

D E C E M B E R 2 0 2 0

# The Suburban Connection

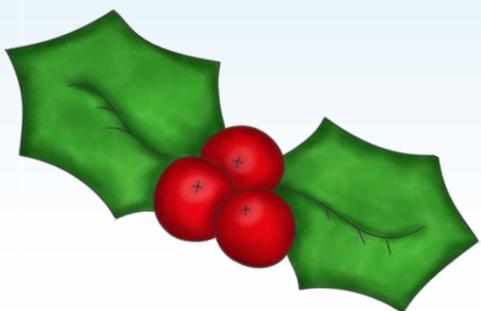
5132 Bellamy Manor Drive, VA Beach, VA 23464 www.sccvb.org Phone: 757.495.0352 Email: info@sccvb.org

## Operation Christmas Child GO Shoe Box Gift Goal Surpassed!

First of all, THANK YOU to everyone who donated items to fill the shoe box gifts and money to help ship them all over the world! You can still donate money online at [samaritanspurse.org/occ](http://samaritanspurse.org/occ).

Secondly, thank you to those who came to help stuff the shoe boxes with the donated items. Things were very different this year and that they all got filled and prayed over, even if by just a few people, was a wonderful showing of dedication and love for Christ. We filled **574** shoe box gifts from SCC.

Thirdly, the National Drop Off Week was held again at Suburban for Operation Christmas Child. continued inside



### Save the Date!

**Decorate Sanctuary**  
**December 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
10:00am

**Family Movie Night**  
**December 11<sup>th</sup>**  
6:00 pm  
Fellowship Hall

**Christmas Eve**  
**December 24<sup>th</sup>**  
Candlelight  
communion at  
6:00 pm in the  
Sanctuary

# Two Sacrifices to Contemplate During Christmas

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Michael Horton says in his book *Core Christianity*, that the Old Testament law provided for two distinct types of sacrifice: a sacrifice for guilt and a sacrifice for thanksgiving. These are the two sacrifices I want us to think about this Christmas season.

## 1. The Sacrifice for Guilt

This is a sacrifice that only Jesus could offer. There was no sacrifice sinful humans could offer to God that would remove our guilt and condemnation. Only the sinless son of God could do this. The whole sacrificial system of the Old testament pointed to the moment when God would send his son Jesus Christ to bear the curse for our sin and bring an end to all other sacrifices. The death of Jesus Christ dealt with more than just our subjective feelings of guilt. His sacrifice removed God's objective condemnation of guilty sinners. Paul says in Romans 8:3 that God condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering therefore (Rom. 8:1) there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. It is in the sending of the SON (Christmas) that the sacrifice for guilty sinners, like me and you, was provided by a merciful God.

## 2. The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

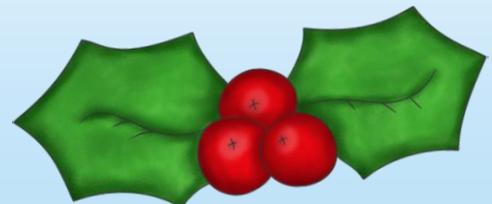
The sacrifice of thanksgiving is our response to a gracious and merciful God who sent his Son to be the sacrifice for our sin and guilt. Hebrews 13:12-16 describes this order of Jesus first offering himself as a sacrifice for our sin and then our worshipful response to him with a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. "Therefore, Jesus also suffered outside the gate, so that he might sanctify the people by his own blood... Therefore, through him let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name."

In Romans 12:1 Paul describes our sacrifice of worship in response to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sin and guilt. "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true worship."

