

# “Sing Christmas”

PRESENTED BY

The GSBC Christmas Cantata Choir



**SUNDAY MORNING AT 11AM, DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>**

*Christmas Celebration meal to follow on festively decorated tables*

# *Great Swamp Baptist Church*

December 18, 2016  
*Sunday Morning Worship*  
11:00 AM

## **Merry Christmas**

### **Prelude**

### **The Welcome**

Announcements

*Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.*

### **Invocation**

*Fred Stanley*

### **We Pray for Special Needs**

Pastoral & Offertory Prayer

*Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.*

Offertory Hymn #86 “*O Little Town of Bethlehem*”

Offertory Special *Sadie O’Connor and Alayna Schrader*

*“Mary, Did You Know?”*

### **Selections of Praise & Worship**

*GSBC Christmas Cantata Choir*

*presents*

### **Sing Christmas**

Message

*Pastor Ralph Lee, Jr.*

### **Invitation**

### **Benediction**



**Today:**  
*Mike Mingledorff*  
*Krey Lowther*

**Next Week:**  
*Cassandra Bradley*  
*Krey Lowther*

## Nursery Workers



**Today:**  
*Latrelle Steedly*  
*Kim Malprus & Kimberlyn*

**Next Week:**  
*Debra Daley*  
*Cathryn Daley*



## Toll Committee

*For December*  
*Helen Malprus and Anita Blanton*

## DEACON OF THE WEEK :

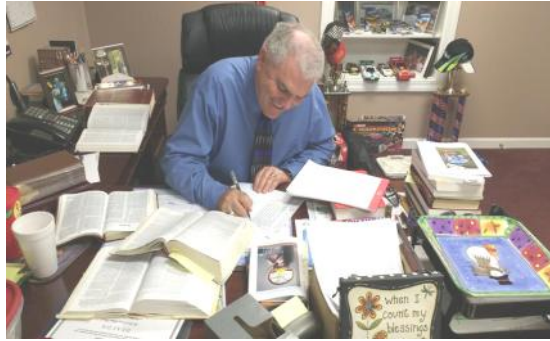


**Today:**  
*Fred Stanley*  
*843-226-5641*

**Next Week:**  
*Robert O'Dell*  
*843-422-9521*



**IF YOUR DEACONS  
CAN MINISTER TO YOU IN ANY WAY,  
CALL THE CHURCH @ 726-3631**



### ***From Pastor Ralph's Desk:***

#### *The Humbleness of Christmas*

*Luke 2:1-20*

*Intro: A traditional tour of the Holy Land will not allow you a very good opportunity to see the Holy Land the way the Biblical characters experienced it. Obviously, time and modernization will change things. However, what has changed that we consider to be sacred spots more than anything has been the elaborate spin that different religious groups and organizations have placed on these places. Nearly everywhere that Jesus did anything, these different religion groups have built ornate shrines. These shrines have removed so much of the elements of what really they were like when Jesus was actually there.*

*A great example of what I am referring to is the birthplace of Jesus. Some 400 years after Jesus was born, a church building called the Church of the Nativity was built over the supposed stable that Jesus was actually born in. It is a very real possibility that it is the actual stable but because the church is built over it, you can't even tell that there are caves there that were used as stables. You have to walk through the church building and then take a set of stairs to go down under the church where you find the cave that was once a stable. In that cave there are three spots each designated by a different religious group as the actual spot where Jesus was born and laid in a manger. Each of these spots have so much jewelry, gold, silver and marble that you would think that you were in a king's palace. These shrines have lost the entire humbling experience of that first Christmas morning. It was such a humbling experience that in our day and age we can't grasp how low the Savior went in order to save us. We need to recapture the humbleness of that first Christmas and ask the Lord to help us to capture that humble spirit and attitude in our own lives.*

***I. First, let us notice the humble process of that first Christmas.*** *This humbling process I am referring to often gets a glancing look or is glossed over. Just the fact that we yearly celebrate Christmas exactly what happened is that humbling process becomes routine. However, it should never be routine. Rather it should be so awe struck and amazing to us that Jesus actually came to us and took on human flesh.*

*In Matthew's gospel, we are reminded that Jesus' birth was the fulfillment of a prophecy out of the Book of Isaiah. It said that a virgin would give*

birth to a Son and that He would be called Immanuel which means God with us. (Matthew 1:22-23) John tells us in his gospel that the Word was with God and the Word was God and that the Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. (John 1:1-2,14)

Those biblical statements are absolutely powerful. However, Paul gives us an unbelievable description of just how humbling the process was for Jesus to take human flesh in detail. That passage of Scripture is in Philippians 2:3-8. Here we are told that before His coming He was equal with God and had always been so. However, for the sake of saving humanity he was willing to let go of all the rights, privileges and prerogatives of being God and take on human flesh. Now He didn't stop being the Son of God but He gave up all the privileges it entails and didn't just become a man but the lowest form of a man a servant and as a servant He willingly died a cruel death on a cross more humiliating than any of us will ever understand. He did all of this for us. Oh, Bless His Holy Name.

