

The Saviour is Born.

News & Views

WINTER 2024/2025



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COME JOIN THE CHRISTMAS FUN!




YOUR ARE INVITED TO
A CHRISTMAS FAMILY EVENT
December 21, 2024
10am-12pm

Join us for a fun family event for kids of all ages that will include crafts, fun games and Christmas carols with Pastor Steve as we look at the true light of Christmas

'TIS THE SEASON TO CELEBRATE

ENJOY STORIES OF ADVENT TO CELEBRATE THE
BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR



**DECEMBER
SERIES:**

HE WILL BE
CALLED...

A Word from Pastor Steve

“LOOKING AHEAD”

In early September, I eagerly shared a vision for ministry for 2024-2025—a vision rooted in deepening our maturity in Christ, seeking additional ministry staff, making the most of our facilities to serve our community, and expanding the spiritual leadership of our growing church. I firmly believe that God is calling us to invest in these goals and that as we work together, we will witness His abundant fruit in our midst.

However, I also shared that advancing the Kingdom of God comes with challenges. When churches like ours step forward in faith, our enemy seeks to create roadblocks, aiming to sow division, deception, and discouragement among believers. I urge each of us to be vigilant.

Consider where you might be tempted to take offence at a fellow believer’s actions or words, where you might be compromising with sin, or where a critical, unforgiving, or judgmental spirit might be taking root. Let us resist the urge to dwell on others’ faults and instead turn to humble prayer before our gracious God.

We must remain prayerful and alert to the enemys schemes, equipping ourselves with the full armour of God that is freely available to every believer. The stakes are high, and the time is short; we cannot afford complacency when there is so much work to do before Christ’s return.

This fall, I have been deeply encouraged to see our ministry advancing in remarkable ways:

- **Evangelism Weekend (November 2):** In partnership with the CBOQ and our Western Association of Baptist Churches, Banwell hosted a regional equipping event. Over 70 people from 12 different churches attended, gaining inspiration, training, and a prayerful commissioning to engage our mission field with renewed passion.
- **Next Steps Classes:** We have launched our fall classes with 12 individuals exploring baptism, church membership, and discovering how they can grow and serve within our ministry.
- **Pastoral Search Committee:** Our faithful pastoral search committee continues its efforts to find a new associate pastor who will enhance our ministry and address the pastoral needs of families in our congregation. While we have not had a significant response to our posting so far, we remain positive, prayerful, and patient, trusting that God will lead us to the right individual in His perfect timing.

- **Community Outreach Centre:** Our long-awaited Community Outreach Centre is nearing its opening. With a soft launch planned for December and a grand opening at the end of January, we are entering a pivotal season of ministry, leveraging this space to enhance existing programs and launch new ones to serve our community. I am so thankful for the hard-working team that has overseen every detail of this expansion and I can see how this facility will enhance our mission for years to come!
- **Alpha Course 2025:** Preparations for our 2025 Alpha Course are underway. A dedicated team of volunteers is undergoing training, outreach materials are being distributed across our area, and new opportunities are emerging to share God’s love and extend invitations to experience the love of Christ in community with us.

As we look ahead, let us not forget the responsibility and privilege we carry as Christ’s church. These milestones and opportunities are not just projects —they are part of God’s unfolding plan to draw people closer to Himself. Each of us has a role to play in this mission, whether through prayer, serving, giving, or simply extending God’s love to those around us.

Let us press on with faith, knowing that challenges are opportunities to deepen our dependence on God. And as we pursue these goals, may we remember that everything we do is for His glory, not our own.

In the coming months, I challenge you to step forward with boldness and joy. Pray earnestly for our ministry, stay united in purpose, and trust that God will do more than we can ask or imagine. Together, we are not just building programs or facilities; we are advancing His Kingdom—one soul, one act of love, and one step of faith at a time.

The best is yet to come! Let us walk forward with expectation, trusting in the One who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

To Him be the glory forever and ever! Amen.

Pastor Steve Amorin



EVANGELISM WEEKEND



Our Benevolent Ministry

“When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” -Matthew 6:3-4

Our Benevolent Ministry is a tangible expression of Christ’s love, offering temporary emergency support to anyone in our community—whether they attend our church or not—who is facing hardship. This ministry aims to meet urgent needs while fostering dignity and compassion in every interaction.