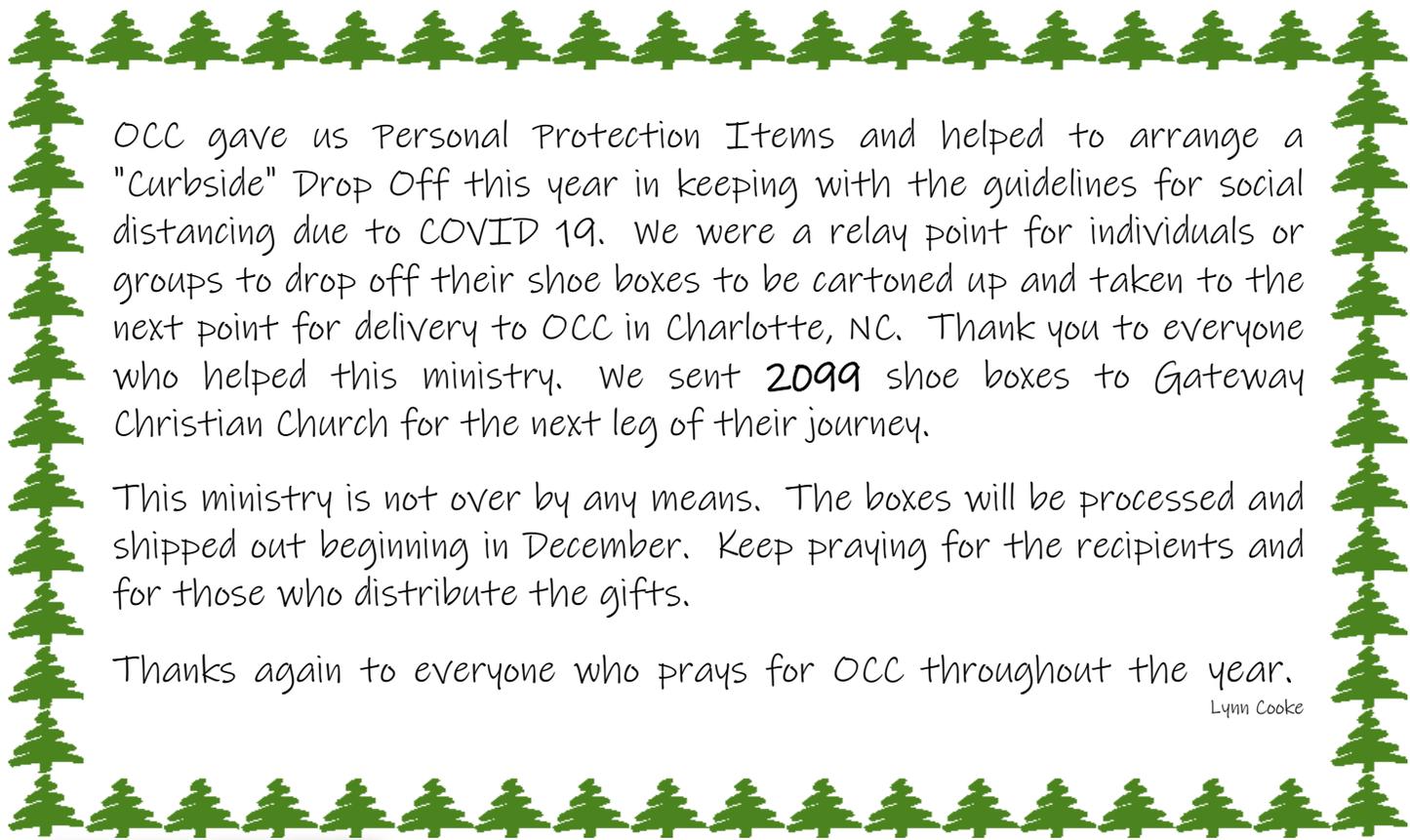
As Horton says, "We no longer have to live for God's approval, or the approval of others, God has accepted us in his Son. You don't have to "become somebody" because you ARE somebody, a co-heir of Jesus Christ. We are now to live as those who belong to Jesus Christ, we are free once again to be thankful, to offer ourselves as living sacrifices of praise rather than dead sacrifices of guilt."

May we this Christmas season rest fully in the sacrifice that Jesus Christ offered to remove the condemnation from us guilty sinners. And may we offer to him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as we serve others and speak of his love and mercy.

Merry Christmas,  
Pastor Todd



# OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD Continued from front page



OCC gave us Personal Protection Items and helped to arrange a "Curbside" Drop Off this year in keeping with the guidelines for social distancing due to COVID 19. We were a relay point for individuals or groups to drop off their shoe boxes to be cartoned up and taken to the next point for delivery to OCC in Charlotte, NC. Thank you to everyone who helped this ministry. We sent **2099** shoe boxes to Gateway Christian Church for the next leg of their journey.

This ministry is not over by any means. The boxes will be processed and shipped out beginning in December. Keep praying for the recipients and for those who distribute the gifts.

Thanks again to everyone who prays for OCC throughout the year.

Lynn Cooke



## Food Pantry Ministry



We are excited to report that we were able to feed 8 families Thanksgiving dinner because of your generous donations throughout the year. Whenever we have had a need, you have generously blessed the food pantry by meeting those weekly needs and donating funds to purchase holiday meals for families in need. Some weeks, we are provided fresh produce (which is a huge blessing) to share with the families who come on a regular basis. Thank you to all of our weekly volunteers who come to pack bags, organize donations, and pray for this ministry.

