

Epworth Church



January 2025



by Rev. Grant Parker

“Doing a New Thing in the New Year!”

“This is what the Lord says... ‘See, I am doing a new thing!’” **Isaiah 43:14, 19 (NIV)**

Even though the church’s new year actually begins with the first Sunday of Advent, New Year’s Day (January 1) still has a significant influence on our lives. We often seem to get caught up in the business of making resolutions, which are as much a part of New Year’s Day as eating black-eyed peas and hog jowls. Of course, the problem with New Year’s resolutions is that many are broken even before February arrives. Perhaps one reason we fail to keep resolutions is because we determine to keep them through our own power alone! What a difference it makes when it is the power of God Almighty that is “doing a new thing” in us!

I suffered through and survived the basic course in accounting, “Elementary Accounting,” while I was a sophomore in college. I learned two things from taking “Elementary Accounting”: #1 – that I was not cut out to be an accountant, and #2 – many accounts need to be “closed out” at the end of each year.

We would be greatly blessed if we were to apply that same basic accounting principle to our lives at the

start of each new year, wouldn’t we? We all have accounts needing to be “closed out,” so to speak.

The account of past sins is one such area we need to “close out.” Proverbs 28:13 says, “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.” King David was a party to adultery and an accomplice to murder. He thought no one was aware of his sins. But God knew of David’s sin and sent a prophet (Nathan) to tell the king so. David knew that if he confessed his sin and was truly repentant, God would forgive him. David’s confession is recorded in Psalm 51:1-4 and 13-17. The Bible tells us, we have “all sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) Therefore, past sin is an area we need to address in the name of the one Who “breaks the power of canceled sin,” as the words of a well-known hymn remind us (“O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”). Sin is an account we need to “close out.” The Word of God says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

Hard feelings (grudges, bitterness, hurt feelings, etc.) is another account we may need to “close out.” When Jesus was

instructing His disciples to pray, He taught them to say “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Holding on to hurt feelings and bearing grudges always hurts the one who harbors the hard feelings more than the offender. “Acid does as much damage to the vessel that holds it, as it does to the surface it’s poured on!” Ask God to help you forgive others, as He has forgiven you!

Close the book on negative thoughts in A.D. 2024. Remember the old adage, “can’t never could!” Don’t let disappointments, setbacks, sour attitudes and unwarranted criticism squelch what God can do for you, in you, and through you this year. Claim Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me!” Believe, with all your might, that God means it when His word says, “We are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.” (Romans 8:37)

Remember—“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17) May God bless you, and may His Holy Spirit do “a new thing” in you throughout the new year.

Keep the Faith, but Share the Gospel!

Brother Grant

The **Prayer Ministry** expresses a heartfelt “thank you” to everyone who has prayed in the chapel during 2024 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 2025! 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.

What kids believe about themselves is the foundation on which they build their lives, beliefs, and relationships.

The words we speak over kids, the lessons and Bible stories we teach (and the way we teach the Bible), the songs we sing, the conversations we have, and the advice and comfort we offer are all planting seeds that will grow into the fruit of identity that comes from being rooted in Christ.



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

Flower Calendar

The 2025 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.

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	Danny Curtiss Brianna Wood
Jan. 2	Matt Bell
Jan 3	Ann Mann Daina Wooten Mollie Martin
Jan. 4	Chris Lamb Amanda Wilkerson Shira Kohn
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
Jan. 10	Mallory Druash Anna Lake
Jan. 11	Draven Johnson
Jan. 12	Larry LaMee
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 16 1/2 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

Speak these truths over kids and pray for them to internalize and believe them.

- I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:13-14)
- I am loved by Jesus, and I get to share His love too. (John 13:34, 35)
- I was made in the image of God and am an image-bearer. (Gen. 1:27)
- I was created with a purpose and God has prepared good works for me to do. He will give me everything I need to do them. (Eph. 2:10)
- I am a citizen of heaven; this world is not my home. (Philippians 3:20)
- I am a child of God and an heir of Christ. I am led by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:14–17)
- I have value because God loves me and sent Jesus to die for me. (Romans 5:8)
- Nothing can separate me from God’s unending love. Through Jesus, I am more than a conqueror. (Romans 8:37–39)
- I am set free from sin through Christ. I am forgiven and made righteous. (Ephesians 1:7)
- God has good plans for my life; plans for a hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11)
- The peace of God will guard my heart and my mind through Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)
- I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)

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. 8th, 6:30 p.m.

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

will resume on January 12th 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 15th at the 11:00 Worship Service. We are so thankful to have been able to recognize these "Little Lambs" of the Epworth family.

Celebrating Babies of 2024!

Prickett, Mary Carlton; 5/2/24, 6lbs. 8oz., 20"; Jennifer & Will; Grandparents: Scott & Kathy Prickett. Great Aunt & Great Uncle: Sherry & Steve Martin.

Garney, Naomi Wren; 8/16/24; 8lbs., 19 in. Penny & Brian. Grandparents: Joy and Ron Garney.

