



# newsletter

Northwest Hills Church  
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Rev. Alex Wolf, Pastor  
Cheryl Morehouse, Office Administrator

Vol. 53 No. 12  
November 25, 2025

Barb Renicker, Music Director  
Nate & Rita Merriam, Custodians

## December 2025

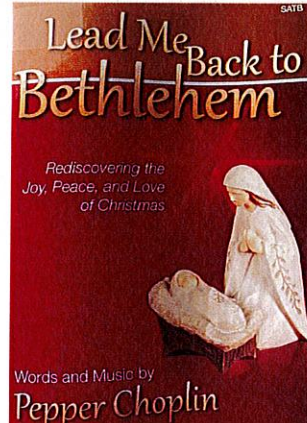
<b>December 7</b>  <i>Poinsettia</i> <i>Orders due!</i>	 <b>9:30 AM Worship/Communion (No Sunday School)</b> <b>10:30 AM Budget Mtg. w/Jackie Robinson-Rm. 119</b> <b>11:00 AM Ruth Circle Christmas Brunch—FH</b> <b>6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH</b>
<b>December 14</b> <i>Cookie Orders Due!</i>	 <b>9:30 AM Worship/Sunday School</b> <b>CANTATA: "Lead Me Back to Bethlehem"</b> <b>10:30 AM Annual Meeting-S</b> <b>6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH</b>
<b>December 21</b> <i>Cookie Pick Up!</i>  <i>Christmas Fund Offering</i>	<b>9:30 AM Worship/Children's Program</b> <b>"The Littlest Shepherd"</b> <b>6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH</b>
<b>December 24</b> <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	 <b>4:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Service</b> <b>11:00 PM Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight Service</b>
<b>December 25th</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	 <i>Church Office Closed</i>
<b>December 28</b>	 <b>9:30 AM Worship (No Sunday School)</b> <b>10:30 AM Finger Food Fest—C</b> <b>6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH</b>

### "Lead Me Back To Bethlehem"

by Choplin

December 14th

The choir will lead your thoughts back to Bethlehem through songs of Christ's birth, the joy of the shepherds, and the mystery of the star.



### "The Littlest Shepherd"

December 21st



Deadline for articles/information for the monthly newsletter is usually the second Sunday for the next month's newsletter. Thank you in advance for your contributions!



# THANK YOU

*"I want to thank everyone for all of the prayers, cards, calls and warm wishes during my recent knee replacement surgery and recovery. God is so good! This experience was a 180 from the first knee replacement! After just two weeks, I was released to drive, released from PT and told I didn't need to return to the ortho clinic until 3 months post-surgery when they'll do x-rays to make sure everything remains in its place. I want to offer a REALLY BIG special prayer of thanksgiving for my wonderful Mom who was a fabulous caregiver for myself and Markie! I couldn't have found a better person anywhere."*

— Nicki O'Neil

*"Thank you, EVERYONE, who ordered cookies in the month of November. Your support is greatly appreciated from year-to-year for this special project."*

— Sarah Circle



*"Thank you, church family, for your kind and generous donations to the Holy Cross Food Pantry Drive, especially for the specially-requested boxed cake mixes that were a special treat and*

*blessing to the 200+ families that were provided the traditional Thanksgiving meal "fixings" care packages. Your consistency in helping us partner with Holy Cross to feed those in our community with food insecurities is truly a blessing. As always, we will continue our year-round collection of non-perishable food items throughout the year. A donation bin is located in the Commons area for this purpose.*

*Our Northwest Hills Church family is the best!"*

## MISSION & SERVICE DECEMBER PROJECT

Once again we are supporting our community partner, the Salvation Army, through their Winter Night Watch Program. Hats, gloves, scarves and especially warm COATS are distributed to the homeless living on the streets of Omaha in the coldest of bitter winter months.

Our Northwest Hills Church family has been so generous to donate their gently-used, or even new coats to this cause. We are collecting for women, children, and men. Particularly in need are the larger sizes, XL and up.

