

The Main Thing

MAIN STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 2018

The Incarnation - A Time to Sing Praise

Pastor Matocha

Christmas is a time for singing. Many of our most memorable hymns are based on the incarnation. During our Sunday morning service on December 16th our children will be singing some of these great hymns for their Christmas program. I encourage you to bring a friend along for that service. The singing of praise has accompanied the incarnation of our Savior from the start. Luke tells us that a multitude of angels praised God by singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased. (Luke 2:14)"

Let's consider this text. The angels highlight three important things. First, they call us to glorify God. This is a fundamental part of our existence. John Calvin states that "Scripture... everywhere reminds us, that we are redeemed from death for the purpose, that we might testify with the tongue...our gratitude to God." How does the incarnation bring glory to God?

The Bible often speaks of glory as God's self-disclosure. God's glory is seen in the revelation of his power at creation, and the revelation of his wrath at Sodom. In the incarnation a unique aspect of God's glory is revealed. The birth of Jesus, the God-Man, demonstrates God's mercy and love for sinners. This aspect of God's glory is also highlighted by John when he writes, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his **glory, glory** as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." The incarnation introduces us to a God glorious not only in power and wrath, but also grace and mercy. Power and wrath strike fear in us, but grace and mercy melt us to tears of godly sorrow and unspeakable joy. In Exodus 33:18 Moses pleads with God, "Please, show me your glory." Exodus 34:6-7 records God's answer. The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin..." The glory pronounced to Moses was on full display in the birth of Jesus. He came for the sole purpose of exhibiting the glory of His Father's mercy through his redeeming work.

The second thing we learn from the angel's song is the purpose of the incarnation. It is to bring "peace on earth." Since the first sin of Adam our relationship with God has been broken. Adam, as representative of humanity, was cast out of the garden and lost fellowship with God. We are told in Ephesians 2:3 that we are "children of wrath". Romans 8:7 reveals that our mind is "hostile to God". Jesus was born to end this conflict. He came to reconcile us to God. He does this by offering himself as a sin atoning sacrifice to appease God's wrath. Only the incarnation could make such a sacrifice possible. There is peace again on earth between God and man because of Jesus.

The third thing that motivates the angels to sing praise is "God's good will toward men." This is how the old King James version translates the last line in the song. This highlights the gracious nature of salvation. The Bible makes it clear that all sin and fall short of the glory of God. We deserve the wrath and curse of God. Despite our moral failures, God shows grace. He is willing to forgive our sins by placing them on the back of his own precious son. This is amazing grace.

Reflect on the message of this angelic hymn. Let the message of God's glory exhibited in his offer of free grace to sinners stir your soul in worship this Christmas season. To God be the glory!



December "Mingle and Jingle"

Our November luncheon numbers were smaller, but the warmth and fellowship filled our hearts with thanksgiving. Another success!

It's now time to turn our attention toward December with all the lights, colors, and pageantry. It's our annual "Mingle and Jingle". The date is December 16th and will follow the morning worship service that will include the Children's Program.

Families will bring finger foods, appetizers, and desserts. If you last name begins with...

A-L Finger Foods

M-Z Dessert or Appetizer

Suggested Finger Foods could be: chicken wings, meat balls, sandwiches cut in quarters, cheese dip, cheese and crackers, etc. Desserts could be: brownies, cupcakes, fudge, Xmas cookies, or candy, etc. Appetizers could be: chips and dip, vegetables and dip, fruit, etc. As always, in any of these areas *use your imagination!*

Mark your calendars for December 16 as we rejoice with the children for the coming of the Christ child. Following the service let's enjoy refreshments as we celebrate our four F's...Fellowship, Family, Fun...without the Fuss!

Merry Christmas,

Lynda



The Men's Prayer Breakfast met on November 14. We had a good turnout and the meal was really good.

Allan used Ephesians 2:8-9 as his text. Paul presents the bedrock doctrine of salvation by grace through faith in only one sentence. Allen described several situations that are applicable to our daily lives. He ended his presentation with this thought "Grace is being given not what we deserve but what we don't deserve."

The next Men's Prayer Breakfast will be **Wednesday, December 12, at 6:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall.** Hope to see you there.

Mike



Upcoming Events

December 7 Happy Hearts at Lion Hills 11:00 a.m.

December 12 Christmas Program Rehearsal 6 p.m.

