



Dec 2	Parent's Night Out	6:00PM-9:00PM
Dec 4	Sunday School	9:45AM
	Morning Worship	11:00AM
	Debt Retirement Celebration	12:15PM
Dec 7	AWANA Christmas Musical and Awards	6:00PM
	Youth	6:45PM
Dec 11	Sunday School	9:45AM
	Morning Worship	11:00AM
Dec 14	Youth	6:45PM
	OASIS	6:45PM
Dec 17	Christmas Dinner Theatre	6:00PM
Dec 18	Sunday School	9:45AM
	Morning Worship	11:00AM
	Christmas Dinner Theatre	6:00PM
Dec 21	OASIS	6:00PM
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Service	6:00PM
Dec 25	Christmas Day Service	10:00AM
Dec 28	NO CHURCH ACTIVITIES	

\*For more information please see church staff.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Harlem, GA  
Permit No. 8

Rev. Carson Britt  
Pastor  
Evan Powell  
Minister of Youth and Children  
Rebekah Dickerson  
Minister of Music and Media  
Ashley Driggers  
Administrative Assistant



12-03	Daniel & Rebekah Dickerson	12-17	Tony & Dianne Mundy
12-05	Daniel & Emily White	12-19	Carson & Jennifer Britt
12-11	Randy & Stephanie Lewis	12-21	Ryan & Jennifer Guy
12-12	Mike & Janis Butler	12-22	Randall & Ruth Hill
12-14	Wesley & Kacee Morris	12-24	Jimmy & Shirley Tankersley
12-15	Kevin & Valerie Allen		

\* Please call the Church Office if your anniversary is not listed.



12-01	Jennifer Guy	12-25	Nancy Morrison
12-01	Raven Truitt	12-26	Brandi Morrison
12-01	Coleman McClellan	12-27	Hope McClellan
12-05	Annette Coleman	12-28	Raley Truitt
12-06	Annette Moore	12-28	Chris Smith
12-06	Shirley Tankersley	12-29	Matt Barrs
12-06	Liza Davis	12-29	Donna Knighton
12-06	Brandy Storey		
12-10	Brigitte Cozart		
12-11	Wil Hardy		
12-12	Chandler Arnold		
12-12	Wesley Morris		
12-14	Nick Hill		
12-15	Sadie Trobaugh		
12-16	Lyndey McClellan		
12-17	Leanna Williams		

\* Please call the Church Office if your birthday is not listed.

## FINANCIALS

as of November 27, 2022

Actual Expenses YTD \$365,224  
Actual Received YTD \$ 353,054

## Deacon of the Month

Jeremy Davis  
678-643-4828

# CONNECTIONS



December 2022

## THE PASTOR'S DESK

What comes to mind when you envision the ideal Christmas day? I envision my family gathered in our den with the Christmas tree on, the fire place roaring, maybe even snow falling outside. (A guy can wish!) I can smell the delicious food cooking in the kitchen with a mug of coffee in my hand. In my mind's eye I can see my children playing well together simply enjoying their gifts and our time together. And, I hear the soft sound of instrumental Christmas music along with the sound of my children laughing. Doesn't this sound like the ideal Christmas day? But, I can't help but wonder, has anyone ever experienced such an ideal Christmas day?

In reality, Christmas day includes a great deal of messiness and work. In our house, the den is littered with balled up wrapping paper and gifts strewn about. The kitchen is messy and the dishwasher runs nonstop during the day. At the end of the day, I am generally exhausted from all of the day's happenings. Can you relate to this? But, even amidst the chaos and messiness of the day and even when I'm having to discipline my children on the one day out of the year I would rather not, I realize that perhaps my craziness is but a glimpse of the craziness that Mary and Joseph endured on that first Christmas morning.

Unfortunately scripture only gives us a small glimpse into the birth narrative of Christ. But, the description that the gospel writers give us is far from ideal. There is no rest. There is no calm. There is no silence. The sounds of children laughing and Christmas carols playing are absent. There is no Christmas tree and no roaring fire. Rather, there is the panic of a distraught father who, despite his best efforts, can only find a barn to accommodate his laboring wife. There is the sound of cows mooing, sheep bleating, and chickens clucking. There is no smell of coffee, fresh baked goodies, or balsam in the air. In their place are the smells of dirt, hay, and manure. This was not the ideal place for anyone to be born, let alone the Son of God. I do not think that this was the kind of birth story that Joseph and Mary had in mind. And yet, it was still good. In fact, it was great. Why? Because at the end of the day the Savior had been born, who is Christ the Lord.

So this year as you plan and envision the perfect Christmas day I invite you to receive the imperfect moments with grace. If you're children need disciplining, if the chaos becomes overwhelming, if your Christmas dinner doesn't turn out perfect, may it be a reminder of the wonderfully imperfect night that Christ was born. May we together experience the joy in knowing that even in the chaos and imperfections of this season, it is all still very good because on this day so long ago, the Savior of the world, who brought eternal life, came into the world so that you and I could receive eternal life. May we choose to cherish the eternal gift of salvation during this season and always.

Merry Christmas to each of you!

*Press on!*  
Carson

Church News

B.L.A.S.T

Will not meet  
December 25th or  
January 1st



Wednesdays | 6:45PM

CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATER  
“The Worst Christmas Play Ever”

DECEMBER 17 & 18  
6:00PM

SCAN BELOW TO RESERVE  
YOUR SEATS TODAY!  
(ALL PAYMENTS WILL BE TAKEN AT THE DOOR.)



