



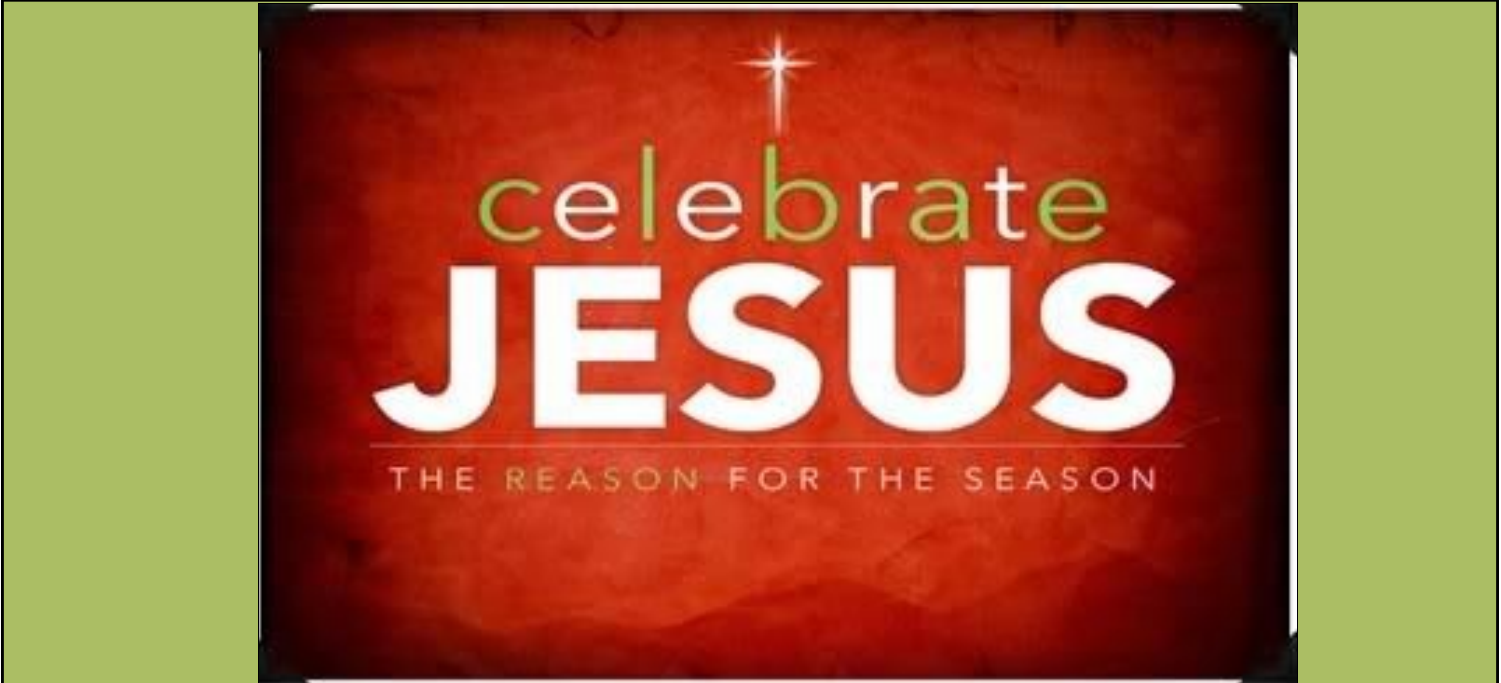
Merry Christmas

December Connections
2013
Lakewood Baptist Church

Message from Brother M.R.

