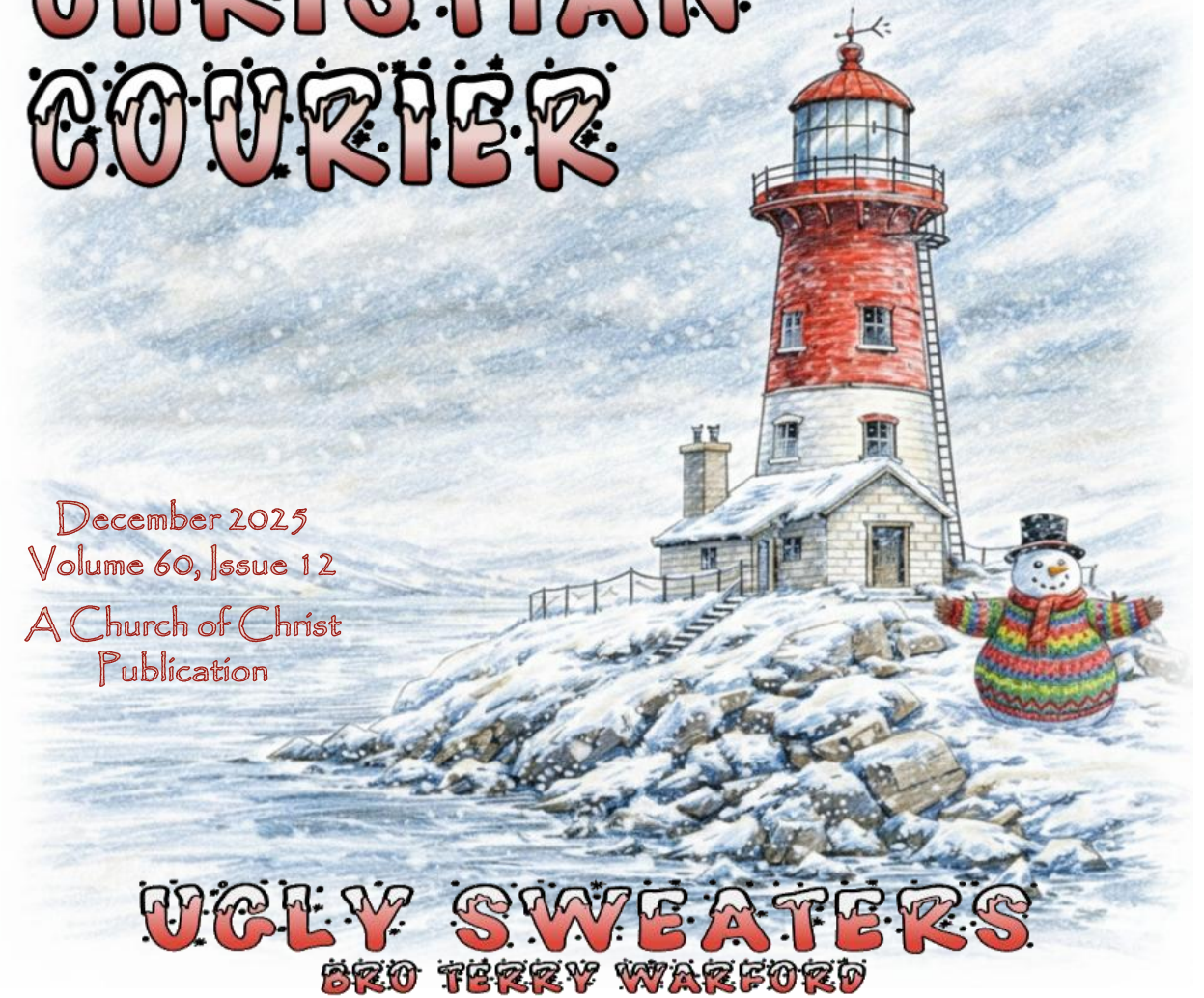
CHRISTIAN COURIER

December 2025
Volume 60, Issue 12
A Church of Christ Publication



UGLY SWEATERS

BRO TERRY WARFORD

One of the new December traditions of the last decade or so has been the ugly sweater party; with ugly sweater contests, ugly sweater cookies, and so on.

We do want to be sure that other parts of the way we live our lives are not ugly. Don't live our lives with ugly words, hearts and actions.

Don't let ugly words come from our tongues. Eph. 4:29 says: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

Matt. 12:34-37 tells us that our words come from our hearts. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Not just ugly words, but ugly actions come from an ugly heart, Matt. 15:18-20. "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man."

