

MCKOWNVILLE CHURCH NEWS

Volume 9 No. 1

Love God, Follow Jesus and Pass It On!

January, 2018

Spirit Filled. Mission Driven

*Articles for the
February
Newsletter are
due around
January 15th.*

INSIDE:

Pastor's Message.....	p. 2
That's Our Story.....	p. 3
Church Sign.....	p. 4
Youth News/Volunteer Opps.....	p. 5
Mission Opportunities.....	p. 6
Announcements.....	p. 7
Duties Calendar, Birthdays and Anniversaries.....	p. 8
Calendar of Events.....	p. 9
Prayer for the New Year.....	p. 10
Children's Activity.....	p. 11

Newcomers and Visitors: WELCOME!

Look inside for
interesting articles, church
news and updates, youth
events, mission
opportunities, fun activities
and more!

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Christmas comes as usual. As Christmas is over, almost everything about Christmas dies down—only inside the church building we see some dimming light of Christmas. Over the last few weeks we have seen Christmas culture

everywhere, but we also have seen much less of the Christmas message. Our church's emphasis on "Keep Christ in Christmas" is an effort to help people understand the meaning of Christmas in the midst of dwindling influence of the Christmas message for the world. The best way to receive Christmas is to practice the message of Christmas in life. With no action, Christmas will be just another holiday.

Faith matters to everyone. It doesn't matter if one practices a specific form of faith or not, or if he or she acknowledges a basic concept of defining faith such as divine being or not. She might deny the existence of divine figure, but she still has a god when she puts her own thought and reason above any other criteria of referencing and reasoning. And in that sense, faith—faith in a different form for her—matters to her. One rings when he says, "To say that truth is only intelligible through reason is a statement of faith."

Christian faith doesn't go against reason and science. Faith goes along with reason; they complement each other. Faith without reason is superstition; reason without faith cannot lead us to see beyond what we see.

Christianity is a faith that is rooted in history, not abstract philosophy, myths, or fictions. Paul clearly put historical fact as the basis of faith when he said, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.... And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins." (1 Corinthians 15:13-17).

Faith is the foundation for our life. As one said, we are called to live, love, and laugh "by faith" in life. As many a people of faith set examples when they went through all kinds of challenges in their lives, we are called to practice faith in life. "The fundamental fact of existence is that this trust in God, this faith, is the firm foundation under everything that makes life worth living. It's our handle on what we can't see. **The act of faith is what distinguished our ancestors, set them above the crowd**" (Hebrews 11:1-2). And only when we truly know whom we believe in, we can live up to the expectations of our Lord.

Our motto for 2018 will be "**Know Jesus, Make Him Known.**" Jesus is willing to meet us where we are. But he doesn't want us to stay at where we meet him. He wants us to grow and bear fruits in our faith. Paul challenges and motivates us to do what he did by saying, "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of **the surpassing worth of knowing Christ** Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things... **I want to know the Christ...**"

Certainly for Paul knowing Christ was surpassing any other human gains. And my new year's resolution, as Paul challenges me, is that I will spend more time getting to know Christ, my personal Savior and friend. I want to invite you to join me in the effort to know Christ personally.

Charlie Yang



That's Our Story...

You may have heard the story of the four high school boys who showed up late for school. They came in and told the teacher that they had a flat tire. The teacher seemingly accepted their excuse and told them they had to take a quiz... She had them sit in separate corners of the room and asked them to write down the answer to one question, "*Which tire was flat???*"

Well, we all know that stories can change over time. Sometimes more facts are discovered, other times the story teller may remember things "not quite the way they really were". Stories can sometimes be like "fine wine", and get better with age, and fishing stories start to sound a little fishy!! In any case, there's a variety of reasons why stories change, some are good, and some perhaps not coming from the best motives, but somewhere in the twists and turns that stories can take, we look for the one constant, the truth.

