



**CHRISTMAS 2014
AT LAKEWOOD**

**ALLELUIA CHOIR & ORCHESTRA
DECEMBER 7TH @ 6:00 PM**

**KIDZ CHOIR & MIXED ENSEMBLES
DECEMBER 14TH @ 6:00 PM**

**INSTRUMENTAL CHRISTMAS
DECEMBER 21ST @ 6:00 PM**

**CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
DECEMBER 24TH @ 6:00 PM**



Brother M.R.

Well, it is starting to look a lot like Christmas, and no, I am not singing out loud. Well, I was actually singing out loud as I walked into my office to write this month's message. Perhaps that might seem strange to some but I really do walk around singing enough that the staff has stopped looking at me strange and decided once and for all that I am touched. Now that is the polite way to say that I am nuts, but just like you can save 15% in 15 minutes, everybody knows that! But did you know that I love Christmas more than any holiday of the year? I get to give out all kinds of great gifts and you never know what kind of goodies will show up on my desk. Did you also know that I love divinity? Just in case you were wondering what kind of goodies I really like. And did you know I like no bake chocolate oatmeal cookies just as much? Now back to all the reasons I love Christmas. I get to give my wife one of those crazy gifts that I can't get away with any other time of the year, for too many reasons to list that seem more important than they have ever been in the past. Since cancer visited my beautiful bride this year I have been reminded to cherish every day we have together, and cherish and actually appreciate a great many things that I have taken for granted. Today I didn't stop until just now to realize that I have not appreciated so many wonderful things that God has done for me. My children didn't starve to death last night, that wasn't the case for 26,000 families worldwide this very morning. I had clean clear running water in my house when I needed it this morning, which means I was blessed, as nearly 1/3 of the world's population do not know that reality. I had a home and reliable transportation to travel freely wherever I needed to go. I was surrounded by people who love and support me and were willing to sacrifice to make my life better. It's not that these things are new to me but that I have taken them for granted that really bothers me at every level. The joy of a life more abundant and free as promised in the Scriptures is being missed by myself and a multitude of others simply because we fail to stop and count our blessings. This Christmas really does have a chance to be different if only I will stop each and every day to thank God for all the little things He does for me. I have become convinced that the lack of joy in the lives of most Americans can be traced back to the fact that they fail to recognize and appreciate all they have been given. I don't appreciate never knowing hunger because I have never had to live without the ability to find something to eat. I don't appreciate a warm blanket and a safe place to sleep because I have never been homeless and cold. The very fact that God has blessed me to have escaped those realities known by so many others should bring me to praise Him. I, like so many other Americans, have failed to appreciate what God has done for me and have begun to simply expect them as though they were an entitlement, but not this year! I believe the peace that transcends all understanding is as real as God. I believe that Paul had discovered this mystery called contentment, regardless of his circumstances. I believe he tried to share it with all of us in Philippians chapter 4 when he wrote, "Rejoice in the Lord always! I will say it again rejoice". Then Paul shared the secret to being in a spirit to rejoice always and how to break free from the things in this world that try to steal our joy. Take control of your thoughts! "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent and praiseworthy think about these things and the God of peace will be with you." Stop and appreciate the things you have and the things that are presently stealing your joy will fade in the light of His blessings. By stopping to appreciate all we have, we can't help but rejoice in the Lord always. Christmas is the season of celebrating the greatest truth of all time. God is for us! God so loved us he gave the greatest gift of all time. We are not abandoned to save ourselves, for Christ has come to pay the price for our sin. So count your blessings, name them one by one, and you will be surprised by what the Lord has done. Stop taking life and everything in it for granted. God is good and worthy of our praise. Paul reminds us of that truth once again in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 when he says, "Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." What is God's will for us this Holiday season and all the year through? Be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances! Sound impossible? Not if you dare to take God at His Word and take control of your thoughts and count your blessings. I am thanking God for you!

God Bless and Best Wishes!

