Miantic Mgws

M monthly publication of Christ Luthgran Church 222 Niantic Road, Barto, PA 19504 610-845-2583 christluthchurch@windstrgam.ngt www.christniantic.com

December 2025

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A Message from the Pastor...

Years ago, before I was a pastor I remember hearing a sermon on Christmas Eve that has stuck with me. In it the pastor took the familiar refrain, "it is better to give than to receive" and turned it around. He proclaimed to the congregation, "it is better to receive than to give." He was not encouraging greed and selfishness during the holidays but instead reminded us of something important. For someone to know the joy of giving, someone else must be willing to receive that gift with joy.

As Thanksgiving dishes are washed and put away, our attention turns to the lists of the Christmas season, shopping lists, wish lists, and lists of loved ones we hope to bless with gifts. It's now time to go out and find all the ways to give. Giving, of course, is at the heart of celebrating Christmas. Giving is important and holy. Giving reminds us to turn our attention toward others, particularly others who are in need during this time of year.

In all the focus on giving, it can be difficult to receive. It takes humility to accept a gift, whether it's a word of encouragement, a helping hand, or an unexpected present. In receiving, we admit our need. We open ourselves up to the love, care, and generosity of others. We allow grace to flow into our lives, acknowledging that we cannot do it all on our own. Receiving is an act of faith and trust.

That was at the heart of that Christmas sermon. Our primary call at Christmas is to receive. Our call is to first receive the "good news of great joy" that the angel announces to the shepherds in the fields. We receive the gift of Jesus, God in the flesh who comes to show us God's love and bring us into God's presence for all eternity. We receive what God has given to us, God's only begotten son.

In receiving this good news and good presence of Jesus, we can then share what we have been given. Because we have received so much from God, we can go out and give what we have already received.

This Christmas season try to not only give but receive. Receive the gift of worshiping our newborn king. Celebrate that God gives us life through him. Share what you have received from God with others. Receive the hospitality and gifts offered to you with joy. Invite others to receive the joy of Jesus this season.

You can invite your friends and family to come out to our Christmas Open House on December 14 from 3-6 PM. There you can receive the gift of the beauty and peace of Christmas in our sanctuary. In the parlor receive the gift of hospitality with delicious Christmas treats and fellowship.

Continued on page 2...

You can also receive the gift of Christmas by joining with the whole church in Christmas Eve worship. There we will again receive the good news delivered to the shepherds and we will receive the grace of God in the body and blood of Jesus given to us in Holy Communion. At 3 PM, we will have our family friendly service perfect for those little ones who may be extra excited that day. And at 9 PM, we will have our traditional candlelight service where we receive the peace of a silent night by candlelight. Invite your family and friends to come and receive that good news with us.

This Christmas season remember what it means to receive. Be open to the love and generosity that others wish to share. Above all be open to the love and grace God has shared with us on a silent night in Bethlehem so many years ago.

In Christ, Pr. Matt

Official Pastoral Acts

(Baptisms, Funerals, Weddings)

Memorial service for Charles Orner on Saturday, November 15, 2025.

Notification in Case of Illness



Christ Niantic Lutheran hopes that all members will notify the church office if they become aware of any member who is ill or who may have other pastoral needs. Please do not assume that "someone else" has already called. We do not mind receiving multiple notifications. Thank you!

Church/Pastor's Office Hours

The Church Office Hours are
Monday through Friday, 9 – 2 p.m.
All non-emergency, non-pastoral calls
can be called into the church office
during or after office hours.

Pr. Matt Finney will have office hours on Fridays.

If you'd like to meet/speak with Pr. Matt, or it's a pastoral emergency, please call Pr. Matt at 484-587-6506.

Thank you. Pr. Matt's church e-mail is: clcpastor@windstream.net.



Altar Flowers and Bulletins

The Bulletin and Altar Flower charts for 2026 are posted in the narthex. If you have a particular date you want, you will need to sign-up early. The cost of Altar Flowers is \$40.00 and Bulletins are \$20.00.

Questions, please see or call SandyGehman.

