



**Please join us Sunday at 4:30 p.m. for our Christmas Eve service.
(The service will be live-streamed.)**

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.” -Luke 1:47-48

This side of the story it is easy to forget that Mary was just a girl. She didn't have any exceptional credentials or divine powers. God didn't choose her to bear Jesus into this because she was special but rather in her ordinariness. Mary, just like all of us, was just a normal person. Mary, just like all of us, was made in the Image of God. And just like Mary we, who are ordinary people, are invited to bear Jesus into the world. Not because we are particularly exceptional or incredibly gifted, but because we are ordinary. In this season let us hold to the beautiful and grace-filled truth, that God uses that which is ordinary to do the extraordinary work of the Kingdom.

In Christ,
Pastor Nathanael



✝ Pray for safe travels for those who are traveling over the holidays; and pray for those who are away from their families or alone.

✝ Pray for Nathanael's cousin, Trevor Parish, who has Muscular Dystrophy and is hospitalized with health complications.

✝ Pray for those with health concerns: Rachel Weaver, Sylvia Miller's brother-in-law Don Wagler, Kathy Johnson's mother Gale; Lee Yoder's sister Leona Slabaugh.

✝ Pray for Alexi Deuzoumbé and his family that they may soon be reunited.

✝ Pray for peace and justice throughout the world. Pray for those affected by violence and hate.

✝ Pray for those affected by natural disasters, and those involved with the relief & recovery efforts.



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- Sunday – December 24 - Christmas Eve Service – 4:30pm
(no morning service or Sunday School)
 - Monday – December 25 - Merry Christmas! (Church Office Closed)
 - Wednesday – December 27 - Puzzle Time in the Fellowship Hall – 1pm
 - Saturday – Dec. 30 / 2-5pm - Open House Birthday Celebration for
LeRoy Yoder's 90th birthday!
 - Monday – January 1, 2024 - Happy New Year! (Church Office Closed)
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Birthday Party for LeRoy Yoder - LeRoy will be 90 years old soon and his family is celebrating his birthday! A drop-in party is scheduled for everyone on Saturday, December 30, 2023, from 2pm-5pm in the Maple Grove Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall. No gifts are necessary but cards would be appreciated. Light food and drink will be provided. Come and celebrate with us!

Puzzle time in the Fellowship Hall at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 27.

Come and work on a puzzle with us or just enjoy the company! Anyone is welcome to come and participate. If you have any questions, contact Savannah Hofstetter Ressler.

Lighthouse Ministries' has a matching gift opportunity of \$18,000! From now until December 31st, every dollar given to the Lighthouse will be matched dollar-for-dollar (up to \$18,000), doubling your impact! Please prayerfully consider giving a gift to help us reach our goal of raising \$40,000. Your partnership in our work and your investment in the children living in our SE Canton neighborhood means the world to us. You can give a gift easily at <https://cantonlighthouse.org/give/> or by mailing a check to the Lighthouse at 1931 3rd St SE, Canton, OH. 44707."

The December edition of On the Level is now available from Mennonite Disaster Service.

In our current issue: Kevin King share stories of people "moving toward Jesus;" meet two women who enjoy cooking and painting with MDS; learn why a retired Army General in Kentucky says, "only God could have made that happen;" and we are now accepting registration for our Annual Celebration in Fresno in February. Click [here](#) to read more. A copy is posted on the bulletin board at the church.

As you shop for the holidays, don't forgot to save your Acme grocery receipts.

Acme will give a percentage of the cash back amount printed on the bottom of each receipt to FISH. The program runs through February 15, 2024. A box is available under the mailboxes for the receipts – thanks for your support of this project!

Ongoing News @ Maple Grove

Coffee Time & Informal Fellowship @ Church – Sundays @ 9am

Join us Sunday mornings before Sunday School – Everyone is welcome!

If you would like to help with supplying donuts and/or baked goods, please get in touch with Barb Dutcher (for baked goods) or Perry Miller (for donuts). Two dozen donuts and homemade or store-bought baked goods are needed at the church by 9am on Sunday mornings. Thanks for your help!

Encouragement Cards - There are encouragement cards placed in every pew so that as the Spirit lays someone on your heart, you can share your thoughts and encouraging words with them. You may place the cards in their mailbox or give directly to them.

Receiving of the offering

An offering basket is available at the back of the sanctuary for you to place your offering before the service begins. The basket will be brought to the front of the sanctuary during the offertory music to be blessed during the offering prayer.

You may also place your offering in the basket after the service. Thank you!



Offering Envelope Numbers

In order to receive a year-end statement of your offerings, you must have an offering number. To obtain an offering number, please contact Kami Sommers. The offering envelopes are designed so you can designate your offering to specific funds. If funds are not designated on the envelope, they are included in the General Fund with the exception of the 3rd Sunday of each month which is Education Sunday and non-designated funds go to the Education Fund.

Family Ministry has freezer meals available to share with those in need!

These can be taken to someone in the church or a neighbor or a friend who could use some help. The meals are in the freezer in the church kitchen and labeled with heating instructions. Please let Cindy in the church office know what you are taking and who it is going to. If you have any questions, please contact a member of Family Ministry: – Barb Dutcher, Betty Miller, Marsha Miller, Sheryl Weaver

To include something in the newsletter, please email Cindy Fleming at secretary@maplegrovemennonite.org by Wednesday each week – thank you!

Church Information: 2121 Smith Kramer St. NE, Hartville, OH 44632 Phone: 330-877-2400

Website: www.mgmennonite.org

Facebook – Maple Grove Mennonite Church Group

(send updates to Pastor Nathanael, Jill Liechty or Julie Yoder)

Nathanael Hofstetter Ressler: Pastor (pastornathanael@maplegrovemennonite.org)

- Office Hours: Monday 9am-1pm; Tuesday thru Thursday-8am-noon; Friday-Sabbath

Cindy Fleming: Church Secretary (Secretary@maplegrovemennonite.org)

- Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday – 8am-1pm

Ministry of Congregational Care: Paul Bontrager, Dan Dutcher, Clara Sommers, Harold Beachy

Prayer Chain Contacts: Jen Geiser and Kami Sommers

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES AVAILABLE

Adult Classes

Women's Class: Room 1-Education Side
Mixed Intergenerational Class: Room 2-Education Side
Men's Class: Room 9-Hallway
Mixed Post-High/20's-40's: Basement

Children/Youth Classes

PreK-4th Grade: Rooms 7-8
Jr. Youth (Grades 5-8): Rooms 3-4
Youth (Grades 9-12): Youth Room-Basement