

Grace Notes

DECEMBER 2017

Monthly Newsletter of Grace Baptist Church



Pastor Randy's Notes

It's hard to believe the Christmas season is upon us!

This morning my Bible reading was the book of Titus. Paul sent Titus to Crete with instructions to clean house of corrupt Cretan leadership in the home churches on the island.

The reason for this is a group of ethnically Jewish Cretans had taken over the churches and were preaching a corrupt version of the Gospel for their own personal financial gain.

What does all this have to do with Christmas?

In our modern society, the message of Christmas is becoming more and more "corrupted." The emphasis on Christmas has moved away from being a celebration of God entering the world in human form as Jesus, and has become a time celebrating things like peace on earth, family, and giving.

Don't get me wrong, peace on earth, family, and giving are all good things. But by celebrating these things, rather than the birth of Christ, is like celebrating birthday cake instead of someone's birthday—without the birth, there would be no cake.

Jesus is the means to true peace on earth. Jesus is the one who draws families closer together. Jesus showed us how to give by giving His life for us. Without Jesus, we would not have the rest.

And don't get me started on the financial boon of companies during the Christmas season. We are inundated with commercials to buy this and buy that so we will have a wonderful Christmas. Bah! Humbug!

I know it is a cliché, but The Reason for the Season is always Jesus.

This Christmas season remind yourself and others of these things as you celebrate:

- The reason we talk about peace on earth is because Jesus came to bring peace on earth.
- The reason we celebrate family is because the idea of family is given by God, both in terms of our own family units, but also as the entire family of the human race.
- The reason we celebrate by giving is because what Jesus gave to us— He gave of Himself so we might have a relationship with the Creator of the universe and live life the way we were meant to live.

Helen and I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas!



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NOTES FROM YOUR MUSIC/WORSHIP LEADER & LAY MINISTER OF CHURCH LIFE, JUDY YOUNG



"For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end." Isaiah 9:6-7

Have you ever anticipated something so much you couldn't sit still or were "standing on your tiptoes" to watch for its coming? The prophet Isaiah caused people to experience this kind of expectancy. He talked about a Savior who would come one day. The above description from

Isaiah was certainly good news for everyone.

Are you "standing on your tiptoes" excitedly waiting for the celebration of Christ's birth? Or do you get bogged down with a packed calendar, the thought you're not able to do enough for your family, or the crowds of cranky shoppers in the malls? How can the Advent season leading up to Christmas be more joyful and full of anticipation? Turn your anticipation to Jesus—our rescuer, our hope, our Savior, our physician, our eternal salvation, God with us. **Jesus was born for you and for me!** Let's stand on our tiptoes and anticipate Jesus together. How, you ask?

Here are a few suggestions:

1. Every day, simply think of the name, Jesus; and let your thoughts wander from there.
2. Pray every morning that your thoughts would focus on His love and compassion as you are busy with Christmas preparations.
3. Thank God for the ultimate sacrifice of His Son to us!



Merry Christmas!



Don't forget these upcoming activities in December:

December 9, Saturday, at 5:00 pm—Adult Christmas Party. Please bring a **hearty appetizer** to share and a **White Elephant gift** for the fun gift exchange. This is a wonderful time to visit and enjoy great food and fun!!

December 12, Tuesday, at 10:30 am—Deaconess Cookie Day. Each year our deaconesses pack cookie and fruit plates for our homebound members. If you would like to donate cookies for this event, please have them to the church kitchen by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 12.

December 24, Sunday, at 5 pm—Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Please join us for a time of reflection and rejoicing as we celebrate Christ's birth with scripture and music.

MUM'S OPEN HEART PANTRY

This Christmas season may we remember those less fortunate than us. The Open Heart Pantry is asking for food items for Christmas Dinner, such as: cranberries, stuffing mixes, and canned food. The item that is usually in short supply is canned fruit. They also in need of canned soups and soup mixes. In this cold weather, and cold days ahead, these are most welcomed.

The next shelving day is Friday, December 15. The food distribution days are Friday, December 15 and Saturday, December 16.


Thank you for all your generosity.

Shannon Hastings, Liaison for Open Heart Pantry.



DECEMBER 2017

Fellowship Fund offering is received the first Sunday of the month.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						
3 COMMUNION 8:30 am Praise/ Worship Team Practice 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship 6:00 pm Bible Study	4	5	6	7	1 7:30 pm IVN Church Bible Study	2 3:00-5:30 pm IVN Worship Rehearsal 5:00 pm Community Tree Lighting and Caroling
10 8:30 am Praise/ Worship Team Practice 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship 6:00 pm Bible Study Collect Food For Open Heart Pantry	11	12 10:30 am Deaconesses' Assembling & Distributing Cookies To Shut- Ins	13	14	15 10:00 am Stocking and Shelves Food @ MUM 1:00 pm Bridger's Harvest Share 3:00 pm MUM's Food Distribution 7:30 pm IVN Church Bible Study	16 9:00 am MUM's Food Distribution 3:00-5:30 pm IVN Worship Rehearsal
17 8:30 am Praise/ Worship Team Practice 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship 6:00 pm Bible Study	18 January Articles Due In Office	19 6:00 pm Board & Spouses Dinner @ Martin's	20	21	22 7:30 pm IVN Church Bible Study	23 3:00-5:30 pm IVN Worship Rehearsal
24/31 8:30 am Praise/ Worship Team Practice 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship 11:00 am Worship 5:00 pm (Christmas Eve Candlelight Service)	25 	26	27	28	29 7:30 pm IVN Church Bible Study	30 3:00-5:30 pm IVN Worship Rehearsal