As I begin to write this month's message on the reason for the season we call Christmas, I am actually getting ready for Thanksgiving. The real problem with this reality is that I like to live in the moment. Today is the final day of "Operation Christmas Child" and we have workers everywhere packing away the thousands of shoeboxes into the trucks for shipment. One of the great benefits of this ministry is the stories that walk through the door on a daily basis. It's Christmas time and as I walked through the church people were just everywhere decorating the buildings, and nowhere was heard a discouraging word. There is Christmas music playing in the rooms, and popcorn popping in the halls. Faces of people I have never seen before who have come from near and far are gathering around the BBQ grill on the front lawn. The smells and sounds are burned into my memory, where it will be a joyful memory for many years to come. Two small children are here with their mother bringing their shoeboxes and the story of when they received those very boxes while in an orphanage. Adopted, they now live here and are sending those same boxes they once received to another child somewhere who's life will be changed as theirs was. A wonderful couple stands in line to ask for some help with their boxes. They have been committed for many years to the project and this year they began packing their boxes in July. It took them until now to get the 504 boxes ready to deliver. A young girl has 16 boxes with her today. It was her birthday and she had ask for everyone at her party to bring \$7.00 to cover the cost of shipping a shoebox as they made gifts for others on her birthday. Oh yes it is starting to look a lot like Christmas, even if Thanksgiving is still two days away. Everywhere I look the spirit of the season is being displayed and I am blessed to be a part of it.

This spirit that drives all the activity should not pass simply because of a day on the calendar. The reason for the season is just as real the rest of the year as it is today. We as Christians have reason to celebrate everyday that we live with and for Him! God is good and worthy of our worship and praise. Not just at Christmas but all year long. So as for me, I want to hold on to the Spirit of Christmas as long as I can. The Good News of Great joy is real and relevant everyday that God gives us to live on this Earth. I thank God for all He is doing, and I pray it will carry on in the New Year as well. From my family to yours, may God bless you and yours during this Holiday Season! May He fill you to overflowing with the peace promised on that day He arrived in Bethlehem! May this be a time of great Joy and refreshing as we stop to remember the reason for the season.



celebrate
JESUS
THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

Children are a gift from God

The love and generosity of our Lakewood family is absolutely overwhelming! Because of your support of our “COTA for Katie T” Silent Auction at the Fall Festival, combined with some very generous donations, we were able to raise over \$7000, which went towards medical expenses associated with Katie Testement’s heart transplant surgery. Thanks so much to everyone who donated and purchased items for the auction and who worked the Fall Festival. This is truly a congregation-wide endeavor, and I appreciate all of the love and hard work that was poured out by our Lakewood family!

I also want to say a great big “Thanks!” to our Awana kids, parents and leaders for helping pack over 40 shoeboxes this year for Operation Christmas Child. It is such a joy to see our families support the many projects that we take on throughout the year. Thank you so much for the gifts, the prayers, and the time you invest in the lives of our Lakewood kids. It is through these loving actions that they are learning what it means to truly live out our lives as Christians.

Our annual Parents Night Out is scheduled for Friday, December 6, from 6:00 – 10:00 p.m. We will have supper, games, and crafts for the kids. Parents, take this opportunity to go on a date, go Christmas shopping, or just chill out together at home while we entertain the kids at the church. The cost will be \$5 per child. A nursery will be provided for babies and toddlers. We are asking that you please sign up on the sheet outside of the children’s office so that we can prepare enough craft activities and food for everyone. Thanks!

Shaping the Future

Andrew Spires

Youth & Younger Single Adults

We come to the end of another year ready to enjoy the Christmas season. I’d like to start by thanking all of you who donated items or funds for our Thanksgiving baskets, which were a huge success! With your help our students and singles made 114 baskets that have already been passed out to the needy as a blessing over Thanksgiving. We also have several opportunities to serve during December; beginning Sunday afternoon (2:00-4:30) December 1st we will be sorting large amounts of donated toys from all over the community at Valley Rescue Mission, then on Saturday, December 14th (8:30-2:30) we will actually help parents “shop” for their children’s gifts and hand out food bags at the Valley Rescue Toy Shop. I believe this is an invaluable experience as our students see that there are real people who are hurting and in need living all around them. You also have an opportunity to get involved, there are two large plastic bins marked “New Valley Rescue Toys” placed in the downstairs elevator lobby. As you do your holiday shopping, I trust you will pick up an extra toy for a girl or boy this Christmas. Please place all new, unwrapped toys in the bins no later than Friday, December 13th, and you will know the joy of blessing others as God has blessed you!