Look for the collection boxes in the Commons. Your kindness will truly make a lasting impact on the most unfortunate in our community.

**CRAFTERS!** We're taking a break from the Wednesday craft group during December/January, with plans to reconvene in February.

**RUTH CIRCLE** will have their Christmas luncheon on Sunday, Dec. 7th at 11 AM in the Fellowship Hall.

**WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION** Christmas Luncheon will be at 12 noon in the Commons on Thurs., Dec. 4th. All ladies of the church are invited to attend. There is no charge for the event but we do ask a food donation for the food pantry of boxed or canned goods or Little Debbie snack treats. Please join us! If you have any questions, please call Kathleen Hammond at 402-981-3630.



**SARAH CIRCLE** will meet as needed. For any questions, call Terri Burright, 402-659-6913. Look for the Christmas Cookie order in this Newsletter! Orders are due December 14th; pick up is 9-11 AM on Sunday, December 21st. Thank you for your support!

**MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST:** We look forward to getting together on Saturday, December 13th at 9:00 AM in the Commons. It is a BYOB: "Bring Your Own Breakfast." All men of the church are invited for this great time of fellowship!

**WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY:** We will continue our Wednesday Bible Studies at 10:00 AM in Room 128 on December 3rd, 10th, and 17th. We will then take a break for the holidays. We will also not meet during the months of January and February so folks don't have to get out and battle the typical Nebraska winter weather during those notorious months! All are invited to come and fellowship around the precious Word of God for our remaining studies this month!

**CHURCH COUNCIL** will not meet during the month of December.





## MEMORY TREE ORNAMENTS

On November 23rd, the memory trees were placed in the Commons area with all the special memory tree ornaments. If you want a special ornament placed on the tree in memory of your loved one, please place the ornament in the basket in a zip lock bag, along with a detailed information sheet about the ornament. A description of the ornament, who gave the ornament, and in whose memory the ornament was given is recorded in a Memory Tree book. This is such a special opportunity for you to remember the loved ones in your life who have passed away. A picture of each ornament and information regarding the ornament has been placed in albums by Jan Jacobsen. After Christmas, the ornaments will be wrapped and stored until displaying next year. Thank you for remembering your loved ones!!



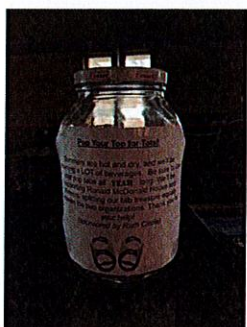
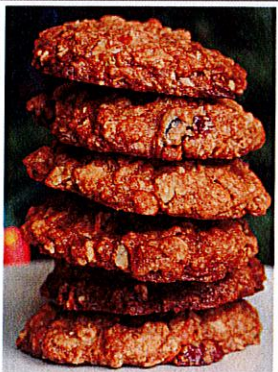
—Sherry Mitchell, Memory Tree Chairman

**2026 GIVING ENVELOPES** will be available for pick up in the Commons December 7th (alpha by last name). If you haven't been assigned a set and would like one, please see Leigh Powell. Thank you for your faithfulness.

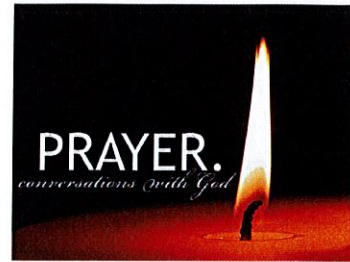


### 2025 Sarah Circle Christmas Cookie Order forms are here!

One is included in this month's Newsletter. Orders are due by Sunday, December 14th. Pick-up date will be Sun., Dec. 21st from 9-11 AM in the Commons. Checks are made payable to Sarah Circle. Orders can be submitted by email to: trumpetvinecraft@aol.com. For questions/ and / or orders you can call Terri Burright at 402-659-6913 or Jan Jacobsen 402-660-4718. Order form and payment check can also be mailed directly to Jan at 13505 N. 108th Street, Omaha, NE 68142-1313. Thank you for your support! (Yummm!)



