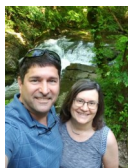




WESTERN MOUNTAINS BAPTIST CHURCH

Volume 20 Winter 2023

Clean



As I write this article, I am looking out my office window at the results of the latest snowstorm. I know that not everyone loves winter. But even the haters have a hard time arguing with the beauty of the landscape after the new fallen snow. Everything is so bright, white, and clean.

We know that this clean look lasts only for a short time. Soon the sand trucks come through, and the traffic sprays that sandy slush up onto the snowbanks, and the cleanliness of the snow is tainted by the road dirt. It is kind of a picture of our own lives.

Before God called us to be His own, we were filthy. Our righteousness was like filthy rags. That means on our BEST day, we were still clothed in dirty rags. Our sin nature was ruling and reigning in our lives.

But God – I love those words – but God sent His one and only Son, to be a propitiation for our sins. That just means that Jesus was the substitutionary atonement for our sins. A price had to be paid – a punishment had to be executed, and Jesus paid the price and suffered the punishment in my place, and in your place.

When we ask for the Lord's forgiveness of our sins, we look like the new fallen snow out my window – fresh and clean.

The prophet Isaiah, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, put it well in **Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.**

His shed blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness, and washes this dirty rotten sinner clean like the white snow.

But sin often creeps back into our lives, like the sand truck, and the traffic that makes things dirty once again. Our job? We must recognize the sin, confess the sin, and repent of the sin so that Jesus can wash us clean once again, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, and not our own filthy rags.

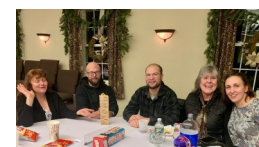
So, I hope you too will remember, when you see that fresh snow, how the Lord offers us this same clean, white fresh start. His mercies are new every morning.



Christmas and New Years Celebration



The New Years' Eve celebration put on by the Youth Group was a blast! Everyone enjoyed the taco bar, Charlie Brown Christmas movie, games and Fireworks.



The moms, led by Rachel Dolan, did a wonderful job performing the story of Jesus' birth. Janette Jackson helped with designing and sewing costumes.

God's Special Agent Academy



These are the graduates from God's Special Agent Academy. These agents went through 13 weeks of training on how to shine for Christ in everyday situations. Some of the subjects were, interacting with family, giving, helping others, bullying, and many more everyday life encounters. Each week was a life lesson followed up by Bible verses and how God would want His agents to shine. Missing from the photo are, Thia, Sarah Catherine, Vienna and Liam.

—Donna Keaten

From L to R: Micah, Clayton, Harlan, Annalien, Abel, Jack

Adult Teen Challenge

Mission Statement: We exist to bring life-changing hope to the addict, their family, friends and community.

One of the ministries that WMBC financially supports is Adult Teen Challenge. It's a ministry that helps men overcome addictions through the power of Jesus Christ. Adult Teen Challenge has 12 centers all over New England and in New Jersey. On November 12, the day of our annual Thanksgiving potluck, we were visited by 5 men from the center in Winthrop, ME.



The Winthrop center sits on 400 acres and ministers to 16 men. They're currently renovating and hope to expand the census to 24 next spring. The program is 10-12 months long and includes 4 key aspects:

1. Daily living needs (meals, transportation, etc.)
2. Education - Scripture memorization
3. Vocational Training - skill development and confidence for those returning to the workforce.
4. Spiritual Life - fostering a relationship with Jesus Christ as the only One who can rescue an addict through a daily discipline of worship, church services, prayer, devotions and mentorship.

Three men gave their testimonies which were both heart-breaking and riveting. One of Satan's most powerful tools is addiction. One of the men expressed how hard it is to break that cycle. Their honesty in front of strangers was impressive as they shared how Jesus rescued them from the bottom of a very dark pit created from their life circumstances and decisions. Their dark stories only magnified the light, love and power of the Lord Jesus over ALL. The testimonies ended with this Scripture:

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself, not counting their wrongdoings against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor 5:17-21

—Chris Gallup

Christ's Love in Action

Fifteen tags were filled for the Angel Tree at Carrabec Community School. Thanks to Pat Pray for pursuing the needs of the children so that we could be a blessing to them at Christmas.

—Pat Pray



45 Edgewood residents had a Merry Christmas thanks to everyone's generous support!

—Annette Stanley



1000 cookies were sent to the Free Street Church in Skowhegan for their annual children's Christmas party. Thanks to Kathy McClure for organizing this effort and to the ladies who helped her in the church kitchen, as well as the many bakers who provided cookies from home.

Mens Reload Conference



A group of men from WMBC went to the Men's Reload Conference at Sunday River on October 20 and 21, 2023. The theme for the weekend was **Momentum, Monument and March** was from the life of Joshua.

Friday night Pastor Dan preached from Joshua Chapter 1 about God calling Joshua to lead the Israelites after Moses had passed. Pastor Dan focused on how Joshua didn't hesitate but obeyed the Lord. He talked about how sometimes we play a game of blaming people or circumstances for not obeying God. Our reactions should be shut up, get up and go!

Saturday morning the pastor focused on Monument. In Joshua Chapter 4 when God told him to have a man from each of the twelve tribes take a stone from the river bed and build a monument on the other side of the river after they crossed. The monument was there to remind them and their children of what God had done to bring them into the promised land. Pastor said we need to do the same with our families by sharing what God has done for us.