So let us cleanse our heart, and by doing so cleanse our words and actions, Eph. 4:31-32. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 5:1-2. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

In Christian love,

Bro. Terry Warford
Glenwood Church of Christ
Port Orchard, WA



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Guess Who???

The answer is below the Bulletin Board



Milk of the Word

Number studies: "12"

The number 12 appears frequently in the Bible, and its significance is both profound and symbolic. From the tribes of Israel to the apostles of Christ, the number 12 is often used to represent completeness, divine governance, and the fulfillment of God's plan.

The number 12 is first introduced in the Old Testament, beginning with the 12 tribes of Israel. The 12 tribes were the descendants of the 12 sons of Jacob (whose name was later changed to Israel). These tribes became the foundation of the nation of Israel, and each tribe had its own territory in the Promised Land. Genesis 49:28. This passage highlights the significance of the number 12 as representing the completeness of the nation of Israel. God's people were to be a unified, complete nation under His guidance. Exodus 24:4.

In the New Testament, we see the number 12 again in the calling of the twelve apostles by Jesus Christ. Just as there were twelve tribes of Israel, Jesus selected twelve apostles to lay the foundation for the church and to carry out His mission of spreading the gospel. Matthew 10:1-2. This group of twelve men would become the core group of leaders for the early church, and their ministry was crucial in spreading the message of Christ. Luke 22:30. This verse connects the twelve apostles to the twelve tribes of Israel, showing that the apostles will have a role in the future kingdom of God, emphasizing their authority and the completeness of God's plan of salvation through Jesus.

The number 12 often represents completeness. The twelve tribes of Israel form a complete nation, and the twelve apostles form the foundation of the church. In Revelation, the twelve gates and foundations show the completeness of God's kingdom. The number 12 also symbolizes divine order. The tribes of Israel were arranged in a specific, orderly way, and Jesus' selection of twelve apostles was intentional to establish divine governance over His church.1 Corinthians 12:28.

In conclusion, the number 12 in the Bible is far more than a mere numerical figure. It carries profound significance, representing the completeness of God's people, the divine order of His kingdom, and the fulfillment of His plan of salvation. Whether in the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve apostles of Jesus, or the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem, the number 12 points to the fullness of God's purpose in history and His eternal kingdom. As believers, we are invited to be part of this divine plan, united in Christ, and looking forward to the day when we will dwell in the eternal city of God.

Bro. Jacob Fuson
Pleasant View
Church of Christ
Stilwell, OK



The Christian COURIER

March — 1966 — April

Sister Ogletree, Elk City, Oklahoma -- Will try to send in a little news from the church at 818 North Washington. All are well or at least able to be at church. Sorry to report that Bro. Melvin De Garmo fell where he was working and broke his left leg just below his knee and also received a gash in the flesh. But he is getting along as well as can be expected.

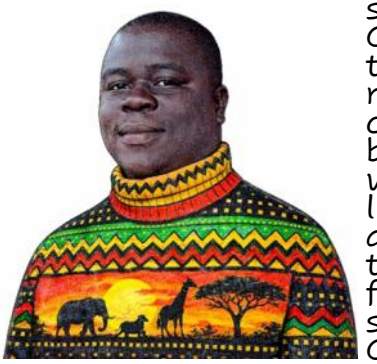
Bro. and Sis. Daniel Greenway have been at church in Elk City the two last Sundays. We would be glad if they would locate here. He gave the lesson yesterday on Faith. I enjoyed it very much. His mother and young sister were also at church. It was the first time she had heard him give a lesson. Hope they all keep coming. Bro. Garry Johnson is home from West Germany out of the service and has been at church the two last Sundays. He is a grandson of Bro. Bob Musgrave who a lot of the readers of the Courier knew.

NEWS FROM ABROAD

TANZANIA UPDATE

We greet you all in name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is because of his grace that we still live in this life.

This is to inform you that we are doing well with evangelism and teaching door to door. It happened that as we were going around, we met a friend who is from the denomination called A Church of the Later Days. We asked him an opportunity to study the Bible especially on steps of salvation, he was amazed when we got to a last step of baptism. He said that it is a new thing he has never heard. He went on by saying, he was taught that when a person is in their "church" when Jesus come back they will be taken to heaven. As we read passages with him, he claimed that most things he never heard because he was not taught. We came to realize that he believes in Mormons teaching.



