

“Sing Christmas”

PRESENTED BY

The GSBC Christmas Cantata Choir



SUNDAY MORNING AT 11AM, DECEMBER 18TH

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 :

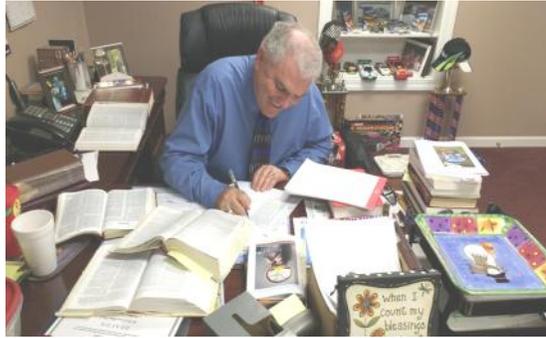


Today:
Fred Stanley
843-226-5641

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

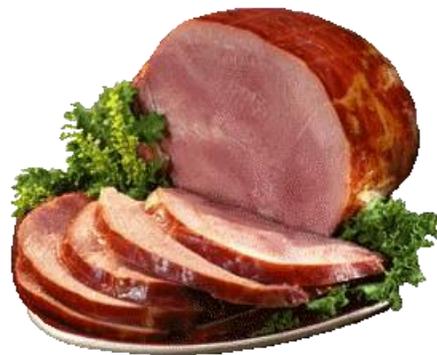
December 19th *Bill & Donna Carter*
Mike & Vicky Roberts Mingledorff

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.

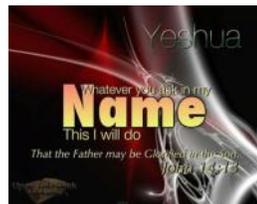
Thank You

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

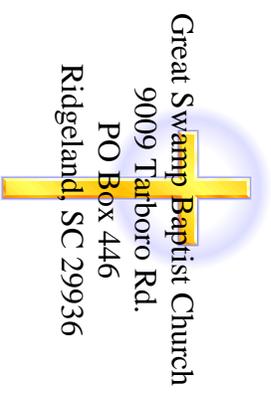
Sunday Morning Breakfast (September thru May Only)..... 8:30AM
 Sunday School..... 9:45AM
 Morning Worship..... 11:00AM
 Evening Worship..... 6:00PM
 Wednesday Night Supper (September thru May Only)..... 6:00PM
 Wednesday Night Service..... 7:00PM
 Saturday Watchman Prayer..... 8:00AM

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