

To the Saints and Friends of Gregory Memorial:



“... to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.” Luke 2:11 NIV

Prepare your heart for Christmas. Christmas is celebrated annually by some Christians to commemorate the Savior’s birth. But it’s not without controversy. There are those who refuse to celebrate Christmas because of its history and the commercialism of the day. It’s easy to get drawn into debates about whether or not Jesus was born in December. The truth is no one knows when Jesus Christ was born. But, our Savior was born. He left heaven behind to come to earth, born of a virgin. He lived a perfect life and died for our sins. His sacrifice is worth being acknowledged and so is His birth.

We get to spend time marveling at the fact that the Creator of all things was once a helpless baby seemingly dependent on His earthly parents. The Bible’s account of the Christmas Story reminds us of the joy people felt when the Messiah was born. So let’s put aside our differences in opinion over the actual date of Jesus’ birth and get to the true meaning of Christmas.

What Do Christians Learn from the Christmas Story? The story of Christmas is one that is familiar to most Christians. God promised to Abram the whole world would be blessed through one of Abram’s descendants:

“I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” [Genesis 12:3].

At the God-appointed time, Baby Jesus was born of a virgin. But His birth was not without difficulties. King Herod, the ruling tetrarch at the time, wanted to kill Him. The small family had to flee but eventually returned to their homeland when Herod died.

The Christmas Story is a reminder that God keeps His promises. *But He does it in His time, not ours.* The Christmas Story tells us about the great love God has for all humanity. He wants to save us so badly that even His life is not too much of a sacrifice to save us. The Christmas

Story reminds us that God is always willing to fight for those who are obedient to Him.

So, what is a good Bible verse for Christmas?

There are many great verses that highlight the story of Jesus’ birth, but this one in particular sums it all up;

“to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. [Luke 2:11 NIV]

If you were to do a Christmas Bible study using a single verse as a starting point, it would be that one. That sentence sums up the whole of who Jesus is, tells us a bit about His birth and ancestry, and tells you why we should care.

An in-depth study of Luke 2:11 would take you back to the covenant promise made with Abraham and the prophecies told about the Messiah. It would remind you why the virgin birth is important and the impact it should have on your life --- even now.

What book in the Bible explains Christmas? If you have never read the account of Jesus’ birth, you may wonder where the story is found. The Christmas Story is found in Matthew, Chapters 1-2 and in Luke, Chapters 1-2.

Remember the True Meaning of Christmas

If we put away all the commercialism and the murkiness of its history, we can admit that Christians celebrate Christmas for one reason: **to celebrate the birth of Jesus.** Let’s not get distracted by a debate on the exact date of Jesus’ birth. Instead, let’s focus on what the Bible has to say about the Messiah. Let us celebrate the birth of a Savior who died to save the world from its sins.

Source: <https://hebrews12endurance.com/christmas-bible-study/>

WORSHIP INFORMATION FOR DECEMBER, 2024

Sunday, 1 December, 2024

“1ST Sunday of Advent”; Holy Communion – Liturgical Color: Purple/Blue
 Service by: Rev. Dr. Katherine C. Jackson
 Candle Lighters: Lauren & David Togger

Sunday, 8 December, 2024

“2ND Sunday of Advent” – Liturgical Color: Purple/Blue
 Guest Preacher: Rev. Nancy S. Clark
 Candle Lighters: Barbara Taliaferro & Mary Lykins

Sunday, 15 December, 2024

3RD Sunday of Advent” – Liturgical Color: Purple/Blue
Worship Service & Cantata - 3:00 p.m.
 Christmas Cantata: “Celebrate! The Joy & Wonder of Christmas”
 Service by: Rev. Marvin Daniel
 Candle Lighters: Maddi & Jonathan Mendoza

Sunday, 22 December, 2024

“4TH Sunday of Advent” – Liturgical Color: Purple/Blue
 Service by: Rev. Marvin Daniel
 Candle Lighters: Mary Webber & Sarah Shrum

Sunday, 24 December, 2024

Worship Service is at 7:00 p.m.
 “Christmas Eve Service” – Liturgical Color: White
 Service by: Rev. Dr. Katherine C. Jackson
 Candle Lighters: Rose Scott & Wayne Powers

Sunday, 29 December, 2024

“1ST Sunday of Christmas” – Liturgical Color: White
 Service by: Rev. Marvin Daniel



OUR PRAYER IN TIMES OF JOY AND CONCERN...One of our great joys and responsibilities to each other and to God here at Gregory Memorial is the regular practice of praying for each other and our community.

