



| NOVEMBER 2025

Memorial Methodist Church

McCook NE



105 East E St



Operation Christmas Child

The church is invited to help pack shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child on Wednesday November 19th at 6pm. Supper will be served and then the packing will begin! Stations will be set up with instructions on what each box needs so it is helpful to have adults or older youth help the little ones.

We are blessed with a generous church and many donations have been made! Items we DO NOT need donated: wash cloths, tooth brushes, bars of soap and crayons.

Items we DO need: pens, pencils, notebooks, coloring books, stuffed animals, sidewalk chalk, toy cars, dolls, card games, gloves, socks, combs, brushes, water bottles, puzzles and other items. A full list of WOW item suggestions can be found online:

www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child

It costs about \$10 to ship each box and we will be packing 100 boxes. Monetary donations can be made on Sunday mornings or to the office; please mark it as OCC donation.

Upcoming Events



SUNDAY SERVICES

Contemporary | 8:45am
Traditional | 10:45am

NURSERY

Infant-Pk Children



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Pk- 12th Grade | 9:50am



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

November 19 | 6 pm



THANKSGIVING

November 27



NOEL ON NORRIS

December 6 | 6 pm



Outreach Ministry

Noel on Norris: Light Parade

Noel on Norris will be Saturday December 6th. The Light Parade that begins at 6pm, we will serve hot chocolate and cookies outside the church building. Donations to make the hot chocolate and plates of cookies will be needed. I will also be looking for volunteers to serve the goodies. Sign up will be made available as the event gets closer. This is always a fun event and a great way to serve the community!

Kelli Jensen



*"Call the laborers and pay them their wages,
beginning with the last group to the first."*

Matthew 20:8

The verse above comes from a parable Jesus tells at the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew chapter 20. A parable was the preferred teaching model of Jesus and involved using a very common image or occurrence of His day to make a powerful point. This particular parable is the common image of a vineyard that is ripe for harvest, and the common occurrence is a landowner who hires day-laborers to work the harvest. Since Israel was checkered with vineyards, everyone listening to Jesus that day would have been familiar with this practice. This is also a parable of the Kingdom, meaning Jesus is using this story to tell His followers what the Kingdom of God is like.

Verse 8 captures the moment when the workday was at an end, and it was time for the vineyard foreman to settle up and pay his workers. The landowner had hired men at intervals throughout the day, promising the early hires one denarius—a good, normal wage for their work. Later hires were promised no specific amount, but apparently, the employer was known to be fair, so off to the fields they went. As evening came and it was time to distribute wages, the landowner instructed his foreman to issue the same pay, one denarius, to each of the men, beginning with those who had worked the least, and ending with those who had been first hired. Seeing his generosity with those hired last, the early workers assumed they would receive more than they had agreed to, so they grumbled when their one-denarius pay was given to them. But the owner reminded them their pay was exactly as agreed, and asked, "Are you envious because I am generous?"

There's something inside of all of us that keeps score in matters like this. We feel those who show up last and work the least don't deserve to get the full pay of those who showed up early and worked the most. That's true in the real world, but this is a parable of the

Kingdom and its intention is to show us what grace is like. Grace is never about what we deserve. The workers who arrived late did not "deserve" the same pay as those who came early. Grace gives us what God desires. God's desire is that all who respond to the Kingdom receive the same grace. So it doesn't matter at what point in our existence we put our faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, we'll all receive the same "payment" in the Kingdom. Sometimes, those who arrive early can be judgmental of those who arrive late, think the latecomers deserve less, or think the early adopters deserve more. We want God to give us what we want by grading on a curve. But God loves us all and He offers us the same grace.

Jesus uses the landowner in this story to make sure their hearts would be tested. So, the landowner specifically told the foreman to issue pay in a sequence beginning with the last hires, working his way toward the first. To no one's surprise, their critical hearts were exposed. The early hires wanted life to be graded on a curve, to get more credit than they had earned.

Grading on a curve can seem a wonderful blessing, always a gift of unmerited grace. And sometimes there may indeed be

factors in poor class performance. Grace is demonstrated by grading on the curve which softens the impact of an uncomfortably high proportion of students who performed poorly.

The drawback to such grace is it can lead us to anticipate, like the early hires, as though life itself should be graded on a curve. God would have us be content with what we have. We may look with envy at those who have far more and conclude that God's been unfair. But do we reach the same conclusion when we see those who have fared far worse than us? Do we suspect there's something wrong with them, that they somehow deserve what they've received? We might think, "Perhaps they haven't been as smart or as hardworking as us." Friends, pride and jealousy are tricky things to manage. That's why we must be cleansed of them. But first, God must orchestrate circumstances to expose our hearts which is exactly what this parable does.

May we repent of those times when we've looked with envy at those who have more than us or with disdain at those who struggle with less. May God cause our hearts to be content with Him and to stop our reliance on His grading on the curve to find fulfillment.

