



Epworth Church

January 2024



by Rev. Grant Parker

“Looking Back and Looking Forward”

“...the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, *I make all things new!*” (Revelation 21:4-5)

New Year’s Day is a great day to face the future with hopeful anticipation! It’s a time to “wipe the slate clean,” “turn over a new leaf,” “get a do-over,”---or whatever adage you prefer to use---and to look forward to a brand-new year, brimming with promise and potential and possibility, wondering what the next 365 days will bring!

If you’re reading this after January 1, A.D. 2024, and if you’re anything like me, by now you’ve eaten black-eyed peas and hog jowls (because that’s what we do on New Year’s Day in my family) and you may already be several days into the new year. Like me, you may have made (and maybe already *broken*) some well-meant New Year’s Resolutions! Nonetheless, I’d like to encourage you to do something a little different as this new year begins. Rather than looking forward, I’d like to challenge you to look *backward* over your shoulder at the year just past, for genuine resolutions are born of such

an effort. And now let us ask ourselves a question: “How will I live differently for the Lord Jesus Christ in 2024 than I did in 2023?”

1. Did I win a soul to Jesus Christ in 2023?
2. Did I attend Sunday School faithfully in 2023?
3. Did I attend worship services faithfully in 2023?
4. Did I witness (share my faith in Jesus Christ) to another person in 2023?
5. Did I attend week day and week night activities faithfully in 2023?
6. Did I visit the sick and shut-ins in 2023?
7. Did I tithe (give 10% of my income) to the church in 2023?
8. Did I have personal and family devotions daily in 2023?
9. Did I live for Jesus---live like a Christian---in 2023?
10. Did I pray faithfully in 2023?
11. Did I invite others to share in the ministry of the “body of Christ,” to attend worship services, prayer meetings, Bible studies, Sunday School, etc. with me in 2023?
12. Did I labor tirelessly for the Lord in 2023?

My prayer is that all of us in the Epworth family will be consumed with a passion for fruitful and faithful labor in the Lord’s vineyard this new year! Or, as the Bible puts it in reference to Jesus, “These were His instructions to them: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask Him to send more workers into His fields.”

(Luke 10:2, NLT)

Keep your hand in Jesus’ hand and your eyes on the Cross!

Brother Grant

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 new members.

Jan 8 – Cheryl Bain

Jan 15—Belle Lee

Jan 22—Marcia Myles

Jan 29—Teri Medina

Blessings, Kathryn Perdue

The **Prayer Ministry** expresses a heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who has prayed in the chapel during 2023 and hopes that it has been a meaningful experience for you. ***“My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up”. Psalm 5:3.*** We need Prayer volunteers for 2024! You can volunteer for our services at 8:30 am until 9:30 am; 9:45 am until 10:45 am; or 11:00 am until 12:00 pm service. You will be sent a reminder postcard with prayer requests. Many prayer resources are located in the prayer chapel for your use. Please add any personal prayer request too. Names and times will be listed in the church bulletin weekly and the newsletter monthly. You may sign up for once a month, several times a year, or a one time slot. Please contact Pam Shores 706-464-0148, Becky Coreno, 706-315-8209, or the church office to volunteer. Please join us and support our Epworth Church with our prayers.

Men’s Ministry News

Memorial bricks are \$100 each which includes engraving. The bricks will be installed in front of the Bell Tower. Order forms are placed on the Gathering Room counter. If you have questions, please contact Ron Hart, John Henderson, or Roy Hogge. We anticipate the remaining bricks will be sold by early January.

The Men’s Ministry is scheduling their **Yard Sale for Saturday, February 24, 2024**. They will start collecting your donations after Monday, January 15th. You can bring your donations to the Church either Monday or Wednesday 9:00 am – 3:30 pm. If assistance is needed to unload your donated items, please contact any member of the Men’s Ministry group to schedule a time for them to meet you at the church.

Your donations will make the Yard Sale a success.

Flower Calendar

The 2024 Flower Calendar is posted on the Gathering Room board. Please sign up if you wish to put flowers in the church either in honor of or in memory of someone or on a special Sunday.



