

# Advent at Epworth—December 2022

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## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS PARTY! - Sunday, December 4th, 6:00 p.m.**

Join us for a great presentation of the Gospel by our young Cherub Choir participants as they dress up and share the Christmas Story. Afterwards we will have refreshments in the Fellowship Hall to celebrate the birthday of our Savior, Jesus!

Please bring “finger foods” to share as we celebrate at the greatest birthday party ever!!



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## **Baby's First Christmas - Sunday, December 11th at 11:00 am**

Come celebrate the new life God has given to the church family in 2022.

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## **Chancel Choir Christmas Presentation - Sunday, December 11th at 11:00 am**

Please join us for the Chancel Choir's Christmas musical presentation at the 11:00 A.M. worship service.... it's the gospel put to music!

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## **CHRISTMAS CAROLING - Wednesday, December 14th at 6:00 pm**

Please feel free to join the Kidz Crew on Wednesday, December 15, at 6:00 p.m. as we go Christmas Caroling. We will take as many as possible on the church van. If you would like to drive, please feel free to caravan with us. Email Letha at [letha.parker@epworth-pc.org](mailto:letha.parker@epworth-pc.org) or text to (205) 799-8547 to register your participation.



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## **MILK & COOKIES NIGHT with a SPECIAL VISITOR**

**Sunday, December 18th, 6:00 p.m.**

Please join the Epworth Kidz Cruise as we celebrate Christmas! Afterwards we will have milk and cookies with a “Special Visitor”.



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## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Saturday, December 24th at 5:30 pm**

Saturday evening, December 24 (Christmas Eve) at 5:00 P.M. – Holy Communion service – You'll discover that this service is very moving and meaningful, and it continues to grow in attendance every year (invite your friends and family members—make it a family tradition).

**NOTE: Christmas Eve Holy Communion will also be served, “come and go” fashion, at 12 noon—1:00 pm, for those unable to attend the 5:30 pm Candlelight Communion Service.**

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Thank you for your continued support of the Epworth Kidz Crew Ministries! The many kidz programs and classes would not be possible without your faithfulness in volunteering and your monetary support of the Epworth Church. We are blessed to be a blessing, and I thank our God for your sharing in the advancement of the Gospel to children.

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## Christmas—The Season of Giving by Rev. Grant Parker

Christmas is known as a season of giving. Millions of gifts costing billions of dollars will be exchanged between now and December 25. It's so easy to lose sight of the real meaning of Christmas amid the hustle and bustle of the season's commercial frenzy.

Hopefully, though, we'll not forget the greatest gift ever given. The apostle John reminds us, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16) God offered a gift to each of us when He gave His Son on that very first Christmas Day over 2,000 years ago.

Suppose we were expected to exchange gifts with God. Well, obviously none of us could match God's priceless gift of Jesus. But what would you give to God if you were to exchange Christmas gifts with Him this year? Gold? Frankincense? Myrrh? In one of my favorite Christmas hymns, "In the Bleak Midwinter," Christina Rossetti proposes an excellent answer to that question:

What can I give Him poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;

Yet what I can, I give Him: give (Him) my heart.

This Christmas season—and in the New Year—let me encourage you to give all that you know of yourselves, to all that you know of Him! What

would be the result if we truly gave all of ourselves—our actions, attitudes, assets, gifts, time, tongues, talents, effort, energy, relationships, families, friendships, souls, bodies, service—our everything—to Jesus?

For most of us, what I'm proposing is a radical change in the way we function and in the way we relate to others. But these are radical times, and only those who are radically saved and radically changed by a personal—not just a "passing"—relationship with Jesus Christ, will make a positive impact in the world for His sake.

What I'm proposing means that Sunday is considered the Lord's Day once again, and all the lame excuses in the world won't change the fact that we should be in the worship service and in Sunday School (as a family) when we're not! I'm suggesting that fathers should become the spiritual heads of their households, and that their wives and children have every right to see God's light and love reflected in the actions of their husbands and fathers! I'm suggesting that wives and all women should strive more diligently to become who the whole Church is really *meant* to be—the faithful Bride of Christ! I'm proposing that we read and study the Bible daily, and practice its precepts. What I'm proposing is that we will commit ourselves to Paul's clear mandate to the Roman church (12:1-2): "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect!" In other words, I'm proposing that if we are saved by Jesus Christ, then let's act like it! If we're Christians, then let's determine to live according to biblical Christian principles of morality! God has called the church to

affect the world in a positive way. But instead, I fear we've allowed the world to infect the church. What I'm proposing is that we seek after holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14). I'm proposing that we become a tithing church in A.D. 2023. The Bible says that the first 10% of our income belongs to God—not to the mortgage company, the bank, the bar, a retail store, a car dealership, the government, or to anyone else. What I'm proposing is for the families of our congregation to have family devotions daily in 2023. What I'm proposing is that each of us will commit ourselves to winning lost souls to Christ, witnessing for Jesus, and inviting people to church and Sunday School in 2023.