## SCC Church Staff



Rev. C. Todd Haynes  
Senior Pastor



Sally Harden  
Director of Youth Ministries



Sarah Nelapaty  
Director of Children's Ministries



### MISSION: WHY DO WE EXIST?

To glorify God, by making disciples of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

### VISION: WHAT WILL THAT LOOK LIKE?

- A growing faith in God
- A growing love for God
- A growing love for others

### ACTION: HOW WILL THIS HAPPEN?

- Drawing near to God
- Pursuing community
- Reaching our world

Visit us on Facebook! Search for "Suburban Christian Church" on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

We want to hear from you! Contact us at [newsletter@sccvb.org](mailto:newsletter@sccvb.org)

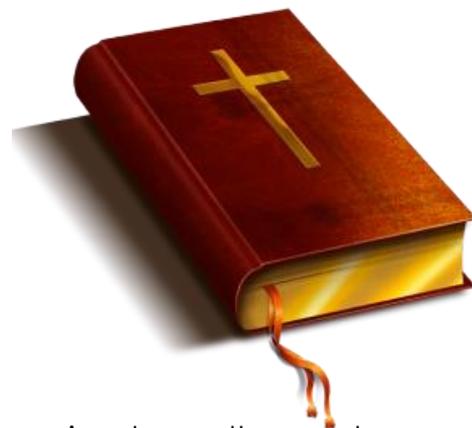
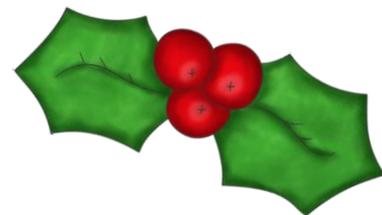
## Sunday School News

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth,” John 1: 1, 14*

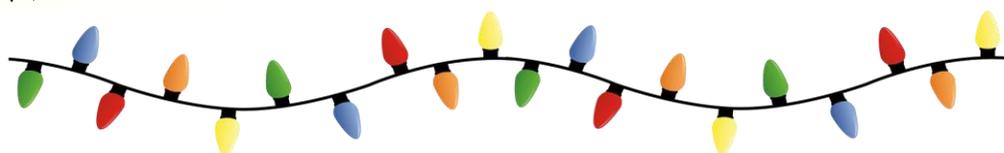
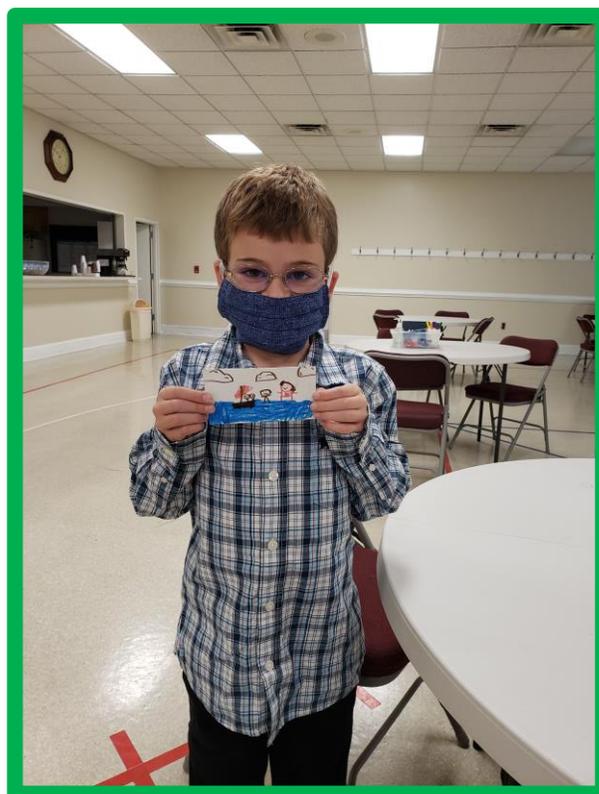
Our teen Sunday school meets upstairs with Sally, Sam Settle and Anna Super. They have been studying “Truth” – how to discern it and how to live by it; and finding Jesus to be THE truth. Our living, true Word is always present to guide, direct and help us. Because Jesus was made human like us, He understands when we fail and fall and is always ready to forgive and restore us to fellowship with Him.

As we enter this season of celebrating the mystery of God coming to earth as a human baby, we want to focus on His glory and grace in coming to rescue us. Family Sunday school will move into the book of Acts and learn how Jesus continued to build His church. On December 20 we will stop to celebrate Jesus’ birth with a (socially distanced) party and special activities. What a great and compassionate God we serve! Please come and join us as we worship, learn, and grow during our Sunday school time.