As we [reflect] on another Advent journey, let's recall the story that's been around for thousands of years, has been retold for centuries, has never changed, yet leaves us renewed every time we hear it! *Which story is that?* The story of the birth of our Lord.

With advent comes the anticipation of Jesus' birth, the story we hear and tell each year. A simple story, yet so powerful that it changed the world, and continues to change the world with each passing year. As our lives continually change, the story of Jesus does not. When God sent His Son to us on that first Christmas Eve, He sent us the Truth, the unchanging story that we pass to our families and friends, and from generation to generation.

Jesus is the constant in our lives of constant change. We are refreshed by His Spirit with each retelling of His birth. Thousands of years have passed, and there will be thousands to come. And although we have no idea what our world will be like in the future, we know that Jesus will be the same as He was, is today, and will be forever. Jesus came to us to save us, from the day of His birth and through eternity.

Yes, Advent is the time of the year to remember the story of how our Faith began. Just One baby born in an obscure part of the world on a lonely, starry night. A night that became the birth of hope, truth, love, and eternal salvation. And each year we can reflect on that special night and peacefully say, "**Yes, that's our story...**"



Dom Perfetti

A sign from God or a Sign for God?



What if we could tell people who we are?

What if we advertise our bible studies?

What if we could relay when the handbells are playing?

What if we could tell people about our missions?

What if we could tell people about our flood relief buckets and invite them to help?

What if we could relay special church events in the calendar to the entire community?

What if we could invite people to church?

What if we could do all this and more in one week with a single sign?

This could be both a sign from and for God!

Well we now have an opportunity to make our outdoor sign modern, flexible and more effective!

After some excellent research by the trustees, we have selected a sign to do the kind of outreach mentioned above and have the ability to change the sign without even going outside!

Please stay tuned for some upcoming fund raising that will make this possible.

Believe me when I tell you this sign can be so much better than it is right now and changing the sign will be a step toward heaven!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me, Kelly Visker or pastor Charlie!

Yours in Christ,
Pat Beauregard

YOUTH NEWS

Sunday School for grades PreK – 12th Grade

Elementary groups: Storytelling, Arts and Crafts, games and more!!!

Middle School: Discussion based sessions to delve deeper into familiar Bible Stories

High School: discussion based on videos and popular movies drawing on Bible based morals in real life situations

Guilderland Youth Group is an open gathering of youth in grades 8-12 We meet to relate, to be social, to empower young people as world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ, to nurture faith development, and to equip young leaders. We meet 3-4 times per month for FUN, SERVICE, LEARNING and WORSHIP experiences. If you are looking for a group of young people to GO and DO – this is for you!!!

You can find contact information and more information about our youth ministries on our website at www.mckownvillechurch.org

2018 Mission of Peace—Next year's Mission of Peace will be to Zimbabwe! Youth who will be Juniors or Seniors in the January of 2018 are eligible to attend. Acceptance based on Application and Interview (happens in March, 2018). Pumpkin Patch Scholarship money is available to underwrite 70% of expenses for each McKownville participant chosen for the MOP team. See Angela Stott to learn more or to get an initial application.

Looking for somewhere to volunteer?

The following organizations are looking for youth volunteers!

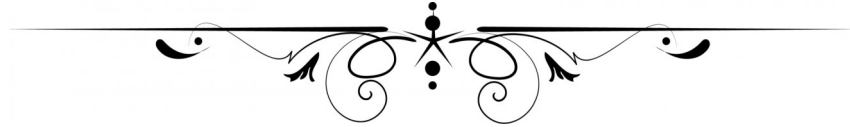
(Perfect for requites community service hours.)

