

A PASTOR'S WISH LIST

A new year is here already. It seems that the year 2024 began only a few days ago, yet here we are on the threshold of another year. It is a convenient time to review 2024 and plan for 2025. The change of calendars is a good time to adopt new challenges for us and for the future.

Some speak of Christmas "wish lists." I would like to share my New Year's wish list with you. I trust I am not being too radical but see if you share any of these wishes: *I wish that December's warm, caring attitudes will translate into year-round attitudes and actions.* Love, grace, and joy are the focus of Jesus' birth--but also of His life and sacrificial death. Let us carry these into the new year!

I wish that every member of our church would pray for, visit, and invite to church at least one new person every month. Many might appreciate a thoughtful visit, note, or phone call on a regular basis. If we can "accept the love and share the joy"--they might, too! What would be the impact of each member bringing along an unsaved or unchurched friend--even if only 1 in 5 or 1 in 10 decide to stay? We can do this!

I wish that every member of our church would pray for and then speak well of the church when talking to outsiders. This also applies to parents. If "roast preacher" and "boiled deacon" are on the Sunday menu, your children will lose their respect for the church, and its leadership, and for that matter, for you.

I wish that every member of our church would covenant to be regular in his/her attendance at the services--and be prompt. Sporadic attendance contributes to discouragement and apathy--which leads to lower attendance--which leads to more discouragement and apathy, and so on. Churches have closed their doors because the members started to think that their attendance was optional.

I wish that we could put aside our selfish attitudes and worldly thinking and rally around the eternal truths of our faith and the practices taught in the New Testament." Our witness is hindered when something is preached from the pulpit and officially taught in the church—and then members and even leaders in the church disregard the preaching and basic teachings that we have covenanted to uphold.

I wish--well, I could go on. *My basic wish is that we Covenant Brethren be CHRISTIANS--in our attitudes, speech, and life.* The Lord will use us if we display the sacrificial and self-effacing attitudes of 1 Corinthians 13, of Philipians, and Colossians 3. A hindrance to seeing God do great things is often simply ourselves.

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:6-7).

Craig Alan Myers is a member of the Covenant Brethren Executive Board

Weekly Prayer Points

When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this Child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.”
Luke 2:17 NIV

The Sunday before Christmas (12/22), Christmas Eve (12/24), and Christmas Day (12/25). Many of our congregations have special services & programs this week. And many people who are not close to the Lord may pass through our doors. This season is often a very “open door” time for the unchurched. Sometimes we can look down on these so-called “Easter & Christmas” attendees. No! Let us pray with thanksgiving for this opportunity to share Jesus! Pray that you may be a “shepherd-like” witness to proclaim Jesus to every dear one that the Lord brings you in contact with! Share the amazement!

Sing: “Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new. Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a Gospel true. Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow: Christ the Babe was born for you! Christ the Babe was born for you!”

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Ngurumd Ya Ushindi Congregation in Tanzania, Africa and pastor Emmanuel William Magembe
- Oak Dale congregation in Scherr, WV and pastor Randy Cosner

CBC Prayer Committee