

December 2024



| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|-------------------|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 Advent 12pm Chickasaw Dine-Cracker Barrel Twas the Night Dress Rehearsal 6pm | 2 | 3 | 4 5:30pm ROW 6:00pm K-5th, 6-7th grade, & 8-12th grade 6:15pm Adult Bible Study 18+ 6:15pm Choir Dress Rehearsal | 5 | 6 Bell Ringing for Salvation Army | 7 Bell Ringing for Salvation Army 1-4pm Chickasaw Market: North Pole Stroll |
| 8 twas THE NIGHT... 6pm Musical & Reception | 9 VLT Meeting 6pm | 10 Ageless Adventures 9:30am Bragg-Mitchell Home \$24 Mike's Food Pantry 3pm - 5pm | 11 Church-wide Christmas Caroling 5pm | 12 Chickasaw High School Band concert 6pm | 13 | 14 Chickasaw Christmas Parade 3pm |
| 15 Worship Team meeting 11:45am | 16 | 17 | 18 CHRISTMAS PARTY kids & youth 5:30pm No Regular Wednesday night Activities | 19 | 20 | 21 Ladies' Breakfast 9:00am |
| 22 Men's Club 7:30am | 23 | 24 Christmas Eve Service 5pm | 25 Happy Birthday JESUS | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 5th Sunday Next Gen & Noisy Offering | 30 | 31 Happy New Year No Wednesday night Activities | | | | |



Chickasaw
METHODIST CHURCH

LIVE LIFE LOVED
& FULLY ALIVE IN '25

NEW SERVICE TIMES IN 2025:
9am & 11am





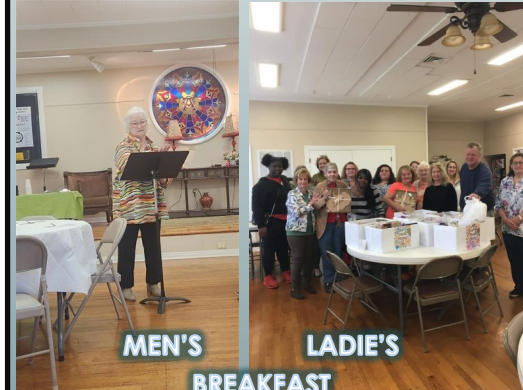
CHICKASAW MARKET



MISSIONS MINISTRY TEAM



NEW SIGNS



**MEN'S
LADIE'S
BREAKFAST**



**COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING
SERVICE**



AGELESS ADVENTURES



HANGING OF THE GREENS



HANGING OF THE GREENS



PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

Why Christmas Matters

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us"). When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife." Matthew 1:22-24

"And Jesus died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." 2 Corinthians 5:15

Everyone knows that Christmas is supposed to be about Jesus, even though most of us all enjoy all that other stuff – seeing family, great foods, fun get-togethers, giving and receiving presents. You get the picture. So, we all agree that the most important part of Christmas is Jesus being born. The question that we need to embrace to make Christmas really all about Jesus is "What difference does it make that Jesus was born, that God came to earth as one of us?" Jesus being born and living as one of us brings a lot of wonderful things to us as people. We could make a lengthy list and enjoy the good feelings that it gives to us. One of the most powerful reasons on that list is that Jesus came to give us purpose as people.

Remember back in the 1980's there was a bumper sticker that said, "I owe, I owe, it is off to work I go." Then there was another one that said, "The one that dies with the most toys wins." I graduated from high school in 1984, and I can say we were materialistic back then. These depressing bumper stickers raise two profound questions, "Is there a purpose to being alive as a human being?" and "Is there an example of a life that had purpose that we can look to?" With the birth of Jesus there is a profound "YES" to these two questions.

Keeping in mind, the birth of Jesus can bring many good things to our lives so I am going to focus this Advent Season on how the birth of Jesus brings purpose to us. I will be sharing a sermon series titled "God Came Near to Us" on the first four Sundays of Advent and Christmas Eve. On December 29th, I have invited Elizabeth Grizzle to come and share with us about How God's Enduring Grace Helps Us even in seasons of loss and grief. I want to thank all the people in our church who are working to create a beautiful Advent Season for our Lord this year. From the gracious, hard-working team of people that were with us on Sunday for the "Hanging of the Greens" to all the behind the season planning that is going on, we make a great team for God!

After I finish sharing with you from God's Word about the purpose that comes to our life because God came near to us, we will roll into our new year with two worship services. I will be sharing a message series on "Living Life Loved & Fully Alive in '25". God's purpose in Jesus Christ is revealed in the verse above, 2 Corinthians 5:15, that we should no longer live for ourselves. Or to put it another, God wants us to live lives that are free of selfishness. I know this truth sounds radical, but this is the reason that Christmas is a big deal. God wants to free us from our selfishness through Christ. The reality that Jesus came as our "Emmanuel" really can change things for us as we walk with Him.