Attendance

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship</u>	Confirmation / Bible Study
October 5 October 12	42 45	4/12 = 4/11
October 19 October 26 (Joint	48	4 / 10 9 / 12
2024 Sun. Avg.: 2025 Sun. Avg.:	49 53	5 5/11

[Prior year averages are based on same time period]

Brown Bag Bible Study

The "Brown Bag Bible Study" will continue in the month of December on Wednesdays:

December 3, 11, & 17. The Bible Study will be held in the Welcome center at 12 noon, and you are invited to bring along a lunch if you wish. It will be a casual discussion-based study. The book of the Bible we will be discussing is: Philippians. This study is open to everyone. Bring along your own Bible or you can borrow one from the church.

Snow, Blizzards and Ice!

<u>Just a reminder</u> - During inclement weather, we will always try to have worship for those who can make it. When we cancel worship due to impassable roads, we will change the answering

machine message, send that message through the prayer chain, post it on Facebook, post it on WFMZ.com, or in severe conditions it will be shown on Channel 69 TV. Even if we manage

to have worship or some other program, never risk life and limb to attend! It is not uncommon for two inches of snow to fall in Niantic and 8 inches in the hills above Bally and Hereford. It is **okay** to stay home and enjoy your family in such situations, BUT when you are able – practice the discipline of worship! Leaders – please let the office know of cancellations and postponements so we can notify others.



<u>Newsletter Deadline</u> –

Information for the January issue of the Niantic News is due by <u>Tuesday</u>, <u>December 9</u>.

There are several ways for you to submit your articles:

- ✓ E-mail it to me at: christluthchurch@windstream.net;
- ✓ Submit it on a flash drive that can be borrowed from the office:
- ✓ Place your typed or neatly written copy in my mailbox.

Thank you... to Chershe who retrieved the mail and checked answering machine messages during this year while I was on vacation. I really do appreciate it!

Melissa



Quilt Tying

will be held on Tuesday, December 9 beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the social hall.

Then we will join the ... Lutheran Ladies Lunch

The December Lutheran Ladies Lunch will be held on **Tuesday**, **December 9** at **12 noon** at Peppe's Pizza and Grill, 2485 Swamp Pike, Gilbertsville!

We will meet at the church at **11:30 a.m.** to carpool to restaurant for an 12 noon lunch or you can meet us at Peppe's at 12 noon.

Help Needed to Decorate for Christmas

We will be decorating the church for the Christmas Open House and Christmas immediately following the worship service on **Sunday, December 14**th. If you could please stay and help it would be greatly appreciated.



Christmas Open House Sunday, December 14 3 – 6 p.m.

If you would like to help at the Open House, please contact Jennifer Lowery-Bomboy, Pr. Matt or the church office. Invite your friends, family, neighbors for some fellowship, tour, cookies & beverages, music and carols! See flyer in the newsletter!



2026 Worship Helpers Needed

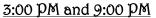
Would you like to try something new in 2026?

Have you ever considered serving as a Greeter/Usher, Acolyte, Lector, or Assisting Minister at the 9 AM service? Help is needed in these assisting positions. Please contact the church office to sign up. Training will/can be provided.

Music news for December:

The Advent season begins on November 30th this year. We would love to have additional singers and instrumentalists for the Advent/Christmas services. Please see, text, or email Deb Matthews if you have an interest in joining us. Preludes will begin at 2:45 for the 3:00 service on Christmas Eve. Preludes will begin at 8:30 for the 9:00 Christmas Eve service.

Christmas Eve Services Wødnøsday, Døcømbør 24



This year, Christ Lutheran will hold two (2) Christmas

Eve services at 3 and 9 PM.

The 3 p.m. service is a family service or for those who do not wish to drive at night.

Preludes will begin at 2:30 p.m.

Join us for Communion at both services and Candlelighting at the 9 p.m. service.

Preludes will begin at 8:45 p.m.