**POP TABS:** Our pop tab collection was so successful that we've decided to make this a year-round project! Now you can bring your pop tabs to church at your convenience so they don't accumulate in a pile at your home! Look for the big jar in the Commons. Thank you for your participation as we look forward to blessing our community partners – Ronald McDonald House and the Shriners – with our collective accumulation. (Ruth Circle)



Prayer chain requests can be called to Ardell Reuter at 1-918-703-1068 or the church office at (402) 572-8392.

*Thank you for your kind responses regarding updating our prayer list. We are always encouraged to hear when our loved ones are much improved. Please continue to let us know of any changes so that we can update our list and assure that the prayers going out weekly are the most current and urgent needs expressed. Thank you in advance. The ongoing list is below:*

Continued Prayer Requests: Sandy Christopherson, Dianne Hasch (Dianna Cupps' friend), Jeff Walton, Cierra Ervin, Kyle Hurt & Jacoby, Marchelle Conrad, Peg Hawkins (friend of Annie Kuti), Steve Swift, Jerrie Wilcox, Nikki Heim, Elaine Jenkins, Cindy Key, Joanne Mears, Vicky (Nikki Heim's daughter); Linda Nelsen, Urban family, Benita Davis (Deb Hahn's mother), Anusha Ganarajah

On-Going Cancer Treatment: Mike Lambert, Mary Larson, Patricia Gename (Mary Hinman's daughter), Dave Merriam, Sue Day, Sharon McNutt (Ruth Negus' friend's sister), Betty Benskin, Gail Formanack (friend of Bev Ambrosius), Gary Dutton, Ena Nolan, (Leigh Powell's niece), Bill Owens, Pat Mixan, Sharon (Judy Cratty's sister)

***"He sent His Word, and healed them"***

— Psalm 107:20

***"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."***

— Isaiah 53:5

**HE HEALED THE ONE  
WHO ARRESTED HIM,  
SERVED THE ONE WHO  
BETRAYED HIM, AND  
LOVED THE WORLD  
WHO CRUCIFIED HIM  
THAT'S MY JESUS**





# FROM PASTOR ALEX WOLF

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Andy Williams first sang in 1963, "It's the most wonderful time of the year!" All around the Omaha area, trees and houses are being decorated with lights and tinsel, stockings are being hung with care over fireplaces, classic Christmas movies are playing on repeat on television, stores and malls are overrun with shoppers. Yes, it's a crazy time! In case you're really feeling the stress of the holidays, I thought of four tips that might help you better enjoy the Christmas season.

1) Set realistic expectations. I don't know of too many families that have a perfect Christmas like they do on the Hallmark Channel movies. And you know what? That's ok. Your Christmas celebrations don't have to be "perfect." The turkey might not turn out just right and there will probably be family drama. Those things come with the season. Try to have the best time that you can.

2) Know your limits. There's only so much time to cram in shopping, baking, gift wrapping, and visiting family and friends. You can't do everything, so why would you try? Figure out what's most important to do. Also, remember to sometimes say "no." Don't be so hard on yourself and do what you can.

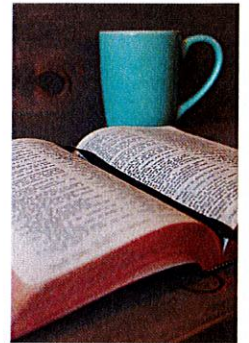
3) Slow down. This tip is an extension of the last one. It's easy to become overwhelmed by all the tasks and traditions. But remember that this holiday is for you, too. Take some time to rest and relax. As people of faith, we must remember to take sabbath time. God rested after the work of creation; you should rest too.

4) Remember the reason for the season. As you revel in the midst of all the lights, decorations, singing of Christmas carols, shopping, and other holiday celebrations, I ask you to also reflect on and remember what Christmas is really all about: the birth of our Savior Jesus, who is Emmanuel, "God with us." Take some time to celebrate Jesus and all he's done for us.