ALBANY BARN: Albany Barn participates in a variety of events both in house at Stage 1 and around the city and Capital Region! We are always looking for energetic, outgoing people to help spread the word about the Barn at these events! The time commitment for events is generally small, consisting of flexible 1-2 hour shifts. Event Staff are usually responsible for answering questions about Albany Barn, assisting in set-up/breakdown as needed, and increasing our community contacts and volunteer base by encouraging people to sign up for our mailing list or as a volunteer. A volunteer orientation will be available prior to all events to ensure our event staff go out with the most up-to-date information about Albany Barn and clear direction for the event they will be working. <http://albanybarn.org/support-the-barn/volunteer/>

Habitat for Humanity—ReStore: Proceeds from the ReStore help build homes right here in the Capital District. The store is our biggest fundraiser and it is run by a small staff and many dedicated volunteers. ReStore Volunteers assist with managing inventory, picking up donations and helping customers. ReStore Volunteers must be at least 16 years old, and we require parental consent for individuals aged 16-17. The ReStore is located at 70 Fuller Road and is open Tuesday-Saturday. ReStore volunteer shifts range from 4-8 hours, but scheduling is flexible.

<https://www.habitatcd.org/restore-volunteer>

Mission Opportunities



Guilderland Food Pantry Needs:

- ♥ Juice
- ♥ Rice
- ♥ Canned meats such as
-salmon, chicken, tuna
- ♥ Canned potatoes
- ♥ Soup
- ♥ Chili
- ♥ Canned fruit
- ♥ Tomato products
- ♥ Whole wheat pasta
- ♥ Spaghetti sauce
- ♥ Coffee, tea, cocoa
- ♥ Pancake mix
- ♥ Syrup
- ♥ Honey
- ♥ Corn oil
- ♥ Cereal
- ♥ All personal care items
- ♥ All paper products such as
- ♥ Kleenex, toilet paper and paper towels
- ♥ Cleaning products



Become a Volunteer!

The Guilderland Food Pantry operates and is maintained by several committed volunteers from the Guilderland community. Volunteers have several opportunities to serve:

- ⇒ Being present at the food pantry between 9:30 and 11:00 to serve clients.
- ⇒ Organizing and stocking the shelves with food.
- ⇒ Organizing food drives within your community or organization.
- ⇒ Delivering food to clients.
- ⇒ Packing and delivering food bags for the holidays (Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas).

If you would like to volunteer please call **930-1001**

<https://www.guilderlandfoodpantry.com>



ADULT FORUM – GOD IN THE MOVIES

Movies excite us in ways that other media may not. Sometimes, beyond the intended direct message, a subtle underlying message resonates even more. Could such a moment be a “God moment?” Catherine Barsotti and Robert Johnston, in their book “God in the Movies” (ISBN 978-1-58743-390-0) suggest a number of films that address spiritual issues.

From time to time Adult Forum will discuss such a film. We meet in the room across from the library (down the hall from the church office) Sundays 9:30-10:30 am and Mondays 7:00 - 8:00 pm.

Barsotti and Johnston selected these films for their book. If one of them is especially meaningful to you, we could feature it in the next discussion. Let a leader of Adult Forum know. Films will be announced several weeks in advance so there is time to watch them before we meet. Come, enrich our discussion! (All foreign films have English subtitles.)

Amadeus [1984]
 Babette’s Feast [1987]
 Chariots of Fire [1981]
 Crimes and Misdemeanors [1989]
 Do the Right Think [1989]
 The Elephant Man [1980]
 Field of Dreams [1989]
 The Mission [1986]
 Places in the Heart [1984]
 Wings of Desire [1987]
 American Beauty [1999]
 Breaking the Waves [1996]
 Dead Man Walking [1993]
 Groundhog Day [1993]

To Live [1994]
 Magnolia [1999]
 The Piano [1993]
 The Shawshank Redemption [1994]
 Three Colors: Blue [1993]
 Unforgiven [1992]
 Children of Men [2006]
 Lars and the Real Girl [2007]
 Munyurangabo [2008]
 Secret Sunshine [2007]
 A Serious Man [2009]
 The Son [2002]
 There Will Be Blood [2008]
 UP [2009]