I wish you Jesus
Pastor Jeff Kelley

Little Blessings Preschool

Exploring season changes is so amazing in the eyes of children who are fascinated with the leaves changing color, but sad that they are dropping off the tree. Cooler temps are okay, but the sun going down earlier really is not okay for children wanting to play outside.

We've been blessed with fun activities this month, including family fun night. Thank you to Kelli Jensen, Julie Gillespie, Janie Bredvick, Kerri Unger, and Bryn Jordan for helping with the event! We appreciate you very much! We had Donuts with Dad or someone Special this month, and that was a lot of fun, sharing time with those we love.

We thank the McCook Fire Department for visiting us and teaching us about fire safety. Ms Diane from the library visits us once a month and reads to us.

Thank you to Ms Patty, as she has been teaching us how to say our name and age in Spanish. We love to have Pastor Jeremy visit each Wednesday to share God's word with us, too.

We've also been learning to write our names, letters, numbers, shapes, and phonetic sounds of letters. Our Bible verse this month is *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."* Deuteronomy 6:5

In November, we will count our Blessings and all the gifts from God that we are thankful for every day! We will have parent teacher conferences and practice for our Christmas program, which will be on December 8th at 6 pm for our morning class and 7 pm for our afternoon class.

Thank you to Pastor Jeff and Kathy Latta for helping drive the van when we need an extra driver. We appreciate you both very much!

Blessings,
Traci Wiemers



The Ancient Path

If you had to guess, currently, which generation do you think attends church most often? I think the answer will surprise you. It's not Gen X, as many would probably guess. It's not even the Baby Boomers. Gen Z and young Millennials are currently the highest church attenders in the world. This age group of 18 to 30 year olds' church attendance has never been this high in recorded history. The irony? Gen Z and young Millennials are often pinned as least likely to seek out a relationship with God; but here we are, and the statistics don't lie.

So, what's going on? Why are so many young people coming back to church? The blanket answer is that these young people are seeking out community,

meaning, and authentic connection with one another. Especially for those who have been raised with technology & smart devices. In a world that has never been more connected through technology, 61% of young people 18 to 25 years old in the U.S. experience profound loneliness.

The most interesting part of this trend is where these young people are choosing to attend. Many would think the younger generations would attend churches that are contemporary in nature. Churches with flashing lights, concert like music, sermons that tickle the ear, and buildings that look like sports arenas more than churches...but that is not the case. Most of these young people are attending

churches more traditional, like the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and Anglican Church (traditional Methodist). These types of churches are more apostolic in nature, have been around for hundreds of years, and believe in episcopal polity. They are also very liturgical, use icons, and display ornate stained glass and other biblical décor. These traditional churches have a high regard for the sacraments, sacred rites, and ceremonial worship. They also reflect the early, primitive church.

So, why should we care about where these young people are attending church? Well, if you look closely at Scripture, it will tell you why this is a big

deal and why we should be paying close attention to this shift. Luke tells us in Acts 2:17, “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions...” I believe God is raising an entire generation to be his mouthpiece for revival & redemption across this great land. Not only here in the U.S., but all around the world, God is using churches that are primitive in nature to equip them.

In a world where modernity is king, God is using the ancient paths to guide this generation back to Him. Look at what Jeremiah 6:16 says, “Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Young people all over the world are finding rest for their souls by walking the ancient path that leads back to the church. So let us not forget our heritage; so that when we stand at the crossroads of postmodern Christianity and the ancient path of God’s word, He will guide us to take the good way, the ancient way, and the way that leads us to peace for our souls.

John Wesley was a man obsessed with the idea of the primitive church. He, along with his brother Charles, started a renewal movement within the Church of England, guiding the Anglican Church back to the practices and spirit of the early church described in the book of Acts. Eventually, this renewal movement would become the Methodist Church.

The Methodist Church became one of the fastest growing churches in America in the 19th century, filled with mostly young people, 18 to 30 year olds.

Friends, we are called by Christ to seek out those that are standing at the crossroads of this fallen world and the Kingdom of God. The broad road that leads only to destruction, and the narrow road, that leads to eternal life (Matthew 7:13 & 14). I am so excited to see God moving in the hearts of young people, especially the young people in this church. Let us continue to encourage them towards the ancient path, the good path, the path that leads to eternal life, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Pastor Jeremy LaBrie

Children Ministries

As we approach November, a time where we often stop to reflect on and search our thankful hearts, let me start by sharing. We welcomed over 30 families for a night of worship, fun, and fellowship for our W.O.W program. I am thankful for families investing in each other, and support and nurture growing in the love of Jesus. I am thankful for teachers and helpers who show up and pour their hearts into our children. I am thankful for Chelsey and the kitchen helpers who offer a sincere smile with each meal (and cookies!). I am thankful for the many volunteers who bake and donate said cookies. I am thankful for the guidance of a supportive leadership team. I am so thankful for a church family who invests in the children. We are appreciative of the upkeep and improvements in the Chapel to make the space usable for a variety of things. We are overjoyed with the new couches in the Youth Center classroom and are so thankful for the many groups utilizing them. I am thankful for a wonderful group of Sunday School teachers who encourage our kids to think big, and boldly live for Jesus. WE are blessed.