However you celebrate this holiday season, may you have a wonderful and joyous time. I wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas!

In Christ's Love,

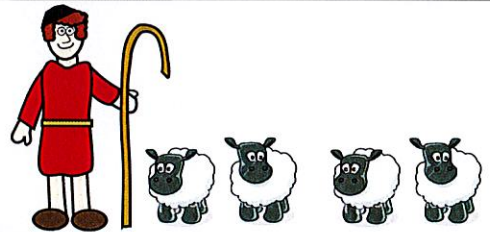
*Pastor Alex*



## Sermon Topics and Scriptures for December

### December 2025 Sermons

December 7—"A Vision of Peace" Isaiah 11:1-10  
December 14 – Choral Cantata "Lead Me Back to Bethlehem"  
December 21 – Children's Program "The Littlest Shepherd"  
December 28 – Lessons and Carols





**Blue Christmas Service**  
**Saturday, December 20th 12 PM**

In the midst of all the wonder and celebration of Christmas, it's easy to forget that not everyone is feeling the joy of the season. Whether it's because of illness, a death of a loved one, the loss of a job, strained finances, or tense family situations, the Christmas season can be one of stress and heartache.



If you are in need of some comfort this holiday season, please join us on Saturday, December 20th at 12 noon in the Commons area for a soup lunch and a Blue Christmas service. The purpose of this service is to offer a space to express the sadness, grief, or loss and take it to God, as well as to remember the hope God offers.



Please RSVP to Pastor Alex by Wednesday, December 17th.

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**Northwest Hills Preschool December 2025 Update**

Once again we are turning the page on the calendar which lands us at the shortest, but busiest month at preschool! Gingerbread men, Christmas trees, candy canes, and snowflakes are decking our halls and carols are being learned! Our Preschool Christmas program is December 19<sup>th</sup> and will be in the sanctuary. We invite everyone to attend! Please pray that we can help our families learn the true meaning of this season, specifically our international students. Our verse for December is:

*"Unto us is born a Savior who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11*

We wish everyone a very MERRY CHRISTMAS!

*Miss Jacque, Miss Lori, Miss Robin  
And  
The Preschoolers*

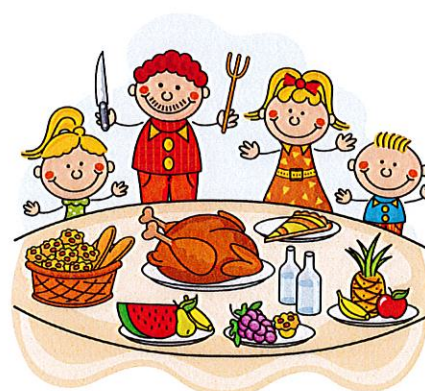
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<i>"Enter God's courts with thanksgiving and His Courts with praise." Psalm 100:4</i>	
<i>We are thank ful for ...</i>	
<i>Eleanor</i>	<i>House</i>
<i>Liliana</i>	<i>Family</i>
<i>Kanaan</i>	<i>Mom</i>
<i>Titan</i>	<i>Baby sister</i>
<i>Vivianna</i>	<i>McDonald's (french fries)</i>
<i>Maddox</i>	<i>Family and sisters</i>
<i>Esther</i>	<i>Toys</i>
<i>Prisna</i>	<i>Dad, mom, baby brother, sister</i>
<i>Benjamin</i>	<i>Mom</i>
<i>Daniel</i>	<i>Mom</i>
<i>Prayash</i>	<i>Dog</i>
<i>Jor</i>	<i>Mom</i>
<i>Miss Lori</i>	<i>Family and friends</i>
<i>Miss Robin</i>	<i>Airplaner to see kids</i>
<i>Pastor Alex</i>	<i>All the preschool students and staff</i>

*So cute.....had to share.*

*Usually twice a month, Pastor Alex has "chapel" with the preschoolers. For November, Pastor Alex talked about being thankful. He then asked each child, individually, what they were thankful for. Here are their answers.....enjoy!*

*(I particularly got a kick out of the little gal who was thankful for "McDonald's French fries!"....and "dog")*







**The CANASTA CLUB** will meet Thursday, December 18th in the Fellowship Hall. **This will be a pot luck!** Dessert will be provided by Team #9 (Deb Shafer & Virgil Beaty). **Plan to arrive in time to start playing by 10:00 AM.** If you have any questions, or would like to join, please contact Deb Shafer at 402-392-0418 or 402-999-1052. We still need subs (men or women). Please contact Ardell Reuter at 1-918-703-1068."

### CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING: Dec. 21st

The Christmas Fund is a special United Church of Christ offering which provides emergency grants and supplementation of health premiums for active and retired clergy and lay employees in our denomination, as well as Christmas "thank you" gift checks to lower-income retired clergy. The Christmas Fund is managed by the Pension Boards. If you would like to donate to the Christmas Fund, special envelopes will be provided at the church.

### BAD WEATHER

Should very severe weather (dangerous travel and/or frigid temperatures) cause Northwest Hills to cancel a Sunday service, there will be three sources used to communicate a closure to you by 8:00 AM that morning: 1) The three major local television channels (WOWT NBC-6, KMTV-CBS-3, and KETV ABC-7) will have a continually updating scroll of closures at the bottom of the screen. Look for Northwest Hills under "church closures" 2) Facebook post and 3) Email.

Although we would love to see you and fellowship with you at church, please always choose caution and personal safety regarding attendance, even if services are NOT cancelled. If there is a concern regarding walking and driving in the white stuff and frozen patches, we'd rather you be safe and snuggled up at home rather than taking a chance of a fall or accident. We love you and care about you!



## LADIES MAHONEY WINTER RETREAT

Thursday, January 30th  
through  
Sunday, February 2nd

All women of the church are welcome for a fun and relaxing weekend at Mahoney State Park.

Call Terri Burright at (402) 659-6913 or Jan Jacobsen (402) 660-4718 to make your reservation or if you have any questions.

**ANNUAL MEETING** will occur in person again this year! We will meet as a congregation to discuss key issues and vote. The Annual Meeting will be held after the morning service on Sunday, Dec. 14th in the Sanctuary. The agenda will include committee nominations and the 2026 budget. The last couple of years we've mailed ballots to your homes, but will hold the meeting live and in person this year. Please make every effort to be present to take part of this important gathering: your voice and vote are valued! Thank you in advance for your thoughtful participation.



### MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND HEALTH PLAN OPEN ENROLLMENT

**FINAL LAST DAYS!** – the Medicare Prescription Drug and Health Plans Annual Open Enrollment Period ends **DECEMBER 7!** The 2026 plans' information will be on the Medicare website and the best way to determine how the changes will affect you and determine which plan will be best for you next year is to use Medicare's Plan Finder at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

Statewide Senior Health counseling will be providing assistance only via phone due to Covid again this year. Call 402-444-6617 and Volunteers Assisting Seniors will set up a phone appointment. Rick Scofield (who is an official VAS Volunteer) has kindly been helping those in our congregation by phone or in person with their choices. Also, if you're approaching 65 or retirement, Rick can provide Medicare counseling about the decisions you need to make.



**2025 Sarah Circle Christmas Cookie Orders****Orders Due-December 14****Pickup Date-Sunday, December 21**

9:00-11am in Commons Area

**Checks Payable to Sarah Circle**Can be submitted by email to [trumpetvinecraft@aol.com](mailto:trumpetvinecraft@aol.com)

Questions/orders - Call Terri Burrignt (402)659-6913

or Jan Jacobsen (402)660-4718

13505 N. 108th St.

Omaha, NE 68142

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Price- \$6.50 per dozen, \$3.25 per 1/2 dozen**