Our students and singles are also invited to a couple of special events; first we will head to Callaway Gardens and see Fantasy in Lights on Wednesday night, December 11th, from 6:00-9:00pm cost is \$10 per person, and second they are invited to a Christmas party to be held at Fran Loftin’s home in St. Andrew’s subdivision on Wednesday, December 18th from 6:30-8:30pm, cost is \$5 per person plus a \$5 gift to exchange. We also look forward to seeing some of our older students who will return for the holidays, some from college, and also Amy Giles and James Valfre from their military training, and I know you will join me in welcoming them home. Finally, we look forward into next year, as a couple of big events are just over the horizon. Our students and singles will go skiing in Winterplace, West Virginia (Feb. 7th-9th) and then we will host the community wide True Love Waits night here at Lakewood on Wednesday, February 12th. We expect 300+ students to come so we will need lots of volunteers, and there will be more details to come shortly on ways you can volunteer and be involved. May God continue to bless you and your family as we remember the *REAL* reason we celebrate the Christmas season, the birth of our Lord & Savior!

Music & Senior Adults

“ I will sing to the Lord”

Charles Keown

An Advent Christmas presented by the Alleluia Choir and Orchestra
Sunday, December 8th at 6 p.m.
Enjoy the lighting of the Advent Wreath with narration written by Dr. Horner

Solo, Ensemble and Children's Choir
Sunday, December 15th at 6 p.m.
Enjoy many of the wonderful musicians who have blessed our church with their gift.

An Instrumental Christmas presented by the Orchestra
Sunday, December 22nd at 6 p.m.
*Featuring - Justin Belew playing 18th Century Christmas in the folk music style
Guest Conductor – Rush Gavin, Charles' former High School Band Director*

JOY TO THE WORLD...A CHRISTMAS CONCERT OF SMITHS STATION HIGH SCHOOL

A Christmas Concert of all of the Choirs of Smiths Station High School will take place in our Sanctuary on **Tuesday December 10 at 7:00**. Everyone is invited and the program is free.

**DESIGNATE "LOTTIE MOON" ON YOUR OFFERING ENVELOPE
25% OF ALL CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE GOES DIRECTLY
TO LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING
ALL YEAR LONG**

TOTALLY HIS
HEART, HANDS, VOICE

Matthew 22:36-39

2013
LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING[®]
NATIONAL GOAL: \$175 MILLION
WEEK OF PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS DECEMBER 1-8



Lakewood Baptist Total: 349 Shoeboxes
 Lakewood Collection Center Total: 4,815 Shoeboxes
 Chattahoochee Valley Collection Center Total:
18,354 Shoeboxes



Lakewood's own Joel McMillon married Izabella, a shoebox recipient from Romania!



**PACKING PARTIES!
 THANKS HOMER, DON & KENNY!!**



4th grader Reagan Bridges asked for an OCC packing party for her 10th birthday rather than get gifts for herself. She brought the 16 shoeboxes she and her guests put together on the first Monday of Collection Week. What a way to start off!



Jon Keown met Kasey Barrow while doing Community Service hours for Operation Christmas Child for their college scholarships 5 years ago. Wedding date 6-14-14!

**THANK
 YOU
 FOR
 EVERY
 ACT OF
 SERVICE**



AWANA LOVES SHOEBOXES!



Moses and Mercy received a shoebox while living in their native country of Gongo in Africa. They were adopted by Ray Cummings (Pastor of Golden Acres) and his wife Amanda. This year Mercy and Moses packed a shoebox themselves for children overseas!



