



As we step into this holy season, our hearts are drawn once again to the humble manger in Bethlehem—where heaven touched earth, hope took on flesh, and the world was forever changed. Christmas is more than a date on the calendar; it is an invitation. An invitation to pause, to breathe, and to remember that God’s love came close... closer than we ever expected or deserved.

In a world that often feels hurried, uncertain, or heavy, the message of Christmas whispers a better word: **“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy for all people.”**

This is the joy we celebrate—not in perfection, but in God’s presence. Not in what we can bring, but in what God has already given us through Jesus Christ.

As a church family, we give thanks for the ways God has carried us, grown us, and woven our lives together this year. We celebrate every act of kindness, every prayer offered, every moment of worship shared. And we look forward with anticipation to the new ways God will lead us in the months ahead.

This Christmas, may the peace of Christ settle gently into your home. May His joy lift your spirit. May His light guide your steps. And may you feel, in both quiet moments and festive gatherings, the deep assurance that **you are loved, you are held, and you are never alone.**

From our church family to yours—  
**Merry Christmas and may the hope of Christ shine brightly in your heart today and always.**

Hey Raytown Family!

December is here, and we’ve stepped into the powerful season of Advent! This is the time when we lean in with expectation, knowing that our God still shows up, still speaks, and still moves on our behalf. Advent reminds us that even in the waiting, He’s working, and even in the darkness, His light is shining through!

So let’s walk into this month with our heads lifted and our hearts on fire. Let’s speak hope like we believe it, spread joy like we carry it, and show love like Jesus Himself placed it in our hands. Our community needs the light of Christ, and Raytown, God did trust us with it.

I’m believing God is going to do something special in us and through us this season. Let’s celebrate Jesus with power, with passion, and with expectation!

I love you all!



## A Message from Moderator Mary



**Hope Peace Joy Love** - the Advent Candles we light each week during the service as we prepare for the arrival of the Christ Child. On the eve of His birth, we light the candle of Light. Every Christmas season we follow this tradition. How often do we take time to reflect on the meaning of each of these?

Each of these words and respective candles have different meanings to each of us.

For me:

- **Hope** is what helps me get through the tough times. Just knowing that because of the Christ Child, I have reason to know that all is not lost and there is the Holy Spirit to see me through.
- The thought of **Peace** comforts me. It will help me make it through the trials in my life and in this world.
- **Joy**, what a wonderful feeling to experience. Not just the Joy in my life now but the Joy I will feel when I am reunited with Jesus in Heaven.
- **Love** is what I feel for others and what God is so willing to share with me. I cherish His love and should be willing to share that same love with everyone I come in contact with.
- Light emitted from this candle reminds me of the bright star that shined the night Christ came to this earth as man; sent to me by Our Holy Father to insure my salvation.

Every year, we celebrate the Season of Advent; the meaning of this celebration never changes. Hopefully as we grow in our life with Christ, this season continues to strengthen our belief that God is always with us providing us with Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, and Light.

Merry Christmas to each of you and may God continue to Light the way for you each and every day.

## End of Year Reminder: Fulfill Your Pledge with Joy

As we approach the end of the year, we want to take a moment to thank you for your faithfulness and generosity to Raytown Christian Church. Your financial pledges make a real difference in helping us carry out our mission: to help people say yes to Jesus.

If you haven't yet fulfilled your pledge, don't worry—there's still time! Your support enables us to continue our ministries, outreach, and community care. Every gift, big or small, helps us move forward together.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Let's finish 2025 strong, together!

## Outreach Corner with Mindy McDaniel



Christmas is drawing near, and Raytown Christian Church members generously donated gifts for children designated through the Prison Fellowship Ministry's Christmas Angel Tree program. Our RCC members and friends provided 84 gifts for 42 children. This special program ensures that presents from an incarcerated parent or family figure will reach their children, along with a personal note from that parent. RCC becomes God's angels for shopping, wrapping and delivering these gifts to the kids! These gifts will be delivered to their caregivers on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.

**December 14<sup>th</sup>, the Angel Tree transitions into the Mitten Tree!** This is the time that RCC members decorate the tree with mittens, gloves, hats and scarves, for either children or adults. Our prayer is that these items will bring comfort to those in need of some warmth during the upcoming Winter months.

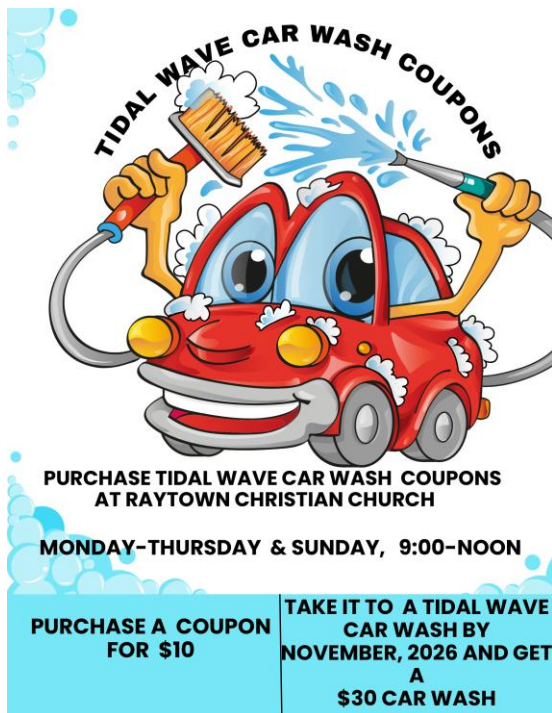
Raytown Christian Church is filled with amazing people who share with those in need, following Jesus' command *to love one another*.