HBC LUNCHEON



DECEMBER 4  
(DEBT RETIREMENT LUNCHEON)  
PRIME RIBS & FIXINGS



I must admit that I have often been one of those sticky sweet people, who overflow in November with blessings galore, ready for family and friends and cooking, gladly preparing for the upcoming holidays with a cheery pep in my step that is likely rather annoying to be around. But I was reminded in a very real way this year that Thanksgiving isn't always that easy for everyone. For many it is a time of hurt and pain; a time of loneliness and remembering those who aren't there anymore; a time of annual arguments, and burnt mac and cheese, and family members whom you very much love...but sometimes you really just don't like.

And sometimes Thanksgiving just hits in the midst of a hard season of life, of financial challenges, or overwhelming stress, family illnesses, or countless home repairs, and the idea of "thanks" giving is just...well, to be brutally honest, there are some years when being told that we HAVE to be thankful on a certain day of the year in the midst of this kind of season feels like a swift kick in the gut.

But Thanksgiving is meant to be a season of preparation. To ready our homes and hearts and lives for the Advent season and the recognizing the significance of the Christ-child's coming by stopping our frantic, hurting, and sometime hard lives and reminding us that we have to *choose* "thanks" giving.

"Thanks" giving will never just happen. It will always be something we have to decide; something we have to choose. Like many of those things which we know we are supposed to do: love our spouse, our neighbor, be kind, show mercy, be generous...thankfulness will never happen by accident! It will always be a choice. Daniel and I celebrate our anniversary in early December each year, and with that right around the corner, I was reminded of the vows I spoke to Daniel of choosing to love him no matter what. It came to me how similar the idea of choosing to love my spouse and choosing thankfulness truly are, because when I replaced the words "love you" in my vows with the words **be thankful**, so much made sense!

*No matter what comes – sickness, struggles, finances, trials, burdens, kids, jobs, yard work, moving, old age – whatever ... I choose here and now to **be thankful** anyway. When feelings get hurt, when the bank account is low, when the house is a wreck, when someone in the family seems to always be sick, when the car won't start, and there aren't enough hours in the day – I choose here and now to **be thankful** anyway. When things go smoothly, when the bills are paid, the kids are doing well in school, when the house and yard are perfect, and the schedule is nice and easy – I choose here and now to **be thankful** anyway. When old age comes and takes us by surprise and we don't move like we once did, when we have to figure out when to retire, when both of us take ten pills a day, and the grandkids come over to wear us out completely – I choose here and now to **be thankful** anyway. And when one of us goes home to Jesus first, when it hurts to say goodbye – I choose here and now to **be thankful** anyway.*

"Thanks" giving is a choice. God, let us lean into you for strength and courage as we choose thankfulness this Christmas season, to honor and glorify You as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

-Rebekah



NOVEMBER 27TH  
FIRST DAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 7TH  
AWANA CHRISTMAS MUSICAL  
& AWANA STORE  
6:00PM

DECEMBER 17TH & 18TH  
DINNER THEATER  
6:00PM

DECEMBER 24TH  
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE  
6:00PM

DECEMBER 25TH  
CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE  
(NO SUNDAY SCHOOL)  
10:00AM



"Have yourself a Merry little Christmas!"

I don't know about you all, but I've gotten very used to hearing the crooning voice of Michael Buble singing these familiar words over the past few years. I have already listened to it on "Alexa's" Apple Music playlist at my house a few times this young Christmas season. For some reason though, the word "little" stuck out to me this year in a way it never has before.

It is true that the first Christmas was indeed a "little Christmas". We know this full well; we are familiar with the details. The first Christmas revolved around a **little** baby; the Christchild. He was born in the **little** town of Bethlehem. He was born to parents that had **little** earthly significance, and baby Jesus wasn't even born in a proper place – rather in a **little** manger stall because there was no room for Him in the Bethlehem inn.

Fast forward to Christmas today in America. Little about our Christmases can actually be considered... "little". No, we do Christmas up big. As a culture, as a society, even as a local church body... Christmas is writ large on the canvas of our consciences. For example, did you see how fancy and beautiful our sanctuary looked this past Sunday? And our houses... they too are filled with decorations. Katie even graduated to having a **third** Christmas tree in the house this year. And as far as the presents are concerned... they are stacked high in big piles. Nothing "little" about the glut of gifts that won't even fit underneath the Christmas tree for they are too many.

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year, and it is filled with so much beauty. But sometimes I feel guilty by just how much we have invested into this season. A season that probably should be earmarked by generous giving – but I wonder if I have instead turned it into a season where I build up earthly treasures for myself to enjoy. In short; if I'm being completely honest, there's nothing little about Christmas as it is celebrated in the Powell House. And I suspect we are not alone. We go all out. But there are other, less fortunate people in the world for whom Christmas does not mean the same lavishness and self-indulgence. The whole world over, there are so, so many who live in destitution and poverty, and this Christmas I am finding myself more aware than ever that Christ came at Christmas for all peoples of the Earth... From those who enjoy the warmth, sweetness, and grandeur of the biggest Christmases, to those who have very little, like His own Son, Christ Jesus had when He first came to Earth. I know I can't fix problems such as world hunger and poverty, but this Christmas I am making three small personal resolutions, to ensure that I do not lose my grasp of the true essence and meaning of the Christmas season.

Daily practice active thanksgiving and gratitude for what God has blessed my family with  
Look for small opportunities to make Christmas a little "bigger" for someone else in my life  
Pray that God's peace and joy will be extended to all people of the Earth and that His presence would be felt in a big and powerful way  
Big things come in "little packages". And baby Jesus, little as he was, changed the course of human history in a big way. Praise Him today for this truth!

-Evan



# Christmas Eve

## CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION

6:00PM

service