Big Rock Congregational Church Atlanta Michigan
A Community of Grace

CHIPS

Off the Big Rock



December 2026

Christ Is Born

By Michelle Grant

Many years ago, there was a baby born in a manger (Luke 2:6-7, New International Version). He was named Jesus (Luke 1:31). Who would have ever thought that baby in a manger would come to save this entire world? Jesus came to save you and me. This Advent season, we celebrate the birth of Christ and His future second coming, because He will come again. However, no one knows the day nor the hour; only the Father knows (Matthew 24:36). In the wintertime, all the trees look beautiful, covered in snow. In a way, God covers everything in winter to make it look new again. God does the same for us when we come to Him. He makes us a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). Praise God for all the blessings He has given us this year, and thank Him for the blessings He will give us in the coming new year.

Hope

The world thinks there is no hope to be found. However, true hope is found only in Jesus Christ. "But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31). Because of Jesus, we can have His hope that will renew our strength in Him. Without Christ, we would never truly experience real hope. How do you find your hope in the good Lord?

Peace

Those who do not know Christ may not understand what true peace feels like. But with Christ, we can experience what that true peace feels like.

Pastor of BRCC:

Dr. Keith Jones

Moderator:

Judy Hoffman

Deacons:

David Bradley
Gail Fehr

Trustees:

Michelle Grant
Lynn Scharer

Our Vision:

We exist to worship God, to share His love that all might be saved and to become more like Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our Guiding Values:

- Being a house of prayer
- Spirit-led congregational governance
- Loving Fellowship
- Reaching out
- Developing spiritual maturity in all members
- Being faithful stewards of God's blessings

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(Cont. from p.1)

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). Because of Jesus, we can have that peace that makes no sense to the world (transcends all understanding). We can have His peace even during difficult times in our lives. Those hard things would be much more difficult if we didn't have the peace of God with us. How have you felt God's peace in your life?

Joy

That true joy can only be found in Christ alone. Other things may give us temporary joy. But we can have that joy in Jesus in all circumstances. The joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). The joy of the Lord is wonderful and can be hard to explain to someone who has not experienced it. Joy is also always the pink candle during Advent. How have you felt the joy of the Lord in your life?

Love

There is not one single person in this world who will ever love you more than Jesus does. He loves you with an everlasting love, and nothing could ever separate you from that love (Jeremiah 31:3 & Romans 8:38-39). Even if you have felt unloved by people you know, please never forget Christ will never stop loving you. His love will always be there even when others are not. Thank God for His love. How have you felt the love of God in your life?

Christ

Christmas Eve is the time when churches all around gather to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Praise God for that sweet baby Jesus. "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means 'God with us')" (Matthew 1:23). This is also when the white candle is lit. Reflect on the birth of Christ today and what He has done for you.

The questions at the end- hope, peace, joy, and love are reflections to think of in your walk with our Lord and Savior (including the reflection on Christ).

Lord Jesus,

Thank You for coming first as a baby in a manger. Thank You for saving us. Thank You for sharing your hope, peace, joy, and love with us. Help us to never forget that we can always have your hope, peace, joy, and love. Thank you that we get to celebrate your birth this time of year. And we look forward to whenever You will be coming again to this world. Thank You, Lord, for all You have done for us this year.

In Your precious Name, Jesus,

Amen.





Hi Friends at Big Rock Church,

The Spanish church I attend recently hosted a women's retreat at a camp a little over an hour away. The theme was "Me Llamó Hija" ("He Called Me Daughter") as shown in the photo above. There were about 100 of us and throughout the weekend we did lots of soul searching and keep surrendering more and more of ourselves to Jesus.

I drove there and back and two of my passengers were from Cuba. I had never met them before and neither one of them had ever been to a women's retreat. As we were about to return to the church on Sunday, I asked the woman in the passenger seat to pray for our safe journey back without realizing that she had no idea how to pray. The other Cuban lady was giving her tips and eventually she prayed and we made it back safely.

