

Senior Luncheon Jan. 15 at 11:30 a.m.  
Feb 19 at 11:30 a.m.  
Mar 18 at 11:30 a.m.

Roller Skating for Elementary Kids Mondays at 6:00 p.m.

Basketball Tuesdays - Elementary 6:00 p.m.  
Middle School 7:00 p.m.  
Sr. High and Adults 8:00 p.m.

Volleyball Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Lord's Supper February 2

## Kings Kids Club is Back!

3:30-5:30 p.m.

January 10, 17, 24, 31

and

February 7 and 21

The Baptist Beacon is sponsored by the Indian Creek Baptist Church. The next Beacon will come out at the beginning of April and will include activities from January, February, and March. Any submissions for the Beacon should be sent as Word Documents or in the body of an email to the Beacon editor by Wednesday, March 18, 2020.

Mail: Attn Beacon  
311 Baptist Church Rd  
Mill Run PA 15464  
Email: [icbcb Beacon@gmail.com](mailto:icbcb Beacon@gmail.com)

*Please send any addresses changes to this address. If you no longer want to receive the Beacon or would rather get it by email, please let us know also.*



# The Baptist Beacon

October, November, December 2019

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**INDIAN CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**311 Baptist Church Road**  
**Mill Run PA 15464-1058**

Address Service Requested

Church Website: [www.icbcmillrunpa.com](http://www.icbcmillrunpa.com)  
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Church office: 724-455-7344  
Pastor Chris Cell: 724-812-2321

Compiled by Mike Bigam  
 (\* Service at Mill Run UMC; + Sunday School Rally; -- No service)

ATTENDANCE	10/6	10/13	10/20	10/27	11/3	11/10	11/17	11/24	12/1	12/8	12/15	12/22	12/29
<i>Sunday School</i>	95	86	96	89	90	89	93	94	95	105	103	105	91
<i>Morning Church</i>	129	110	126	163	115	146	151	149	165	170	183	182	157
<i>Evening Church</i>	22	*	27	30	*	24	*	--	--	+	--	31	--

## **District 11 Sunday School Association Rally**

**Submitted by Brian Dull**

On Sunday evening December 8, 2019 the District 11 Sunday School Association Rally was held at Mill Run United Methodist Church. A total of 51 people attended. ICBC won both the red banner for having the most in attendance, and also won the blue banner for having the highest percentage of their total Sunday School in attendance. The Sunday School rolls for the individual churches were not on hand that night and so actual attendance percentages could not be calculated. Therefore, District 11 President Barney Shipley awarded the blue banner to ICBC.

John Tressler led the singing and pianist was Vicki Tressler. We enjoyed selecting many of our favorite Christmas hymns for the congregational singing. Special music for the evening was presented by the ICBC Senior Choir singing a selection from their Christmas Cantata. The song was entitled “Born in Bethlehem”.

Lynn Kifer and Albert Ohler each had very nice Christmas readings. And Virginia Work recited the Christmas story from memory, from Luke 2: 8 – 20.

An offering was collected and the money will be donated to the ICV Food Pantry in Normalville. Pastor Rob Kifer had the closing prayer for the service. It was a good evening of worship and fellowship.

The next rally will be held Sunday March 8th at Normalville United Methodist Church. Hope to see you there!

## **ICBC CAMPGROUND MINISTRY AT YOGI BEAR PARK**

**Submitted by John Tressler**

This was our 37 year of church services at Mill Run’s Yogi Bear Jellystone Park. Each Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day (15 Sundays this year), we meet at the campground pavilion. It all started in 1982 when Don Bowser with the help of Gorman Dull lead services at the bottom of the water slid. It is such a fun ministry to be involved in, each week we get to meet people from all across country and sometime from other countries. We never know who will show up or where they are from, but we have made some Great friends over the years.

This year was the 5th year in which we have had a different speaker each week. This was the first year we have had speakers from the Methodist church. Christine and John Zimmerman were work with Mill Run United Methodist church and staying at the campground.

We would like to thank Randy Work and Yogi Bear Park for allowing us to have the services. We would also like to thank them for providing coffee and tea each week.

A very big Thank you to Kerwin Miner for all his hard work again this year in lining up speakers. We couldn't do it without you. Great job! If you would be willing to help next year please talk to me or Kerwin.