In 2024, our ministry responded to over 30 requests from families, single parents, children, and seniors across diverse walks of life. The assistance provided included covering transportation costs for medical treatments, supporting rent and utility payments, supplying groceries, helping with funeral expenses, and addressing critical dental procedures. In some cases, we proactively reached out to local families in crisis, offering unexpected blessings on behalf of our church family.

As this ministry is intended for temporary emergency relief, a key aspect involves guiding those with ongoing challenges toward local resources such as food banks and government programs. This ensures that individuals receive sustainable support beyond what our ministry can offer.

Equally important to meeting financial needs is the personal connection established through these efforts. Each request is handled with care, wisdom, accountability, and confidentiality by our Office Administrator, Brenda, and myself. Together, we strive to extend not only material aid but also compassion and encouragement during difficult times.

In 2023, we implemented new guidelines for our Benevolent Ministry to ensure responsible stewardship of resources. I had the privilege of drafting the Benevolent Ministry Policy and collaborating with Mike Morency at Matthew House for his input and expertise. These guidelines help us use the Benevolent Fund effectively, avoid fostering dependency, and comply with Canada Revenue Agency regulations for charitable organizations.

This ministry is entirely funded by your designated church offerings. Your generosity has enabled us to be a light in times of darkness, bringing hope and relief to those in need. Thank you for being a vital part of this mission. May we always find joy in serving others as an act of worship and faith.

Together, we can be the hands and feet of Christ, extending His love to our community.

Pastor Steve Amarin

OUTREACH CENTRE UPDATE

Hello Banwell Family!

This is (Hopefully) my last News & Views update regarding the construction of our addition, as we are very near completion of the project! All major construction, framing, building services (Plumbing, electrical and HVAC) rough-ins etc. have all been completed. Interior finish work has been mostly done, drywall and painting are completed. Vinyl tile flooring has been completed in the kitchen, porcelain tile has been completed in the bathrooms, entrance and coat room. Vinyl tile should be completed in the gym in the next week or so, with high quality commercial carpet squares being installed in the foyer and mezzanine area last.

Kitchen cabinets have been installed, and are looking sharp! Fabrication of a stainless-steel countertop is currently underway, and should be completed and installed soon. With appliances and fixtures set in place, the kitchen is really starting to take shape, the fixtures will be permanently plumbed in the next couple of weeks, and the gas stoves will be operating shortly. The sign, designating the addition as the "Community Outreach Center" is currently being installed, a back-lit cross that was recovered from Faith Community Church is currently being refurbished and will be installed in the next couple of weeks.

The old resource room has been brought into the addition as well, the resource room has a new door from the new lobby, and got porcelain tile installed to match the new lobby, it will be repurposed into a coat room for events happening in the Outreach Center. Our very own property committee will install some repurposed coat racks once the addition is complete. Mezzanine finishes are progressing as well, with the wall up and drywalled, this will leave us with a mostly finished space, the Mezzanine will feature 2 bathrooms, a storage room, and an open space for future use, fitted with lighting, carpet tiles (to match the foyer) and paint.

The project is proceeding well with respect to the budget. no new significant extra charges or surprises since the last update. The Building Expansion Sub-Committee did elect to remove the gym divider from the scope of work for a substantial cost savings. Our builder will leave rough-in services for a future divider, but supplier issues made procurement of the divider difficult to fit into the construction timeline. The Sub-Committee therefore asked for it to be removed from the project, Banwell will take the cost savings now, and install the divider ourselves at a later date.

With the project so close to completion, the Building Expansion Sub-Committee has been working with the Pastoral Care and Worship Committee and the Missions and Outreach Committee to plan launch ceremonies, please refer to the Pastoral Care and Worship update in this News & Views issue for details on a soft opening in December, and a grand opening in January.

Thank you for your continued commitment to this vision for Banwell's future. Please continue to pray for the ongoing work, the safety of the construction crew, and for wisdom and guidance for all parties involved in this exciting undertaking to further reach our community!

Blessings

Joel Wiebe VC BOD

PASTORAL CARE & WORSHIP

Hello again, Banwell church family! The Pastoral Care & Worship (PC&W) Committee is off to a great start, and we look forward to continuing on into 2025 with momentum. Specifically, I am happy to report that Nigel Tully has been a Godsend in coordinating our Care Team under the guidance of Pastor Steve. Currently, the Care team oversees visits to 27 individuals via the combined efforts of seven Banwell Community Church volunteers. Should you be interested in joining the Care Team, please contact the Care Team Coordinator (Nigel Tully) at care@banwellchurch.org.