December 15 Blalock – Glenn Wedding 2:00 p.m.

December 16 MSPC Children's Christmas Program
Mingle & Jingle



December 24 Christmas Eve Service 5 p.m.

December 25 Christmas Day





Happy Hearts

Bess Swedenburg

On November 14, 2018, our Happy Hearts group went into action!! Usually we listen to a speaker or enjoy someone's performance, but in November we shop, shop, shop for the best bargains in town! Then the items purchased are divided onto appropriately designated tables: hygiene, school items, toys, girl clothing and boy clothing according to age. And the fun begins! Our men assemble the boxes provided by Christmas Child Shoebox ministries and the ladies fill these boxes with age appropriate items. It's quite the task for a group of senior citizens but we manage to do it really well! Or so I think, we filled 52 boxes and paid the postage! This year we were blessed to have some young people helping us! The Denham boys wanted to come back and help wash dishes again, so I immediately seized the opportunity to have them help pack shoeboxes also. They were just as excited to be invited as we were to have them come and help! And they were great packers, faster at everything than we were !! Peter enjoyed putting boxes together alongside Ben Chilcutt while Patrick and Stewart were busy packing boxes. A little later Peter decided to join in all the fun of choosing what should be sent to whom. We all had a good time packing and realized just how valuable our young helpers really were (afterall, Johnice wasn't able to join us this year and she was a fast packer too)! As soon as the boxes were complete, the casseroles were brimming hot!

We always have a traditional southern Thanksgiving meal in November while counting our blessings. High on our list of blessings are the military families who join us for worship at Main Street Pres. Having celebrated Memorial Day on the 11th and Pearl Harbor Day coming up in December, we are even more thankful for our nation's freedom! Freedom to worship, freedom to express our thoughts, freedom to bear arms, freedom to vote, just to name a few. We are thankful for all the freedoms our military secures for us and know that they come at a high price! What a privilege and blessing to be American! And what a blessing to know

and love as many of the Air Force as do we at MSPC! Keep coming and bring others with you!

Back to our Thanksgiving meal, it was said to be possibly the best ever! Smoked turkey, cornbread dressing, gravy, sweet potato casseroles made by Jean Yelverton and Ann Barkley, squash casserole, eggplant casserole, butter beans, apple salad made by Diann Carter, congealed cherry salad made by Nell Fleming, rolls provided by Frances Laws, and of course cranberry sauce! For dessert we were treated to an assortment of sweets: Kitty Brewer made an apple cake, Deb Shelton made a spice cake, and Ann Chilcutt made pecan pies and a pumpkin pie! Can you believe we ate all of that? Nell brought her mint sweet tea which we all look forward to every time we meet! It was all so good and so much fun doing for others while counting our own blessings!

The decorations were as spectacular as the food! The combination of Fall leaves, Pilgrims, Indians, berries, pumpkins, fresh smilax, seasonal fabrics, Thanksgiving napkins, made our tables so festive. A special thank you to Nell Fleming, Deb Shelton, and Kitty Brewer for decorating and setting our tables! Every year we use Nell's fall collection to decorate the tables. She and I are always surprised that it never looks the same and every year we think it looks the prettiest ever! Though Nell would never admit it, dragging all those boxes of stuff out of the attic and to the church is a huge chore! She is always willing and happy to do it. Another of our blessings!

If you missed our November meeting, you missed a real treat! But you have another chance coming up soon! On December 7, at 11:00, we will meet at Lion Hills for a buffet lunch and some Christmas music! It will be special and hopefully everyone will make a special effort to attend the last Happy Hearts meeting of 2018! We would appreciate your calling Diann, 328-2523, so that we can have a good estimate of how many will be coming. But please don't stay away because you didn't call, a few extras will certainly be permissible! It's more important that you come!!

Friday, December 7 • 11:00 • Lion Hills

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

*Happy Hearts
and
Helping Hands*



MSCS NEWS



It is hard to believe I am in my 15th year at MSCS. It has been such a wonderful and rewarding experience to be a part of this unique and special preschool. I look forward too many more!!! I have the honor of teaching five very sweet little girls this year. "Girl Power" is definitely our theme! I am trying to create a loving and spiritual environment which will set the stage for a positive year of growth.