The speakers this year were: Kerwin Miner, John Tressler, Cody Adanitsch, Ken Firestone, Wendy Pritts, Dara Pritts, Rick Broadwater, Jeff Crider, Pam Hughes, Brian Dull, Rob Orndorff, Derek Orndorff, Christine Zimmerman, John Zimmerman, and Pastor Chris.

We had 149 campers and 163 locals for a total of 312 attend our services this summer.

Thank you all very much. May the Lord bless you as you serve.

## **Christmas is a pagan holiday\***

**Submitted by Pastor Chris**

Every year around Christmas, believers speak of "putting Christ back in Christmas," to which the unbelieving world responds: "He wasn't there in the first place... Christmas is a pagan holiday." Some Christians even believe part of this: they believe that, in order to avoid persecution or to provide an alternative to pagan worship, Christians began to celebrate Jesus' birth on the winter solstice or on another holiday- the Birth of the Unconquered Sun. Some groups have gone so far as state that early Christians had no concern whatsoever about birthdays; that the very act of celebrating Jesus' birth was a pagan concept. Is any of this true?

First, let me share two contextual notes: one historical and one about scholarly discussion on this general topic. 1) We must remember that early Christians were incredibly opposed to pagan culture. Anyone who suggests that early Christianity (first 200 or so years) was influenced by paganism hasn't done their homework. The word 'pagan' itself was a euphemism for an unbeliever. For the Christian, participation in pagan worship or practices was off-limits. Many, many Christians died for their opposition to such things. 2) There was a point in academia where it was believed that all world religions were heavily dependent on one another; that Christianity was heavily dependent on pagan deities and legends. As scholars looked deeper into such claims, the differences between beliefs became very apparent. Nobody in academia has made such a claim in almost 100 years. This is one area where scholarship and cultural beliefs diverge significantly.

Second, let us note further issues with those specific pagan holidays (the winter solstice and the Birth of the Unconquered Sun). Traditionally, people mention the winter solstice as the holiday from which Christians borrowed, but this doesn't work at all due to the date (Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> vs. Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> on our calendar). The date of the winter solstice isn't arbitrary- it represents the shortest day (and longest night) of the year. Additionally, the Romans (from whom Christians allegedly borrowed this date) did have a week long celebration around the winter solstice... leading up to it. It was called Saturnalia. As far as the winter solstice was concerned, there was nothing celebrated after December 21<sup>st</sup>. How about the Birth of the Unconquered Sun, which is celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup>? Empower Aurelian instituted this holiday in 274 A.D. ... years after we have records of Christians celebrating Jesus' birth on December 25<sup>th</sup> (Groups such as the Donatists celebrated Jesus' birth on that date). If anyone borrowed a date for a holiday, it was the Romans, not the Christians. Further, no one suggests or draws any parallels to the celebration of Jesus' birth and Roman holidays until around 1200 A.D., during a time when Christians were borrowing heavily from unbelieving cultures around the world.

Why would some early Christians have believed that Jesus was born on December 25<sup>th</sup>? This is actually a neat historical note: it was common in Judaism (and other near eastern people groups) to believe that someone was either born on or conceived on the date of their death. Since it was generally believed that Jesus died on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan (the 25<sup>th</sup> of March on our calendar) in early Christianity, it made sense for Jesus to be born 9 months later- on December 25<sup>th</sup>. This may seem strange to the modern reader, but it was a common belief in the ancient world. Both Tertullian and Augustine (early church fathers) calculated Jesus' birth based on this belief.

Now, you've probably heard it said that it is impossible for Jesus to have been born in December because shepherds wouldn't have been in the fields at that time of the year. But, there is no reason to believe this to be the case. In fact, sheep still graze around Bethlehem in the winter.

None of this is to suggest that Jesus was, in fact, born on December 25<sup>th</sup>. We simply don't know. We can, however, have confidence that the very celebration of the Virgin Birth did not have pagan origins. Have confidence as you celebrate the Lord's birth- you aren't being a worldly Christian.