Jan Grills



During our Thanksgiving service, someone mentioned our Sunday School program how they are thankful for the teachers and those who pour themselves into the Sunday School program. They said, “I told my children and grandchildren about Jesus and who He is, but it is also because of this program that they have come to know who Jesus is and about His love.”



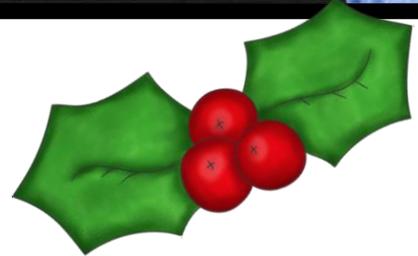
## Kristen Keller Update

Dear Suburban Missions Committee,  
Thank you for your continued support. I'm so grateful for your church's commitment to what the Lord is doing among the nations. Here are some specific ways to pray along with me! Thank you, again!  
Kristen Keller



### Prayer Calendar for Kristen

- Sunday: Pray for Book studies to begin
- Monday: Pray for protection and for spiritual strongholds to be broken
- Tuesday: Pray for community leaders to have open hearts
- Wednesday: Pray for people of peace
- Thursday: Pray for people to have dreams and visions
- Friday: Pray for friendships with Cloud women
- Saturday: Pray for artists and musicians to know Truth and tell the story



*His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward Him and find Him – though he is not far from anyone of us. Acts 17:27*

## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 24, 2020 at 6:00 P.M.

No other service compares to the glow of candlelight and the holy hush of worship on Christmas Eve.

## Fall Family Festival Update

### Another Fall Festival success!!

Despite living in a time where masks hide smiles, social distancing is not only a catch phrase but a mandate and hugs or handshakes are a thing of the past, our Fall Festival was a success. We were blessed with lots of donations, volunteers, and hand sanitizer in order to provide a safe alternative to door to door trick or treating. We even had a few kids from our Good News Club attend! That in itself is a blessing! I saw a few young faces that I haven't seen in what seems like ages and I saw some moms praying over each other. We had good weather (some would say it was chilly!) along with a blue moon to end the evening. We substituted our bouncy houses for an inflatable movie screen that can be used by all of our ministries for years to come. It was a real treat to watch It's The Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown with the kids.

Thank you to Andrea Hoover for being a co-collaborator, Sally Harden for taking over the daunting task of setting up the outside movie experience with ease, Hollice and his group for cooking, and to all our volunteers on games and set up/tear down duty. You are all a blessing to this church and our community!

Carol Brooks



## WE WILL MISS YOU – THANK YOU FOR SERVING AT SUBURBAN!



Rohit and Sarah Nelapaty have been part of our Suburban family for many years. A few years ago, they moved to North Carolina. Even though the distance was over an hour, they rose early every Sunday morning to drive to Virginia Beach for church. Sarah was the Children's Ministry Director for two years, and Rohit was part of the praise team for over ten years. Their faithfulness has been a huge encouragement for us all, especially this year. With their children growing up, they felt God was leading them to find a church nearby so they could be more involved during the week. When God leads, His people must follow with faith. So, with sad but loving hearts, we are "letting go" and know that God is going to use them to encourage and be a light for Him.

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*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,  
give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the  
will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

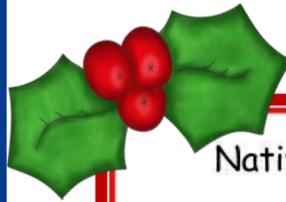
*1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

# Nativity Word Search

C A N O I T A V L A S D N S H S  
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 R A T S A M T S I R H C T E J S  
 N E M E S I W S H E E P I G O E  
 J G N I K M A R Y G I U V N S J  
 M O S Y I H X Q U R Q W I A E T  
 D O N K E Y R E G N A M T D P M  
 Z I L I N N K E E P E R Y O H F