**II. Second, let us notice the humble parents of that first Christmas.**

The parents the Father chose to use to birth His Son into the world were not the kings of the day; nor were they the influential of the day; nor were they the celebrities of the day. Rather, they were the poor and unknown of the day. As a matter of fact, outside of the relatives of Mary and Joseph of the day, no one would have known them then and we certainly would not know of them now. It is only because of their association to Jesus Christ that we know who they were. God used humble but dedicated persons to bring and raise Christ in the world in a very humble setting. God has not forgotten those in the world in poor and humble settings. By coming through a virgin like Mary and using a poor carpenter to take care of Jesus, God says your humble situations are not too humble for Him.

**III. Third, let us notice the humble places of the first Christmas.**

What places would you choose if it were your responsibility to find a place for the birth of the Son of God? New York City; Paris, France; Washington, D.C.; Jerusalem? Well the place that God chose were none of the above not even close. First there was the hick town of Nazareth. A town that most Jews considered a pretty redneck type. A place to be avoided. It was this that God chose to reveal and announce to Mary and Joseph of the coming birth of Jesus. Second, the next place was of course, Bethlehem. It had a great history because King David was from there. However, at the time of Christ's birth, it was just a small village south of Jerusalem. In our eyes, we would say no place for a king.

Now what really makes all of this so significant and so humbling is to remember what place Jesus left to come here. He left the very throne room of Heaven to come to the most undesirable place here on earth. So, He came to the smallest of places and the most undesirable of place to show that no matter how small of a place you are from and how undesirable of a place you are from, He left Heaven for you. He

*left heaven for you so He could bring you back to Heaven with Him. Oh, Bless His Holy Name.*

**IV. Fourth, let us notice the humble particularities of the first Christmas.**

*Here I am referring to the surroundings of the actual time of the birth. As we know that because so many people had returned to Bethlehem to pay their taxes and because Joseph and Mary were having to move along much slower than most because she was pregnant, they arrived later than most. Therefore, what few rooms were available were all taken up and the only space available was a stable which was most likely a small cave in the hills surrounding the village.*

*Therefore, because it was a stable, we must envision that it was possibly crowded with various kinds of animals. This means that the place was filthy, stinking, damp and germ. Also, the fact that we are told that Jesus was laid in the manger should really cause us to see how humbling Christ's birth was. However, by using the term manger, we have somewhat glossed over what we are really referring to and what we are referring to is an actual animals feeding trough. So, again we must see how nasty of a setting Jesus came into the world is. That manger had to have been filled with germs because the animals ate right out of it.*

*It was appropriate that Christ would come into a filthy place like this. For it showed that just as His place of birth was stinky, filthy, unclean, and germ so was and is the world that He came into. By allowing Himself to be born in these particularities, He was showing that no matter how filthy our lives have become, He comes to reach even the most unclean among us, which is really all of us. Oh Praise our Lord for His humble beginning among us. V. fifth, let us notice the humble people of that first Christmas. We've already discussed the parents. Here, however, I want to especially focus on the shepherds. For they were the first people that God appeared to through His angels on the night of the Savior's birth. Of all the people that God could have sent first to see Mary, Joseph and the new born Christ child, He couldn't have chosen a more humble set of people than the shepherds. They were considered social outcast because of their occupation which caused them to often be ceremonially unclean. Also, most considered them untrustworthy.*

*God chose the socially unacceptable to show that they and all others weren't outside of His reach. Those rejected by most coming the way He did, God showed that even the shepherds were loved and welcomed into His Kingdom. Besides Jesus referred to us as His sheep and He as our Shepherd. Thank God that He chose the shepherds first to show us that He will be our sacrificial Lamb and that He will shepherd us just like the shepherds do their sheep. Conclusion: Jesus first coming was indeed a humble experience beyond measure. However, we must remember that His second coming will be anything but humble. So, now is the time to surrender to Him while He humbly reaches out to us.*