WALL-E [2008]
 Water [2005]
 The Adjustment Bureau [2011]
 Calvary [2014]
 Get Low [2010]
 Life of Pi [2012]
 Noah [2014]
 Of Gods and Men [2010]
 The Tree of Life [2011]
 True Grit [2010]
 13 Years a Slave [2013]
 Zero Dark Thirty [2012]

UPCOMING MOVIE DISCUSSION

Once again, Adult Forum goes to the movies! From time to time we watch a movie to discern “God moments”, scenes where God seems to be present in the plot or actions of characters. Join us Sunday January 7 when we will discuss the 1937 film “The Wizard of Oz”. Most folks have seen it more than once, but we will show a brief portion of the film as a refresher. Where in the film do you see God speaking or acting? Which character exhibits God-like behavior? We meet 9:30 am Sundays, just a short walk down the hallway, across from the library. If you can’t make the Sunday morning discussion, we also meet Monday 7:00 pm, same place. See you!

SUBMIT PHOTOS

Please continue to submit PHOTOS and descriptions of small groups, ministries, teams, etc. for a new and updated church guidebook and the new communication board!

Our trustees are looking for someone to fill a vacant building maintenance position—See a trustee for more information!

Grab A Hard Copy!

Each Sunday morning, Pastor Charlie’s sermon will be available in print and can be picked up from the greeters before the service begins. If you would like to have the sermons mailed to you each week you may call the office (456 -1148) and make a request.

Watch it live!

You can now view Pastor Charlie’s sermons live as they happen or later on when you have time from our Facebook page! /McKownvilleChurch

JANUARY DUTIES CALENDAR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>GREETERS/ USHERS</u>	<u>LAY WORSHIP LEADER</u>
January 7	Susan and Bill Burns	Dianne Steffens
January 14	Ken and Curtis Groupe	Paul Cullen
January 21	Kristen and Monte Waters	Angela Stott
January 28	Alan Longshore, Terry O'Neill	Kim Keane
February 4	Delores Campbell, Helen Knight	Tricia Stott



Greeters & Ushers Coordinator: Looking for a new volunteer!!

Coffee Hour Coordinator: Chris Steffens - 608-5300

Lay Worship Leader Coordinator: Nancy Rutenber - 456-0412

**We are still looking for someone to take over the position of Greeters/Ushers coordinator. Please contact Pauline Martin for details about the job. blundyp379@aol.com

* Please note that Greeters and Ushers duties are now combined.

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS

Anniversaries

Birthdays

12 – Ken & Jennifer Grupe



2 – Beth Berger
2 – Karen Tedesco
5 – Daniel Dass
7 – Vera Lund
7 – Pauline Martin
7 – Kathryn Braun
11 – Patti Krekeler
11 – Joshua Scattareggia
13 – Marty Markessinis
15 – Alexander Burns
16 – Bob Colclough

16 – Cathy Gee Jurek
18 – Ricky Eistertz
19 – Ralph Carpenter
27 – Lori Jenkins –Davis
29 – Angela Stott
30 – Illa Pickett
30 – Jason Davies
30 – Michael Shropshire
30 – David Martin
31 – Tricia Stott
31 – Paul Berger

A Prayer for the New Year

The New Year can often bring a mixed bag of emotions and memories for many of us. Some may have just experienced the best year ever and look forward to an even greater one looming ahead.

Others may have just trudged through one deep struggle after another. The fresh calendar year brings desperate hope for things to be better, with an ache for the still-fresh wounds to slowly begin their process of healing. Whether you've just walked through the greatest year of your life, or are incredibly glad to see this one finally over, one truth still rings clear amidst it all. You are not alone.

Not ever. Our God is a "with us" God. On the heels of the celebration of the birth of our King, that reminder has the power to carry us right into a fresh, new start. He is Immanuel, God with us. And though things and people around us shift and change, our God never changes. The following is a prayer to keep God first in the coming new year.

Dear God,

Thank you that you make all things new. Thank you for all that you've allowed into our lives this past year, the good along with the hard things, which have reminded us how much we need you and rely on your presence filling us every single day.