Anniversaries	
Jan. 3	Gary & Pixie Dillard
Jan. 4	Keith & Christi Badowski
Jan 5	Mason & Susan Riepe
Jan. 10	Grant & Letha Parker Carlos & Diane Velazquez
Jan. 12	Mark & Teresa Sanders
Jan. 28	Bubba & Pat Roberts Wayne & Sherri Sheffield
Jan 29	Sam & Jaime Singer

JOIN EPWORTH’S SECURITY MINISTRY TEAM

- You may not see them, but members of our security ministry team volunteer and are on duty during every Sunday service and special church-wide event to help ensure the safety of our worshippers and the sanctity of our services.
- They perform an important mission for Epworth Church, and they can use your help.
- The more security ministry team members Epworth has, the less frequently any one of them needs to volunteer; with you as a member of our team, they will have to serve even less frequently.
- Some positions on our team do not require much physical activity – you can walk, drive the golf cart, or just sit and monitor camera feeds. We will train you before you serve.
- Please join us! If you are interested in joining yourself, know someone who is, or know someone whom you think would be a good member of our team, please let Pastor Grant (grant.parker@epworth-pc.org or 334-298-3186) or Ross Goode (rcgoode525@gmail.com or 706-464-5089.) know.



Birthdays	
Jan. 1	Matt Smith Danny Curtiss
Jan. 2	Matt Bell
Jan 3	Ann Mann Daina Wooten Ariel Pritchett Mollie Martin
Jan. 4	Chris Lamb Amanda Wilkerson
Jan 5	Reid Thomas
Jan. 6	Alana Watson
Jan 7	Abigail Brewer Alisa Meacham
Jan. 8	Doug Cameron Bonnie Lenoir Amy Wilkerson
Jan. 9	Margaret Moss Richard Berklite
Jan. 10	Mallory Druash Anna Lake
Jan. 11	Draven Johnson
Jan 13	Claire Garney Kaylee Shields
Jan. 14	Emily Ludwig
Jan. 15	Presley Wilkerson
Jan. 16	Nancy Pool Ron Garney Cindy Hart Brooks Barbaree
Jan. 18	Kabot Lake
Jan 19	Julianne Griggs Landon Ketchum Ellen Simmons
Jan. 20	Chase Sigmon Don Leonard
Jan. 23	Charlotte Chancey Bryce Gaunt
Jan 24	Wyatt Bridges
Jan. 26	Garrett Glass
Jan. 27	Brandon Caulder Diane Glass
Jan. 28	Matthew Robinson Will Herbert
Jan. 29	Mackenzie Ensley
Jan. 31	Brian Garney Rachel Parker

Our precious Epworth family:

Letha and I wish to express our sincere appreciation to you for the abundantly generous Christmas gift our family received from the congregation. We are absolutely overwhelmed by your generosity and thoughtfulness! You are more than just loyal members to us—you are indeed “family!” You have been there for us, always going “the second mile,” constantly drawing us into the marvelous experience of God’s lavish grace, demonstrated in, through and by you throughout the year—and particularly in these festive seasons of Advent and Christmas, as together we celebrate His greatest gift, the birth of His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Letha and I have been constantly engulfed by your compassion and thoughtfulness these past 15 years. You have “been there” for us with your constant prayers, telephone calls and texts, cards, notes, comments, hugs, understanding, patience—in essence, lavishing your love upon us, fulfilling God’s word in the Bible, found in 1 John 3:18 (ERV): “My children, our love should not be only words and talk. No, our love must be real. We must show our love by the things we do.” Please know how very much we love and appreciate all of you, and how blessed we feel to be your parsonage family. Brother Grant



A sincere thank you to all who sponsored wreaths through Wreaths Across America (WAA) to honor our Veterans in 2023.

YOU DID YOUR FINEST JOB EVER !!

Your generosity, selflessness and true love of your Veterans led Epworth to reach another record high in supporting Veterans through WAA this year. You sponsored 458 wreaths in memory of and to honor our Veterans. Your efforts resulted in Fort Mitchell National Cemetery (FMNC) receiving 945 wreaths in 2023, a 22% increase over what you accomplished in 2022.

Thank you very much for a job done even better than the great jobs you have done every year since 2018. You’ve grown every year, ensuring FMNC received 145 wreaths in 2018, 302 wreaths in 2019, 410 wreaths in 2020, 537 wreaths in 2021, 776 wreaths in 2022 and 945 wreaths in 2023. Another absolutely splendid job!