Taylor, Elizabeth Blake; 9/19/24; 4 lbs. 12 oz, 19 in.; Brett & Dudley Taylor; Grandmother: Vickie Taylor

Chedrick, Naomi Grace; 11/4/24; 6 lbs. 3 oz., 19.5 in.; Chami and Justin Chedrick; Grandparents: Joe Chedrick (deceased) Maria Chedrick LaMee and Larry LaMee; Naoko Oike

Congratulations to Brindlea and Don Griffin on the birth of their grandson, William Harris Dawkins, son of Lena and Hunter Dawkins, born Nov. 12, 2024.

EPWORTH MOM'S DAY OUT AND PRESCHOOL WILL RESUME ON JANUARY 8TH.

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 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5 4:30 pm Choir Practice	6 10:00 am—Take down Christmas decorations 12:00 pm—Happy Days Covered Dish Luncheon	7 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am—Bible Study Ephesians	8 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	9 9:00 am - Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm—Men's Ministry (meet in the Fellowship Hall) 6:30 pm EMW (will meet in the Youth Room)	10	11
12 4:30 Choir Practice KIDZ CREW starts back at 5:30 pm	13 Newsletter Deadline	14 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am—Bible Study Ephesians 6:30 pm—Bible Study	15 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	16 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool	17	18
19 4:30 Choir Practice 5:30 pm Kids Cruise and Cherub Choir	20 MLK Jr Day Office Closed	21 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am—Bible Study Ephesians 6:00 pm Prayer Vigil 6:30 pm—Bible Study	22 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	23 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool	24	25
26 4:00 pm Administrative Board Meeting 4:30 pm Choir Practice	27	28 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am—Bible Study Ephesians 6:30 pm Bible Study	29 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	30	31	

A message from our Youth Minister Daniel Cook

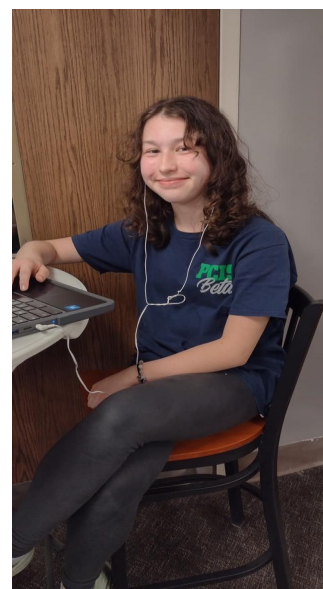
2024 was a great year for Epworth Students! This past year has been filled with many exciting firsts for Epworth Students. We attended Merge Youth Camp for the first time, held our inaugural DNOW weekend, and celebrated 8 baptisms! Alongside these new experiences, we also enjoyed familiar activities. The students packed 100 boxes for Operation Christmas Child, donated \$335 to purchase Christmas gifts for families in need, completed our second annual Fall Brawl, and recently returned from our ski trip.

2 Corinthians 4:15 *"All of this is for your benefit. And as God's grace reaches more and more people, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory."*

We have so much to be thankful for, and we believe even better days are ahead. It is encouraging to see the students grow in their relationship with Christ, their worship, and their witness. God's grace has been shared through these students with their friends and family. All glory goes to Him who is at work in Epworth Students.

Over the past year, we have made significant progress in becoming who God calls us to be as a youth group and as individuals. Throughout all our activities, we have faced challenges that encourage us to deepen our walk with Christ. Although these steps may seem small and take time, we are indeed making progress. While we express gratitude for what God has accomplished, we recognize that there is still much work to be done. As we look ahead to 2025, we will continue to strive towards our individual goal of becoming more like Christ each day, as well as our ministry goal of reaching teenagers across the bi-city with the love of Christ.

We invite you to celebrate with us as we reflect on 2024. This year would not have been possible without your support, prayers, and love for our ministry. We are truly grateful for our supportive church community and are excited about what God has in store for 2025.



Student Events in January:

Wednesday Nights

January Series: Let Him Cook!

Let Him Cook is 4 weeks that follow the journey of Joseph found in Genesis. This series is all about the process God takes us through in order to get to our purpose and promise. "Let Him Cook" will challenge students to lean into the season they're in, and see what God is developing in them to prepare them for their God-given destiny.

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.

Save the dates for 2025:

Summer Camp: July 11-14, 2025

DNOW: August 15-17, 2025

Ski Trip - December 27-30, 2025



THANK YOU!

It has been my absolute privilege to serve Christ in the Epworth Church as Director of Children's Ministries for almost 16 1/2 years. Although I will never lose my love for sharing Christ with children, I now have the honor of passing along this wonderful ministry to a very capable Sister in Christ. I have had the joy of watching Amber McCart grow in the Lord and in her love for ministering to children in the Epworth Methodist Church. She has served faithfully in every facet of our programs that relate to children, and I know that with God's guidance and the wonderful support of our church family, the Children's Ministry will continue to flourish.

Thank you, church family, for loving me and serving with me throughout the years. I now have the continued joy of serving Jesus Christ with you as a volunteer wherever I am needed.

I love you, and Jesus loves you best of all!

Letha