God has continued to bless Banwell Community Church (BCC) with a season of growth, and we look forward to seeing our new adherents and members integrated into the living body of the local church. In 1 Corinthians 12, we read that, “Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body...”

Over the coming months, the PC&W Committee will be working with the Church Clerk to update the membership list (to ensure that future business meetings accurately consider the minimum membership attendance required to meet quorum). Along with many other files, the PC&W Committee oversees church membership (and baptisms), so if you have any questions, you are welcome to reach out! Of particular note, Pastor Steve will be offering a

“Next Steps” class at 9:30am for anyone interested in what it means to be a member of the body of Christ. Pastor Steve and I are excited to see our BCC body striving towards maturity in Christ!

Finally, for those of you interested in the Building Expansion’s progress, the Pastoral Care & Worship Committee and the Mission & Outreach Committee have formalized a schedule for formally opening the Community Outreach Centre. In early December (assuming that the General Contractor is not held up by a few time-sensitive items), the respective Committee Chairs (Aaron Blata and Joel Wiebe) plan to organize a “soft opening” for BCC members and adherents to tour the new facilities; it is expected that the facilities will be available for internal use after that date. However, on 25 January 2025, we plan to host a formal “grand opening” and community open house from 1:00pm to 3:00pm; this event will be coordinated by the Hospitality Committee, and the Board will invite local municipal, provincial, and federal dignitaries to join area residents in attending a formal “ribbon cutting”. We expect other Committees to join in the planning of this “grand opening” event, which we hope will include a few family-friendly activities (like bouncy castles). This date was specifically selected because Anniversary Sunday is on 26 January 2025 (the following day), so we expect any leftovers to be shared at our first official after-service potluck; Kim Anber will be organizing the potluck, so you can expect to see a sign-up sheet within the next little while!

In closing, as I look ahead to the New Year (and the good tidings that come with it), I am sustained by the godly wisdom of Apostle Paul, who wrote in Philippians 4:19, “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.” We can rest assured in His promises!

In Christ’s Service,
Aaron Blata

(Chair, Pastoral Care & Worship Committee)

Christian Growth & Nurture

Christian Growth and Nurture Program Updates:

Kingdom Kids (Grades 1-5)

This season of kingdom kids has been an exciting one! We've seen the number of kids attending each week double in size since the Spring!

We've been having fun learning about God's character and the many promises he has for his people through our series "The promises of God".

In addition to our weekly lesson and games, the kids have been busy designing, building and painting their own cars to be raced in our first ever Pinewood Derby!

Youth Group (Grades 6-12)

The Youth Group completed a series on who Jesus is during the month of October. In our transition week, we had a night of games, snacks and fellowship. Currently, we are just finishing up our studies on Prayer and will go into a series about Christmas, in preparation for the Advent season. In the New Year, we are looking into being involved with the Alpha program. Please pray for discernment and wisdom of the leaders as we move forward in serving in Banwell's youth ministry. It is an exciting time of growth, and we look forward to the opening up of the Community Outreach Centre and seeing what God will do in expanding our relationships with Him and each other.

Family Events

In October, we held our Fall Family Fest. Children participated in games, made crafts and learned about how God provides. Our next family event is for the Christmas season and is planned for December 21st. Stay tuned for more details.

Sunday Morning Children's Church

As we see an increase in the number of children, we will require more volunteers. Please pray for our children's and youth ministry. Please see Christa Braccio if you are interested in volunteering in this area.

Christa Braccio

Chair, CG&N Committee

FINANCE COMMITTEE

I would first like to start off saying that we are so blessed at Banwell for having the tithes and offerings to support our mission and to ensure committees and our Pastor can lead those to Christ and help all grow in their faith.

The Finance committee has finalized the mortgage of \$750,000 which was approved by the membership in order to help fully complete the Outreach Centre. We were so fortunate that we could partner with Canadian Baptist Ontario Quebec (CBOQ) as the lender of this mortgage. Due to the amazing Build it Together Campaign that took place earlier this year, we were able to extend the need for these monies for several months. Along with this, the finance committee has been managing the funds from the sale of the land in order to earn interest and apply it to the expenses for the Outreach Centre.