There is family member of six people and they are from a Catholic background. These too did not know about baptism but they knew sprinkling. It is what they call baptism but our question to them was when and how were they baptized? And this father of the family responded by saying; it happened when he was young and the water was poured on his forehead. In fact we asked him to give us what they call the Bible for us to read where it says baptism but it was not there, they did not see a need of putting it in there. According to them, they are not using the Bible as God's word but catechism or creed books. So they didn't know that for someone to become a Christian must hear the word, believe it, repent of his/her sin, confess Christ, be baptized in much water, and live Godly life. Because they didn't know all these, the head of these family said that they shall never go to a Catholic church again and because of this statement we have been monitoring them to see if indeed they are not going. It has come to our attention that that indeed they are not going. And now we use that opportunity to visit them again and again. The good news is that we are almost persuading them to become members of the Lord's church. May each one at his own time pray the work we do and for these precious souls that if it is possible they may become Christian not Catholic.

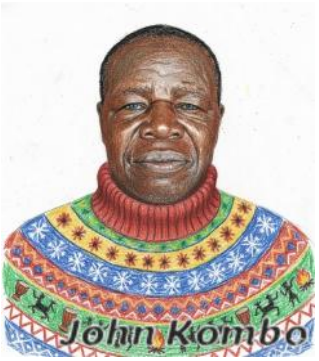
Once more thank you for your support and prayers. God's word will continue to be preached and taught as much as we can.

God bless you,
Your brother in Christ,
Alex Sadat

KENYA UPDATE

We salute you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We thank God for the opportunity to work in His dear Kingdom. Much has been done here in Kenya in regard to the spread of the gospel and more needs to be done.



Today we are proud of and thank the Almighty to enable us restore more congregations of the church of Christ in Kenya who still use many cups during Lord's Table. These churches call themselves "Kenya Church of Christ". We are not many compared to them. On the other hand we continue to witness more and more denomination being started within the communities where we live and work. This is so sad as millions of human souls travel rapidly on their road toward death in the darkness of sin. This people need the guidance of the light of God (Luke 1: 77-79). But who is there to show or guide them? We are the ones to do it since we have been given the mantle and a assignment to go out there and spread the gospel to lost souls. Those few Christians in the Lord's church argue endless about their responsibility to share the light.

According to the Bibles, the Jews of the old, members of the Lord's church are pursuing and holding fast to the material things, they have refused to "seek first the Kingdom and the righteousness (Matt. 6:33).

Nobody asks this question, "What have I done for the Lord's church?" (Jeremiah 8: 4-6). We have lost the first love in reference to behavior (Rev. 2:4). The problem of lethargic and lazy disciples has cropped in the church, so to speak.

Attached herewith are the photos of the Baptismal event (photos on pg 11) which took place on 09/12/2025 at Londiani Jct Congregations . We witnessed two souls who were baptized and ready to serve our Almighty God. God's blessings to you all. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year 2026.

Your Brothers in Christ,
Bro. John Kombo Barut,
Bro. Simion Omwansa,
Bro. Robert Keiyo
Barut Church of Christ
Nakuru, Kenya

Studying Revelation

A look at Revelation 2:27-29

Bro. Paul Warford

Rev 2:27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

Psa 2:1-12 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

Psa 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying,*

Psa 2:3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

Psa 2:4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

Psa 2:5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

Psa 2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Psa 2:7 I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Psa 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession.

Psa 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

Psa 2:10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

Psa 2:11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Psa 2:12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

I would say that these two scripture passages definitely go together.

Revelations 2:27 and Psalms chapter 2 talk of when the father gave to the son the rule of the world. So that the heathen could learn of the true God and not follow his false gods anymore and could acquire salvation. They are ruled just like we are with the rod of iron that shall not bend, God's word is

final, and their beliefs in false Gods shattered like a piece of pottery to serve the true and living God. Of course, we know that this is a spiritual rule and not a physical rule like the premillennialists believe.

Rev 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.

Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star.

Here Jesus explains to us exactly who the morning star is. It's he himself, so he is going to give us of himself. Exactly how is that gonna happen, let's read the scriptures.

Gal 3:26- 27 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

He is going to give us of the bright morning star when we are baptized.

We will be surrounded by Christ, infused with Christ and become a child of God when we are baptized.

B.W. Johnson says this,

The Morning Star is one of the titles of Christ. This, then, means that Christ will give them a fellowship with himself; they shall share his dominion.

Rev 2:29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Here as in most of the letters to the churches if not all of them Jesus admonishes us to be listeners. He doesn't want what he says to go on unheard, he wants us to hear it and apply it to our lives.

