



December 2024

The Messenger

Christmas Is Our Story to Tell - Pastor Mike Mirakian

It's that time of year again, and we have a story to tell. Christmas is our story, the church's story. Actually, it's God's story, and He has called His people in the church to tell it to the world. So, as the world decorates and celebrates this holiday season, let's join in the merriment by telling the real story of Jesus' birth.

Despite declining rates of church attendance and professions of faith, nearly everyone in our culture still celebrates Christmas. They may call it the "holiday season" and not talk about baby Jesus or the manger, but we should be grateful that most of our neighbors will make the coming days special with parties and decorations. Even if they don't know the real story, Christmas is a big deal, just as the angel said, "good news that will cause great joy for all the people" (Luke 2:10).

Some Christians bemoan all the money made by companies profiting from our Christmas gift-giving, but maybe we should agree with Charlie Brown's reaction to Snoopy: "This commercial dog is not going to ruin my Christmas." Gift giving is part of the story we tell. God gave the world the priceless gift of His one and only Son, and the magi brought expensive gifts to honor Jesus. Now, we give Christmas presents to family and friends as tokens of our love for them and of God's matchless love for each of us.

We also share the real story of Christmas in our music. While the world grooves to Mariah Carey and croons along with Bing Crosby, we sing carols celebrating Jesus' birth:

Joy to the world the Lord is come!

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.

O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Even sappy holiday movies set against a backdrop of Christmas decorations can point people to the real story. We all long for hopeful, happy endings. We like feel-good moments of light and laughter, and we have the best story to tell, a love story with a joyful ending that offers peace on earth.

So, as your neighbors light up their homes, decorate their trees, shop for gifts and hum along with holiday tunes, be glad that Jesus' birth is still celebrated by so many and watch for opportunities to tell the real story. God sent His Son into this world, born as a little child, placed in a rough manger and greeted by shepherds, angels and wisemen from afar. Jesus brought light into this dark world, showing God's love and offering new life to all who will come to Him in faith.

Take a few moments to read the real Christmas story from the beginning of Matthew or Luke. Refresh the details in your mind and rejoice in your heart. Jesus' story is our story, and we get to tell it again this year with sparkling lights and colorful gifts, through cheerful songs and happy stories.

We share the good news that Jesus came to save us. O come, let us adore Him!



Birthdays

- 4 Carl Ecklund
Emily Lorbach
- 11 Rose Peterson
- 13 Aidan Breese
- 17 Jill Page
- 18 Mario Torres
- 20 Nancy Ilgen
- 21 Noelle Mirakian
- 28 Kay Forsen
Jeanine Parker Heck

Offering Envelopes



Weekly Offering The 2025 offering envelopes will be available for pick up during the month of

December in the north lobby. If you would like to be assigned a box please contact the church office.

60 Plus



Join 60 Plus for lunch on Tuesday, December 17th, at 11:30 AM at Thunder Bay Grille, 7652 Potawatomi Trail. Please call Sue at church 815-399-9296 or give Karen Holmertz your reservation by December 15th. Also let her know if you need a ride. Remember to invite others to join us. We will **not** be going to church after for caroling and dessert.

Financial Report from the Treasurer

I have estimated that we need \$39,000.00 from now until the end of the year to cover anticipated expenses without using any of the prior year's surpluses. This is an average of \$6500.00 per Sunday. Thank You for your support.

Serving in December

Counters:

David Holmertz & Jim Page

Head Usher:

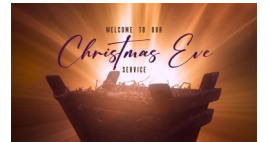
Tom Heck

Remember in Prayer

Joan Boettcher recovering from a fall.
Sylvia Bowman recovering from surgery.
Lillian Slack recovering from surgery.

Christmas Eve Worship

Join us on December 24th at 4:00 pm for our Christmas Eve worship service. Please invite your family and friends to come celebrate our Lord's birth.



Christmas Sing-along

Please join Jerry and the worship singers for a Christmas Carol sing-along on Sunday, December 22nd before the service, at 10 a.m.

Women's Post-Christmas Luncheon



All women are welcome to meet at Tavern on Clark, 755 Clark Dr., Rockford, on December 30th at 11:30 a.m. Please invite other family or friends to join you and contact Nancy Norman to make your reservations.

Women's Fellowship

We will continue to view the Chosen 4. All are welcome! We meet on Tuesday morning from 9:30 -10:30.

Sunday School

During the month of December the adult Sunday School class will be led by Colleen Felts in a series on the book of Acts. Join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m.

Pastor's Bible Study

Each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. Pastor Mike leads this interactive and challenging Bible study. The group is currently exploring the Gospel of Luke. Join us for warm fellowship, thoughtful conversation and spiritual encouragement.

December

S

M

T

W

T

F

S

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|----------------------------------|----|----|
| 1 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:45 Vida Eterna | 2 | 3 8:30 Morning Prayer 9:30 Women's Fellowship | 4 | 5 10:30 Pastor's Bible Study | 6 | 7 |
| 8 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship LT Mtg. 11:45 Vida Eterna | 9 | 10 8:30 Morning Prayer 9:30 Women's Fellowship | 11 8:00 Men's Breakfast at Mary's Market 7:30 VE prayer & worship | 12 10:30 Pastor's Bible Study | 13 | 14 |
| 15 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:45 Vida Eterna | 16 Messenger news due in the office | 17 8:30 Morning Prayer 9:30 Women's Fellowship | 18 7:30 VE prayer & worship | 19 10:30 Pastor's Bible Study | 20 | 21 |
| 22 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:45 Vida Eterna | 23 | 24 8:30 Morning Prayer 4:00 Christmas Eve Service | 25  | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 10:15 Worship 11:45 Vida Eterna | 30 11:30 Women's Luncheon Tavern on Clark | 31 8:30 Morning Prayer | | | | |

**December 2024
Broadway Covenant
Church**

3525 Broadway
Rockford, IL 61108

Senior Pastor - Mike Mirakian
Phone - (815)399-9296

We're on the Web
www.broadwaycovenant.com

Leadership Team Update

- ◆ Barb Burwell has agreed to take over leadership of the Mission and Outreach committee.
- ◆ Laura Mirakian has joined the Mission and Outreach committee.
- ◆ Love Tree gifts need to be returned to church with the original tag attached by Sunday, December 15th.

Mission Report

Merry Christmas from the Mission, Evangelism & Outreach Committee. This month please pray for **The Rock River Valley Pantry**. “The Rock River Valley Pantry was established in 1976 serving about 125 households a month. Those who needed the pantry could use them four times a year. Today RRVP is the largest community-based food pantry in Northern Illinois, distributing food from two locations five days a week. They provide more than a million pounds of food each year to those in our community who would otherwise go hungry. They have about 125 volunteers who help each week doing a variety of duties: Assisting staff in receiving donated goods; sort, inspect, package & restock shelves; greet shoppers, and help them with their groceries. With the help of Master Gardeners, they have a 32-bed organic garden that provides more than a ton of fresh produce each year.” For more information see www.rrvp.org.