We have currently provided guidance and supporting information to our working committees so that they can be preparing the 2025 Budget. As activities continue to grow, so will budgeted amounts in order to support these programs, the new Outreach Centre and of course our current Church building. We will also be preparing a 5 year financial plan as it will be important to plan for the future and take all of this into consideration.

Finally, there has been some discussion about methods of giving and we, along with the Board of Directors will be reviewing suggestions on how this can be improved.

In His Service,
Dave Hammond
Chair of Finance



“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Galatians 6:2

Hello Everyone,

In bearing our neighbor’s burdens by caring for Banwell’s congregation through prayerful support and pastoral care we hope to continue the rich tradition of hospitality that exists within the Banwell community.

Supporting and encouraging those challenged by medical and mental health concerns, our team of volunteers is part of a newly formed Care Team and is here to ensure; “appropriate spiritual care of the Banwell Congregation in both times of prosperity and discouragement. “

As trained volunteer pastoral care providers we have, in our infancy as a team, conducted many visitations to congregants and church adherents on the Active Care List by providing prayerful support and hospitality to Banwell’s shut-ins, nursing home residents, hospital patients, hospice, or going through a season of recovery or grief. All of whom need Christian care.

It is our prayerful hope to continue this timely service while ensuring the confidentiality and dignity of each Banwell member we support.

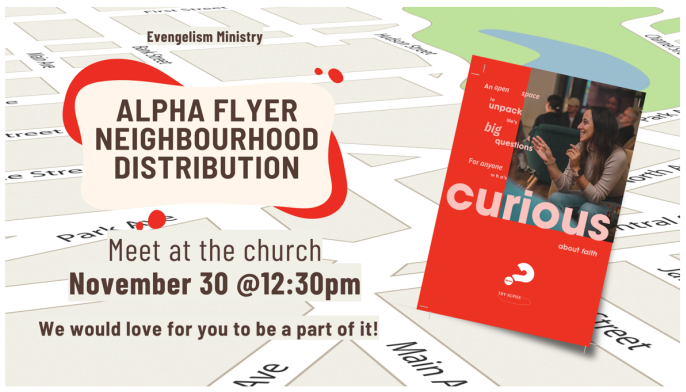
Nigel Tully
Care Team Coordinator

Shoe Boxes

THANK YOU BANWELL for collecting exactly 100 shoe boxes to give to children in need this Christmas!



EVANGELISM MINISTRY



The Evangelism Ministry has a great opportunity to support many of our church functions. In June we met to distribute flyer for VBS. In November and December we have the same opportunity to distribute flyers to our neighbourhood for the January Alpha program.

These event are a time where the entire church can come together to unite with common goals as we do ministry together.

There is always something for all to do.

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

Luke 10:1-4 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and **sent them two by two** ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. **Go!** I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

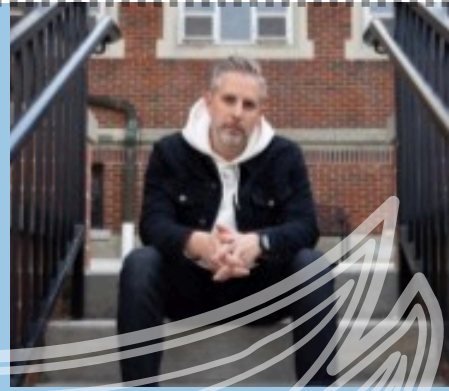
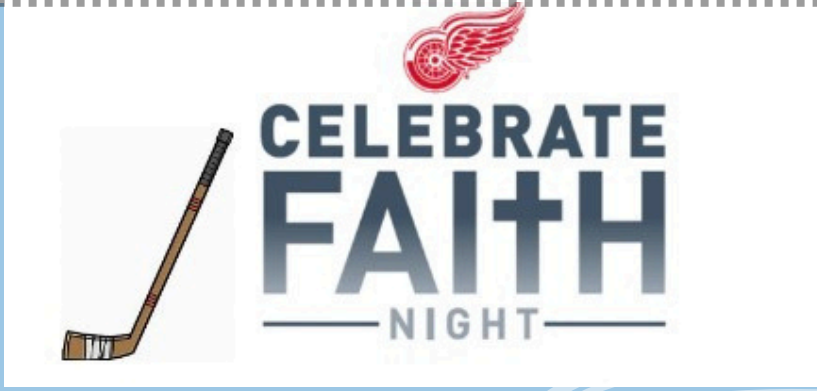
Jesus was a master teacher. These verses share how ministry was accomplished by going out and sharing the faith. The disciples later became the 12 Apostles when Paul was later added. But before that they were disciples in training under the care of Jesus to show them how to love souls that are perishing all around them.