Preparing for Thanksgiving dominated most of November. The book and CD Off to Plymouth Rock! really explained about our first Thanksgiving. They also enjoyed making many Thanksgiving crafts which were used as decorations for our annual Thanksgiving feast. All the classes came together and celebrated Thanksgiving with delicious food our sweet moms prepared. We are so thankful for all of their support. Our Christmas program will be December 17th in the church sanctuary at 10:00. We hope you will join us! Please pray for all of us as we prepare for this most enjoyable performance. We look forward to many fun Christmas crafts and activities. They especially love to learn about Jesus' birth, Mary and Joseph, the Wisemen and angels.

We all wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In His love,

Gaines Gaskin



Do our children think Christmas is about Jesus or about gifts? There is a way to take the focus on gifts and turn it to a focus on Jesus. When we give gifts to one another, we are demonstrating that we love one another. The whole reason we give gifts in the first place is because we're imitating what God did for us. Helping our children see that the gift of Jesus is why we give gifts to one another adds meaning and depth to the experience of Christmas. How can we, as parents make sure that during this Christmas season, we continue to point our children to what is the main thing? How can we keep our own hearts there?

Have you noticed from the time children are little, that when holidays roll around, their little antenna perk up and their hearing perks up- and they notice things are different somewhat...Mom's put up a Christmas tree," or "She's cooking different food because it's Thanksgiving," or "She has these decorations out."

They notice that we're doing different things to make this time of year unique and special. This is a teaching opportunity too. This isn't just, "Okay; let's make different food because it's Thanksgiving/Christmas." Maybe they're more receptive if their little antennas are up. Maybe we can teach them some things about being thankful. Let's figure out: "What can I teach them? How can I teach my kids to be grateful when their little antennae are up and going, 'Okay; this is a special time of year'?" It's the same with Christmas, and the same with Easter, and the same even with some other opportunities throughout the year. We celebrate these holidays because there's something important about them-something meaningful happened/something that we should pay attention. So how do we, as moms and dads, teach our kids what that is? What that meaningful event was? And "Why do we celebrate this?"

The reality is-the songs on the radio, the commercials that are on TV, or what is in your social media feed now-all of this is talking about "Christmas is coming." It's all pointing you toward, "Don't you want..." and "Shouldn't you buy..." and it's all consumer-oriented. So, while our kids and our antennas are up, let's tune out the consumerism, and let's tune into what Christmas is about in the first place.

Some resources you may find helpful to center Christmas on Christ:

https://www.amazon.com/Jesus-Christmas-Explore-Gods-Amazing/dp/178498227X/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_img_0?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=P4V9QKTDXBODENP7Y0VA



https://www.amazon.com/Advent-Storybook-Bible-Stories-Showing/dp/0830776087/ref=pd_lpo_sbs_14_img_2?encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=P4V9QKTDXB0DENP7Y0VA

<https://www.amazon.com/Why-Christmas-Barbara-Reaach/dp/193690862X>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/media/christmas-stories>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/holidays/christmas/purpose-of-christmas>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/holidays/christmas/others-centered-christmas>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/media/daily-broadcast/embracing-the-reality-of-christmas>

<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/holidays/celebrating-christmas/rethinking-christmas-wish-lists>



Security Team Update

Over the past year, the Session and Deacons have prayerfully considered the issue of church security in light of continued acts of violence toward churches throughout the nation. It is an objective sign of the broken world which we live in that Christ's church has so often come under attack. News of such violence is pervasive and unavoidable.

Beginning in 2018, the leadership of the church sought volunteers from the membership to be involved in forming a security team whose mission would be to provide a first level of protection for our church family. Those who volunteered then underwent an intensive training program taught by a qualified instructor with over 30 years of experience in such training. We were careful to choose someone who not only had the appropriate background and skills, but who was also a strong Christian who lives his life by the principles taught by Christ.

In total, each volunteer completed over 30 hours of instruction that emphasized violence prevention, verbal de-escalation techniques, and non-violent intervention. There was also intense training on physical restraints as well as firearm safety and proficiency. All security volunteers were required to complete the training program in its entirety and did so successfully. Each security member has also completed the requirements imposed by the State of Mississippi to be recognized as "church security team member". These men have made a strong personal commitment to the safety of our church.

Going forward, you will notice members of the team outside the church entrances before and during services. Team members will also be present in the sanctuary, nursery, and will check all entrances periodically. Radios will be used by the members to communicate with each other and a radio will be available in the nursery at all times. As has been the case for the past few weeks, the Main Street entrance, the rear entrance, and the 7th street entrance by the church office will be locked following completion of the first hymn. The main entrance on 7th street will remain open.