Saturday afternoon the pastor preached from Joshua Chapter 5 about a man in armor with his sword drawn. Joshua asked this man if he was for us or his enemies. The man responded that he was for neither but a captain of the host of the Lord. What pastor shared was that the battle belongs to the Lord.

The overall theme was to remind us that we need to have a legacy that lasts with our families, our church families, and the people in our community. Our actions matter.

Ephesians 6:12,13 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the Heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God so that you will be able to resist in the evil day and having done everything, to stand firm.

—Gene Boucher

Serving our Seniors (SOS)..New Ministry at WMBC



Pastor Tom approached Cheryl Browne concerning a need he observed in the Church and community for services to the elderly. Cheryl formerly worked for an agency program serving the elderly and disabled for 20+ years. Discussion ensued in notifying the church family to determine if they needed assistance and/or were willing to assist others in need. Several service options were noted from light housekeeping, transport to appointments, visitation, board games, cards, cooking, laundry, raking leaves, etc. Services were to begin within the church fellowship, then expand to the community. Several met on 10/26/23 and discussed a mission statement which is, "Be a blessing by allowing someone to bless you." Stephanie

Diedricks offered secretarial assistance with providing meeting minutes and developed the questionnaire for those willing to serve or those who have need for services.

After distributing the questionnaires, 13 were submitted with several requesting technology assistance with their laptop, phone, iPad, etc. The first SOS meeting on 11/16/23 was with Stephanie and Chris Gallup assisting with technology issues. There were 9 in attendance. Games were available (i.e. Scrabble, Cribbage, etc.) and snacks (AKA pickens) were provided. Several calls were made inviting others to attend the gathering. We will schedule meetings to continue discussions on how best to meet needs in our community. Please feel free to join us and if a need is known contact Ministry Chair, Cheryl Browne 491-2500.

A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. Proverbs 11:25 —Cheryl Browne

Pictured above are Cheryl Browne and Stephanie Diedricks

Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent. But I will hope continually and will praise You yet more and more. Psalm 71: 9, 14

Weekly Meetings @ WMBC

Sunday @ 9am—Sunday School—all ages

Sunday @ 10am—Church Service

Sundays @ 6:30pm—Youth Group

Mondays @ 9am—Strong Bones Exercise for Seniors

@ 6:30pm—Men's Bible Study

Tuesday @ 9:00am—Ladies Sewing Class

Wednesdays @ 9:00am—Ladies Bible Study

@ 3:00pm—Adult Bible Study (Freeman Twp)

@ 6:15pm—Discipleship Studies

Thursdays @ 9am—Strong Bones Exercise for Seniors

Saturday @ 6:00pm—Prayer Meeting



WMBC donated 50 turkeys to the Methodist Economic Ministry food pantry for Thanksgiving baskets. We also helped stock their food pantry with extra money collected.

Pastor Appreciation Month



Dot Lambert read a poem she wrote about Pastor Tom.



Doris Foley, Chris Gallup and Jean Sawtell planted crocus bulbs around the cross.

Others showed their appreciation more personally as the Lord led.

January 2024 Collection Campaign -fill a baby bottle with change for **First Choice Pregnancy Center.**

Behold, children are a gift of the Lord,... Psalm 127:3

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What's Happening @ WMBC

January

2nd—Church Leadership Meeting @6:30pm

3rd— Money due to Farmington Baptist for Liberia Mission trip

3rd— Wednesday Ladies' Bible Study begins a new 6 week study @ 9am

6th— Men's Breakfast @ 8am

7th— Lord's Supper

9th—Women's Fellowship Meeting @ 1pm

9th—Pastor, Elders, Deacons Meeting @ 6:30pm

12th— Family Game Night @ 6:30pm

15th— Martin Luther King Day

18th— SOS (Serving Our Seniors) Meeting 10am and Social @11am

21st— Fellowship Potluck after church @ 11ish

23rd—Women's Fellowship Meeting @1:00pm

23rd—Pastor, Elders, Deacons Meeting @ 6:30pm

27th—Bridging the Gap ~ Hot meals delivered to elderly

February

3rd —Men's Breakfast @ 8am

4th — Lord's Supper

6th—Church Leadership Meeting @ 6:30pm

9th—Family Game Night @ 6:30pm

13th—Women's Fellowship Meeting @1pm

13th —Pastor, Elders, Deacons Meeting @ 6:30pm

15th— SOS (Serving Our Seniors) Meeting @ 10am and Social @ 11am

27th—Women's Fellowship Meeting @ 1pm

27th—Pastor, Elders, Deacons Meeting @ 6:30pm

March

2nd—Men's Breakfast @ 8am

3rd—Lord's Supper

5th—Church Leadership Team @ 6:30pm

8th—Family Game Night @ 6:30pm

12th—Women's Fellowship Meeting @ 1pm

12th—Pastor, Elders, Deacons Meeting @ 6:30pm

26th— Women's Fellowship Meeting @1pm

26th—Pastor, Elders, Deacons Meeting @ 6:30pm

Stay tuned for the new Wednesday night studies in January and for Sliding Party and Cabin Fever Reliever in February and March.