Let us move into the Christmas Season looking for the purposes of life that we find only through Christ. I hope to see you on Sunday and every Sunday of Advent this year.

God Bless-

Dave Rhodes

CHURCH NEWS

By Rev. Dave Rhodes

Don't you just love the Christmas Season? Just this morning I was reflecting on how excited I am about my children coming to visit us and that I will get to send and receive Christmas Cards very soon. Later on, today, I am joining my family on our annual Christmas tree hunt. In the church we call the four Sundays before Christmas and Christmas Day "Advent". As a church, we have so many great things planned for our Advent Season 2024. I hope you can be involved in all of them. I know that isn't realistic, but I hope you can join in with as many as possible. As I was sitting in the fellowship hall on Sunday after we finished decorating our church, I had a strong thought, "We really do enjoy working together." Please take a few minutes to notice how nice the outside of our buildings looks decorated for Advent as well as our sanctuary and fellowship hall. Please pay attention to our decorations, we are going to be doing some touch work on our decorations as Advent goes by.

Our Vision Leadership Team has been working to create a great ministry plan for the coming year. We are working with our staff to do year-end self-evaluations and laying out our dreams for the coming year. We will be approving a budget for the coming year at our December meeting. At our last meeting of the VLT, we made the decision to move forward with a bold plan to experiment with two worship services from the first Sunday in 2025 until Easter Sunday. There is an amazing amount of work we need to do before we can have our first Sunday with two worship services. Pray for our ministry leaders as we plan and work to launch our "two services Sundays."

As we celebrate the coming of Jesus this Advent, we have wonderful events planned this month. You can see great breakout descriptions of these events in the rest of this newsletter and please notice the beautiful December calendar. We will be serving people this Advent because Jesus came to serve us. If you haven't signed up to serve God beyond our local church by ringing bells for the Salvation Army, please sign up on Sunday morning. We will forgo our regular Wednesday night ministries on December 11th to bless the local shut-ins of our church by going Christmas Caroling. We will meet at the church at 5:00 pm to enjoy some hot chocolate and practice our songs. Then, we will travel around our city bringing some Christmas cheer to people who rarely get out of their houses. Some years we have a large crowd take part in this event, so I say, "the more we have merrier their Christmas will be." Next, we will serve our local schools by hosting the Christmas concert of the bands of Chickasaw Middle and High Schools on December 12th at 6:00 pm. If you would like to support this event or bring refreshments to it, please let Jennifer Barnes know.

We will celebrate the gift of Jesus to us on December 8th as our music ministry team brings us a glorious Christmas musical, "Twas the Night." I have heard from a number of our church's musical team that this is going to be a powerful time of Christmas music and drama. You do not want to miss this glorious opportunity. After the worship experience, our Men's Club will provide a chili supper in the fellowship hall that night. Then on Christmas Eve, we will celebrate the gift of Jesus to us by having our candlelight Christmas Eve service at 5:00 pm. I have been thinking lately about how to bring a greater experience of the miracle of Christmas to one's heart during Advent. One way that will bring great joy to anyone is to get a friend to come and experience the wonder of Christmas worship with you. Let's have a great Advent this year!

Dave Rhodes



Jennifer Barnes

YOUTH LEADER

All it takes is one person to show up at the right time in a kid's life and convince them they are made in the image of God. That one act can potentially change the future of generations."

- Reggie Joiner. Please read that one more time. It is so true and so powerful.

Several years ago, as Easter was upon us, I put out a generic "PLEASE HELP" message in the bulletin asking for a volunteer to assist in our Children's Ministry. When I turned around and saw Greg Green following me and the kids out of the sanctuary, I assumed he was needing to leave for a restroom break. I remember being shocked when he told me he was coming to help in Kid's Worship. And I remember being even more shocked when he returned the next Sunday....and then the next....until, it was no longer a shock - he was part of the children's ministry team! One person, showing up at the right time.

As we began to grow our Wednesday night children's program, "Mr. Greg" quickly became one of our most faithfully serving adults. It was a special moment when a teenager who spent her childhood years in our kid's ministry saw him walk through the door last Wednesday - her eyes lit up when she saw him walk through the door and she ran to hug him with absolute joy. One person, showing up at the right time.

Our preschool age children are still a bit too young for Kids 4 Christ, but they are ready to start hearing about Jesus! Mr. Greg recognized the gap and stepped forward to fill it. You can find him in the nursery every Sunday morning, introducing our youngest church family members to Jesus. One person, showing up at the right time.

While most of his peers are probably relaxing in their homes on Wednesday nights, Mr. Greg chooses to get in his car, drive to Chickasaw, and spend the next hour and a half investing in the lives of teenagers, most of whom have had zero consistent contact and influence from Godly men. He helps to ensure that the youth stay focused, and he is vigilant to spot any that seem to be veering toward trouble and helps correct their course. One person, showing up at the right time.