Shaping the future

It's the most wonderful time of the year as we rush towards the end of 2014 and see 2015 just around the corner! We have a busy month planned for December as usual. Here are a few of the things we have planned:

Christmas Carol & Card night- Wednesday, December 10th from 6:00-8:00 pm in the Youth Room. We'll enjoy our normal Wednesday night worship with a little twist. **Free.**

Valley Rescue Toy Drive & Giveaway- Saturday, December 13th from 8:45-3:00 pm. Meet at VRM on 2nd Ave. in Columbus. Breakfast & lunch will be provided. Drop off & pick up there. **Free.** In advance of this event please drop off a unwrapped gift or stocking stuffer for a needy child (ages 0-12) in either of the donation boxes in the sanctuary foyer or elevator lobby.

Youth & Singles Christmas Party- Wednesday, December 17th from 6:00-9:00 pm at the Loftin home in St. Andrews subdivision. We'll enjoy 13th St. BBQ with all the trimmings and we'll watch a Christmas movie before we do our annual gift exchange. Cost is **\$5.00 per person** to cover food, and everyone needs to bring a dirty Santa gift to exchange (**at least \$5.00 in value, no gag gifts**). Drop off and pick-up there.

Fantasy in Lights- Thursday, December 18th from 6:00-9:00 pm at Callaway Gardens. **Cost is \$15 per ticket**, open to students, parents of students, and singles. Meet in parking lot near the youth room to load the bus. Price does not include any food or drink which are for sale by vendors at Callaway.

New Year's Eve Party-Wednesday, December 31st 10:00pm-12:15 am, location: TBD. Join us as we await the beginning of the new year! Cost will be **\$3.00 per person**. More details to come.

Looking forward into the new year, we have the youth, singles, and young married couples **Ski Trip to Colorado**, along with **True Love Waits** and the **SWO Purity Weekend** coming in February. Please be in constant prayer for the younger generation as they strive to live out their faith in this world. I trust that as the new year approaches, we will see more hearts turned to Him!

Children are a gift from God

I want to say a great big "Thanks!" to our Awana kids, parents and leaders for helping pack 48 shoeboxes this year for Operation Christmas Child. We had a great time taking the boxes over to the OCC room, and Linda Keown made the night so special by sharing with the kids how just one box had changed the lives of a whole village with the gospel message it contained. We love Mrs. Linda and appreciate all the time and effort she and her team of volunteers put forth in collecting and packaging all of the boxes! 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 12, 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!

Don't forget that our children's choir is working hard on the musical, "The Christmas Cupcake." The preschoolers will perform with the elementary choir in sharing "the sweetest story ever told" about a child's quest in discovering the real meaning of Christmas. Mark your calendars for December 14 at 6:00 pm!

OUR GIFTS TO JESUS

It wasn't just by happenstance that the wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the baby Jesus. There is much significance in those gifts, and a great inference concerning what we should bring to Jesus this Christmas season.

They brought gold, a gift that would be presented to a king. Then and now gold is symbolic of royalty, and in this gift the wise men were recognizing the sovereign dominion of Jesus. They believed that the baby they had been seeking was born a king, as declared in Daniel 9:25, and as they announced in Matthew 2:2. Have you recognized His sovereignty over your life and given Him the submission that is due to Him as a King?

They brought frankincense, symbolic of the sinless deity of Jesus. In Exodus 30:34-38, God gives Moses instructions concerning the ingredients of the incense to be offered in the Tabernacle, and three times He emphasizes that it is to be "most holy." Frankincense is the base of this holy incense to be given to God in worship. In the gift of frankincense, the wise men were worshiping Jesus, as stated in Matthew 2:11. They did not cuddle Him in their arms or chuck Him under the chin or play games with Him. They fell on their faces before Him. Have you confessed that He is Lord and given Him the worship that is due to His deity?