I want to encourage each of you, and our children to practice giving thanks, always. As we look to November and December we are excited to participate in Operation Christmas Child and packing of the shoeboxes as well as preparing to perform in a Children's Christmas Program.

Julie Cuellar



Upcoming Events



SUNDAYS

Worship Services | 8:45 & 10:45 am
Sunday School | 9:50-10:40 am
Nursery | Infants-PK | 8:30 am-12 pm
3Sixteens | 6-12th | 6-7 pm

MONDAYS

Praise Band Rehearsal | 7 pm

WEDNESDAYS

Men's Bible Study | 6:30 am
Women's Bible Study | 9 am
W.O.W. | PK-8th | 6-7:30 pm
W.O.R.D. | 9-12th | 7-8:30 pm

THURSDAYS

Community Supper | 5:30 pm

SATURDAYS

Men's Bible Study | 7 am

Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 2

Trustee Meeting
November 6 | 7 pm

Ad Council Meeting
November 11 | 5:30 pm

MMW Unit
November 13 | 1:30 pm

Operation Christmas Child
November 19 | 6 pm

Newsletter Articles Due
November 19

Youth Breakfast
November 23 | Between Services

Thanksgiving
November 27

Thank you for reading!

MEMORIAL METHODIST CHURCH

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Girl Shoebox Gift Suggestions

A gift-filled shoebox can be the first present a child ever receives, so it is important to uniquely pack each gift and make it **FUN, FULL, and PERSONALIZED**—praying for the child and adding a photo and personal note.

A “WOW” ITEM

- Small backpack or purse
- Doll
- Soccer ball and pump
- Stuffed animal
- Jewelry making or hobby kit
- Large toy



PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

- Toothbrush
- Washcloth
- Comb and brush
- Nail clipper and file
- Water bottle
- Flashlight



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Pencils, sharpener, and erasers
- Pencil container
- Pens
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Markers
- Notebooks
- Index cards
- Calculator
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Glue stick
- Small adhesive tape
- Drawstring bag



CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES

- Flip-flops or shoes
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Wristwatch
- Costume jewelry
- Hair accessories
- Clothing and undergarments
- Winter cap, scarf, and mittens



GAMES & ACTIVITIES

- Puzzles
- Coloring books or pads
- Dry watercolor set
- Binoculars and compass
- Musical instruments
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Jump rope
- Stickers
- Games



TOYS

- Small ball
- Building blocks or LEGO® sets
- Slinky® or yo-yo
- Plastic animals
- Magnets
- Finger puppets
- Interactive toys
- Other small toys and figures



DO NOT INCLUDE

- Soap
- Food, candy, or gum
- Toothpaste
- Used or damaged items
- Scary or war-related items
- Wearable traditional camouflage
- Seeds or organic matter
- Liquids
- Medication
- Money
- Breakable items
- Matches, fire starters, or aerosols
- Knives, saws, or razor blades

Wondering if an item will fit in an Operation Christmas Child preprinted shoebox?

Cardboard dimensions: 12 x 7 x 4.38 inches

Plastic dimensions: 13 x 7.5 x 4.7 inches

For more shoebox packing suggestions, the latest resources, and Follow Your Box labels, visit samaritanspurse.org/occ

VIEW SOLICITATION DISCLOSURE INFORMATION FOR SAMARITAN'S PURSE ONLINE AT SAMARITANSPURSE.ORG/DISCLOSURE.



Boy Shoebox Gift Suggestions

A gift-filled shoebox can be the first present a child ever receives, so it is important to uniquely pack each gift and make it **FUN, FULL, and PERSONALIZED**—praying for the child and adding a photo and personal note.

A “WOW” ITEM

- Small backpack
- Soccer ball and pump
- Stuffed animal
- Hobby kit
- Large toy truck or car
- Other large toy



PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

- Toothbrush
- Washcloth
- Comb and brush
- Nail clipper and file
- Water bottle
- Flashlight



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Pencils, sharpener, and erasers
- Pencil container
- Pens
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Markers
- Notebooks
- Index cards
- Calculator
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Glue stick
- Small adhesive tape
- Drawstring bag



CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES

- Flip-flops or shoes
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- Wristwatch
- Clothing and undergarments
- Winter cap, scarf, and mittens



GAMES & ACTIVITIES

- Puzzles
- Coloring books or pads
- Dry watercolor set
- Binoculars and compass
- Musical instruments
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Jump rope
- Stickers
- Games



TOYS

- Small ball
- Building blocks or LEGO® sets
- Slinky® or yo-yo
- Toy cars
- Plastic animals
- Magnets
- Interactive toys
- Other small toys and figures



DO NOT INCLUDE

- Soap
- Food, candy, or gum
- Toothpaste
- Used or damaged items
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- Wearable traditional camouflage
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