During these difficult times, we lift our leaders and country in prayer. Many people are struggling, hungry and ill. Please keep praying for those in need.

Outreach has again included a Food Resource list at the end of this month's Christian Pilot.

*Outreach is always interested in our congregation's thoughts and ideas on how to reach out to our community! Please feel free to find an Outreach team member and share your thoughts or drop a note in the Outreach mailbox located in the reception area of the office.*

**Our first and foremost goal is to help the unchurched say "Yes!" to Jesus.**



Raytown Christian Church has ordered more Tidal Wave Car Wash coupons to sell during the month of December.

RCC purchases car wash coupons from Tidal Wave for \$5.00 and we sell them for \$10.00. RCC makes a \$5.00 profit off each coupon we sell! And here is the best part,

when people use the Tidal Wave Car Wash coupon, they receive a \$30.00 car wash!

These coupons can be used at any Tidal Wave Car in any state!!!! There are two local Tidal Wave Car Wash locations...Raytown Road and 50 Highway and on 39th Street in front of Target.

We could use your help in promoting the Tidal Wave Car Wash coupon fundraiser by asking friends, neighbors and family if they would like to purchase them. Maybe you would like to buy some for gifts. We have put a sticker on the back of the coupon that tells buyers to contact the church for more Tidal Wave Coupons. If you would like to take some Tidal Wave coupons to sell to a group you are involved with, please let me know! Thank You for supporting this fundraiser!

Tidal Wave Coupons will be available for sale when our RCC Office is open, Monday-Thursday and Sunday 9-noon.

We have ordered more Tidal Wave coupons to sell during the month of December.

**REAP's 37th Annual Christmas Store** is officially underway, and we need your help to ensure local families experience the joy and hope of the holiday season. This year, we aim to have 50 families adopted—ranging in size from 1 to 5 children, ages newborn to 17. Larger families with 5 or more children especially need organizations or groups willing to adopt them.

By adopting a family, you're giving local children a Christmas they'll never forget—and supporting neighbors right here in Raytown.

### How to Participate

Requirements for adopters:

- Spend at least \$100 per child
- Consider items from the children's Amazon wishlists (or similar items)
- Label bags or items with each child's name
- Wrapping is optional, but welcome!

### Important Details

• Drop-off deadline: Monday, December 22nd by 5 PM at REAP

• Want to adopt a family?

Email: [adoptafamily@raytownreap.org](mailto:adoptafamily@raytownreap.org)

• Prefer to donate instead? Give online at: [www.raytownreap.org/donate](http://www.raytownreap.org/donate)

• Checks may also be mailed to:

REAP – 9300 E. 75th St., Raytown, MO 64138

(Please write "Christmas Store" in the memo line.)



## Disciples of Christ Regional News

### Christmas Offering

This year's Special Christmas Offering is set for **December 7th and 14th. 100%** of this offering stays here in the Greater Kansas City Region for our shared Ministry. You can either make a donation using envelopes in the pews indicating that it is for the Regional Ministry and making the check out to KC Disciples or you can donate online at [www.kcdisciples.org/donate](http://www.kcdisciples.org/donate). We used to have specific envelopes for this provided by the Region, but this was stopped several years ago. You can review all the important ministries and work done by the Region by visiting the website and reading the 2025 Annual Report.

### Fifteen Most Influential Women of the Bible

Pastor Mike Hanneman of Raymore Christian Church has published his 4<sup>th</sup> book, "Fifteen Most Influential Women of the Bible".

This will be a great Christmas gift for anyone. Buy a copy for yourself, your wife, daughter, friends or family members, or several copies for a bible study group. In this book you will learn about how God used every day and ordinary women who trusted and obeyed God to accomplish great and amazing things for His glory.

The book can be purchased by following this link:  
[Fifteen Most Influential Women of the Bible](#)



## RCC's Inclement Weather Policy

The decision to cancel a service is not made lightly. Our goal is to make sure that everyone is safe during bad weather. RCC procedures are that if Raytown Schools are closed the church is closed. If the need arises to cancel Sunday Services or other weekend events, we will notify you via email. Sunday Service cancellations will also be posted on local TV stations. It is important that the office has your correct email address. If you know someone that doesn't have email and you receive information about our closing, please share with them.