When I realized that she had questions about prayer I wondered if she was a follower of Jesus or not. So, I began by asking if she believed in the existence of God because Hebrews 11:6 tells us "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him." Her answer was positive.

As I continued sharing the gospel with her, I could tell the message was falling on good soil. So, on our trip back to the church Dana (not her real name) surrendered her life to Jesus. It was so beautiful! I asked her to tell the person who invited her to the retreat and shortly thereafter she got back a very positive response from her. When we finally got to the church that person gave Dana a big hug, congratulating her!

Since then, both Dana and her husband have been going to a church small group with other couples each Friday night. The first time they went they stayed an extra hour talking with the hosts after everyone else left. I'm glad they can go to this small group as both of them work most Sundays so it's difficult for them to come to church. Please pray that soon Dana's husband will also place his faith in Jesus. He definitely approves of Dana's decision.

She doesn't have a Bible yet, but she downloaded the YouVersion Bible app. I asked her to read the gospel of Luke and she did. Then I had her download the Jesus Film app (based on the gospel of Luke). She then watched it, though she admitted that watching the crucifixion scene was hard.

Thank you for your important role in this story through your prayers for me. Speaking of prayer, I'm linking the November Prayer Calendar for Vision 2026, our Bridges' year-end conference in Baltimore and invite you to pray for us as we get ready.. Each day has a different prayer focus as we realize that "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." (Psalm 127:1a)



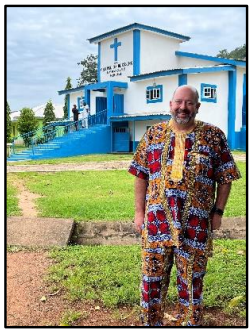
Most gratefully yours,
Harriet S.

Robert & Terri Harmon Ministry News

November & December 2026



News:



We wanted to share a note that Robert received from one of the Nigerian leaders at the mission hospital where he recently worked. It was encouraging for us to hear this man's perspective, ***"Robert, thank you for your wonderful love and passion demonstrated in your visit to Egbe, Nigeria, West Africa participating in God's Kingdom ministries at Egbe Hospital especially the installation of solar power. We pray God's purpose for your creation and salvation in Christ will continue to manifest in your life for God's glory and blessings to masses globally (Mark 10:29 & 30)."***

Overall, the I-TEC project in Nigeria for **EGBE Medical Mission** is **working well**. The missionaries, hospital staff and teachers are excited to have **electricity 24/7** as they run their large hospital and nursing college. Unfortunately, there have been a few issues with the system that can't be fixed by local technicians. One of the inverters needs to be replaced and is under warranty, so **Robert will be returning to do this in November**. Please be praying as he ministers once again in his faraway land.

Terri's Consultant-to-Consultant "mentoring" groups are going well. She has **22 missionaries** participating this year! Pray that she can **be an encouragement** to them as they serve the Lord.

Prayer Requests:

1) Please keep praying for Robert and his **health needs**. He will be meeting with a new primary care doctor after he returns from Nigeria. Pray that this connection will give ideas and **possible treatments for his fatigue issues**.
2) Pray for the survey team who are looking at a **future expansion project** for Hope Africa University and Van Norman Clinic in Burundi.
3) Pray for Terri as she continues to **tutor at-risk teens**. Each one is precious in the Lord's sight.
4) Pray for the **permits needed** to complete a solar electric project for a Bible Training School and Retreat Center in **Jamaica**.

Thank you for your **prayers & support**! We wish you each a **wonderful Thanksgiving** & **Merry Christmas**!

Robert.Harmon@itec.org

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terri@tckconsultant.org

PACE
THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CROSS-CULTURAL CONSULTANTS IN EDUCATION

Susan's November, December Newsletter

Last month, I attended a community worship service celebrating the German day of thanks for the harvest. Psalm 95 was shared at the service and it was a good reminder to me that God is worthy of our praise and thanksgiving. Over the past few months, I have seen many things to thank God for.