\*not really

## **God's Tots**

God's Tots started it's 11<sup>th</sup> year on September 17. We currently have 35 registered preschoolers with 14 volunteers. We have an average of about 24 children per week. This fall we started with a 3-lesson series on my body. They learned how they can use their heart, hands, feet, eyes, ears and mouth to praise Jesus. We studied about the fall season and harvest. We had a short hayride and then the children gathered pumpkins in the grove. Our sharing project was shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. For Veterans Day the children heard about who Veterans are and how we are thankful for their military service. They made thank you cards and then we handed the cards out to the Veterans that attended the church's senior luncheon. They also learned thankfulness with a lesson on the 10 lepers and Thanksgiving. We concluded our fall session with our series on the birth of Jesus. We had our annual book exchange and the children made a variety of crafts for Christmas. We will start again on Tuesday, January 7, 2020.

## **Fall Festival**

It was a beautiful, warm day for the 1<sup>st</sup> ICBC Fall Festival. On Saturday, October 19 our lower parking lot was transformed into an area filled with Trunk or Treat vehicles. The cars and trucks were decorated and loaded with candy. We had Noah's Ark, the Farm, Legos, Camping, The Little Mermaid, cruising, Super Heroes, tropical and many more. A total of 21 trunks. Over 100 children came in costume to visit each trunk. But the fun didn't stop there. The kids enjoyed the games, pumpkin decorating and apple bobbing. And every child did some bouncing in the bounce house and ran thru the haybales at the obstacle course. The tractor and wagon took people on a ride through the country side. Now if you were hungry, we had it covered. A complimentary lunch of chili, hot dogs and dessert was available. We had fresh, hot popcorn being made all day. If you wanted to taste some apple cider or get a gallon to take home, you visited the cider press where they were making fresh apple cider. There was also delicious candy apples, pumpkin pie and pumpkin bread. As we enjoyed the refreshments, we were entertained by the Country Churchmen. The quartet sang some of our favorites and it was enjoyed by everyone. As the sun was setting, people gathered around the campfire. It was a great day and God blessed us with wonderful weather. We can't wait till next year!

## **Senior Luncheon**

This fall ICBC started a new outreach program for senior citizens and yes, you are a senior if you are over 55 years of age. On November 20, we held our first monthly senior luncheon in the church gym. The complimentary senior luncheon is open to everyone in the area and no reservations are required. We had 50 people in attendance, who enjoyed a Thanksgiving meal of turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, corn, cranberry salad and a dessert of pumpkin roll and cookies. Pastor Chris had a Thanksgiving devotion after the meal. On December 18, we had 49 people in attendance on a cold and icy morning. We celebrated the Christmas season with a traditional dinner of ham, cheesy potatoes, green beans, toss salad and a dessert of ice cream with a cookie and peppermint stick. Yum, Yum! We had a display of nativity scenes that different members of the church provided. A variety of nativities in different sizes and some dating back to the 1930's. Many had special memories of loved ones and their childhood. It was an interesting and inspirational display. After lunch, Pastor Chris had several readings and a devotion. After his attempt at jokes, a short skit, "I'll be home for Christmas...if I ever get waited on at the mall" was presented. After our try at Christmas shopping humor and singing of "We wish you a Merry Christmas", everyone enjoyed some fellowship time.

The luncheons will be held the third Wednesday of each month at 11:30 am in the church gym. Transportation is available, if needed, by calling 824-812-2321. Hope to see you there on Wednesday, January 15.

## Couples Class

Submitted by Bonita Warrick

The Couples Class celebrated Christmas at Brady's Restaurant on Friday, December 13. 13 members were present. The meal was enjoyed by all.

The class also supplied grocery bags filled with goodies to accompany the bags of toys that were provided for children through the Salvation Army Christmas tag outreach.