Luke 10:8-9 “When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’

Jesus was very mindful to reach out to those who needed healing. We all need healing of some sort. Jesus is the only way.

Please continue to get involved in sharing your faith and reaching those in your neighbourhood for Christ.

Erick Alfaro



Pre-game concert & testimonial by Matt Hammitt Grammy-nominated recording artist (formerly lead singer for Sanctus Real). Check him out at <https://matthammitt.com>

Tickets in the upper bowl are US \$62 (to get this group rate, we need to put money down, so please let us know of your interest ASAP).

Contact Rick Nicholls for tickets or car pooling options:
1-226-229-2305 or ricknicholls@protonmail.com

Rick Nicholls

Search Committee Update



Your Search Committee has been meeting regularly to prayerfully consider applicants for our Associate Pastor. To date, we have received a number of applicants none of whom we feel would be suitable for the position. However, we continue to seek God's guidance as we look toward the future and the candidate He has chosen for our church. To this end we are asking that you keep the Committee in your prayers.

In addition, you might have the name of someone you think would be a good fit for the position. If so we would encourage you to reach out to them and have them send their resumes to opportunities@banwellchurch.org.

In closing I want us to remember that God is in control and He will lead the right individual to our church in His timing. In the meantime I want to encourage you to continue to pray for His guidance and let's keep in mind that we need to "Trust God and leave the results to Him".

Garry Billings
Chairperson Search Committee

Community Outreach Centre Progress

Take a look at these photographs by Jim Wheeler to see the expansion in the process of completion!



JOY, UNSPEAKABLE JOY

BY DONNA SOPER

JOHN 15:11 "THESE THINGS I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU, THAT MY JOY MAY BE IN YOU, AND THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL".

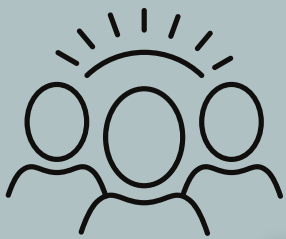
Have you ever noticed how many times the word JOY or joyful is used at Christmas? Many Christmas cards have the word JOY or joyful in the verse and I have seen so many ornaments with the word joy on them. I purposely bought one last year because I saw the word joy wrapped around the ornament.

I did some research and there are twenty-one Bible verses mentioning joy. Joy does not depend on our outward appearance. Joy comes from the heart. Joy is peace and hope regardless of our circumstance. Do you know someone who has suffered greatly in their life but still exuberates joy? Do you have joy?

When life overwhelms us at times it is easy to forget where that joy comes from. At this time in history, we can be discouraged with all the turmoil around the world but as Christians our joy is found in the only One who can give us Joy! Jesus came as a baby in a manger to fill our hearts with perfect joy. It is a choice we make every day to follow Him and be filled with His joy.

I am reminded of the praise song we sing, "Joy, unspeakable joy. Rises in my soul, never lets me go".

May you feel His joy this Christmas no matter your circumstance.



Friendship Circle

Our Friendship Circle is still meeting every Wednesday at 10:30 am and we always welcome new friends and are happy to see our old ones come back again for a social time together. Wishing everyone a very blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Friends in Christ
Sandy Kettlewell

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

November was Financial Literacy Month, and it's a perfect time to focus on improving our financial health, building resilience, and creating more open conversations about money. For many, money management can feel overwhelming, and financial stress can lead to isolation. But the good news is, talking about it and equipping ourselves with the right tools can make a huge difference. This month, we want to encourage you to engage in those important conversations—whether with family, friends, or our church community. By sharing experiences, resources, and financial wisdom, we can support each other in achieving better financial health.

One powerful way to start this journey is through the Money Course offered by Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Canada. This simple but effective course provides easy-to-follow tools to help you manage money, budget, and tackle debt—empowering individuals to take control of their financial lives. Your church is partnering with CAP to offer this course, helping break down the barriers that often come with financial stress, and creating a space where people don't have to face their struggles alone.

Conversation Starters to Try:

Have you ever budgeted or tracked your expenses? Even a simple system can make a big difference in how you manage money. The Money Course can help with that!