angels  
 Christmas  
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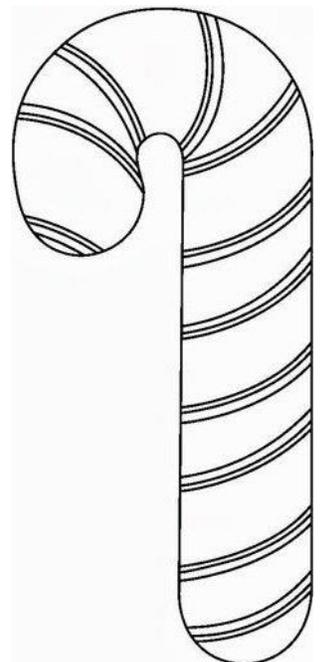
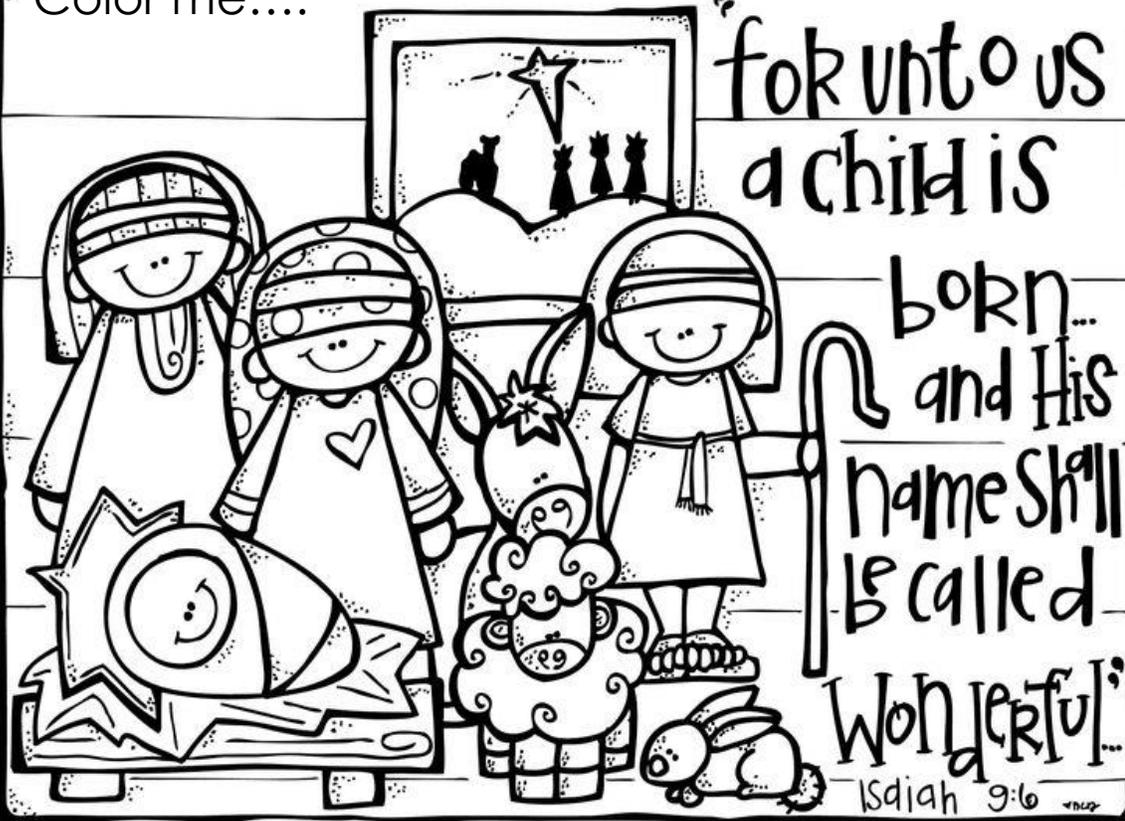
## Nativity Word Scramble

1. STRA      -----
2. MAGREN      -----
3. MYAR      -----
4. SEPHE      -----
5. DOEYKN      -----
6. AEGLN      -----
7. JPHOES      -----
8. JSSEU      -----
9. KIGSN      -----
10. STBALE      -----

All these words come from the Christmas story. Can you unscramble them?



Color me....



## A.J. and Barbara Hensley Update

Pastor Todd and Church,  
Thank you for your letter. We would like to take this time to apologize to each of you for not keeping in touch. So, let me take some time to catch you up. My cancer has been treated with surgery, radiation, and hormone shots and as of 2 months ago, my check-up shows no cancer in my body. Barbara's health is good. But right now, I am dealing with a broken ankle, so Barb needs to be in good shape to take care of me.

The Seminary was going great until the virus put a hold on everything. We were in Florida waiting to travel to Brazil in March when the travel ban was put into effect. So now all the classes for 2020 have been cancelled, but we have been able to do one virtual class that was viewed in Africa and Brazil. We have been able to use this down time to be in contact with our professors here in the states and our students in Brazil and Africa to make plans for 2021.

Our plans are for 20 classes in 2021. We are waiting for the all clear and medication to be available so our professors and us can travel. Our plans are to go to Brazil and Africa. Yes, we have branched out to Africa during this down time. God is in control and He is keeping us moving even though we are standing still.

We are praying about coming to see all of you as soon as possible. Let us know when you all are comfortable for us to come visit.