Special Music will be at both services. Let us celebrate our Savior's birth!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Adelynn Hoffman
- 3 James Benner, Harold Swavely
- 4 Emily Barr
- 6 Stephen Hoffman
- 7 James Barton
- 12 Marvin Steward
- 15 Donna Haas
- 16 Bristol Ziegler
- 20 Carolyn Hoffman* (1937)
- 22 Ava Novotny
- 25 William Roberts
- 26 Carole Soffa
- 28 Jennifer Lowery-Bomboy
- 29 Jeffrey Aston, Callie Hummel
- 30 Justin Shaner
- 31 Gerry Flicker, Shannon (Hoffman) Sminkey

Prayer Concerns

Prayer Chain Initiator: June Herb 610-754-7841 or e-mail: JuneRose56@aol.com

Kemember

NOTE: Names on the prayer list remain on for one month, unless someone notifies June or the office to remain on longer.

Health & Healing:

Anthony and Grady - sons of Amy Fluke's friend

Keith Barrows - friend of Cheryl Barr

Pat Gabel – Bob's wife

Hannah – friend of Denise Hoffman

Heather – daughter of Kathy Romich/cousin of Lisa Hevdt

Charlie Hoffman

Charlie Houser – 10 yr. old grandson of Dorothy

Houser

Crystal Hughes - Friend of Laurie Stofflet

Roberta Korsak

Elsie Krall – Lisa Heydt's mother

Addie Lorah – newborn daughter of a friend of

Lindsey Mason

Otto Nuss – Nancy Folk's brother/member of CLC Polly Orner

Pr. Jennifer Phelps – former member at CLC

Rosalie Seasholtz – Melissa Seasholtz's mother-in-law

Mona Serfass - friend of Cheryl Barr

Todd (Scrufty) Slonaker – cousin of Gerry Flicker and Denise Hoffman

Marvin Steward

Tiffany - Nancy Fioriglio's cousin's daughter

Elaine Wolfe – friend of Linda Hoffman

Death (Family and Friends of...):

Charlie Orner (10/23)

Nephew of Pat Moser's daughter's friend, Kathy (10/24) Gerald Eisenhart - friend of Dorothy Willing (11/12)

<u>Military Deployed to Conflict Area/Serving in the</u> Military*:

Owen Dietrich – cousin of Lindsey (Riegner) Mason; Anthony Lester – friend of Lindsey (Riegner) Mason; Dustin Lowery – Jennifer Lowery-Bomboy's nephew; Quinn Mason - Lindsey (Riegner) Mason's stepson; Matthew and Joseph Schwenk - nephews of Amy Eichinger; Nathan Powell – son of a friend of Amy Fluke

> *If you know someone that is deployed or serving, please contact June or the church office to put them back on the list. Thank

Homebound Members of Christ Lutheran Church:

*For current addresses of our Homebound, please contact the church office.

Gerald Flicker (Grandview Manor in Fleetwood); Dorothy Willing (Frederick Living/Cedarwood); Sue Bendinsky (Chestnut Knoll)



Mercy Ministry:

Chershe Derr, Chairperson

CHRISTMAS

Christmas Card Exchange

SHARING CHRISTMAS
GREETINGS WITH CHURCH
FRIENDS HELPS FUND MERCY
MINISTRY PROJECTS

The annual Christmas Card Exchange begins **Sunday**, **November 30**. Place Christmas cards, addressed to congregation members, in the box in the Parlor. Then put the amount you saved on postage in a pew envelope and mark it "Christmas Card Exchange." Cards will be sorted by the Mercy Ministry committee. Don't forget to stop in the Parlor to pick up your cards!





Flip for Ronald

Little aluminum flip top soda pop tabs can add up to dollars for the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. Tabs can be placed in the plastic container on counter on the Narthex.

Redner's Save-a-Tape: Social Ministry is still collecting Redner's Save-a-Tape BUT when submitting your receipts, I have to have the bottom part that says "Today's Contribution - \$XX.xx" or Save-a-Tape with the dollar figure. Without this on the bottom, Redner's will not give us the 1% back. So, all you need to do is get a Save-A-Tape card from Redners, go shopping at Redner's and deposit your complete receipt in the box in the narthex. Redner's will send us a check for 1% of the receipts! It's that easy! Any questions, please contact Shirley Deery at (610) 367-0548.