While these actions may seem invasive or extreme to some, not taking any actions would be a total lack of responsibility by our Church Officers. We hope the congregation will understand and help embrace these new policies in place.

We prayerfully ask for your support as we take on this responsibility.

Roger Day
Chairman of the Deacons
MSPC



December 2018

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
						1 Cookie Swap The Honey House Cathy Duncan <i>Russ & Pat</i> <i>Russell</i>
2 Communion Joy Day	3	4	5 Last Wednesday activities for 2018 John Hunter Allgood George Clegg	6 Prayer Meeting Noon Jesse Duncan, Jr.	7 Happy Hearts Lion Hills	8
9 Community Groups	10	11 WIC at Night Nick Brewer Jack Chilcutt	12 Christmas Program Rehearsal 6 p.m.	13 Prayer Meeting Noon Margo Allgood Amy Kilpatrick	14 <i>Allan & Kitty</i> <i>Brewer</i>	15
16 Children's Christmas Program Mingle & Jingle 	17 MSCS Christmas Program <i>Bertram & Debbie</i> <i>Jenkins</i>	18	19 Last Day for MSCS	20 Prayer Meeting Noon Nick Hairston	21 Reed Hairston Elizabeth Woodson	22 Nell Fleming <i>Nick & Eleanor</i> <i>Hairston</i>
23 Community Groups	24 Christmas Eve Service 5 p.m.	25  Merry Christmas Melissa Allgood	26 Tyler Allgood Marianne Field	27 Prayer Meeting Noon	28	29 <i>George & Martha</i> <i>Clegg</i>
30 Visiting Minister Craig Barnard No Evening Service	31					

December Volunteers

Nursery

- Dec. 2 Janie Williams
Robin Tait
- Dec. 9 Shirley Swoope
Janie Williams
- Dec. 16 Gee & Becca Allgood
Karmel Crandall
- Dec. 23 Ivy Harris
Roger & Joy Day
- Dec. 30 Frances Glenn
Pat Russell

Ushers

- Dec. 2 Roger Day, Gee Allgood,
Trip Hairston, Allan Brewer,
Danny Williams, Carson Miller
- Dec. 9 Ray Kilpatrick, Thomas Glenn,
Jay Nail, Russ Russell, Brent Drown,
Gray Flora, Phillip Goodwin
- Dec. 16 Justin Harris, Henry Pilkinton,
Ben Woodson, Bill Laws,
Grover Allgood
- Dec. 23 Roger Day, Matt White,
Patrick Shipp, Mike Meharg,
Jon Watson, John Hunter Allgood
- Dec. 30 Roger Day, Gee Allgood,
Trip Hairston, Allan Brewer,
Danny Williams, Carson Miller



Our Shut-Ins:

- Louise Armstrong
- Sadie Brewer
- George & Martha Clegg
- Verda Laws

- Keith Cole
- Jennifer Garner
- Phillip Goodwin
- Debbie Jenkins
- Poogie Laws
- Dan Matocha
- John Mark Russell
- Brad Talley
- Faith Whitlock
- Rick Wright

Moms to be:

- Margo Allgood
- Meryl Fisackerly
- Ivy Harris
- Wendy Herron
- Lucy Lilly
- Jennifer White

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- President Donald Trump
 - Officials in Washington
 - Governor Phil Bryant
 - Mayor Robert Smith
 - Police Chief Fred Shelton
 - Sheriff Mike Aldredge
 - State, City, and County Officials

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- Helping Hands
 - Life Choices Pregnancy Center
 - Palmer Home
 - All Churches and Pastors in Columbus

**December
Money Counter**

Patrick Shipp

**November
Budget Report**

Offerings this Month

\$ 25,474

**MAIN STREET
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

701 Main Street
P. O. Box 26
Columbus, MS 39703-0026

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Main Street Presbyterian Church

(A Presbyterian Church in America Congregation)

Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Church Officer Prayer Time

9:15 a.m. Sunday School Fellowship

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:40 a.m. Morning Worship

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship

Wednesday Schedule

5:30 p.m. Supper

6:00 p.m. Children and Youth Activities

6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study and Prayer Time

Thursday Schedule

Weekly Prayer Meeting at Noon