In Christian Love

Bro. Paul Warford

Pleasant View

Church of Christ

Stilwell, OK





Bulletin Board

Prayer List

John Kombo	Nakuru, Kenya	Diabetes, heart issues
Agrippina Silvester	Gaita, Tanzania	Severe back problems
Sandra Hughes	Broken Bow, OK	Cancer
Linda Camp	Broken Bow, OK	Cancer
Rylan Perrin	Broken Bow, OK	Carney Complex - nerve tumors
Morgan McIntosh	Broken Bow, OK	Beginning cancer treatments
Debbie Wilkerson	Cedaredge, CO	Fighting cancer
Mike Schell	Montrose, CO	Cancer in both lungs
Louise Brister	Citrus City, AZ	Melanoma Cancer
Billy Martin	Citrus City, AZ	Fighting cancer
Pauline Holloway	Gleed, WA	Uterine & cervical cancer
Otto Alvarez	Harlingen, TX	Dangerous travels, 2 angioplasties
Mariela Alvarez	Harlingen, TX	Dangerous travels, thyroid issues
Larry Pollan	Ringgold, TX	Heart attack & surgeries
Jessica Chastain	Stilwell, OK	Health issues
Retha Morris	Stilwell, OK	Battling Parkinson's
Darletta Spencer	Stilwell, OK	Cancer
Bruce Cuming	Yuma, AZ	Heart Issues, back & leg pain
Dennis Davis	Yuma, AZ	Back & leg issues
Susie Davis	Yuma, AZ	Kidney trouble
Suzie Warford	Port Orchard, WA	Cancer
Kathy Lamb	Gleed, WA	Cancer surgery
Lavonne Walk	Gleed, WA	Health Problems
Betty McKinney	Gleed, WA	Back surgery
Troy Solomon	Gleed, WA	Health Issues

Passings

Kenny Gray	Tiner Congregation, OK	Passed - December 9, 2025

Guess Who??? Answer: JW & Pearl Bedingfield

Londiani Junction Baptisms

Donations and information:

Church of Christ
Africa Mission
3814 64th Drive
Lubbock, TX 79413









Thought for the Month

In todays society, we celebrate and record the date a new life is born into this world. In the time of Christ, however, this wasn't typically the case. One's life and death was far more significant as they reflected the choices one made and how one lived day to day. The day they were born was much less significant.

Every year, our birthdays are celebrated as well, and looking outside the circle of our life and choices, the only real thing that has happened is we've aged yet another year. This is great when we are young and vibrant, but not so much in our "Golden Years."

Have we given any thought to how our lives will be seen after we're gone? Will we be seen arriving on a certain day? Or rather because of our many faithful works and the lives we've touched?

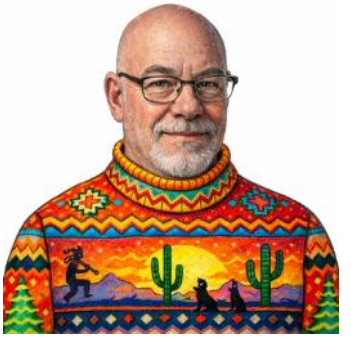
Always remember dates fade into irrelevant history, but our actions leave lasting marks, good and bad...

The Apostle Paul says this in II Tim 4:7, *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith..."* This DIRECTLY leads into one of the most encouraging verses in The Bible: Matt 25:21 *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord."*

Love & Blessings

Bro. Jesse Warford

Pleasant View
Church of Christ
Stilwell, OK





In Loving Memory

James "Kenny" Gray

Jan 3, 1940 – Dec 9, 2025

Tiner Church of Christ,

Broken Bow, OK

Mr. James Kenneth "Kenny" Gray, age 85, a resident of De Queen, Arkansas, passed away, Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at his home surrounded by his family.

He was born to Fred and Cleo Finney Gray on January 3, 1940, in Wright City, Oklahoma. He married the love of his life, Ellen Fay Gray, on December 9, 1963, in Holly Creek, Oklahoma. Kenny served his country in the U.S. National Guard and was a former sales and delivery driver for Hilltop Lumber Company. He was a member of the Tiner Church of Christ, he enjoyed fishing, hunting, sports, spending time with family, and most especially his granddaughters.

He is preceded in death by his parents, and one brother, Jerry Gray.

Kenny leaves to cherish his memory, his wife of 62 years, Fay Gray; one son and daughter-in-law, Mike and Glenda Gray; two granddaughters, Erica Gray and Ceira Gray, all of De Queen, Arkansas; along with a number of nieces, nephews, cousins and a host of friends.