In His Service,  
A.J. and Barb



mark  your **Calendar**

Since A.J. and Barbara's response to the Suburban Christian Church Missions Committee letter, Pastor Todd has been in contact with A.J. and plans have been made for them to be with us during the worship service on **Sunday, January 24th**, to update us on the ministry in Brazil and the new ministry of the Seminary.

## Belong Women's Ministry

Wow! What a year! It has been a while since we have met together because of COVID-19. We had planned the Outer Banks retreat and God had different plans. The Belong Gang met with the goal of rescheduling the retreat and planning our next Belong get together, but God kept saying "not now." So, we are waiting – waiting for God's direction and for Him to continue to teach us. What is He trying to teach you? Moreover, do you have a teachable spirit?

Being teachable is not so much about how much you know, it is the desire to listen, learn, and apply. It is the desire to grow. It is the willingness to learn, unlearn, and then relearn. Sometimes this takes God saying, "not now" and having an attitude of patience and obedience, which is something I struggle with. We become teachable when our desire to receive wisdom is greater than our desire for comfort.

Do we have a willingness to be instructed? Are we humble enough to receive wisdom from the Lord and from others? At times, we all become unteachable and refuse sound advice. The real truth is that during those times, we would prefer to change the rules rather than comply. However, that never brings us to a place of blessing; rather, it damages/harms our lives just as Scripture says, "Pride comes before a fall."

We must realize that a deeper Christian life requires us to crucify the flesh, take up our cross and follow Jesus. It requires active pursuit in seeking, listening to, and obeying the Scriptures. As we humble ourselves, we are stripped of pride and our hearts become soft and teachable, yearning more for intimacy with the Father.

Proverbs 8: 32-36 says, "**Now therefore, listen to me, my children, for blessed are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favor from the Lord; but he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death.**" Scripture emphasizes the importance of listening to God. Often, we ignore His voice, His warnings, and even His vivid red flags because we refuse to listen. If we are not listening, we are not learning, and if we are not learning, we are not growing. The cycle never stops, and we cannot be teachable until we stop what we're doing and begin to watch, wait, listen, and obey.

Do we really have a burning desire to be taught? Do we honor and respect wisdom from a "**multitude of counselors?**" (Proverbs 15:22) Are we diligently seeking God's best in our lives, refusing to compromise our integrity and character? Are we motivated to becoming wise and applying this wisdom to our lives? Are we learning from our past mistakes, refusing to keep falling into the same traps?

If we find ourselves lacking the desire to learn from God and others, it is usually because we have lost our first love and need a fresh revelation of who He is and how much He loves us, along with a healthy dose of fear of the Lord. Having a healthy fear of God is key: "**Who is the man that fears the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way he chooses.**" (Psalm 25:12)

Yes, God is at work. He is trying to teach us that He is in control of everything and if we humble ourselves and surrender, His plans are always best.

Listening with you,  
Wendy Haynes



## Saturday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast and Bible Study

The Saturday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast and Bible Study sessions are conducted on the first and third Saturdays, **meeting in December on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>**. Breakfast begins at 8:00 AM and the Bible Study begins at 8:30 AM.

December will usher in a study of the **Book of Ephesians**, Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus. It is one of Paul's Prison Epistles (letters written while Paul was under house arrest in Rome, about 60-62 AD) and was written to present the Good News of blessing through Jesus Christ and to encourage believers to continue to walk as His faithful followers and serve in unity and love, even in the midst of hardships and troubles. He instructed Christians to "stand firm" and to "put on the whole armor of God." The book deals with topics at the very core of what it means to be a Christian and hits on a wide range of moral and ethical behaviors.

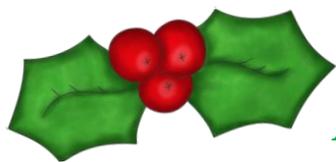


The December 5<sup>th</sup> session will feature introductions to the Book and a photographic tour of the ancient city of Ephesus as it was in Paul's day. It was a large and magnificent city as its extensive ruins attest.

**The Men's Prayer Breakfast and Bible Study is open to men of all ages; church members and non-members.** It is an outstanding opportunity for the study of God's Word, for prayer and for fellowship.

A home-made breakfast of eggs (fried and scrambled), pancakes, bacon, sausage, grits, sausage gravy, biscuits, fruit medley, orange juice, and coffee begins in the Fellowship Hall at 8:00 AM and is followed at 8:30 with Bible Study and prayer. It concludes by about 9:15 AM, leaving plenty of time for most Saturday morning obligations.





AWANA Ministry

# Suburban Kids

Club has been a lot of fun this past month. We have introduced games again in a different fashion. The clubbers are enjoying about learning to be thankful and grateful with their many blessings. We also donated food to the SCC Pantry and toys, hats, and gloves to OCC this past month.