WAA Day was Saturday, December 16, this year. Epworth persons sponsored 68 wreaths for specific Veterans interred at Fort Mitchell, and those sponsors and our team were scheduled to place all of those wreaths plus more wreaths on other grave sites there. Additionally, we were scheduled to bring back 40 wreaths you sponsored for Veterans interred locally. Further, both Epworth buses were scheduled to support WAA Day by shuttling those honoring our Veterans into and around FMNC on WAA Day. What a great way to recognize and honor our Veterans. Since WAA Day occurred after submission of January 2023 NL input, we’ll give you a report on WAA Day results later.

Now is the time to think about supporting our Veterans through Wreaths Across America in 2024. We’ll give you the details soon.

EPWORTH KIDZ CREW

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. Isaiah 43:19

KIDZ CONNECTIONS....

Will resume on Wednesday, Jan. 10th, 6:30 p.m.

CHERUB CHOIR & KIDZ CRUISE SUNDAY EVENING CLASSES....

will resume on January 14th at 5:30 p.m. Ages 3 years through 1st grade will meet for Cherub Choir with Diane Glass and Emily Sanford. The Kidz Cruise group, 2nd through 5th grades, will meet with Josh and Amber McCart in the Kidz Worship Room



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOXES!! The Kidz Crew and Youth packed more than 50 boxes each, and when added to those packed by all of you, we were able to send 192 shoeboxes around the world! Thank you for your support of this special ministry by donations of filled shoeboxes, donations of items, and monetary gifts that helped pay for shipping.

You are a blessing!

BABY'S FIRST CHRISTMAS: We introduced our babies who celebrated their first Christmas on December 10th at the 11:00 Worship Service. We are so thankful to have been able to recognize these "Little Lambs" of the Epworth family.

Mollie Lane Martin; January 3, 2023. Kaylee & Estin Martin.

Weldon "Tate" Ranew; March 10, 2023. Pennie & Zach Ranew. Brother, Kirkland.

Samuel Gus Wood; May 13, 2023; Marie Van Loo & Jacobus Wood. Brother, Charlie.

Kennedy Blaire Humphries; June 7, 2023. Olivia & Judson Humphries.
Sister, Adalyn and Brother, Grayson.

William Harris Brown; July 27, 2023. Michelle and Justin Brown. Brother, John Kenneth and Sister, Caroline.

Koa James Smith; Aug. 3, 2023. Victoria Sanders Garrett. Teresa & Mark Sanders' grandson, and sister Elena.

Whitten Gunnar Petsch; Aug. 8, 2023. Lindsay and Tyler Petsch. Brothers Wes and Raylan.

Luke Aaron Word; October 13, 2023. James and Erin Word. Brother, James, Jr.

EPWORTH MOM'S DAY OUT AND PRESCHOOL WILL RESUME ON JANUARY 9TH.

START THE NEW YEAR BY COMMITTING YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILDREN TO LEARNING THE SCRIPTURE. BIBLE STUDY AND SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION ARE IMPORTANT TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND CONTINUAL CONNECTION WITH OUR SAVIOR.

January 2024

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1 New Year's Day	2 6:30 pm Book of Daniel Bible Study	3 6:30 pm Pastor's Bible Study No Kidz or Youth Activities	4 6:30 pm EMW	5	6
7 4:30 pm Choir Practice 5:30 pm—Family Movie Night	8 10:00 am—Take down Christmas decorations 2:00 pm—Happy Days Covered Dish Luncheon	9 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:30 pm Book of Daniel Bible Study	10 9:00 am Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	11 9:00 am - Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm Men's Ministry 6:00 pm—Grief Meeting led by Minnie Henderson	12	13
14 4:30 Choir Practice KIDZ CREW starts back at 5:30 pm	15 MLK Jr Day Office Closed	16 Newsletter Deadline 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:30 pm Prayer Vigil 6:30 pm Book of Daniel Bible Study	17 9:00 am Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Pastor's Bible Study, Classes & Kids Konnections	18 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool	19	20
21 4:30 Choir Practice 5:30 pm Kids Cruise and Cherub Choir	22	23 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:30 pm Book of Daniel Bible Study	24 9:00 am—Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Pastor's Bible Study, Classes & Kids Konnections	25 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool	26	27
28 4:00 pm Council on Ministries 4:30 pm Choir Practice	29	30 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:30 pm Book of Daniel Bible Study	31			

A message from our Youth Minister Daniel Cook

What a great ending to 2023! Epworth Students have seen a lot of exciting change and growth over the second half of 2023. We just had 22 leaders and students return from our ski trip in West Virginia. Students and leaders participated in our Serve Day helping in a local school, down at the Mobility Cart, and helped around the church. During the Fall Brawl we saw over 35 new students visit on Wednesday night. We had around 50 students attend the Back to School Bash and Dodgeball Tournament. The students gave \$200 to those affected by the Maui fires and packed over 100 boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The youth rooms got a facelift and a newly updated sound system. We have seen many students come and visit and decide to come back week after week. Epworth Students is also blessed with a great group of leaders who serve week after week to make this ministry happen!