	Dozen	Half Dozen	Total
Almond Joy Cookies (Almonds & Coconut)			
Chocolate Chip Cookies			
Coconut Macaroon Cookies			
Cranberry Pistachio Sables			
Cutout Sugar Cookies			
Fudge-Chocolate			
Fudge-Peanut Butter			
Gingersnap Cookies			
Lemon Bars			
M & M Christmas Cookies			
Monster Cookies			
Oatmeal Raisin Cookies			
Peanut Butter Bonbons			
Peanut Butter Cookies			
Peanut Butter Cup Cookies			
Peanut Clusters			
Pretzel Hugs (2)			
Scotcheroos (Rice Krispie Bars)			
Snickerdoodles Cookies			
Spritz Cookies			
White Chocolate Macadamia Nut Cookies			
Variety Pack (Our Pick)			

Cranberry Bread (5" x 9" pan)-\$5.00		
Kringle-Almond-\$6.50		
Kringle-Cherry-\$6.50		
Peanut Brittle (1/4 lb.)-\$2.50		
Puppy Chow-\$4.00		

Total Owed		
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Special Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You!**



# DECEMBER 2025



**KIDS QUEST!!**

**EPIC Youth  
PK-High School**



**December 7          Play Practice.**

**December 14        Play Practice.**

**Saturday, December 20th 10-11 Practice—S**

**December 21        Christmas Program!**

**December 28        No Sunday School.**





# DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	2 7 PM Scouts-FH	3 10 Bible Study—128 6:30 Choir & Bell Choir	4 12 noon Women's Assoc. Christmas Luncheon—C	5	6 11 AM Judy Jensen Funeral Service w/ luncheon to follow in FH
7 9:30 Worship/Communion (No Sunday School) 10:30 Budget Review-119 11 AM Ruth Circle Christmas Brunch—FH 6:30-8:30 Square Dancing-FH <i>Poinsettia orders due!</i>	8 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	9 7 PM Scouts-FH	10 10 Bible Study—128 6:30 Choir & Bell Choir	11	12	13 9 AM Men's BYOB-C 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group-19D
14 9:30 Worship/Sunday School CANTATA 10:30 Annual Meeting—S 6:30-8:30 Square Dancing-FH <i>Cookie orders due!</i>	15 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	16 7 PM Scouts-FH	17 10 Bible Study-128 6:30 Choir & Bell Choir	18 10-2 Canasta—FH	19 11:15 AM Preschool Christmas Program-S	20 10-11 Children's Program Practice—S 12 noon Blue Christmas—C 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group—19D
21 9:30 Worship/Sunday School CHILDREN'S PROGRAM 9-11 Cookie Order <i>Pick Up-C</i> 6:30-8:30 Square Dancing-FH	22 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	23 7 PM Scouts-FH	24 4:00 PM Family Christmas Eve Service 11 PM Traditional Christmas Eve Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY (Church Office Closed )	26 (Church Office Closed for Christmas Holiday)	27 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group-19D
28 9:30 Worship (No Sunday School) 10:30 Fellowship—C 6:30-8:30 Square Dancing-FH	29 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	30 7 PM Scouts-FH	31 New Year's Eve (no activities)			S: Sanctuary C: Commons L: Library FH: Fellowship Hall



**NORTHWEST HILLS CHURCH  
9334 FORT STREET  
OMAHA NE 68134**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

<b>NON PROFIT ORG U S POSTAGE PAID OMAHA NE PERMIT NO 369</b>
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## **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

5 Dawne Sobocinski	16 Jodee Mann	21 Layla Meador	29 Deb Shafer
6 Breeyen Svacina	16 Halle Meador	21 Angie Myers	30 Jean Barker
7 James Kohtz	17 Jeff Morton	24 Inga Mehlenbacher	30 Joanne Mears
9 Bernie Hurt	17 Kyle Hurt	24 Doug Roberts	30 Elliott Scofield
10 Corwin Miller	18 Andersen Buckley	26 Mike Mehlenbacher	31 Richard Putzstuck
10 Byron Christensen	20 Gary Kuti	26 Sunny Massa	31 Bev Ambrosius
10 Phyllis Johnson			

## **DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

19 John and Shirley Spencer