We pray for your Spirit to lead us each step of this New Year. We ask that you will guide our decisions and turn our hearts to deeply desire you above all else. We ask that you will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight. We ask that you would help us release our grip on the things to which you've said "no," "not yet," or "wait." We ask for help to pursue you first, above every dream and desire you've put within our hearts.

We ask for your wisdom, for your strength and power to be constantly present within us. We pray you would make us strong and courageous for the road ahead. Give us ability beyond what we feel able, let your gifts flow freely through us, so that you would be honored by our lives, and others would be drawn to you.

We pray that you'd keep us far from the snares and traps of temptations. That you would whisper in our ear when we need to run, and whisper in our heart when we need to stand our ground.

We pray for your protection over our families and friends. We ask for your hand to cover us and keep us distanced from the evil intent of the enemy; that you would be a barrier to surround us, that we'd be safe in your hands. We pray that you would give us discernment and insight beyond our years, to understand your will, hear your voice, and know your ways.

We ask that you would keep our footsteps firm, on solid ground, helping us to be consistent and faithful. Give us supernatural endurance to stay the course, not swerving to the right or to the left, or being too easily distracted by other things that would seek to call us away from a close walk with you.

Forgive us for the times we have worked so hard to be self-sufficient, forgetting our need for you, living independent of your spirit. Forgive us for letting

fear and worry control our minds, and for allowing pride and selfishness wreak havoc over our lives. Forgive us for not following your ways and for living distant from your presence.

We confess our need for you...fresh...new...again. We ask that you make all things new, in our hearts, in our minds, in our lives, for this coming year. We pray for your refreshing over us.

Keep your words of truth planted firm within us, help us to keep focused on what is pure and right, give us the power to be obedient to your word. And when the enemy reminds us where we have been, hissing his lies and attacks our way, we trust that your voice speaks louder and stronger, as you remind us we are safe with you and your purposes and plans will not fail. We ask that you will be our defense and rear guard, keeping our way clear, removing the obstacles, and covering the pitfalls. Lord, lead us on your level ground.

