

OCKER BRETHREN CHURCH

Serving Christ, Serving Our Community

DECEMBER 2023



DECEMBER 3
HANGING
OF THE GREENS



DECEMBER 10
CHOIR SPECIALS
IN WORSHIP



DECEMBER 17
SUNDAY SCHOOL
PROGRAM &
FINGER FOOD
LUNCH



DECEMBER 24
CANDLELIGHT
SERVICE 5:30 PM
NO MORNING
SERVICE

From the Pastor....

Well, Thanksgiving is over and Advent season is almost here. The Advent/Christmas season is my favorite time of the church year. I like the traditions and the focus on peace and love.

But, for me, the aspect I love most about the Advent/Christmas season is the very real sense of God's presence....For some reason, I can feel God more during this season... he seems closer...more real...more accessible...then the rest of the year.

It's the weekend before Christmas, and Bobby, in Boston, gets a call from his elderly father in Texas. The father says, "Bobby, your mother's making me crazy. I've had six decades of picking up after her. We're getting a divorce. Don't try to talk us out of it." Dad hangs up, and Bobby immediately calls Geraldine, his older sister in Hong Kong, waking

her from a dead sleep. Within minutes, Geraldine—ever the older sister—telephones their parents in Texas. In a shrill, rushed voice she says, "Dad, you and mom have been together for sixty years! How much time do you think you have left? I will not let you waste your golden years in bitter legal battles. I don't care what the issue is, we WILL work it out. Am I understood? Don't do a thing. Bobby and I will both be there on the first flights we can catch back to Texas." Geraldine hangs up. The old man smiles at his wife and gently kisses her hand. "Well, my love, looks like both our children will be home for Christmas this year."

At Christmas time, presence is so much more important than presents! And that's the beauty of the Christmas story. In ancient times, when our ancestors gazed at the skies and pondered the

hard questions of life, when they were confronted with the mysteries of birth, and death, and illness, and wonder, they found their best comfort not in tales of conquest and glory, nor in lofty wisdom and rituals, but in a simple true tale of divine presence: A disgraced pregnant maiden, a dreaming carpenter, an inglorious barnyard birth, and the earthy, simple claim that God is with us; God is among us; God is not far off where we couldn't reach, but around us and within.

The message of Christmas is that God does not remain in remote majesty and splendor, but becomes present in all our human travail, sharing our indignities, and outrage, and shame. God is present in all our laughter, and love, and in the satisfaction of a job well done.

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.....FROM THE PASTOR(Cont.)

God with us! In that same old story, the angel names the child "Jesus," which means "God saves." And how does God save? By coming to us, being among us, walking beside us...and then commissioning us to go and do likewise.

I am looking forward to celebrating another Christmas with the Ocker family...what a joy it is to be present with you all and then to experience God's presence together. I will save a seat for you at our Hanging of the Greens service...when you come, see if you can feel God more than normal...he will be waiting for you.

Brad



Wednesday night Bible study

Thank you to all that were part of the Bad Girls Bible Study. We learned a lot and had great conversations. Our next study will begin in January. We will be studying the Gospel of Matthew. If you would like to get started in your study, please read the Gospel in it's entirety. Hope to see you there!



Baby Blanket Buddies

Thank you for your donations of Baby Blankets to support Hope Pregnancy center. We are donating 10 blankets at this time. These will provide hope and comfort to the mothers and babies that receive them.

If you didn't get a chance to create a blanket this time, I will continue to collect blankets to be delivered around Easter in honor of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you want to learn to knit or crochet, I am more than happy to teach you.

Blessings, Maggie



Christian Sisters

The Christian Sisters will not meet in December. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 16. We want to wish everyone a blessed and joyous Christmas as we celebrate our Savior's birth!



Wednesday Nights at Ocker

6-8pm; Dinner Provided

Nov. 29- Family Game Night
hosted by Brother Brad in the
fellowship hall.

Dec. 6- Youth Bible Study

Dec. 13- Youth Bible Study

Dec. 20- Youth Bible Study

Dec. 27- Family Game Night



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CAMP

**A one-day Christmas VBS
for children ages 3 & up.
Youth are welcome to
attend and volunteer for
the day.**

Saturday, December 9

Drop off 7:30-8:00am

Pickup 3:00-3:30pm

**Breakfast, lunch, and
snacks provided.**

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY & SERVICE PROJECT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

Following the SS program and
gift exchange, the BYF (6th &
up) will travel to Temple to
distribute Christmas ornaments
and visit at an assisted living
facility (tentative on their
visitor policies on that date).