Salvation Army Christmas Food Boxes

During these difficult times, let us not forget our local food banks and donate to the Salvation Army during December.

This food drive will benefit their **Christmas**Food Boxes (donations accepted through December 7), as well as stocking their food pantry. All types of canned goods or other non-perishable food items are needed. Items especially needed are as follows: canned vegetables, stuffing mix, instant potatoes, canned sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, mac and cheese dinners,

soups, canned chicken or tuna, cereal and

pancake mix.

Donations of **hams** or turkeys for the Christmas Food Boxes may also be donated, and again should be taken directly to the Salvation Army because of the need for refrigeration. Please deliver to Salvation Army directly by December 8. If this is a problem, please contact Kay Barr. They ask that you please do not donate outdated items. All donated items will go to help people in need throughout the Boyertown Area.

Please place items in designated boxes
located near the water cooler just outside
the Welcome Center. Thank you!
Let us help our neighbors in need especially
this year!



MERCY MINISTRY will NOT be participating in the Salvation Army Bell Ringing this year.

Important Notice: ANNUAL REPORT

Committee and Staff Reports are due into the office by Monday, January 4.

SAVE THE DATE!

2026 Sportsman's Dinner to be held on Saturday, January 17, 2026.

More details to follow but we expect this dinner to be bigger and better than last year's!

Membership Directory Update Form

Please complete this form if you have not done so previously. This form gives permission to publicize a member's e-mail and/or cell phone number in the Membership Directory that is published in January each year. Forms are on the table in the narthex. Please complete and return to the office by Friday, December 12, if you wish to have either/both included in next year's directory. Please place a completed form in Melissa's mailbox. Thank you.



The Staff of Christ Lutheran Church:

Pastor Matt, Melissa Seasholtz, and Deb Matthews wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Highlights from the September 23, 2025 Council Meeting:

- 1. 2026 Proposed Church Budget: Most numbers are similar to the 2025 budget. The proposal includes a 3% staff increase. Must wait until October when the health insurance rates are properly reflected. We are exploring different options for deepening our partnership with St. Pauls. A motion was made by Roxanne Fox and seconded by Bob Heydt. Motion passed.
- 2. Congregational Meeting: Scheduled for November 9. All in agreement. Date will be published.
- 3. Loan of the Chimes: Joe DiCindio teaches music and would like to borrow the chimes for kids from 6-8th graders not as delicate as bells with gloves, etc. A motion was made by Danny Knaub and seconded by Dave Fioriglio. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Terrapact: Bob Heydt will try to contact them
- 2. Safe Training: Dave Fioriglio will review the policy; The endowment committee can divert the leftover money (\$377.86) to either the Lutheran Disaster Response or through Thrivent for Texas Flood Relief. A motion was made by Danny Knaub and seconded by Bob Heydt. Motion passed.
- 3. Vitality Survey kickoff on September 28th

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approval requested for \$1,734 for Reed Sign Company. Motion by Dave Fioriglio, seconded by Pat Moser. Motion passed, with Bob Heydt abstaining.

Respectfully submitted, Dawn Sandoval Council Secretary

Highlights from the October 28, 2025 Council Meeting:

- 1. 2026 Proposed Budget: motion to send to congregational meeting, Danny Knaub, Roxanne Fox, second. Motion approved.
- 2. Safe Place Policy update, changed to account for updates to PA law governing volunteering with children. Please take a look at draft and suggest edits for next month.
- 3. Vitality Survey Results: schedule call with Pr. Linda Mason
- 4. November Council Meeting Date Change: Monday November 17

OLD BUSINESS:

1. TerraPact Update: Steve spoke with TerraPact representative. They would like to see updated lease agreement with Windstream.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Church Mutual sent an email to the church asking for reports from the church.
- 2. New Council members for 2026. Dawn will not be able to serve again. Gerry is ineligible to serve another term. Roxanne and Dave can serve another term. Will reach out to some potential members.
- 3. Vacation time, November 24-26.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Matthew Finney, Pastor



Remembering our **Homebound* Members** and those in **Assisted Living** or **Retirement Communities**this Christmas season:

Sue Bendinsky

Chestnut Knoll, MC 120 W. 5th Street Boyertown PA 19512

Gerald Flicker*

Grandview Manor (Room 34) 129 Houck Road Fleetwood PA 19522

Shirley Himmelberger

286 Pilgert Street Alburtis PA 18011-2436

Hilda Kolb*

2849 Big Road, Room 1309B Zieglerville PA 19492

Sharon Moser

Chestnut Knoll, Room 102 120 W. 5th Street Boyertown PA 19512

Polly Orner*

The Village at LifeQuest, Apt. 317 2100 Cherry Blossom Lane Quakertown PA 18951

Dorothy Willing

2849 Big Road, Cedarwood Zieglerville PA 19492



MEMBERSHIP AT CHRIST LUTHERAN

VISITORS are always welcome to the Table!

MEMBERS (two types): Voting & Non-voting

The only way you can ever be removed from the membership roll at Christ Lutheran, or any ELCA congregation:

- You request a transfer
- You ask to be removed
 - You depart this life

VOTING members must make a record of having:

- Filled out a communion card and received the Lord's Supper ONE time per year
- Contributed ONE time per year, making sure your name or envelope number is included.



Sunday, December 14th, 3-6 pm

Christ Lutheran Church, Niantic 222 Niantic Rd. Barto, Pa 19504

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*

Join us for an uplifting evening of classic Christmas carols performed by the talented pianist Jill Watkins, followed by a heartwarming visit with Santa and Mrs. Clause.

While you're here, indulge in the sweet treats of homemade Christmas cookies, lovingly made by members of our church community.



	Current Period	Year to Date	YTD Prior Year	
INCOME				
CONTRIBUTIONS	\$6,296.78	\$95,938.53	\$102,485.79	
OTHER FUND CONTRIBUTIONS	674.00	7,891.84	6,337.02	
INVESTMENT INCOME	0.00	978.26	1,646.57	
OTHER INCOME	0.00	(18.65)	0.00	
TOTAL INCOME	6,970.78	104,789.98	110,469.38	
EXPENSES				
SALARIES		**2		
PASTORAL MINISTRY	\$7,857.68	\$46,229.05	\$45,210.20	
OTHER STAFF	4,859.75	36,344.32	33,296.68	
Subtotal Salaries	12,717.43	82,573.37	78,506.88	
WORSHIP				
MUSIC	274.35	1,171.77	1,321.39	
ORGAN & PIANO MAINTENANCE	324.00	324.00	300.00	
WORSHIP SUPPLIES	160.00	2,796.90	2,606.39	
Subtotal Worship	758.35	4,292.67	4,227.78	
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION				
CURRICULUM MATERIALS	19.99	19.99	34.76	
Subtotal Christian Education	19.99	19.99	34.76	
OTHER MINISTRIES	0.00	261.00	204.00	
SOCIAL MINISTRY/OUTREACH	60.08.08			
COMMUNITY SERVICE AGENCY	0.00	51.42	0.00	
ADVERTISING EXPENSE STEWARDSHIP	27.13	215.07	265.00	
INTERNET EXPENSES	0.00 347.12	523.78	400.02	
Subtotal Social Ministry/outreach	374.25	3,504.44	2,782.45	
	374.23	4,294.71	3,447.47	
CHURCH ADMINISTRATION	000.40			
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	228.18	2,002.44	1,707.94	
	66.99	1,035.24	632.88	
Subtotal Church Administration	295.17	3,037.68	2,340.82	
BUILDING OPERATIONS				
HEAT, ELECTRIC & GAS	370.30	13,820.12	10,376.91	
CLEANING SUPPLIES	680.00	4,402.19	3,723.73	
REAL ESTATE TAX	0.00	143.84	139.56	
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	2,523.00	11,409.86	20,452.92	
Subtotal Building Operations	3,573.30	29,776.01	34,693.12	
INSURANCE	2,379.25	9,543.00	7,682.00	
FUND EXPENSES	0.00	21,748.77	7,849.36	
TOTAL EXPENSES	20,117.74	155,547.20	138,986.19	
EXCESS INCOME/EXPENSES	(\$13,146.96)	(\$50,757.22)	(\$28,516.81)	
¥				

Respectfully submitted Lucan Hitchilan

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Worship:

9:00 a.m. ~ The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month and on all festivals.

