

DEC. 22, 2013



# Real Life News & Notes

*church of Christ of Grand Junction*

*A Relevant, Serving, Growing Family of Jesus followers*

## Outreach Minister

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## Visitation Minister

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## Youth Minister

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## Preaching Minister

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## Church Office

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## Season's Greetings!

During this holiday season and **on behalf of the ministers and staff**, our warmest wishes and gratitude is extended from our hearts to yours, our church family. What a loving, caring, serving, and loyal group of Jesus followers we have at this place. We echo Paul's greeting to the church at Philippi: **"I thank my God every time I remember you."** (Phil 1:3).

Our congregation is blessed with talent, diversity, wisdom, a cooperative spirit, compassion, and generous and serving hearts. May we continue to love unconditionally, forgive completely, and extend patience and grace as we serve each other, being compelled and constrained by the eternal love of God. We have some among us who are ill, some grieving, others barely getting by financially, others with family and marriage struggles, and still others celebrating new life, new relationships, fresh joys, and the newness of Christ in their hearts. In it all and through it all the God of Bethlehem is working to be born again in our hearts, to bless us, restore us, redeem us, and fill us with the Spirit of Christ.

I am confident I speak for Brian, Hunt and John when I say we do not consider our roles as ministers to be a "job." I often tell others, *"I don't have a job, I have a life, and generous Christian people support me financially so I can devote every waking hour to focusing on serving and meeting needs in God's kingdom."* What a tremendous blessing and responsibility that is and we ministers do not take that role lightly. Jimmye, and Craig and Elaine also consider their roles a blessing as they keep things around here clean, working, and administratively organized and functioning, as they go the second mile in practical ways every day to serve our church.

Many of you will be traveling, many remaining home. Where ever you are we pray that this festive time of **family, friends, fellowship, and food** (my apologies to John, alliteration is his thing, not mine...J) will be rich and cherished by all.

As we consider Immanuel and ponder the gift of Bethlehem, may this special season be a time to remember how blessed and forgiven we are, how joyful and peace filled Christ empowers us to be, and may those gifts continue to bind us together as pilgrims with common faith, shared hope and a glorious, unimaginable future.

***Thank you Church and May the Peace and Warmth of this Season be upon you All. Merry Christmas!***

With love,

*Craig and Elaine, Jimmye and Bill, Rachel and Brian, Myrna and Hunt, Holly and John, and Ann and Doug.*

**Memory Verse For December— Isa. 9:6**

**"to us a child is born, a son is given".**

### Our Gathering Today

**Sermon:** This morning we will take a walk through **Bethlehem** and see how an ancient and inconsequential village in the Middle East contributed to the greatest gift the universe could ever know. (Thanks again to **Nolan Grigsby** who was a wonderful vessel of God's word last Sunday as we talked about Jesus and the storm!)

**Guests:** If you are a guest this morning we want to welcome you and make you feel at home! We are a growing church family who will love and accept you as Jesus does. Please let us know how we might serve you.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### Meeting Cancellations

Due to all the Christmas rush and other related activities, we will not be meeting for Bible Study on Wednesday December 25 (Christmas Day) or Wednesday January 1, 2014 (New Year's Day). The agape meal on December 29 has also been cancelled so that families can spend some un-winding time together and some quiet, reflective time with the Lord.

### Christmas Day

Darlene Rettig will host Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day for those who have no family to share it with. Dinner will be served about Noon. See Darlene for further details.

### Thank You

To each of the choir members who surprised me on Sunday afternoon. I could have enjoyed your singing all afternoon. I especially appreciate your taking the time to come by.—*Arlene Rowles*

### Car Needed

Natasha Lemons is in need of an inexpensive, reliable car. If you have one you would like to sell, please contact her.

### Collection Plate Coins

Other than the change we collect in cans annually for Mountain States Children's Home, we would like to mention that the change placed in the collection plate, which usually comes from the children, and we would like for them to know that is also sent to the home. The funds go to purchasing perishable goods for children that live there. *A big thank you to the very young of the congregation.*

### Books Donated

"Snub and Eileen Liles would like to share some books with our church. These were written by Dick Stephens a long time missionary in Malawi who founded the Malawi project and started the preaching school there. Snub and Eileen are long time friends and supporters of brother Stephens. The books are in the foyer and what are not taken will be placed in the church Library. Thanks Snub and Eileen for sharing these!"