December Birthdays

4 Dan Jones
 6 Carol Morton
 11 Maribel Kamsard
 21 Destiny Kamsard
 29 Pastor Randy Pearson



December Anniversary

30 Ed & Betsy Vulgan



OUTREACH

As of the writing of this article, we are less than half of Graces's goal for the World Mission Offering. This offering supports our missionaries as they work for peace and justice, abolition of global slavery, discipleship, and economic and community development throughout the world. Please pray about your response.

Meet Kihom Ngwemi & Nzunga Mabudiga who serve as one of three mission couples in Haiti. They serve in the areas of theological education, training and capacity building, economic development, and health and wellness. They both visit and preach in churches. Nzunga teaches theology at the Christian University of Northern Haiti. He manages two projects: the goat and pig project for children and the clean water project. He also administers the Cap-Haitian Eye Clinic. Kihomi works with families in areas of counseling, women's health, and economic development. She represents all Haitian women of Baptist denominations at national and international conferences.



In the month of August, Nzunga wrote the eye clinic consulted with 485 patients and operated on 36 persons, and the lab performed 147 different test. He also wrote about ordering 3000 eye glasses cases.

Nzunga wrote "Many of our people suffer in silence with nobody to hear them. They cry as they walk and cry as they sing and pray. Thank you for being with us that we can be with them."

During this last week it was announced that 50,000 Haitians who had come to US after the earthquake will lose their temporary status and must return to Haiti. Pray for these families.

Carol Martin, Lay Minister of Outreach

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AND CAROL SING

Iglesia Vision Nueva has come along side us for this event. Both of the churches walked the Bridger's neighborhoods praying for the event and delivered 400 door hangers. On Saturday, December 2, come and bring your friends, enjoy, and volunteer for this event.

On Sunday, December 3, the gift tree will be out for Vestal and Bridger families. Please take a tag, buy, and wrap a present. We will need volunteers to deliver the gifts on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 19 and 20.

Carol Martin, Outreach Chairman



GRACE-FULL

This is the time of Advent when we anticipate the coming of the Christ. May this season of blessing be a time of contemplation and joy for you and yours.

At Grace we are continuing some traditions of generosity, and starting at least one new tradition—the Community tree-lighting event. We also have opportunities to show ourselves “grace-full” with Starbucks gift cards to our First Responders, Christmas gifts to families at Bridger and Vestal and gifts to the staff who take care of us throughout the year.

Sharon Owen, Lay Minister of Finance



GRACE FAMILY FINANCES

OCTOBER 2017

General Operating Fund

Monthly Budget	\$ 9,790.33
Income Received	\$ 8,405.46
Expenses	\$ 10,526.53
Net Received for Month	\$ (2,121.07)

Mission Fund

Mission Giving Plan	\$ 1,139.42
Specified gifts/offering	\$ 760.95
Total Mission Giving	\$ 1,900.37

General Fund Balance and Liabilities

General Fund Balance 10/31/17	\$ 15,472.09
Payroll Tax Liabilities	
& Accounts Payable	\$ 597.21
GF Less P/R Liabilities	\$ 14,874.88

Other Funds (10/31/17)

Atkinson Fund	\$ 154,861.32
Building Fund Balance	\$ 12,033.90

SPIRITUAL LIFE

It amazes me how God, through Jesus, shows His love toward us! This Advent season we look ahead to celebrating Christ's birth (God coming to earth in human form). During his ministry, he taught us by his example.

In John chapter 16:31 near the end of his life, Jesus says, “*You believe at last*”, and then summarizes the confusion that will come to the disciples in the next few hours. He says, “*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.*” He immediately prayed to God (chapter 17) giving us the example of stopping and praying when we see adversity ahead of us. The prayer continues, addressing “*those who will believe in me through their message*”, verse 20. That's you and me! His example and words show his love to us. Verses 15 through 19 say that because we believe Jesus, and God, we are set apart (sanctified) from the world and protected by God from the evil one. We have eternal life with Him! Praise God!

Continue to be light and salt in the world around us so others can believe also! MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Blessings!
Paul Young



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*All we do inside these
walls prepares us to do
God's work outside.*

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN DECEMBER

2 Community Tree Lighting & Caroling

9 Adult White Elephant Christmas Party

10 Collecting Food For Open Heart Food Pantry

**12 Deaconesses Assembling & Distributing Cookies To
Shut-Ins**

15 & 16 MUM's Food Distribution

15 Bridger's Harvest Share

18 Articles For December Grace Notes Due In Office

19 Board & Spouses Dinner @ Martin's

24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

25 Merry Christmas!

STAFF EMAILS

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GOD'S VISION FOR GRACE BAPTIST

Making disciples of Christ, in a relational environment,
to share in God's mission to the world.