Have you ever given a donation to a charitable cause? Giving isn't just about money; it's about making a difference and sharing blessings.

Have you considered signing up for the Money Course or bringing a friend? It's a great opportunity to learn together, support each other, and gain practical knowledge that can lead to financial freedom.

How You Can Get Involved:

Learn More about CAP Canada: Our church is already partnering with CAP through missions or benevolence gifts and offers free courses.

CAP's Service Delivery Philosophy:

CAP Canada's approach is rooted in the belief that every person is an image bearer of God, and they are committed to treating clients with dignity, respect, and care. Their service delivery includes:

Inherent Dignity: Every client is treated with respect, free from judgment or discrimination.

Holistic Approach: CAP works alongside community care providers to ensure clients get the help they need for all areas of their lives.

Excellence: CAP offers accredited financial counseling and education, ensuring that clients have the tools they need to make informed decisions.

Empowerment: Through collaboration, education, and listening, CAP empowers clients to take control of their financial situation.

Acting Justly: CAP advocates for clients' needs and works toward systemic change where necessary.

This month, as we approach the Christmas season, we are reminded of Immanuel – God With Us. Just as God is with us through every challenge, we too can be present for one another by offering support, practical resources, and open conversations about money. Together, we can make this a season of financial healing, empowerment, and hope.

New dates and times for a course starting in the new year will be announced

Contact Heather Hanson

capmoneywindsor@gmail.com

Visit capcanada.org/partner for more information and donations

Heather Hanson

christians
against
poverty

CAP

Men's Ministry Report



BREAKFAST MEETINGS

- Saturday, January 25 - Speaker - Pastor Steve
- Saturday, March 22 - Speaker - Blair Holman
- Saturday April 26 - Speaker Pastor Alex Moir

Men's Conference 2025

Reserve this date for a very challenging day entitled "Standing Firm" led by Rev. Dr. Chris Crocker.

Saturday, February 22/2025 9:00am.

Dr. Crocker states: "In a world that challenges manhood "What is a Man?" Standing Firm will equip participants to be the men God wants us to be. It will answer the question from the Bible in 3 parts: Creation, Character and Calling. Each session will include an interactive presentation followed by small group discussion.



Details will be forthcoming. Please mark your calendar now for what promises to be not only challenging but, also an inspiring thought provoking experience you will not want to miss.

As a friend of Pastor Steve, Dr. Crocker was invited to be the guest speaker at his induction service. Dr. Crocker is Pastor of Markdale Baptist Church in Markdale ON. He is also a professor at the Toronto Baptist Seminary.



A White Bag Sunday

Don't miss out on the special presentation by the men of Banwell Church on Sunday, December 8. A chance to be able to participate in donations of nonperishable items. Donations will be distributed between the Downtown Mission and the 1st Baptist Church.

The Men's Ministry Executive wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and New Year!

Christmas Changes Everything!



READY FOR CHRISTMAS

*Ready for Christmas, she said with a sigh,
As she gave a last touch to the gifts piled high.
Then wearily sat a for a moment and read,
Till soon, very soon she was nodding her head.*

*Then quietly spoke a voice in her dream,
Ready for Christmas? What do you mean?
Ready for Christmas when only last week
You wouldn't acknowledge your friend on the street?*

*Ready for Christmas, while holding a grudge?
Perhaps you had better let God be the judge.
Why, how can the Christ Child come and abide,
In the heart that is selfish and filled with pride?*

*Ready for Christmas when only today,
A beggar lad came, and you turned him away,
Without even a smile to show that you cared?
The little he asked – it could have been spared.*

*Ready for Christmas? You've worked, it is true,
But just doing the thing that you wanted to do.
Ready for Christmas? Your circle's too small-
Why, you are not ready for Christmas at all!*

*She woke with at a start and a cry of despair,
There's so little time and I've still to prepare.
Oh Father, forgive me, I see what you mean,
To be ready means more than a house swept clean.*

*Yes, more than the giving of gifts and a tree,
It's the heart swept clean that He wants to see.
A heart that is free from bitterness, sin.
Ready for Christmas – and ready for Him.
Author Unknown*

The News & Views staff extend many thanks to all who contributed to this edition of the News & Views and wish Banwell a Christ-filled Christmas!

Jim Wheeler - Corrina Alfaro - Brenda Semande - Wayne Parsons