I am thankful for the lovely patio outside my apartment and the short 10-minute walk to school. My short walk to school has caused me to see some new views of my town (see photo below). Returning to BFA after a year away has also brought me some new views and perspectives on my work with staff and students. It has been a challenge to get to know the many new staff and students who have arrived over the past year. This year we have many new students several of whom are learning in English for the first time. I have started meeting a few times a week with one of these students to help her with her studies.

The new school year has also brought new opportunities to provide some training for our staff. Recently, I led a training session on using testing data with some teachers. One of the teachers was able to use this information to encourage a student in areas where he wanted to grow. I am thankful to be able to serve in this way.

This fall, BFA publicly launched Vision 2030, the school's strategic vision. The A, B,C,'s of BFA outlined in the vision represent the goals that resulted from our last accreditation visit. My department worked on two parts of this vision B & CD. B stands for Biblical Worldview Integration, ensuring that Biblical truth is a part of all the school's courses. Currently, our teachers are working on implementing Biblical worldview questions into their courses. CD stands for Curriculum Development- the documentation and review of the school's curriculum. This year we are reviewing our math and physical education curriculum to help ensure that what we teach meets the needs of our students and is aligned to the mission of the school. If you want to learn more about Vision 2030- see the school's website- https://bfacademy.de/bfa2030/.





Top photo- from the community Thanksgiving service- the yellow building in Top photo-from the community Thanksgiving service-the yellow building in the back is the back is BFA's new dorm.

Bottom photo - students working in the library- I spent a lot of time in this room in October proctoring student testing.

I am also very thankful for your partnership with me in my Wycliffe ministry. Your gifts and prayers are an important part of God's work here in Kandern, Germany and around the world.

Please join me in thanking the Father for:
•a smooth move to Kandern
•the progress many of our students are making in their studies
•A smooth transition to new curriculum software

Please join me in trusting the Father for:
- wisdom in knowing how to best serve both teachers and students
- strength and encouragement during the darker months of November & December
- teachers to join our staff for next school year

With joy & gratitude,
Susan Steele

CE&D Update



Adult Sunday School: Join us Sunday mornings at 9:15. We'll study the Christmas story, or Advent, which is more than a sentimental myth or a quiet manger scene we use to decorate our living rooms. The Christmas story is the good news of God entering into the darkness of our world. Join J.D. Greear in this four-session series as he takes a deeper look at Jesus as Emmanuel, our Wonderful Counselor, the Everlasting Father, and the great I Am. When you know Jesus, you will realize Christmas is more than a nice story—the arrival of Jesus changes everything.

Bible Study: We will meet at 5:30 on the second Wednesday of the month for a light supper and study. The study will be *Encounters with Jesus*. The evening begins with a light soup supper, followed by the study.

Library: If you could lend a hand returning the books to the shelf, please see Juli or Gail.

Prayer Breakfast will continue to meet at 9:00 in the fellowship hall on Wednesdays. Join us afterward for prayer. If you could make breakfast on Wednesday, please sign up on the sheet in the kitchen.

CE&D will not meet during this busy holiday season.

Choir News



Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord: let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.
Psalm 95: 1-2

Join us on December 20th for the Christmas Cantata, *Sing We Now of Christmas.* This cantata combines familiar carols with newer songs and narration.

Women's Fellowship News



Thank you to the women who helped pack the Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes for Samaritan's Purse. The boxes are on their way to children throughout the world and will help spread the news of Jesus' love for them.

Women's Fellowship will begin their visitations again in January. If you would like to join us, or know someone who would like us to visit them, please let Gail know.