### God Gives The Increase

Mark Udem has decided that he wants to be a part of our church family and we welcome him. His mailing address is Box 841, Clifton, 81520 and his home address is 442 Osage Circle in Clifton, 81520, Phone:970-589-7935. Welcome Mark!

### Youth News

**Sunday night activity:** Join us tonight at Spin City, which is at 637 24 1/2 Road, at **6pm** tonight! We're going to be hanging out and having fun until 8. Spin City has bowling (\$6 per person for an hour) and skating (\$8 plus \$3 for skate rental), plus other fun activities. For more info, go to [spincitygi.com](http://spincitygi.com). Parents are welcome!

**No Wednesday night meeting this week:** Merry Christmas! Have a wonderful day with your families.

**Winter Peak:** Forms are available! Just ask Brian. The retreat is from Feb 21-23 in Estes Park. It's for grades 9-12, and the cost is \$100. Get your forms and payment in ASAP!

Continue to pray for those with ongoing illnesses, and their families.....GARY WALLACE extensive brain cancer, MARY CATHEY... in rehab at Larchwood, pray she will soon be able to go back to her residence, the LARRY LUCERO FAMILY, Alyssa and the others for healing of their different health issues, and comfort for them. MILLIE'S son, as he deals with ALS, and for his family.

Prayers of Thanksgiving that JOHN AKERS procedure went well and he seems to be feeling better....pray for continued healing and comfort for him.

RAGS RAGSDALE....continue to pray for Rags as he deals with the return of his lung cancer. Pray for healing, comfort and peace for him and his family.

JEAN HOLLINGER....suffered a broken hip from a fall. Pray for her healing and comfort, strength and peace for her and her family.

Pray for MELVA WILLBANKS and her family in the loss of her grandson in an accident last week. Pray for comfort for them all He leaves a wife and children.

Pray for Jan Nelson's brother in law, GALEN, he has infection in the pins in his foot, pray they will not have to amputate his foot or leg.

Pray for MARY CLAYTON, as she goes to her job in Africa. Pray for protection, strength, wisdom and guidance from the Lord.

There are several people who need work. Pray for God to direct them where He wants them to be, and for encouragement as they continue searching for jobs to support their families.

Continue to Pray for travel safety for the many that are and will be traveling during the upcoming Christmas and New Years holiday season.

Pray for safety, wisdom, strength, courage and guidance from above for our MISSIONARIES, and their families. Pray for their efforts to bring many to Christ.

Pray for the MILITARY....pray for their safety and for spiritual uplifting, for wisdom and strength ...and for their families. Also pray for those who have returned from combat and are having a difficult time adjusting, and those who are wounded, physically and/or mentally.

Continue to pray for OUR NATION. Pray for God's will to be done. Pray for the leaders to be led to the Lord and to lead as God would have them to.

Continue to give thanks to God for answered prayers!

TAYLOR AND CARRIE FUOCO—Carrie's father purposely ended his life last week. Pray for comfort & peace for the family in their pain and sorrow.

**Zacchaeus and the Challenge of Scripture**

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus the tax collector in Luke 19. It's a story that is familiar to anyone who grew up going to church, and unfortunately those familiar stories all too often get overlooked by us when we get older. Simple passages of scripture that can get summed up in a Sunday school song, like the story of Noah or the parable of the house on the sand and the house on the rock, are passed over or oversimplified. Zacchaeus is no exception.

Here's where I get to show off a little bit of my education. When I was sitting in a New Testament class at Abilene Christian, my professor said something that blew my mind. We all know Zacchaeus was short, right? That's why he climbed up in a tree, right? Well, not so fast. The text simply says that Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, but he couldn't "for he was small in stature." The professor smiled and pointed out that there is no indication here (or apparently in the original language from which it is translated) whether or not it was Zacchaeus or Jesus who was short.