*Jesus Love You,  
Ralph Lee, Jr*

*December 19th*  
*December 22nd*

*Diane Thames*  
*Tammy Lee*  
*Krey Lee Lowther*



*Anniversaries*

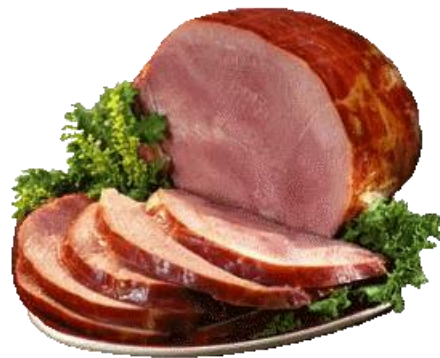
*December 19th*      *Bill & Donna Carter*  
*Mike & Vicky Roberts Mingledorff*

*December 20th*      *Wallace & Allene Malphrus*



## **Menu**

*Ham*  
*Mac & Cheese*  
*Green Beans*  
*Dessert*  
*Tea & Coffee*



*Ann Malphrus Cooking Team*

## GSBC Prayer Pages December 18, 2016

*Ralph Lee, Jr. - Pastor  
Richard Waitt- Music Director  
Deacons  
Child Dev. Ministries*

### Leadership

*President Barack Obama  
United States of America*

### Hospitals

*James Lang-Savannah  
Ted Nettles-Sav. Memorial*

### Nursing Centers

*Elaine Degler-RNC  
Wofford Malphrus-Effingham  
County Rehab. Center*

### Called to Ministry

*Chris Carter & Family*

### Other Health Needs

*Patricia Malphrus (12/1)  
Mike Hodge (12/1)  
David Lee (12/1)  
Saylor Moser (12/1)  
Rodney Malphrus, Sr (12/1)  
Ronald Davis (12/8)  
Gary Breland (12/1)  
Donna Murphy (12/1)  
Wallie Walts (12/1)  
Franklin Taylor (12/8)  
Reed Smith (12/8)  
Jimmie Cleland (12/1)  
Nancy Rivera (11/17)  
Denise St. Lawrence (11/17)  
Ethel Cleland (11/17)  
Louise McClendon (11/28)  
Robin Holmes (12/02)  
Caitlyn Owens (12/14)  
Jacob Christenson (12/14)*

### Church Needs

*Sunday School  
Small Groups  
SFCA-Donna Carter*

### Unspoken

*Jonathan Malphrus-Job Search  
Ann Malphrus  
Max Cole  
Ray & Peggy Michael  
Connie Saxon Family  
Clarice Van Curen  
Chet Egerdahl & Family*

### Surgery / Recovery

*Brandy Freeman (12/1)  
Ron Davis (12/15)*

*Ministries  
Outreach Ministry  
Nominating Committee*

### Bereavement

*Family Of  
Wilton Ellis Altman  
Effie McDowell  
Ann Jones  
Butch Skerrett's Mother*

### Expecting / Births

*Vanessa Smoak & Daughter*

### Cancer / Treatments

*Barry Jones (12/8)  
Dale Robiston (12/1)  
Mack Pope, Sr. (12/1)  
Mitzi Cramer (12/1)*





## Pray For Our Military



*Bobby Emerson- Fort Hood-Army*

*Jared Blanton-Home*

*Matthew Mills-Parris Island*

*If you have someone who needs listing, call either the church office a@726-3631 or E.L. Ambrose @ 726-5479.*

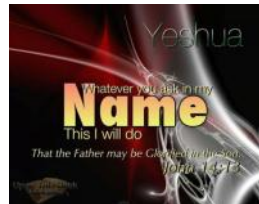
*Thank You*

**Please Continue To Remember**

*Ricky Cleland  
Mike Hodge  
Shirley Malphrus  
Rose Boyles  
Myia Angala Ellis  
Susan L. Vaigneur  
Lula Floyd  
Mary Cope  
Judy Smith  
Jeffrey Stanley*

*Dot Nettles  
Betty Nettles  
Tom Hinely  
Olivia Stanley  
Lois Bootle  
Lane Malphrus  
Grace Boyles  
Jeanie Raburn  
Scott Boyles  
Brian Freeman*