Thank you for providing our meal on truck day!
Loving Children Here and Abroad

December 2013

Check out our website for up to the minute changes @ LBCPC.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Baby Dedication @ 10:45 6:00 Kidz Choir 5:00 Youth	2 Amen Choir @ 10:30	3 Alleluia Choir @ 6:30	4 VKBW @ 10:00 5:45 Awana/ Flyte & Youth	5	6 Parent Night Out 6-10pm CDC Christmas Program	7 Union Springs-Red Door Leave at 1:30
8 6:00 Alleluia Choir Concert	9 Amen Choir @ 10:30	10 Sweet Spirits @ 10:00 Smith Station H.S. Chorus Concert @ 7:00	11 5:45 Awana/ Flyte/Youth 7:00 Deacon Meeting	12 CDC Christmas Party @ 6:00 Walk thru Bethlehem 2-9	13	14 Valley Rescue Toy Drive 8:30-2:00
15 Men's Breakfast @ 8:00 Solo & Ensemble Program	16 Amen Choir @ 10:30	17	18 19 Awana Store 5:45 Awana/ Flyte/Youth Christmas Party 7:00 Finance Meeting	19	20	21
22 Instrumental Christmas	23	24 Office Closed	25 Christmas Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve Office Closed				

Regularly Ongoing Weekly Activities

* All times are Eastern.

Sunday

9:30 AM Contemporary Worship Service
9:30 AM Bible Fellowship
10:45 AM Blended Worship Service
10:45 AM Bible Fellowship
11:15 AM Kidz Worship
5:30PM PRAYER TIME
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

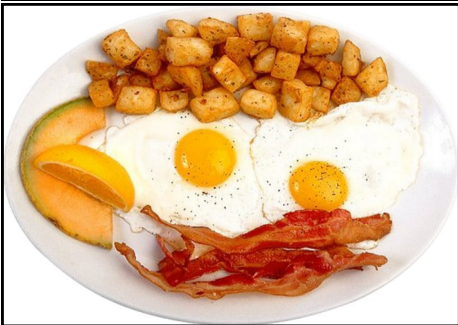
5:00 PM Family Night Supper
5:45 PM Youth Bible Study
5:45 PM Awana / Flyte / Youth
6:00 PM Orchestra Rehearsal
6:00 PM Adult Prayer and Bible Study
7:00 PM Praise Team

Additional Information

The church office should receive all submissions to be considered for the monthly newsletter (*Connections*) by 2:00 PM on the 14th of the prior month.

Weekly submissions for consideration should be received by noon each Tuesday.

Toy Drive for Valley Rescue Mission
 Bring new toys only from now
 until December 13th.
 Donation bins are in the downstairs lobby.



**Men's
 Breakfast
 Sunday, December 15th
 8:00 am
 Everyone Welcome**



Bus Trip to the Red Door Dinner Theatre-Dec. 7
 This year's Christmas production at the Red Door Dinner Theatre will be *Papa's Angels*. Your \$20.00 includes dinner, the show and the bus ride. Leave at 1:30.

Bus Trip - Walk Thru Bethlehem – Thursday, Dec. 12
 The bus will leave at 2:00 for Michelle's Buffet in Eufaula. We will arrive at Mt. Gilead before 5:30 and return to the church by 9:00. The cost is \$15 which includes bus and buffet in Eufaula, drink, tax and tip. Walk thru Bethlehem is free. This event is limited to the first 40 people to sign up. Call Lorene Parker or the church office.



SOUND CHOICES
 PREGNANCY CLINIC

Our Church's Goal:
\$1,000.00

2013
**Baby Bottle
 Boomerang**

**Sound Choices is part of our
 Circles of Influence but this is our
 opportunity to add to our offerings to
 save a life!**

**Pick up your baby bottles beginning Dec. 15.
 Return them by January 19th which is
 Sanctity of Life Sunday.**



Contact Information:

Lakewood Baptist Church
 Website: LBCPC.org
 4011 Lakewood Drive,
 Phenix City, AL 36867
 Main Office: 334.298.6433
 Fax: 334.298.4873
 Hours: M-Th 8:30 - 4:30 F- 8:30 - 4:00

Child Development Center:
 334.298.6461
 Website: LBCPC.org/cdc
 Hours: M- F 6:30 - 6:00

**December
 2013**

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Issue 2

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