We will then eat dinner
together (location TBD) and
have our gift exchange (details
TBA).

* This is also the last day to
register for the January youth
retreat.

Looking Way Ahead:

Check
www.huscamp.org for
summer camp
program dates. Mark
your calendars now
and make it a priority.

Also: The first
weekend of February
will be a confirmation
retreat at the Hus
Encampment. More
details to come.

BYF ACTIVITIES FOR JANUARY

January 6-7: State Youth Retreat at
Hus Encampment. All registrations
must be received by December 17.

Wed. Jan. 10: We will set up for the
craft retreat at Youth Bible Study

January 12-13: Youth Sponsored
Craft Retreat. A sign up genius will
be sent to all youth. Be sure to sign
up to help!

January 14: Youth Soup-Your-Bowl
Meal, following worship. A sign up
genius will be sent to all youth. Be
sure to sign up!

If you have questions regarding
youth activities, please see Jenn
Chervenka or contact her at
jennchervenka@gmail.com; 254-
913-1244.

*Merry
Christmas*

A small illustration of a Christmas tree with a star on top, positioned to the right of the 'Merry Christmas' text.



Operation Christmas Child

THANK YOU! 350 BOXES!

A huge **THANK YOU** to the Ocker Family for the 2023 year!! We are greatly overwhelmed with the generosity for the church family throughout this year. As a church, many donations of varies items were brought in for OCC and Ocker was able to pack 350 boxes! **Yes, you read that correctly, 350 boxes!! The most ever packed at Ocker!** OCC would like to thank everyone who came out November 11th to pack the boxes, it was a lot of fun! For the next few months, please pray for the delivery of the boxes and for the children who will receive them.

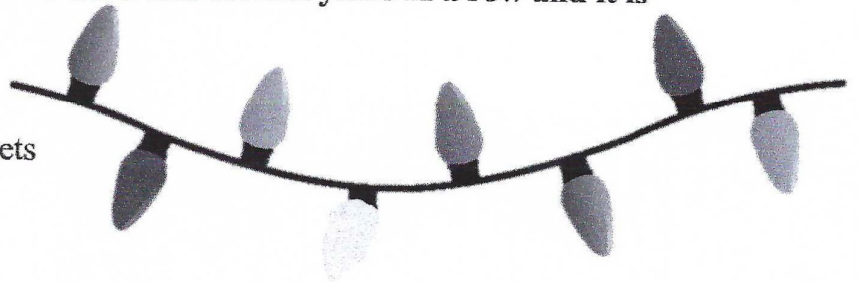
As a thank you, please take an OCC ornament located on the OCC Christmas tree. These ornaments can be placed on your Christmas tree as a reminder to pray for the children who will receive this year's boxes.

Stay tuned to know where the boxes are being ship to; we hope to know soon.

We would also like to thank the Tomlin family for delivering the shoeboxes to the distribution center! Karen has done this several years in a row and it is greatly appreciated!

MERRY CHRISTMAS,

Erin Brinkley and Tracie Malovets



DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY SCHOOL / CEC NEWS

The CEC (Christian Education Committee) met on Sunday, November 11 right after worship and a light lunch to discuss Sunday School Christmas Program and activities.

All Sunday School classes are going well and growing.

First Sunday Fellowship Breakfasts are going well with the following Schedule:

December 3 – Youth and Children’s Sunday School Teachers

January 7 – Standard Bible Class (RoseAnne’s)

February 4 – Mayberry Class (Jennifer’s)

March 3 – Adult Books of the Bible

April 7 – Everyone-Potluck

May 5 – CEC Muffins with Mom

June 2 – CEC Donuts with Dad

July 7 – Youth and Children’s Sunday School Teachers

August 4 – CEC Provided – Back to School

Breakfast starts at 8:30 am.

Our Sunday School Christmas Program is scheduled for Sunday, December 17 during worship. The children will perform the Nativity and the youth will perform a skit. Practice information has been made available to these youth and children. Most all of Sunday School classes will also take part in the program. Please join us!

After the Sunday School program, we will have our usual finger foods lunch and gift exchange. Of particular interest, there will be a special guest for the children and all. A winter wonderland for our special guest will be set up for the children to visit and families to take some photos. So, please bring your favorite finger foods to share. Children and youth will have a not from their teachers for the gift exchange.