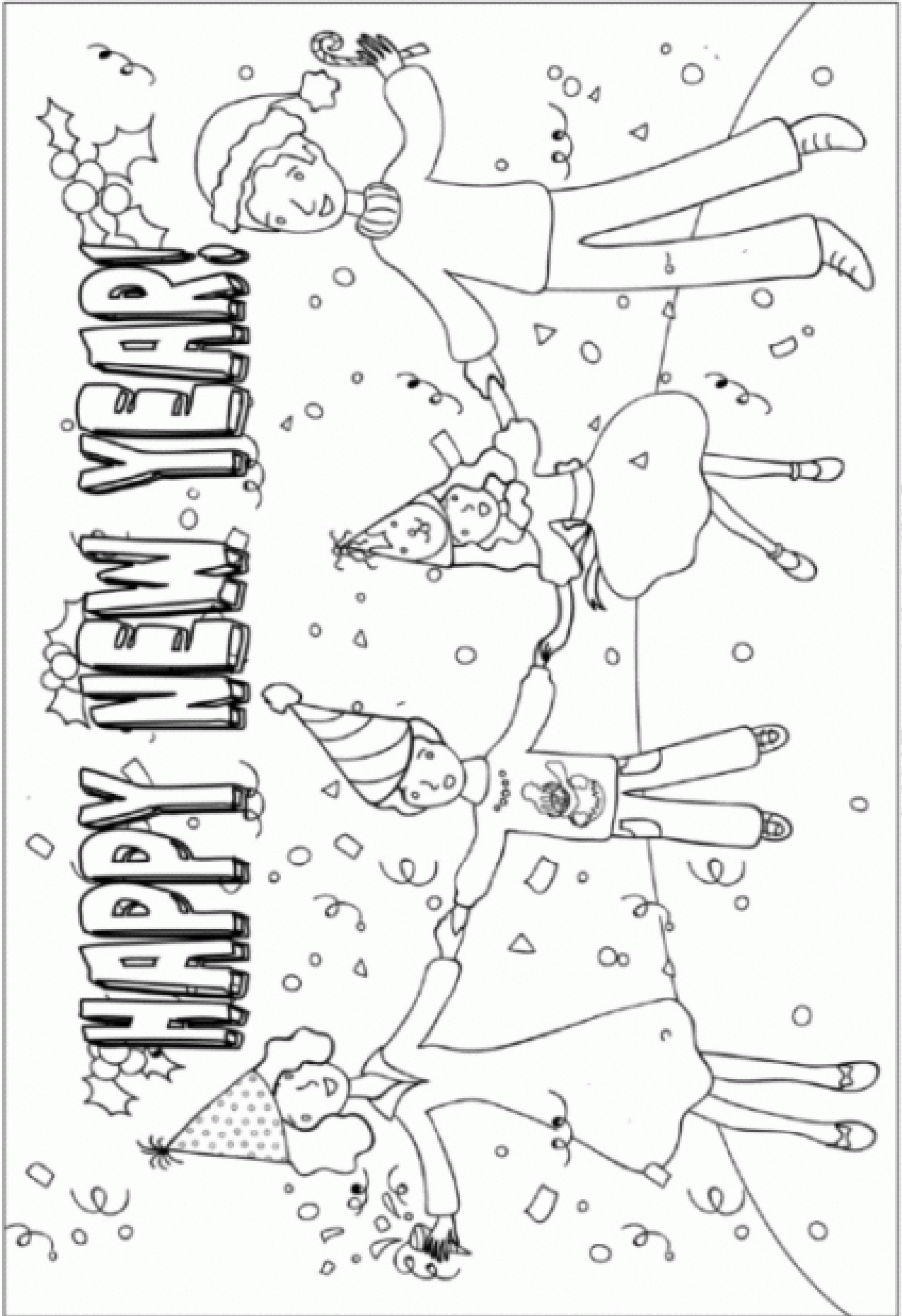
We ask that you would provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favor. We pray for your blessings to cover us, we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed. We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but to say, "These are the ones that the Lord has blessed."

Help us to be known as great givers, help us to be generous and kind, help us to look to the needs of others and not be consumed by only our own.

May we be lovers of truth, may the fruits of your spirit be evident in our lives - your love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Shine your light in us, through us, over us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes. Set you way before us. May all your plans succeed. We may reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing.

To you be glory and honor, in this New Year, and forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.

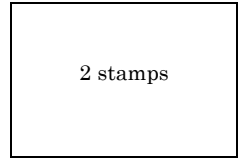


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The Rev. DR. Charlie Yang, Pastor
E-mail: pastorcyang@gmail.com

Office Hours:
Monday—Friday: 9am-1pm

Ministry and Team Leaders of the McKownville United Methodist Church

Board of Trustees:

Chair & Sexton Liaison: James Stott

Vice-Chair & Furnishings,
Building Use Coordinator: Kelly Visker
Nancy Rhodes

Leases & Legal Affairs: Noreen Van Doren

Grounds & Planned
Maintenance: Chris Brewer, Chris Spencer

Insurance: Nancy Pullen

Furniture: Nancy Pullen

Ministry Teams:

Leadership Council: Paul Krekeler, Team Leader

Staff/Parish Relations: Oakley Neitzel, Patti Krekeler,
George Jenczko, Alan Longshore, Emma Herendeen,
Monte Waters, Sue Burns, Tricia Stott, Nancy Rutenber

Finance: Paul Scoville, Team Leader
Treasurer & Payroll: Tim Pierce
Finance Secretary: Barbara O'Neill

Worship: Charlie Yang, Team Leader

Evangelism through Outreach: Jim Bowen,
Team Leader

Christian Education: Kim Keane, Team Leader

Memorials & Gifts: Nancy Pullen, Team Leader

Senior Ministries: Darcianne Leizer,
Team Leader