They brought myrrh, symbolic of the sacrificial death of Jesus. Myrrh was a very valuable gum-like substance that was used to embalm the dead. Why would they give a little baby something connected with a funeral? They recognized that this baby was born to die. Mark 15:23 tells us that on the cross the executioners offered Jesus wine mingled with myrrh. Myrrh was used as a narcotic to dull pain, but Jesus refused the taste of myrrh that He might taste death for every sinner. In John 19:38-40 we learn that myrrh was one of the ingredients used in the burial of Jesus. I don't know how much the wise men understood about the reality of the death of Jesus, but the Holy Spirit knew, and it is no accident that they brought myrrh. Have you realized that Jesus died for you and trusted Him as your Savior?

Those visitors from the East gave to Jesus gold and frankincense and myrrh, signifying sovereign dominion, sinless deity, and sacrificial death. Because of His sovereign dominion, I give Him my will. Because of His sinless deity, I give Him my worship. Because of His sacrificial death, I give Him my life.



“ I will sing to the Lord”

**Alleluia Choir & Orchestra Christmas Program
Sunday, December 7 @ 6 P.M.**

**Children’s Choir and Mixed Ensembles
Sunday, December 14 @ 6 P.M.**

**Instrumental Christmas Program
Sunday, December 21 @ 6 P.M.**

**Christmas Eve Service
Wednesday, December 24 @ 6 P.M.**

I want to thank everyone who has volunteered to sing in the Christmas Program this year. We have young people, children, guests from other churches, and many of our own who don’t regularly sing in the choir that will make this a Christmas to remember. Tell your family and friends about the wonderful opportunities to hear the beautiful Christmas music this season at Lakewood. It is a joy to stand in front of such talented and faithful musicians from week to week. I hope you will let them know how much you appreciate their service from week to week.



Merry Christmas!

**Red Door Theatre
Presents
Always... Patsy Cline**



**Friday, December 5th
Bus leaves at 5:15 pm
Dinner, Play & Bus
\$38 per person**

Bulletin Board

There are events and notices posted there as well as notes of appreciation from our members.

Notes of Appreciation were received from the following:

The family of Hillary Hatchett Neal

Keith Pruski

There is a scrapbook from Homecoming 2010 in the upstairs elevator lobby in the Historic Gallery for your viewing pleasure.

Wednesday Menus

12/3
Meatloaf,
Mashed Potatoes
& Gravy, Turnip Greens,
Cornbread, Salad
& Dessert

12/10
Pork Chops,
Rice & Gravy,
English Peas, Rolls,
Salad & Dessert

12/17
Chili,
Grilled Cheese Sandwich,
Salad & Dessert

12/24
Merry Christmas!

In Memory of:

Sue Rogers for Food Closet from Jimmy and Susan Graham
Richard Atkins for Challenge to Build from Gail Brantley

In Honor of:

Gail Brantley for Food Closet from Billy and Cathy Greene
Jean Russell for Food Closet from Billy and Cathy Greene

Welcome New Members
Seddrick & Maria Carr

Sympathy to
Diane Bush and Family
In the loss of her mother,
Shirley Yancey



Ministerial Staff:

M.R. Hamilton, Pastor
brothermr@LBCPC.org
Charles Keown, Minister - Music & Senior Adults charles@LBCPC.org
Andrew Spires, Minister - Students and Singles andrew@LBCPC.org
Patrick Thornton, Minister - Children patrick@LBCPC.org
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Carol Breault, Office Ministry Assistant carol@LBCPC.org
Linda Keown, Music & Media Ministry Assistant linda@LBCPC.org
Child Development Center
Cabbi Black, Director cabbib@LBCPC.org
Tammy Evans, Administrative Assistant tammy@LBCPC.org

October Giving	Budget	CTB	Missions	Other	Total
10/5/14	\$18,276.60	\$629.00	\$385.00	\$950.00	\$20,240.60
10/12/14	\$11,523.70	\$550.00	\$601.15	\$3,575.96	\$16,250.81
10/19/14	\$10,886.16	\$210.00	\$410.00	\$532.00	\$12,038.16
10/26/14	\$9,373.77	\$357.00	\$318.00	\$2,169.56	\$12,218.33
Totals	\$50,060.23	\$1,746.00	\$1,714.15	\$7,227.52	\$61,170.70