A Valentine Banquet was discussed. Valentines Day is actually on a Wednesday this year! More information and tickets will be available in January. Go ahead and mark your calendars now!

The next CEC Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 11 after worship.

We're on the Web!

www.ockerbrethrenchurch.org

Twitter: @ockerchurch

&

Facebook!



Ocker Brethren Church

Annual Children's Christmas Program

In preparation for Ocker's Christmas Program, CEC will be hosting a series of practices for children Pre K-5th grade.

Sunday Nov.26: Assign parts~ *Parents be on the lookout for paperwork*

Sunday Dec.3: Rehearsal~*During the last part of Sunday School*

Wednesday Dec.6: Rehearsal~*5:30-7:00 Dinner provided*

Sunday Dec. 10: Rehearsal~*During the last part of Sunday School*

Wednesday Dec. 13: Dress Rehearsal~*5:30-7:00 Dinner provided*

Sunday Dec. 17: Program & Meal/Gift Exchange

Please be at the church at 9:00 for a run through



If you have any questions please contact Chelsey Pierce (254) 718-2847

NOVEMBER 2023

Ocker Brethren Church
17454 State Hwy 53
Temple, TX 76501

MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 806
Rogers, TX 76569

Phone 254.985.2240
E-mail
ockerbrethrenchurch@
gmail.com

Pastor:
Dr. Brad Herridge
Phone:
254.716.2578
Email:
bradherridge@gmail.com

Board of Elders
President:
John Paul Chervenka
Phone: 254-760-3841
Email:
jp.chervenka@gmail.com

Sunday School Supt.
Tracie Malovets
Phone: 254-760-8969
Email:
tmalovets@gmail.com

Youth Director:
Jennifer Chervenka
Phone: 254-913-1244
Email:
jennchervenka@gmail.com

Church Secretary:
Stacie Sebek
Phone:
254.718.5608
ockerbrethrenchurch@
gmail.com

Christian Sisters
Hospitality Coordinator:
Deanna Naivar
Phone: 254.931.5720

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 5 – Judy Jeske
 - 6 – Ramona Gerich
 - Wayne Hoelscher
Brayden Gilliam
 - 7 – Jana Jeske
 - 10 – Donald Malovets
 - 11 – Roger Cassens
 - 12 – Alicia Buck
 - 14 – Kathy Jordan
 - 18 – Taylor Jungmann
 - 20 – RoseAnne Groseclose
Darcy Doskocil
 - 23 – Megan Weathersbee
 - 24 – Jordan Krcha
 - 25 – Savannah Sebek
 - 30 – Macie Sebek
Quentin Hoelscher
- Want to be included on birthday/anniversary
calendar? Send info to:
ockerbrethrenchurch@gmail.com



December Anniversaries

27 – Ryan & Ashlyn Zdroik

Upcoming Dates:

January 7 - Board of
Elders Installation

January 10 – Board of
Elders Meeting

••• CHOIR NEWS! •••

The Sanctuary Choir will present two special numbers on Sunday, December 10. Therefore we will have practice on the following dates:

Wednesday, November 29 at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Sunday, December 10 at 8:30 am in the Sanctuary

Both specials will be sung to CD so it is very important for all choir members to be at both rehearsals if possible.

Questions may be addressed to Kim Dillard, director.



Make a joyful noise unto the Lord for the Christmas Season!

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

	1	2
3 8:30 am First Sunday Fellowship 10:15 am Hanging of the Greens	4	5
6 8:30 am First Sunday Fellowship 10:15 am Hanging of the Greens	7 SS Rehearsal 5:30 – 7 pm Youth Bible Study 6 – 8 pm	8 SS Rehearsal 5:30 – 7 pm Youth Bible Study 6 – 8 pm
9 8:30 am First Sunday Fellowship 10:15 am Hanging of the Greens	10 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship with Choir Specials	11 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship with Choir Specials
12 8:30 am Choir Rehearsal 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Worship with Choir Specials	13 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	14 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange
15 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	16 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	17 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange
18 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	19 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	20 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange
21 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	22 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	23 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange
24 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	25 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	26 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange
27 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	28 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	29 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange
30 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	31 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange	32 9 am Sunday School 10:15 am Sunday School Program followed by Social & Gift Exchange



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