

December CALENDAR

December 1	Candles & Carols	5:45PM
December 3	MIDWEEK <i>Doors Open at 6:15PM for Youth</i>	6:30PM
December 6	Church Work Day	8:00AM
December 7	Sunday School Morning Worship <i>Sue Whiddon Building Fund</i> Church Luncheon	9:45AM 11:00AM 12:15PM
December 8	Candles & Carols Edee’s Christmas Recital	5:45PM 7:00PM
December 10	MIDWEEK Christmas Party <i>Church Wide Event</i>	6:30PM
December 12	Women’s Event <i>Christmas Slumber Party</i>	6:30PM
December 14	Sunday School Morning Worship	9:45AM 11:00AM
December 15	Candles & Carols	5:45PM
December 17	Youth Christmas Party Deacons Christmas Party <i>at Java House</i> No MIDWEEK	6:30PM 7:00PM
December 18	Pre-K Christmas Program	6:00PM
December 21	Sunday School Morning Worship Church Luncheon	9:45AM 11:00AM 12:15PM
December 22	Candles & Carols	5:45PM
December 24	Christmas Eve Services No MIDWEEK	4PM & 6PM
December 25	CHURCH OFFICES ARE CLOSED	
December 28	Sunday School Morning Worship <i>Family Worship Service</i>	9:45AM 11:00AM
December 31	NO WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES	

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Rev. Carson Britt
Pastor
Evan Powell
Minister of Youth and Children
Rebekah Dickerson
Communications and Connections Minister
Sang Lee
Worship Leader
Ashley Driggers
Administrative Assistant
Lindsey Rogers
HBC Pre-K Director

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Happy Anniversary

Happy Birthday

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

12-01 Jennifer Guy
12-01 Raven Truitt
12-05 Annette Coleman
12-06 Shirley Tankersley
12-06 Liza Davis
12-06 Annette Moore
12-06 Brandy Storey
12-10 Brigitte Cozart
12-11 Wil Hardy
12-12 Wesley Morris
12-15 Sadie Storey
12-15 Lexi Sherbon
12-19 Randy Sawyer
12-25 Nancy Morrison
12-27 Hope McClellan
12-28 Raley Truitt
12-28 Chris Smith
12-29 Donna Knighton

SAVE
THE
DATE!

Night of Worship
JANUARY 7TH

URGENT

Saturday Sacks
Urgent Items Needed:

- Mac & Cheese

-Applesauce
- Ramen

-Vienna Sausages
- Fruit Snacks

FINANCIALS
AS OF NOVEMBER 26, 2025

Actual Expenses YTD \$371,333
Actual Received YTD \$374,893



DOWNLOAD OUR NEW CHURCH CENTER
APP TO STAY UP TO DATE!

CONNECTIONS

December 2025

The
Pastor’s
Desk

It’s that time of year again when many of us start making plans for the Christmas season. And while Christmas is technically just one day, it often feels like an entire month full of activities—some we look forward to, and others we simply try to survive.

As December approaches, Jennifer and I usually sit down and map out what the month will look like for our family. We talk about what we want to do with our kids. We try to squeeze in as many Christmas movies as possible, enjoy driving around to look at the lights, and celebrate our anniversary with a dinner out if we can make it happen. We try to spend as much time as we can with extended family. And then, of course, there are all the practical things—buying and wrapping gifts, putting up decorations, baking, and keeping up with all the “extras” that come with the season.

In the middle of all of that, the real challenge becomes keeping the main thing the main thing. It’s easy to lose sight of why we go through all of this in the first place—to celebrate the One who came to save us from our sins.

During December, our church will be focusing on the theme “Make Room.” We want to be intentional about making room in our lives for Christ and for what He desires to do in and through us. In a very practical sense, that means making room to keep Christ at the center of our Christmas activities. But this theme reaches far beyond December.

How often do we make room to really listen to the Spirit? How often do we allow space for holy interruptions? Are we willing to make room for new friendships God may be bringing our way? And perhaps the hardest question of all: are we willing to make room for change? Most of us—myself included—struggle with that one. Yet when I look back over the Christmas seasons of my life, the one thing that has remained constant is that things change. Traditions shift. Schedules adjust. The people around our tables are not always the same. And still, Christ invites us to make room for whatever His Spirit desires to do in us.

After all, the whole reason we celebrate Christmas is because long ago a baby came who changed everything. Through His coming, His death, and His resurrection, life itself has been made new. And the change He brings is always ultimately for our good—it brings life.

So as you enter this season, let me gently encourage you: make room for Jesus. If Christmas has started to feel exhausting or overwhelming, give Him priority again. You may discover a renewed joy. You may find that making room for what God is doing in you is exactly what your heart has been needing.

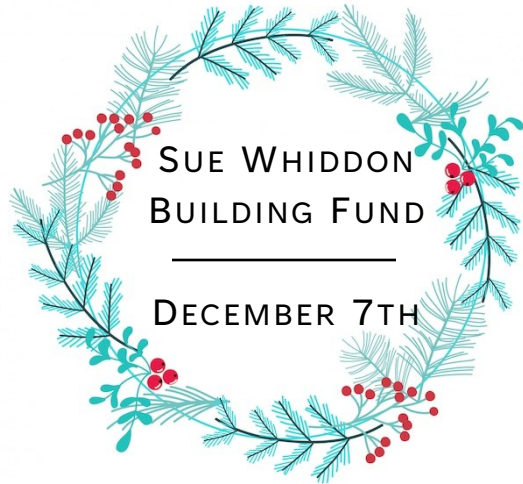
Merry Christmas!
Carson

Church News

CHURCH OFFICES

CLOSED

CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 25TH



DECEMBER 7
(MIDWEEK)