Birthdays and Anniversaries





Jamie S.	12th
Naomi R.	21st
Pat S.	26th
Cecilia M.	26th

Upcoming Events

First Sunday of Advent	November 29th
Decorating Party	December 6th *4:00*
Christmas Cantata and Dinner	December 20th
Angel Gifts Due	December 20th
Longest Night Service	December 21st *7:00*
Carols, Candles & Communion	December 24th *7:00*
Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner	January 1st Noon
Undecorating Party	January 10th *4:00*



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Prayers, Praises & Blessings - December 2026

Daily:

Pastor Keith, Marilyn, and family
Big Rock Leaders as they begin work on the 2026-27 fiscal year
Big Rock Congregation
The Ministries of Big Rock
VBS, Sunday School, Children's Church, Adult Bible Study, Bible Adventures Kid's Club
Missions of Big Rock
New Life Pregnancy Center, Lydia's Gate, OCC, Sermitarian Purse,
Maupo H. & World Relief Y-Malawi Women,
Our School District, staff & students
Local, State, Country & World Leaders
CCCC Conference *(National & Local)*
Persecuted Church
First Responders in the community
Peace to fill our hearts and homes
Harmony with one another
May our time together be filled with laughter, love, and the warmth of Your presence.

Military:

Curtis B.
Michael C.
Cabria C.
Rachael L.
Beto V.
Megan R.
Andrew H.
Uriah P.
Ian R.

Missionaries:

Jeremy, Joy & family
Robert, Terry & family
Kurt, Lisa & family
Harriet S.
Susan S.
Caleb & Sandy C. and family
Dan & Angie H.
Anna Marie

Homebound:

Bruce A.

Prayers for Healing:

Allen P.
Jerry K.
Sarah R.
Cindy
David G.
Marilee G.
Dave B.
Jan F.
Michelle G.
Jim G.
Paul K.
Ava K.
Tanya
Linda S.
Hayley
Michael K.
Kyle H.
Melissa
Michelle
Jameson S.
Marilyn J.
Sonya & Margaret
Peggie O.
Bill K.
Andy V.
Joshua K.
Jamie S.
Pat & Joanna S.
Dick & Naomi R.
Rajini
Asher
Stephanie
Kay L.
Terry H.
Janessa B.
Don B.
Emma
Pat H.
Gabe
Debbie S.
Chad B.

Prayers in General:

Jessica & Prabhu D. & Family
Jim Z. *(Jail Ministry)*
Bill H. *(Jail Ministry and health)*
Amy C. & family
Becky H. & family
Shelly G.
Dixie, Tony, and Cecilia
Dorcy C.
Kim W.
Tanya & Juan
Drena's family
Alaina & Aren H.
Janessa & Sam B.
Jason

Praises & Blessings:

Visitors to BRCC
New job for Jessica
Joy of the season
Birth of God's own Son, Jesus

DECEMBER 2026

She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us'), *Isaiah 7:14*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29 Praise Team 8:30 Sunday School 9:15 Worship Service 10:30 First Sunday of Advent	30	1	2 Prayer Breakfast 9:00 Women's Fellowship 10:30	3 Full Board Meeting 4:00 Choir 5:30	4	5
6 Praise Team 8:30 Sunday School 9:15 Worship Service 10:30 Decorating Party 4:00	7	8	9 Prayer Breakfast 9:00 Soup and Bible Study 5:30	10 Choir 5:30	11	12
13 Praise Team 8:30 Sunday School 9:15 Worship Service 10:30	14	15	16 Prayer Breakfast 9:00	17 Choir 5:30	18	19
20 Praise Team 8:30 Sunday School 9:15 Worship Service 10:30 Cantata and Dinner Angel Gifts Due	21 Longest Night Service 7:00	22	23 Prayer Breakfast 9:00	24 Carols, Candles &Communion 7:00	25 Christmas	26
27 Praise Team 8:30 Sunday School 9:15 Worship Service 10:30	28	29	30 Prayer Breakfast 9:00	31	1 Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner Noon	2

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