Liz Bonnett



## Music Notes

We do not know yet what will happen about a choir. So far, we are still in Stage III for prevention of the spread of COVID 19. This means that the guidelines are to "suspend" choirs until further notice.

We cannot safely rehearse together without masks and social distancing, so the idea of a full choir is impossible at this time. However, if you are interested in singing in a small group, please let me know. We are thinking we may be able to restart a limited choir in February if all goes well with vaccines and infection rates.

During the month of December, we will have Christmas Carols sung by a small group to help the congregation celebrate the season.

I've missed working with you and look forward to the time when we can be together again.

Lynn Cooke, 424-9869

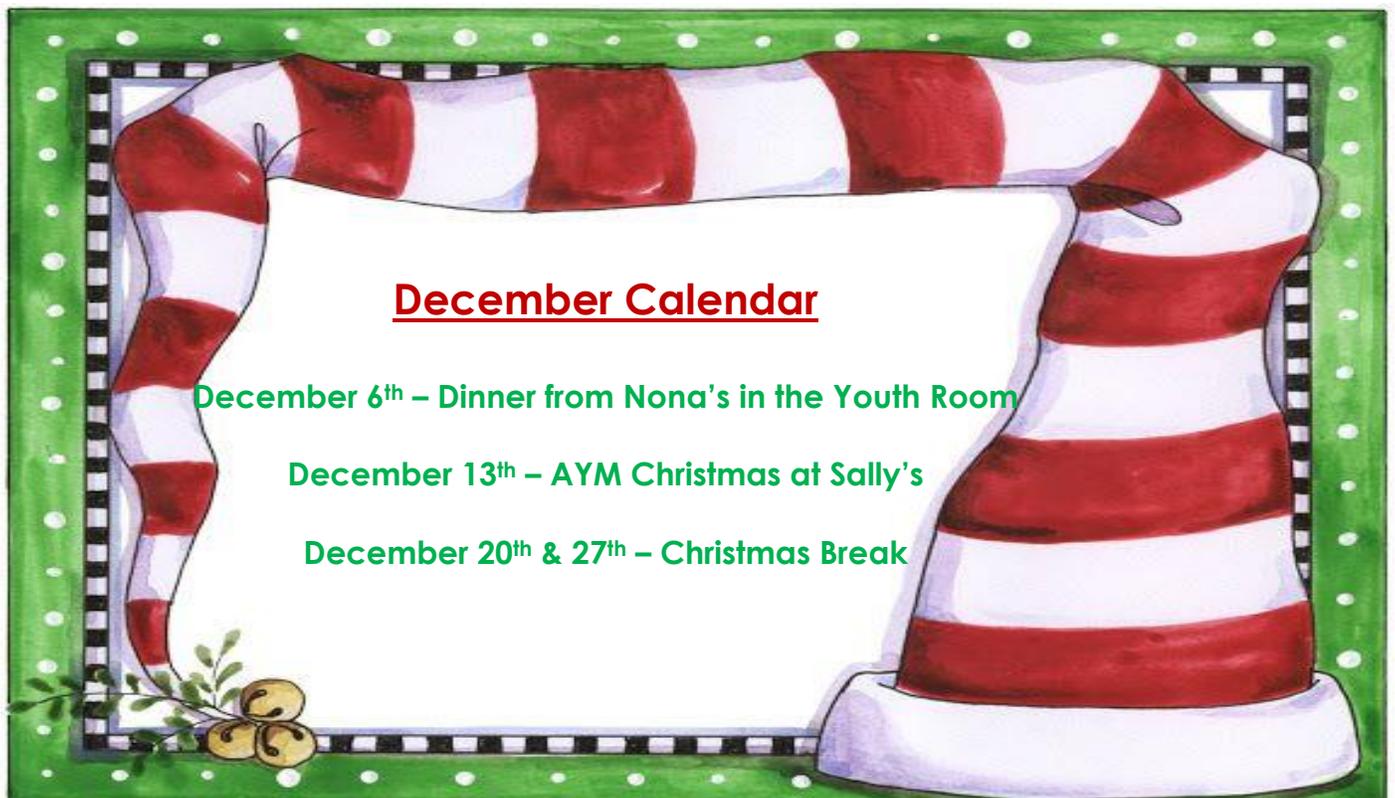


## Merry Christmas

## Ambassador Youth Ministry



AYM on Sunday nights



## Mother's Day Out Update

After considering all the aspects necessary to be in place to open our doors in January, we have come to the conclusion that we are unable to do so at this time. We ask your prayers for our staff and the children that we are looking forward to serving again in September. We need wisdom to know how best to prepare for reopening at the beginning of this coming school year.