I know it sounds silly, but I couldn't believe my ears! Apparently my whole childhood was a lie. And it really is a little thing, not especially important to the way we interpret the story. But it got me wondering about what else in the Bible I had underestimated.

Apparently I'd underestimated quite a bit. As C.S. Lewis says, the Bible is "a book written for grown-ups." We are obligated to study and really think about what we're reading and not to simply be content with our childhood understanding of our faith.

The story of Zacchaeus gets even more complex. In Luke 19:8, Zacchaeus tells Jesus, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." It is commonly taught that this tax collector was pledging to mend his ways and turn his life around. And in response, Jesus says, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham."

But what if Zacchaeus was saying that paying back anyone he might have cheated was something he was *already doing*? Many scholars view this as the more probable explanation. In this case, Jesus' statement is a vindication of a righteous man who had been unjustly shunned by his community. It's a different story than we're used to, but it's very powerful. It has implications for how we treat each other and especially how we treat those who the community chooses to exclude.

My point here, though, isn't to change anyone's mind about the story of Zacchaeus. The point is that when we open the Bible, we are opening a difficult book. Reading scripture, like every other aspect of the Christian life, is something that we ought to approach with a commitment to excellence. With a desire for knowledge of the truth. We must be humble, recognizing that people with good intentions and genuine faith will sometimes (more likely *constantly*) disagree.

We can all be thankful that we aren't saved by our correct interpretation of this or that passage of scripture. Praise God, we are saved by Christ. We are called to respond in gratitude with a desire for deeper, ever-growing and ever-maturing faith and understanding.



# Church of Christ of Grand Junction

2893 Patterson Road  
Grand Junction, CO 81506

Phone: 970-245-4210  
Web: grandjunctionchurch.org

### For the Record

Dec. 15, 2013

Attendance	260
Average Attendance, 3rd. qtr.	265
Contributions	\$5,448.00
 Budget	 \$6,208.96

### Honored to Serve the Lord's Table in December

Tony Clayton  
Lane Coale  
Bryan Crowe  
Tom Deister  
Lonnie DeLancey  
Paul DeLancey  
Scott DeLancey  
David Downey

### Communion Preparation—December Dielle Norton & Daughters

### Communion Table 12/22/13 Dean Blanck

Announcements: Ron Wilson

### Sunday Morning Adult Classes—9:00 AM—9:45 AM

Ron Wilson—Covenant of God—Auditorium  
Young Adult (Under 30)—Room 207  
Sermon On The Mount—Vince Urbina—Room 103

### Wednesday Evening Adult Classes—7– 8 PM

Doug Clayton— 1st John—Auditorium  
Shirlene Caraway—103

### Sunday Morning Children's Classes

Cradle Roll—Birth to 2—Nursery  
2 & 3 yr. old—104  
Pre KK, Kindergarten—205  
1st & 2nd Grade—209  
3rd thru 5th Grade—208  
Middle School—213  
High School—203

### Wednesday Evening Children's Bible Study

2 & 4 yr. old—104  
Kindergarten 1st & 2nd—205  
3rd thru 5th Grade—208  
All teens meet in—203

## Sunday morning worship begins at 10:15 AM

### Mesa View Retirement Service Schedule

Meets Sundays at 10 AM

Dec 22	Bobby Heath, Matt King	Mark 8:22-26
Dec 29	Jerry Austin, Craig Austin	Mark 8:31-9:1
Jan 5	Chuck Tourney, Bud Treu	Mark 9:2-13
Jan 12	Bill Tidwell, Wes Yeager	Mark 9:14-32
Jan 19	Bob Heath, Darren Mahoney	Mark 9:33-36
Jan 26	Paul Delancy, Scott Delancy	Mark 9:42-50
Feb 2	Hunt Zumwalt, Steve Bagga	Mark 10:1-12
Feb 9	Bill Barslund, Sandy Harris	Mark 10:13-16
Feb 16	Scott Ferguson, Dave Scheurman	Mark 10:17-31
Feb 23	Bobby Heath, Matt King	Mark 10:32-45

### Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NIV)