I know that what I'm proposing as our gift to God seems radical to many. Some may have already put my article aside. But please understand, what I have proposed to you is simply visible fruit (outer evidence) of a relationship Jesus described to Nicodemus in John 3:7, "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again!'"

"What shall I give Him, poor as I am? What I can I give Him, give (Him) my heart." May we become gifts to God this Christmas!!

Your servant, because He gave all of Himself, for me!

Brother Grant

Birthday	Name
12/1	Billy Ray Head Hazel Norman Robert Meacham Cindy Cameron Daryl Griggs Marie Culpepper Wyatt Wilkerson
12/3	Jason Yohn Marina Meacham
12/4	Cody Townsend Wynn Bradley
12/5	Richelle Sanders
12/6	Luke McCart
12/7	Carol Griffis Ricky Stone Chami Chedrick
12/8	George Gatewood Callie Gatewood James Clark
12/9	Gloria Griggs Carol Stanton Andrea Gil Jay Baker
12/10	Sloane Moss Taylor Hartley
12/11	Donna Zeigler
12/12	Rich Coreno Steve Lake James Brooks
12/13	Libby Clay
12/14	Joshua Caldwell
12/15	Carol Martin Dee Dee Ellis Susan Riepe Vicky Moss
12/17	Cathy Sharpe
12/18	Mallory McLeod Megan Redmond Marley Hamilton
12/20	Emily Wallace Maria Chedrick Taylor Riddle
12/21	Pat Roberts
12/22	Judy Burkes Rex Kennedy

12/24	J.W. Martin
12/25	Emma Wilson
12/28	Mia Bell
12/29	Rob Linsley Madison Shields
12/30	Jeanette Kersey Wade Wilkerson JoJo Roberts

Anniversaries	
Dec 14	Seabo & Vickie Griggs
Dec 17	Gentry & Belle Lee Todd & Twila Schneider
Dec 23	Chuck & Sandy Clay Johnny & Connie Burell
Dec 29	Lance & Carmen Brooks
Dec 30	Mark & Daina Wooten
Dec 31	Jerry & Vivian Obert

### Say Merry Christmas to the teachers:

Epworth would like to bring Christmas goodies to tell the teachers at Ridgecrest Elementary how much we appreciate them. We will be collecting any goodies in the conference room on Sunday, December 4th. (Store bought, homemade or bags of candy). If you would rather give a monetary donation toward this cause, please see or contact Christi Badowski (334-614-2656).

### Visitation Volunteers

The following people will accompany Brother Grant when he goes visiting on Monday nights. If you are listed here, please meet Brother Grant at 6:30 pm at the church to go with him to visit prospective and current members. Blessings,  
Kathryn Perdue

December 5— Bryce Gaunt  
December 12— Pam Shores

### **PARSONAGE FAMILY CHRISTMAS GIFT**

Dear Fellow Epworth Member,

I hope the reason for the season fills your heart with joy this Christmas and that you are surrounded by the love, comfort and peace that only our precious Savior can bring you! We have so much to be thankful for in our families, our community, our country and in our church family. We are blessed to have two of His most faithful servants, Brother Grant and Letha Parker, ministering year-round to the many and diverse needs of our church family...which is often done at the expense of their own family's needs. Literally from cradle to grave, Brother Grant is right beside us for all the "times of our lives." I want to thank you in advance for the generous response to the **Parsonage Family Christmas Gift** this year. Just be sure and mark your check or envelope for the "**Parsonage Family Christmas Gift**" and place it in the offering plate!

I want to share this beautiful Christmas Prayer with all of you!

### Christmas Prayer

Heavenly Father,  
in this Christmas season,  
help us rightly to remember  
the birth of Jesus,  
that we may share in the song  
of the angels,  
the gladness of the shepherds,  
and the worship of the wise men.  
Close the doors of hate  
and open the doors of love  
all over the world.  
Let kindness come with every gift  
and good desires with every greeting.  
Deliver us from evil,  
by the blessing that Christ brings,  
and teach us to be merry  
with clean hearts.  
May the Christmas morning  
make us happy to be your children,  
And the Christmas evening bring us to our  
bed with grateful thoughts,  
forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.  
Amen.

God bless you and thank you so much for your generosity!