*Myrtle Rowell Smith  
Billie Langford  
Gary Way  
Christy Gagel  
Vera Miles  
Mary Daley  
Leonard Steedly  
Barbara Mills  
Joyce Sutler  
Lanell Smith*



*Christmas! The very word brings to my mind memories. Almost always I recall the early childhood memories. As I reflect on my parents—both long taken in death. Brothers and Sisters and other relationships along life's way. Some continue but most are no longer relevant. The only constant I have come to know is the Christ of Christmas. He is very personal in prayer. What about you?*

*E.L. Ambrose*

## Today's Prayer Team

### Group II

*Barbara Mills-Leader  
Betty Robertson*

**Watchman Prayer Service  
Saturdays @ 8:00am**

### Prayer Note

*For emergencies  
a prayer chain  
is available for needs.*

*You may access  
by calling the  
church @ 726-3631*

*Or*

*E.L. Ambrose @ 726-5479*

# Announcements



**Watchman Prayer Group**  
*Saturday, December 24th @ 8:00 am*

*NO S.O.F.F.E Group Meeting for December*  
*Will Resume in January*

**NO Sunday Morning Breakfast**  
*December 25th*  
*January 1st*

**Regular Services Sunday Evening**

**Regular Wednesday Evening Service (December 21st)**

**Sunday, December 25th**  
*Christmas Service*  
*10:00 am*  
*No Evening Service*

**New Year's Service**  
*Sunday, January 1st @ 10:00 am*  
*No Evening Worship*



## Christmas Card Mailbox

The GA's are sponsoring the G.A. mailbox this year. Let us deliver your in house Christmas Cards for \$0.20 each. The mailbox is located outside of the church office. Proceeds will go to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Great Swamp Baptist Church  
 9009 Tarboro Road, Ridgeland, SC  
 Office - 726-3631 Fax - 726-3294  
 Email: greatswampbc@gmail.com  
 Website: greatswampbaptistchurch.com

### Church Staff

Pastor: **Rev. Ralph Lee, Jr.**.....jehu27@gmail.com  
 Music Director: **Richard Waitt**.....waittfamily@embarqmail.com  
 Sunday School Director: **Wallace Malphrus**.....Josie6@embarqmail.com  
 Pianist: **Michelle Waitt**.....waittfamily@embarqmail.com  
 Administrative Assistant: **Sybil Reynolds**.....greatswampbc@gmail.com  
 School Administrator: **Donna Carter**.....dcarter@hargray.com  
 Custodian: **Ann Malphrus**.....ramalphrus@hargray.com  
 Landscaper: **Wallace Malphrus**.....Josie6@embarqmail.com

### Calendar of Events

For  
 December 18th through December 24th

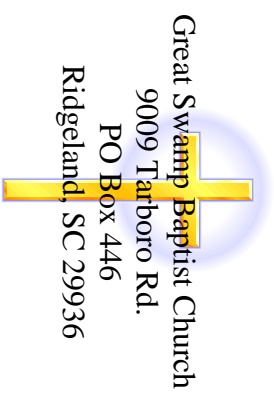
Sunday Morning Breakfast (September thru May Only)..... 8:30AM  
 Sunday School..... 9:45AM  
 Morning Worship..... 11:00AM  
 Evening Worship..... 6:00PM  
 Wednesday Night Supper (September thru May Only)..... 6:00PM  
 Wednesday Night Service..... 7:00PM  
 Saturday Watchman Prayer..... 8:00AM

### Stewardship

Budget Offerings	This Week	Weekly Budget	Surplus/Deficit + / -
Tithes & Offerings	\$5,353.05	\$ 4,828.76	+\$524.29
Designated Funds	This Week	*****	Acct. Balances
WNS	\$76.00	*****	\$238.81
Lottie Moon Offering	\$56.09	*****	\$556.49
Youth Camp /WNS	\$122.50	*****	\$2,083.83
SMB	\$74.00	*****	\$438.90
Cemetery Fund	\$250.00	*****	\$360.00
Dot Lee Scholarship	\$25.00	*****	\$260.00
Benevolence	\$369.00	*****	\$794.44
OCC	\$200.00	*****	\$838.57

### Recommendation

*The Finance Committee recommends to the church the proposed budget for 2017. It will be voted on at a Special Called Business Meeting on Wednesday, December 28th. Copies of the proposed budget are in the lobby.*



Great Swamp Baptist Church  
9009 Tarboro Rd.  
PO Box 446  
Ridgeland, SC 29936