You don't have to be "on the field" every Wednesday and every Sunday like Mr. Greg to make a difference. Look for ways to show up when and where you can.

You can be that one person, showing up at the right time. Ensuring that our Next Generation is growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus. Potentially changing the future of generations. Who are you showing up for?



Angie Middleton

WORSHIP LEADER

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 6PM

twas
THE NIGHT...

A MUSICAL CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION
BY THE CMC WORSHIP TEAM
FOLLOWED BY RECEPTION

NURSERY PROVIDED AGES 3YRS & UNDER

This is a favorite season for many! There is so much excitement in the air: cooler weather is peeking in, there is an abundance of fun things to attend and do everywhere around! There are lots of parties and yummy foods! Many experience an extra dose of the spirit of giving! It is just a fun and exciting time. I pray that in all the business this month brings, you will make time to celebrate and focus on the reason we get to have this season... the birth of a baby that changed everything! We have many opportunities to celebrate together at CMC! Please join us!

God Came Near

An Advent Sermon Series

based on the book by Max Lucado

Beginning December 1, 2024



Christmas Party!

Wednesday, Dec 18

Kids and Youth
5:30 - 7:30 pm

Loving God · Building Relationships · Serving the World

Tuesday, December 10th- 9:30am
Bragg - Mitchell Home—\$24.00 includes—
Tour of the Home beautifully decorated for
Christmas and a box lunch by Naman's.
Call Barabara Pulliam: 251-457-2339

Headcount needed by Dec. 3

No cancellation or I still pay the \$24



To RSVP or for more
Information, call
Barbara Pulliam
at 251-457-2339

NEW SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDIES COMING IN JANUARY

1. ****Finding Joy, Part Two**** - Teacher: Michelle Phillips, following ROW
2. ****Sermon Series Study/TBD**** - Teacher: Dave
3. ****Men of Valor**** - Teacher: Phil King, Sunday School Hour, upstairs in Education Building

You are also invited to try our on-going small groups on Sundays at 9:30am (10am starting in January)
The Beckham's Class
The Transitions Class
Ladie's Class

**LIVE LIFE LOVED
& FULLY ALIVE IN '25**

NEW SERVICE TIMES IN 2025:
9am & 11am

MIKE'S FOOD PANTRY

December 3rd and 17th, 3pm—5pm
Your donations are greatly appreciated!

MEN'S CLUB

Meet every 3rd Sunday of the month at 7:30 am
for food and fellowship. All men are welcome!

LADIE'S BREAKFAST

Meet every 3rd Saturday of the month at 9am for
food and fellowship. All ladies are welcome!

CHICKASAW DINERS

Meet for lunch every 1st Sunday of the month
right after the worship service. All are welcome!

EMBRACE ALABAMA KIDS

This Christmas season, we're partnering with @Embrace Alabama Kids, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting vulnerable children and families across Alabama (formerly known as the United Methodist Children's Home). Every gift, big or small, helps provide homes, healing and hope for those in need. Join us in sharing the love of Jesus this Christmas by donating a financial gift sometime during our Advent Season.



We will be taking a special offering on December 8th at the Christmas Musical. Also, we will be taking up a special offering for this ministry beyond our local church at the Christmas Eve Service as well. Save your change and bring it on the 5th Sunday of the month, December 29th, as our children collect a "Noisy Offering" for our annual White Christmas project that benefits Embrace Alabama Kids. Of course, you can make a special donation anytime - just write "White Christmas" or "Embrace Alabama Kids" on the memo line of your check or on the envelope of a cash donation.

The practice of remembering our "other children" each Advent Season is a beautiful tradition that goes back for decades in the Methodist Church. Let's honor God this Christmastime by giving to those children that have been forgotten and harmed by their families. God is pleased when we remember and care for the forgotten people in our world.

12/1 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

12/6-12/7 BELL RINGING FOR SALVATION ARMY

12/8 TWAS THE NIGHT...CHRISTMAS MUSICAL 6PM

12/11 CHRISTMAS CAROLING 5PM

12/14 CHRISTMAS PARADE 3PM

12/24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 5 PM

CHRISTMAS
at Chickasaw Methodist

2024 Bell Ringing

Ring the Bell for the Salvation
Army Dec. 6th Or 7th!
This year we are honoring:
Mr. Harold Butts!

Merry Christmas

TURKEY DINNER

Thank you to ALL who helped in any way with our Annual Turkey Dinner! It was a huge success!

**TURKEY DINNER
MANAGER**



LYNN LANKFORD
MANAGER

GOBBLE GOBBLE

NOV 2024



And... A BIG shout out to Lynn... our official Turkey Dinner Manager!!!



A special Thank You to Pam Maurin for heading up the silent auction!

Thank You , Lydia's Circle, for being in charge of the Sweets!