Susan S. Wiggins

### **Our Faithfulness**

Budget YTD: \$889,652.19  
Actual Contributions: \$771,267.57





# Youth Ministry Youth Ministry

Life is  
**better**  
together. Ecc. 4:12

**We would love to have you join us for youth each week.**

Sun. 9:45 am Contemporary Worship Service

Sun. 11:00 am Small Groups

Sun. 5:00—6:30 pm Youth "Sunday Night Life"

Wed. 6:00—7:30 pm "Wednesday Youth Group"



“ IF YOU WANT TO GO FAST, GO ALONE. IF YOU WANT TO GO FAR, GO TOGETHER ”



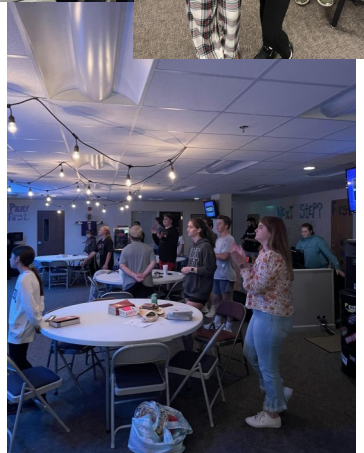
## Save the dates 2023...

**Passion Conference**  
12th grade, College, and Young Adults (18-25 years old)  
January 3rd - 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
State Farm Arena  
Atlanta, GA.  
Cost: TBD

**Mission Trip**  
(Lead Team Generate Camp)  
11th & 12th Grade, College and Young Adults  
June 3rd - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Covenant College Lookout Mountain, GA  
Cost: \$150  
**\*NOTE THE CHANGE IN DATE AND LOCATION\***

**Youth Camp**  
Upcoming 6th grade thru 12th grade  
July 21st-25<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Shocco Springs  
Talladega, AL.  
Cost: TBD

**Local Mission Outreach**  
Summer 2023  
All Students  
Bi-City area  
More info coming soon.



# December 2022

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				<b>1</b> 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool  6:00 pm—Staff <b>Christmas            Party</b>	<b>2</b> 6:30 pm Prayer <b>Ministry            Christmas            Party</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 6:00 pm <b>Cherub Choir            Christmas            Pageant and            Happy            Birthday Jesus            Party</b>	<b>5</b> 10:00 am Cart workshop	<b>6</b> 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am Bible Study	<b>7</b> 9:00 am MDO & Preschool 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	<b>8 Newsletter            Deadline</b> 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool <b>6:30 pm            UMW            Christmas            Party</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 11:00 Service <b>Baby's First            Christmas            Choir            Christmas            Special</b>  6:00 pm <b>Join Epworth            Kidz Cruise as            we celebrate            Christmas!            Milk &amp; Cookie            with Special            Guest</b>	<b>12</b> 10:00 am Cart workshop	<b>13</b> 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am Bible Study	<b>14</b> 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 10:00 am Cart workshop  <b>6:00 pm Kids            Christmas            Caroling</b> <b>6:00 pm Youth            Christmas Party</b>  6:30 pm Classes Pastor's Bible Study	<b>15</b> 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  Wreaths Across America Ft. Mitchell  Youth Prayer/ Serve Day (Assisting with Wreaths Across America)
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 10:00 am Cart workshop	<b>20</b> 6:00 Prayer Vigil	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 12:00-1:00 <b>Christmas Eve            Holy            Communion            "Come and            Go"</b>  5:30 pm <b>Christmas Eve            Candlelight            service</b>
<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>26</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>27</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>29</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>30</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>31</b>

## **Angel Tree**

Angel Tree is a program of Prison Fellowship that serves incarcerated parents by providing a pathway for strengthening and restoring their relationships with their children and families. Angel Tree is a unique program that gives Epworth an opportunity to share Christ's love with families of prisoners. The program connects parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts given on the parent's behalf.

When a mother or father is in prison, the pain of separation from their child can be acute, but an Angel Tree gift, delivered in the parent's name, can help restore and strengthen the relationship and act as a symbol of God's love. Epworth has been participating in the Angel Tree Program for over twenty years. Many children, their families and prisoner parent have been blessed by this program.

Epworth will be participating with the Angel Tree program again this year. We will not be asking you to sponsor a specific child, buy and wrap presents and deliver to the church. Several options were given from Prison Fellowship Ministries and it has been decided that we will provide gift cards to each child. We are asking for donations so that we can provide a \$25.00 gift card to each child on behalf of their incarcerated parent. We feel this is the safest way to be able to carry on this worthwhile program.

You have always been a very generous and loving church and I look forward to us being a part of Angel Tree again this year and praying for those we serve.

Pam Shores, Your Angel Tree Coordinator