There have been a lot of things to be thankful for but we believe there are even better days ahead. This reminds me of the passage in Philippians 3 as Paul talks of his attitude and mindset as he lives his life in pursuit of God's calling. He has a view of the past which God has brought him through but knows the most important goal still lies ahead.

Philippians 3:12-15

12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The past few months we have taken great strides in becoming who God is calling us to be as a youth group and in our individual lives. Woven within all the activities has been challenges to grow deeper in our walk with Christ. Though these strides are often small and take time, progress is taking place. As we are grateful and thankful for what God has done, we know there is much work left to do. As we move forward in 2024 we will continue to strain towards our individual goal of becoming more like Christ each day and our ministry goal of reaching teenagers across the bi-city with the love of Christ.

Epworth Church family, we invite you to celebrate with us as we look back over 2023 because it would not have been possible without your support, prayers, and love you have given this ministry. We are thankful for a supporting church and are excited about what God has in store for 2024.



Student Events in January:

Wednesday Nights

January Series: Enough! During the month of January we will dive into our theme for 2024: "Enough." Throughout the month we will look to see how God is more than enough for us and how that is applied in the life of a teenager. We will also start the year with 21 days of fasting and praying. It will be a time of learning, growing, and diving deeper in our relationship with Christ.

Join us on Wednesday night from 6:00 - 6:30 as we hang out in the gym, game room, and snack bar. From 6:30 - 7:30 we have our youth service and then hang out for a few minutes after.

Sunday Mornings Worship

We invite all families and teenagers to attend a Sunday morning worship service. As you know there are three to choose from, with most teenagers attending the 9:45 service. We would love to see your family worship with us!

Small Group - Sunday Mornings at 11:00

Following the 9:45 service there is a class offered for all teenagers. Some may call it Sunday School and others call it a Small Group, no matter what you call it, it is important. This is a place for teenagers to talk through the Bible and life with other teenagers to grow together as they navigate what it means to follow Christ.

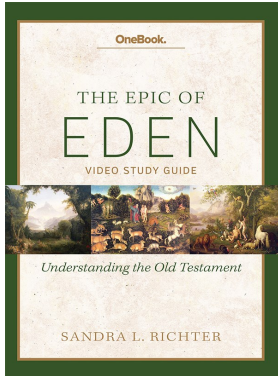
Upcoming Events in 2024:

Summer Camp: June 12 - 15, 2024

Summer Trips to Six Flags, White Waters, Braves games, and much more!

Ski Trip - December 27-30, 2024





“THE BEST BIBLE STUDY I’VE EVER HAD!” – the typical response of previous participants in The Epic of Eden

THE EPIC OF EDEN – 12 WEEKS – TUESDAYS AT 9:30 AM
LED BY SANDRA ROWAN – STARTS February 6th
REGISTRATION ENDS ON JANUARY 16th

\$15 for Study Guide, payable at <https://epworth-pc.org/give/> (Non-budget). To register, please call or text Keith Badowski at (334) 614-0577

Does your knowledge of the Old Testament feel like a grab bag of people, books, events and ideas? How many times have you resolved to really understand the OT? To finally make sense of it? In The Epic of Eden video study, Dr. Sandra Richter clearly and powerfully communicates a history of God’s redeeming grace, weaving together a story that runs from the Eden of the Garden to the garden of the New Jerusalem.

Through text and video teaching for 12 sessions, Dr. Richter brings a new dimension to the history of the ancient Near East, orienting any study group in time, geography, culture, redemption, and relevance to today – all without diminishing her reader’s faith or “dumbing down” the scripture.

Legendary Bible stories take on new life as Dr. Richter clearly articulates their part of a larger pattern, revealing an even deeper significance for the tales individually. The Epic of Eden video study is ideal for serious church groups wanting a meaty study of biblical text, as would anyone eager for a strategic grasp of the good, the bad, and the ugly of the Old Testament and how it relates to God’s activity in the present.