December 2014

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Amen Choir @10:30	2 Ensemble Rehearsal @ 6:30	3 VKBW @10:00 Alleluia Ch. & Orchestra Reh. @ 6:00	4	5 Bus to Union Springs @ 5:15	6
7 Ist Pl. @ 4 Yth Choir @ 4 Alleluia Ch. & Orch. @ 4:30 Alleluia Choir & Orchestra Program	8 Amen Choir @ 10:30	9 Ensemble Reh. @ 6:30	10 7:00 Deacon Meeting	11 CDC Christmas Program @ 10	12 Parents Night Out 6-10 pm	13 Valley Rescue Toy Give Away 8:45- 3:00 pm
14 Ist Pl. @ 4:00 Solo/Ensemble/ Kids Choir Program	15 Amen Choir @ 10:30	16 Orchestra Dress Reh.@ 6:00	Youth Christmas Party 6-9 Deacon Meeting @ 7:00	18	19	20
21 Orchestra Reh. & Lunch @ 12:00 Instrumental Christmas	22	23	24 Office Closed 6:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 Merry Christmas	26 Office Closed	27
28	29	30	31 Office Closed			

Regularly Ongoing Weekly Activities

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
6:00 PM Worship

Wednesday

5:00 PM Family Night Supper
5:45 PM Youth Bible Study
5:45 PM AWANA / FLYTE
Youth Get Real
6:00 PM Orchestra Rehearsal
6:00 PM Adult Prayer and Bible Study
7:00 PM Praise Team

Thursday

2:00 PM Clothes Closet
2:00 PM LOAF

* All times are Eastern.



2014 Atlanta Processing Center
Destination Countries
Burkina Faso Burundi
Central African Republic
Chad Congo
Democratic Republic of Congo
Dominica India
Jamaica Mali
Mauritius Southdan
Sensitive Country(ies)

Melvin's Greatest Journey!

An Amazing Story of how your shoebox can change a village

In year December 2011, 80 children in a desperately poor village in the Vunika region in Labasa, Fiji received a shoe box through Operation Christmas Child. In this village were many Hindus, Muslims and native Fijian people of other faiths.

Soon after the distribution, 30 children enrolled, with the consent of their parents, to do The Greatest Journey, our 12 lesson, children's discipleship program.

By the end of the program, 15 of the children had given their lives to Jesus. One of them was Melvin, a 10 year old boy who lived with his grandparents. Melvin's grandfather was known as a religious leader and witchdoctor by the local villagers. Amazingly, Melvin's grandfather agreed to have The Greatest Journey classes at his house.

Pastor Waisea from a neighboring town came and taught the classes and some of the children's parents came along to see and hear what their children were learning. The children completed The Greatest Journey in 14 weeks. They asked Pastor Waisea if he would keep teaching the classes so that they could learn more about Jesus and so a Bible study group was established in Melvin's grandparents' home.

The Bible study group grew steadily over the next three months and 5 of the adults accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior, including Melvin's grandparents, to the astonishment of many neighbors.

Melvin's grandfather then asked Pastor Waisea to start a church in his home. The church grew with 25 people attending regularly over the next seven months. Melvin's grandfather and Pastor Waisea approached a local landowner to buy some land so that they could build a church and on Sunday, 16th September, 2012 the first church service was held under temporary shelter on the land with forty people!

In 2013, Melvin's grandfather went to be with the Lord. Today Melvin is growing into a fine young man and a bright student. He faithfully attends Sunday school and prayer meetings every week and his young sister is also involved in the activities of the church.

Melvin is doing his best to get his Dad to come to church and is sure that God will bring him.

With your ongoing support and prayers, The Greatest Journey will continue to transform lives across Asia Pacific and around the world.

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 am - 4:30 pm
F - 8:30 am - 12:00 pm

Child Development Center

Website: LBCPC.org/cdc
334.298.6461
Hours: M - F 6:30 am - 6:00 pm

**December
2014**

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