## Understanding Charitable Giving IRAs with Dave Sprick



Did you know that you might have the opportunity to contribute to RCC by transferring money directly from your IRA using a strategy called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)? Even though the new Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) age is now 73, QCDs can begin at age 70 ½. Unlike a regular distribution from an IRA, a QCD is not a taxable distribution. The net effect is an increased gift to RCC AND reduced income taxes!

Lots of abbreviations, and sounds complicated, but it is not. If you are older than 70 ½ and have an IRA talk to your accountant or financial advisor or feel free to discuss with me how you might benefit by using this giving strategy.



Our First Annual Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest was a festive hit! Thank you to everyone who joined in the fun by digging deep into closets, thrift stores, and crafting bins to bring out your most wonderfully tacky, over-the-top Christmas sweaters. The laughter, smiles, and good-natured competition added so much joy to our Advent season.



We are excited to announce that this year's winner is **Jackie Wright**, who stole the show with her truly "**Fab-YULE-ous**" sweater! From the bright colors to the delightfully overdone Christmas flair, Jackie's sweater captured the playful spirit of the contest perfectly.



More than just a silly tradition, our Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest reminded us how good it is to share joy together as a church family. In a season that can be busy and stressful, taking time to laugh, celebrate, and simply enjoy one another's company is a gift from God.

Thank you again to everyone who participated, voted, and cheered one another on. We're already looking forward to next year's contest—so you've got plenty of time to start planning your next "ugly" (but wonderful!) Christmas creation!



The Raytown Community Choir filled our sanctuary with the **joyful sounds of the season**, and we were delighted to welcome **over 80 people** for this festive afternoon of music.

After the concert, many joined us in the **Inspiration Center** to enjoy cookies, coffee, and hot cocoa—a warm and cheerful time of fellowship that perfectly capped off this event.

Thank you to the choir and everyone who attended for helping make this a truly special holiday event!



## Food Resources from our Outreach Team

### Hope Network

10500 E State Route 350 (in Connection Point Church)

Phone number: 816.778.1147

Food pantry Tuesdays at 5:00, Wednesdays at 3:00, Thursdays at 6:00 and the 4th Saturday of the month at 10:00

### REAP

9300 E 75th St Raytown, MO

<https://raytownreap.org/how-we-help/>

Free grocery Fridays from 9:30-10:30 (event will not be held 10/31/25).

You can also make an appointment for their food pantry.

### Woods Chapel Raytown-Grace Place Clothing Closet and Food Pantry

5413 Blue Ridge Cutoff Raytown, MO

Wednesdays: November 5th, 12th, and 19th-Food pantry at 4:30 followed by a meal

Thanksgiving giveaway Saturday, November 22 from 10:00 am until noon

### Sisters in Christ Mobile Food Pantry

3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 8:00 am until 11:00 am at the RSECC Building-10750 E State Route 350 Raytown, MO

### Life Connection Church

3883 Blue Ridge Blvd Independence, MO

816.353.4445

They offer a clothing and food pantry (typically the 1st Saturday but call to confirm)

### Koinonia Bible Church

7020 Richmond Ave KCMO 64138

<https://kbckc.churchcenter.com/home>

Food pantry first and third Sunday from 1:00-3:00

For more info, email ssaldana@kbckc.org or call the church at (816) 313-9130.

### Community Services League

<https://form.jotform.com/233116891859063>

404 N Noland Rd Independence, MO

Drive-up pantry Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10-12:00.

Sign-up using their form.

### One Spirit United Methodist Church

7900 Blue Ridge Blvd KCMO 64138

816.353.0890

They typically offer a food distribution even on Thursdays-call to confirm!

### Journey Impact Church

463 W Ward Rd Lee's Summit, MO

<https://takeethejourney.cc/connect/journey-cares/>

You can make an appointment on the website. Their hours are 10:00-2:00 Tuesday, 5:00-7:00 Wednesday, 10:00-2:00 Thursday, 10:00-12:00 Saturday

### Memorial Church International

11424 Hickman Mills Dr KCMO

816.363.7939

Food and clothing the 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 2:00-5:00

### Serve and Lift Center

8001 Longview Rd KCMO

<https://catholiccharities-kcsj.org/market/>

816.929.1498

Appointments are available for a client-choice food pantry on the website.

### Evangel Church

1414 E 103rd St KCMO

<https://www.evangel.church/food-pantry>

Food pantry Wednesdays 4:00-6:00 and Sundays 12:00-12:30

Harvesters mobile food pantry 2nd Saturday of the month at 7:00 am

### Longview Baptist Church

1300 SW Longview Rd Lee's Summit, MO

816.524.3341

Drive-thru food pantry 1st and 3rd Sunday from 12:30-3:30

### Macedonia Baptist Church Mountaintop Inc. Food Pantry

1700 E Linwood Blvd KCMO

[macedoniakc.org](http://macedoniakc.org)

Food pantry Wednesdays 1:30-5:00

### Pantry Connection

<https://urbancommunityconnections.org/recurring-connections>

Check the website for locations. They are at The Temple at 7900 Westridge Rd Raytown, MO every 4th Saturday from 1:00-3:00 but have other locations in the metro, as well.