

Dear Main Street Church Family,

Christmas Eve has long been one of my favorite days of the year. As a pastor's kid, Christmas Eve was usually filled with church services and activities. As far back as I can remember, Christmas Eve has been about carols and candlelight, about familiar Scripture readings and *Silent Night*. A lot of work goes into Christmas Eve services. There are extra bulletins to prepare. (I can hear the clacking of the folding machine as I type these words.) The Altar Guild prepares the sanctuary and musicians work overtime to prepare for all the special music. Personally, I think it is worth the effort, because on Christmas Eve, we gather in the darkness to celebrate the Good News that the birth of Jesus is a gift of light--*a light that no darkness can overcome*.

Christmas at Main Street

I'm looking forward to the three (3) services at Main Street on Christmas Eve. Each of the services is going to be different, so there will be something for everyone. I hope to see you and your family and friends. I also hope that if you know someone who doesn't have a church home, you'll invite them to join us at Main Street:

- 5:00pm ~ A Family Service, featuring The Christmas Story as told by the Main Street Singers Children's Choir. (Every child that attends this service will have an opportunity to participate.)
- 7:00pm ~ A Traditional Candlelight Service. (Nursery will be available for children three (3) and under.)
- 11:00pm ~ A Traditional Service of Candlelight and Communion.

Our 2011 Christmas Eve offering will go to the **Waynesboro Area Refuge Ministry (WARM)**. WARM is a community ministry providing shelter to homeless persons in Waynesboro. Main Street, along with other area churches, will be participating. If you would like to give a gift in honor of a loved one, please mark your offering envelope. A list of these Christmas special gifts (names, not amounts) will be published in January. This is one of the ways we celebrate Jesus' birth, by offering hope to people who are in desperate situations. I hope you will plan to give generously. If you are going to be out-of-town on Christmas Eve, I hope you will send or drop off your offering to the church office. (Please be sure to mark your offering: Christmas Eve.)

On Sunday December 25, we will have one (1) service at 10:00am. This will be a service of Lessons and Carols. There will be no Sunday School or Children's Church, but we will have a nursery for children three (3) and under. Feel free to dress casually as we celebrate the birth of Jesus in Scripture and song.

Stewardship Reminder

Don't forget that Sunday, December 25 is the last Sunday of 2011. Our Sunday morning offering will go, as it does every week, to our general fund. You will also be able to send in or drop off end-of-the-year offerings next week. However our Financial Secretary requests that 2011 offerings be in the office by Thursday December 29 so that they can be deposited and recorded.

You may want to know that, looking ahead to 2012, we have received 106 Estimates of Giving, totaling about \$378,000. We use these Estimates of Giving as we make ministry plans and set our budget. Main Street Church is making a difference in the lives of the people who attend our services, programs, and activities and in the lives of many people in our community. I believe God is honored when we work together to bless the lives of others. In the past twelve (12) months, we have accomplished much in the name of Jesus, but there is much more to do. If you haven't turned in an Estimate of Giving card, I hope you will. What you tell us is not cast in stone and can be changed at any time. Additional cards are available in the church narthex.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Thank you for all you have done to serve Christ, care for one another other, and bless others in the past 12 months. I look forward to growing and serving with you as we discover all that God has in store for us in the months ahead. If I don't get a chance to see you this weekend, know that Anne, Rob, Andrew, Emily, and I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In Christ,

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