Suburban  
Kids



## A Little Christmas Hymn History

It is one of the most exuberant carols that we sing. It is one of the most popular carols that we sing. It is also one of the most beloved carols that we sing. And yet, as you will learn today, it is not actually a carol at all. In fact, though we sing and treat it this way, it is not even a song about Christmas; at least, not as its author intended. The song in question is none other than Isaac Watt's famous work *Joy To the World*.

If the father of medicine was Hippocrates and the father of the telephone was Alexander Graham Bell, then the father of English hymns was none other than Isaac Watts. Having penned a massive collection of over 750 hymns, Watts' work is still being printed in books, projected onto screens, and sung by Christians worldwide.

Isaac Watts was born in 1674, in South Hampton England. Raised in a deeply religious family, Watts' earliest memories were of his father's concrete convictions about religious liberty. Watts Sr. even spent time in prison on two separate occasions for his outspoken Nonconformist views. (Rather than conforming to the Church of England, Nonconformists were typically Presbyterians or Baptists who wanted to worship in a government-free church.) Isaac Watt' parents saw to it that their love for Christ and His word were passed on to their son.

As a child, Watts showed remarkable propensity for rhyme, much to his father's chagrin. After the family prayer time, one day, the sober minded elder Watts confronted his young son about why he had opened his eyes mid-prayer. The boy Watts creatively explained that he had been distracted, saying, "*A little mouse for want of stairs, ran up a rope to say its prayers.*" Unamused by his son's rhyming reply and wanting to discourage such juvenile behavior, his father spanked him for it. To which Watts cried out, "*O father, father pity take, and I will no more verses make.*"

No amount of spankings, though, could drive his love of verse, rhyme, poetry, and music from his heart. His education eventually led him to pastor a large independent church in London. He quickly earned a reputation for his oratory and preaching skills even becoming a private tutor helping train other preachers in the city. Throughout his years of ministry, Watts obsessively sought to put his Christian affections and convictions on paper so that other could join him in heartfelt worship and song.

Continued on next page. . .

## Joy to the World continued . . .

Believe it or not Watts' work, in his day, was not always well received. You see, Watts was boldly introducing (what was for his time, contemporary) "praise and worship" songs into the life of the church. (Think of Isaac Watts as the Chris Tomlin or Matt Papa of his day.) Up until that point, the song selection in most Protestant churches was limited almost exclusively to the Psalms. John Calvin, during the Reformation, had translated the Psalms into the common language of his people (French) so that they could be sung corporately. Many English-speaking churches followed in his pattern. When Watts came along, though, he began introducing extra-biblical poetry into his songs. To some, this was anathema. To others, it was a breath of fresh air.

Watts' lyrical goal, as one author put it, was to wed "emotional subjectivity" and "doctrinal objectivity." Songs such as *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, *Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed*, *I Sing the Mighty Power of God* and *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* were a blend of personal reflection and emotional reaction couched in rich theological convictions. His songs put the old wine of faith into the new wineskins of English rhyme and poetry. Isaac Watts was giving new life to church worship.

Like Calvin did for the people of his day, Watts also published a work in 1719 that was a translation or rewriting of the Psalms for congregational singing. The hymnbook was entitled (it's long, so prepare yourself), *The Psalms of David: Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Applied to the Christian State and Worship*. In other words, Watts read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament and wrote his Psalm-book to explicitly point to the person and work of Christ. In that collection, you will find Watts' rewriting of Psalm 98. It is familiarly entitled *Joy to the World*.

The opening line of *Joy to the World* is sometimes sung incorrectly as, "Joy to the world! The Lord **has** come." That is not what Watts wrote. He wrote, "The Lord **is** come." Watts was not describing a past event (the birth of Jesus) but rather looking forward to a future event (the return of Jesus).

The main point of Psalm 98 (which Watts himself clearly understood) was not about the first coming of Jesus, but, rather, about His Second Coming! And that's precisely what the song is about. It speaks of Jesus' final coming to earth when "the Savior reigns" and when "He rules the world with truth and grace." Watts longed for that glorious final day when the "nations (will) prove the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love."

Even though Watts may not have ever envisioned his song being sung at Christmas time, I think it is a wonderful tribute to his work. Indeed, the first advent of Jesus stands as a historical guarantee that His Second Advent is just around the corner. Indeed, the birth of Jesus and the return of Jesus are "good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Take from: *The Story Behind the Carol: "Joy to the World!"* by Tyler Scarlett, Dec. 15, 2013, Teaching Pastor at Forest Baptist Church