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Matthew Finney ~ <u>clcpastor@windstream.net</u>
Minister of Music: Deborah Matthews ~ debmatth@comcast.net

Administrative Assistant: Melissa Seasholtz ~ christluthchurch@windstream.net

2025 Congregational Council

President: Steve Novotny Vice President: Dave Fioriglio
Secretary: Dawn Sandoval Treasurer: Sue Hoffman**
Assistant Treasurer: Nancy Fioriglio** Financial Treasurer: Kathy Watts**

e-mail: clcfinancial@windstream.net

Gerry Flicker ☑ Keith Folk ☑ Roxanne Fox

Bob Heydt ☑ Danny Knaub Roberta Korsak

(**non-council member / +youth member / ✓ second term)

Ministry Assistants for December 2025

	Acolyte	Lector	Communion Assist	Assistant Minister	Ushers/Greeters
December 7 9:00 a.m.	*	Donna Menear	Sue Hoffman	Terry Flicker	*
December 14 9:00 a.m.	*	Bob Heydt		Terry Flicker	Jennifer and Kevin Bomboy
December 21 9:00 a.m.	Tenley Willman	Nancy Fioriglio		Denise Hoffman	Shirley and Merle Deery
Christmas Eve, December 24 3:00 p.m.	Tenley Willman	Tori Willman	*	*	The Willman Family
9:00 p.m.	Luke Moser Gio Sandoval Jackson Moser	Heather Moser	Heather Moser	Denise Hoffman	Ginnie Wilkinson and *
December 28 9:00 a.m.	*	Diane Houck		*	Gerry Flicker and *

Altar Guild: December 7: Shirley Deery; December 14: Gio and Dawn Sandoval;

December 21: Tenley and Tori Willman;

December 24 (3 p.m.): Tenley and Tori Willman;

December 24 (9 p.m.): Gio and Dawn Sandoval; December 28: Chershe Derr

Counting Team: TEAM D - Jim Barr (capt.); Norm Hoffman, Sue Hoffman, Gerry Flicker

*Help needed – contact the church office if you can help. Thank you.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Pecember 2025						
	1	2	3 12 noon Brown Bag Bible Study 7:00 Sr. Choir	4	5 10 AM – 1 PM Pr. Matt's Office Hours	6
7 Second Sunday of Advent 8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 9:00 Worship / Holy Communion 10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 10:00 Confirmation (room I)	6:30 Property (W/C)	9 *January Niantic News Articles are ຈັປປີ 9:30 Quilt Tying (S/H) 11:30 Meet in parking lot to carpool to Peppe's for Lutheran Ladies Lunch at 12 noon 7:00 Book Club (W/C)	10 12 noon Brown Bag Bible Study 7:00 Sr. Choir	11	10 AM – 1 PM Pr. Matt's Office Hours	13
14 Third Sunday of Advent	15	16	17	18	19	00
8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 10:00 Confirmation (room I) 10:00 Decorating for Christmas 3–6 p.m. Church Christmas Open House	6:30 Council (parlor)	*ALL info for Christmas Eve and Dec. 28 bulletins are DUE into the office.	12 noon Brown Bag Bible Study 7:00 Sr. Choir		10 AM – 1 PM Pr. Matt's Office Hours	20
21 Fourth Sunday of Advent 8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 10:00 Confirmation (room I)	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Services: 3 PM Communion (2:45 p.m Preludes begin) 9 PM Communion / Candlelight (8:30 p.m Preludes begin)	Merry Christmas! Office Closed - Holiday	Office closed. Melissa Vacation	27
28 Lessons & Carols	29	30	31	January 1	January 2	January 3
8:30 Coffee & Conversation (W/C) 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee & Conversation (W/C)	Office closed machine will be	d. Melissa Vacation ~ Ma be checked.	New Year's Eve il and answering	Office Closed New Year's Day!		