The class is thankful for their teacher- Kerwin Miner



On Wednesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, our church hosted a musical group from the Lancaster, PA area. This musical program brought members from several churches in our community, and we had around 100 in attendance. This is how *Then Sings My Soul* describes their ministry:

*"Then Sings My Soul: Beloved Hymns & Songs Inspired by the Ministry of Billy Graham" all started because of a great love for hymns, their histories, and a deep respect for the ministry of Billy Graham. When researching the project, writer Kat Prickett was floored when she learned just how many hymns were "made famous by" or were written by those saved at the Billy Graham Crusades. Having grown up watching Graham's Crusades on television and listening to George Beverly Shea on cassette tape, Kat knew she wanted to one day write a program about hymn histories. When Mr. Graham passed away in February of 2018, God lit that desire on fire. What started as a Sunday of performances at The Red Caboose Motel in Strasburg, Pennsylvania in August of 2018, has now grown in to a program that's traveled throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey, with over 5,000 people having been blessed by these great hymn stories and the message of Billy Graham.*

*"Then Sings My Soul" is an hour and twenty-five-minute musical presentation, and features 4 professional vocalists and live music accompaniment from the Lancaster, PA area. Highlighting historical moments in Reverend Graham's ministry, the program includes a look at the history behind over 30 of some of the most famous hymns - many of which were written as a result of tragic and trying circumstances. Featuring favorites such as How Great Thou Art, I'd Rather Have Jesus, His Eye is on the Sparrow and Just As I Am, there's even an old-fashioned hymn sing, just like in the "good old days"!*

The response from those in attendance was encouraging. All who attended were blessed by the vocal skills of the group and were encouraged in their faith by the rich theology of the hymns that were shared. We want to extend a measure of gratitude to Pastor Dan Blank for reaching out to us with the opportunity to host this event.

## **Congratulations**

Ben and Shannon States welcomed their daughter Brooklyn Elizabeth States on December 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:39 p.m. Brooklyn weighed 8 lb. 13 oz. and was 19 inches long. The proud grand parents are Jerry and Julie Miller, Chuck and Jenny States, and Christine and Rusty Smith. The Proud great grandparents are Franklin and Patty Miller, Benjamin and Diane Luke, and Rose and Charles States

## **Obituaries**

Melvin C. Warrick, 70, of Mill Run, went home to be with the Lord, Sat. Oct 19, 2019, with his family by his side, while in the Select Specialty Hospital, Latrobe. He was born May 9, 1949 in Connellsville a son of the late Melvin C. and Evalyn Faye Boyer Warrick, Sr.

Melvin was a graduate of Connellsville High School with the class of 1967. He then received his Bachelors Degree in Business and Finance from Penn State University. He worked as a salesman for Sears for 19 years and then retired from the Environmental Department of the Sony Corp. Melvin loved the Lord and was a longtime and faithful member of the Indian Creek Baptist Church in Mill Run, where he formerly served the church as a Deacon and Church Treasurer, and was a member of the Senior Choir.

Melvin loved and enjoyed spending time with his family and will be sadly missed but fondly remembered by his loving wife of 47 years Bonita G. Work Warrick, his sons, who Melvin often referred to as "his good boys", John Warrick and wife April, James Warrick and wife Sherry, and Joseph Warrick, his grandchildren, who he loved and was very proud of, Cade, Luke, Avery, Maya, and Reese Warrick, his sister Susan Faye Johnson and husband Carl, and his special niece Tonya Work Brewer.

In addition to his parents Melvin was predeceased by his sister Virginia Lou Warrick.

## **Greetings from Mill Run and Thank You**

**Submitted by Patty Ann Dull**

We had many joyful times in Mill Run, celebrating the birth of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lord, Jesus Christ. Glowing lights always add a lot to the worship services or to the parties. I toured a fascinating display of antique lights. The collection was from owner Don Lachie, of Ligonier. I knew that prior to electricity folks used real candles on their trees. The display included clips used to fasten them to branches. Another early tree light was the 'fairy light'. It was a small glass bowl with a wire hanger. Folks filled it half-way with water, then a layer of cooking oil, and floated tiny wicks on top. The flames would bounce and flicker as people moved and danced near the tree. It's fun to try to visualize that. Some of the very old bulbs were figures of Santas and angels and others. I thought they were made more beautiful by the cracks and worn-away paint, showing how much, they were used and loved. I didn't know that bubble lights originated in the 1940s.

Today people love to light up the lawn, the roof, windows and trees, etc. But I wonder how many realize that centuries ago lights began to be a big part of Christmas because Jesus is the Light-of-the-World.

We thank Kurt Colborn, of Pittsburgh, for helping us with print and mailing costs. Until next time, keep in touch and in prayer.