ITALIAN BUFFET
(SPAGHETTI , CHICKEN ALFREDO , PIZZA)

DECEMBER 21
(WORSHIP)

MEXICAN BUFFET

CHURCH WORK DAY December 6th 8:00AM

CHRISTMAS EVENTS & Services

CANDLES & CAROLS

MONDAYS IN DECEMBER | 5:45PM

EDEE SWEATMAN CHRISTMAS PIANO RECITAL

DECEMBER 8 | 7:00PM

CHURCH WIDE CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 10 | 6:30PM

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS SLUMBER PARTY

DECEMBER 12 | 6:30PM

HARLEM CITY TWILIGHT PARADE

DECEMBER 13 | 6:00PM
(SEE REBEKAH FOR MORE INFO)

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 17 | 6:30PM

HBC PRE-K CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DECEMBER 18 | 6:00PM

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

DECEMBER 24 | 4:00PM & 6:00PM

FAMILY WORSHIP

DECEMBER 28 | 11:00AM
(NO B.L.A.S.T)

As we approach the Advent season, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the many extra tasks, activities, and events that fill our calendars. Add in school theme days for our kids, and it's no wonder this season can feel incredibly stressful. Yet we are called to keep Christ at the center—to remember His birth and the truth that He came for us.

I'm not someone who slows down naturally, though I find myself wanting to more as I get older. Life is busy, and I tend to thrive in the chaos. But Scripture calls us to rest. We are commanded to keep the Sabbath and to "be still and know that I am God" (Psalms 46:10). Modern life, however, makes rest difficult. We are constantly needed, constantly connected, and stillness can feel out of reach.

That's why the context of this verse matters. Psalm 46 begins with hope: "God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble." It then names many hard things that can happen, yet reminds us that God is our fortress. Do we treat Him as such? Do we run to Him for rest—or just try to squeeze in a nap?

Stillness doesn't always mean doing less. There is a difference between stillness of body and stillness of spirit. Ministry and daily life can be nonstop, yet we are called to depend on God for strength—to rest in Him. We can be active and still at peace in our spirit.

Another translation says, "Cease striving and know that I am God." I love that. It's not just about stopping, but about letting God be our source rather than trying to do everything ourselves. When we rest in Him, even our busy moments can become opportunities to honor His name this Christmas season.

"Be still. Cease striving and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. The Lord Almighty is with you. The God of Jacob is our Fortress." (Psalms 46:10–11)

-Rebekah

Join us on Monday evenings in December at 5:45pm for **CANDLES & CAROLS**

as we embrace the tradition of Advent together. Each week, families are invited to participate in the lighting of the Advent candles and reflect on the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christ. We'll also lift our voices in a carol or two as we prepare our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Savior.



Coffee with Carson & Men's Breakfast



Our Men's Breakfast and Coffee with Carson will *not* meet this month. We look forward to gathering again in January!

We worship in a one stoplight town. Harlem is hardly a "bustling metropolis". "Distant outpost" is slightly more accurate. However, even though Harlem isn't the biggest or flashiest location, it's no remote wilderness area. The reality is – ***our lives are not lacking for illumination.*** We have streetlights. Digital billboards. Traffic. And this time of year... gaudy Christmas decorations. Sure, we present ourselves as country folk, but honestly, how far do any of us have to drive to see the neon glow of a flashing business marquee?

It's easy to see we live in a very different time and place to Joseph and Mary. Most days – even in my sleepy Dearing neighborhood – it can be difficult just to look up and see the stars, much less one specific star. So each year as we revisit the Christmas story, it always strikes me as incredible just how prominent a place a single star has in the nativity narrative. In Chapter 2 of Matthew's gospel account, we read of a new star that has appeared in the night sky – a star that serves as a road map to allow these "wise men" to find their way along the winding path to Bethlehem. It is a beautiful story.

But it's more than just that. We cannot miss the symbolism hiding in plain sight. The star was not just a great light pointing to a little baby. The star was a great light pointing to **the** great light... The Light of the World. The Savior, the Messiah, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. A light that we should call Emmanuel, or "God with us". *Jesus' birth was marked by a heavenly light. And His life, death, and resurrection provide the believer with heavenly light... it is by Him and through Him that we are given sight.* His Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. Sweet little Jesus boy, light of the world.

But just like the lampposts and street signs around town threaten to blot out the beauty of the celestial scene as we gaze towards the heavens, our busyness often brings so much chaos and commotion that it can be hard to see the light of Jesus at work in our lives. We are surrounded by stimuli. Our eyes – and nervous systems – can scarce take it all in. So our vision is obscured. Our focus is distracted. Our gaze falters. The Light of the World... clouded over and crowded out. If we are not careful, it is very easy to find ourselves walking through life in total darkness.

As a church family, let us all commit ourselves this Christmas season to taking actionable steps to seeing the light of Jesus more clearly. May we say no to the things we need to say no to. May we drop unnecessary efforts and obligations. May we simplify and live in each moment. And may we spend time in prayer asking that God may give us "eyes to see" (Psalm 119:18). I am confident that if we take these steps, we will see precisely what the magi did so long ago – we will see the face of God.

***In "light" of my newsletter article this month, I feel like I would be remiss not to warmly invite each of you to the weekly Carols & Candles gatherings throughout the month of December. This is Harlem Baptist's way of observing a longtime tradition of the church, but in a fresh, new way. These gatherings will be brief – just 10 to 15 minutes – but we want to invite everyone to join us in an intentional time of worship as we seek to choose the unrushed life. I hope to see you during these worshipful Monday evenings and pray they will bring light and joy to the life of your families.

-Evan



HBC Women's
Slumber Party
December 12 | 6:30PM

