



## *Pastor's Paragraph*

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### *Christians at Risk*

Her name is Asiya Noreen, but she is commonly known as Asia Bibi. She grew up in a small rural village in Pakistan. Her Catholic family was the only Christian family in her entire village. As a Christian, she faced enormous pressure from her fellow villagers. They were always urging her to convert to Islam. Her family was allowed to live in the village, but they had to accept their underclass status, and they would never be accepted as equals. Over nine years ago, she was working in the fields harvesting berries with some other women. She was instructed to go fetch some water. As she retrieved the water, she took a sip out of the tin cup. One of the women working with her observed her and immediately rebuked her. Christians are considered unclean, and it is wrong for them to drink out of the same vessel that Muslim women use. Once again, the woman demanded that Asia convert to Islam. Asia responded by defending her faith and questioning Islam. According to Asia's testimony, she said, "I believe in my religion and in Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for the sins of mankind. What did your Prophet Mohammed ever do to save mankind? And why should it be me that converts instead of you?" This was the beginning of an international incident that is still roiling the Middle East and many Western nations. She was accused of blaspheming the Prophet Mohammed. She was sentenced to death by hanging for blasphemy, and was sent to prison. During that time, many Christian leaders called for her release, including the Voice of the Martyrs and both living Popes. Two Pakistani politicians were assassinated because they defended her and were opposed to the blasphemy laws that were used against her. The Pakistani supreme court acquitted her on October 31st of this year, and outraged Muslims took to the streets to demand that she be hanged for her sins. Her fate is still uncertain, but she is definitely still in eminent danger. And, the government of Pakistan has made it nearly impossible for her to flee the country. Some western nations are working to offer her asylum. Sadly, even freedom loving democracies have to tread carefully because they do not want to enrage their own Muslim populations.

Another story that is currently in the news is the tragic death of John Chau. John is a Christian who traveled to India on a tourist visa, although his real goal was to spread the gospel. From India, he illegally traveled to a remote island (North Sentinel Island) that is inhabited by only a small tribe of natives that are completely isolated from the modern world. His goal was to bring the Good News of Jesus to the island, but unfortunately he was met with a flurry of deadly arrows. In some ways, this story is reminiscent of the plight of Jim Eliot, Nate Saint, and the other missionaries who were murdered by primitive tribesmen in Ecuador over sixty years ago. Mr. Chau knew the potential dangers, but he believed that the glory of the gospel was worth the risk. I may question his methods, but his passion and priorities are admirable.

These two stories serve as reminders that the world is a very dangerous place, and that it is becoming increasingly hostile to Christians. It has always been dangerous to be a pioneer missionary, taking the gospel to new locations. And, in some places, it is dangerous just to live a Christian life as an uneducated peasant harvesting berries from the field. Living for Christ takes faith and courage! ~Pastor

# December 2018



"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:14

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Trustees' Mtg. 8 AM
2 Communion Choir Practice	3	4 Deacons' Mtg 7 PM	5 AWANA 6:30-8:00 pm Balloon Night! 	6	7  Teen Progressive Dinner 5:30 pm	8 SS Program Practice
9 SS Christmas Program 10:30 am Caroling 6 pm 	10	11	12 AWANA 6:30-8:00 pm	13	14	15 Cantata at The Ambassador 
16 Christmas Cantata 10:30 am Potluck 5:30 pm 	17	18	19 AWANA 6:30-8:00 PM Store Night! 	20	21	22
23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7 PM 	25 Christmas 	26 No AWANA	27	28	29
30	31	Pastor on Vacation: December 26th—January 2nd				

We will be doing Bible dedications in memory/honor of our loved ones this Christmas! Envelopes are available on the back table. (They are due on the 16th.)

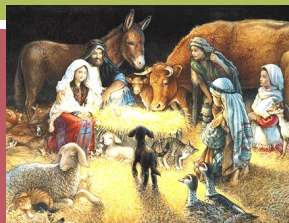
## Christmas Potluck

This year, for our Christmas Dinner, the committee is having individuals sign up to decorate one table however they choose (like last year)! Please sign up at the back table and plan to have fun decorating a table for all to enjoy! You pick the theme, color, etc. Whether it's classy, simple, or detailed. . . . every table will be unique! Be creative!

## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

We would like to provide a variety of presentations which could include solos, group numbers, poems, instrumental, readings, piano selections, etc, please let Faye know by Thursday, Dec. 20th.

AWANA Store donations are needed by Sunday, December 16th. Thank You!



## Christmas Events

December 9th  
Sunday School Program  
10:30 am  
Christmas Caroling  
6 pm

December 16th  
Cantata 10:30 am  
Christmas Potluck  
5:30 pm

December 24th  
Christmas Eve Service  
7 pm

## October Finances

### Balance Forward 10/1/2018

Deacon's Fund	\$351.04
Designated Fund	\$1,310.71
General Fund	\$23,731.24
Checking Account	\$25,392.99
October Income	\$15,721.53
October Expens-	\$9,987.26
Net Increase	\$5,734.27

### Balance 10/31/2018

Deacon's Fund	\$351.04
Designated Fund	\$3,585.71
General Fund	\$27,190.51
Checking Account	\$31,127.26