<p>First-responders, world-wide Our deployed U.S. service personnel & their families Families, persons, communities affected by weather disasters & gun violence Those affected by wars in Ukraine, Gaza & Lebanon People & Sovereign Country of Ukraine Those who are suffering from illness/loss/grief/hardship Amy Townson, Josh Ingram’s sister Becky Scott Smith Russell Heiser, Ingrid Phoenix’s grandson (health issues) Butch Meade, Glenda Mayhew’s brother Verne & Clara Smith Eddie Frankenstein Etta Holc Jerry & Ruby Hasky (health issues) Lee Harsh, Valerie Harsh's brother-in-law (health issue) Larry Brown of Chesterfield, Larry Johnson's friend (health issue) Emily Henry, Mary Holc’s sister (health issue)</p>	<p>Renee' Renier, Diana Flaherty's long-time friend (health issue) Paula McDaniel, Pam Elder's sister (health issue) Moneka Suprenant, Susan Shockley’s & Sandy Eickmeyer’s friend (brain injury) Mary Kay & Mike Schroeter (health issues) Dr. Joseph Hillier of Matoaca, Lykins family friend (health issue) Alex Courtney of Florence, SC, business associate of Dianna L. Flaherty, Mary Lykins' daughter (injured, vehicle accident) Peggy & Dennis Allen (health issues; Peggy: Petersburg Home for Ladies, Rm #18) Corey Whelan, Pat Hunter’s grandson (on-going health issue) Judy Recher (health issue) Shirley MacNeill (health issues; recovering at home) Sean Godwin, grandson of Bill & Cheryl Godwin (health issue: MCV-Massey) Charlie Perkins (health issue) Evelyn Foster (Petersburg Home for Ladies, Rm #22)</p>
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ELECTION OF CLASS OF 2027 ELDERS AND TRUSTEE, ALSO CLASS OF 2025 TRUSTEE REPLACEMENT. Our new Elders for Class of 2027 were elected on November 3 and on November 17, all were examined by Session, ordained (Jonathan Mendoza) and installed (Jonathan Mendoza, Blake Bishop, and Susan Shockley) during the November 17 worship service. Our congratulations to all and profound thanks for their willingness to serve Gregory’s congregation!

We also express our heartfelt thanks to the Chairman and members of the 2024 Congregation Nominating Committee (Patsy Johnson, Chairman; Members: Pat Hunter and Doug Holc) for their diligent and dedicated efforts in developing the slate of names that our congregation approved on November 3. **Well done, All!**

SESSION NEWS – 2025 Clerk, Donald Hunter; Clerk *pro tempore*, Susan Shockley; Treasurer, Susan Shockley. Session’s Stated Meetings for 2025 will be 12 pm (est.), after worship on 3rd Sundays; and our new Covenant Minister (part-time) is Rev. Marvin Daniel. **Our prayers have been answered!**

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDERS - If you want to order a Christmas Poinsettia (RED or WHITE), then Sunday, Dec. 1 is your last opportunity! Order forms are in bulletins. Cost is: \$17 per plant (includes plant & delivery fee). Please make your check payable to: Gregory Memorial Church and place the completed form with check in the collection plate. We will place our order with the florist on Dec. 2 or 3. Delivery is Dec. 19.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS CHURCH DECORATING – Worship Committee and volunteers to decorate the church on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 11 a.m.

“COOKIES & COCOA” OPEN HOUSE at Gregory Memorial will be after the PG Christmas Parade on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 3 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CARD BOX is in the Narthex for you to place cards in box. Cards will be given out after Dec. 8.

ANGEL TREE – We are sponsoring the ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation. Every time a child comes in for a cancer treatment, they have an opportunity to select a toy from a “Treasure Chest.” Please take a card from the Angel Tree that is in the Narthex. Each card has a description of the toy, along with its picture and the Aisle Number where it can be found. (EVERY TOY can be purchased at the Colonial Heights Target store. We have the entire month to shop, so your not-wrapped toys don’t have to be brought to church until Dec. 22.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA & WORSHIP SERVICE – Sunday, Dec. 15 at 3 p.m. - The combined choirs of Trinity UMC and Gregory Memorial PC will present the Christmas Cantata, “Celebrate! The Joy and Wonder of Christmas” at Trinity UMN at 11 a.m. Then, at 3 p.m. the choirs will perform a repeat performance of the Cantata at Gregory Memorial with a brief worship service. Please mark your calendar for 3 p.m. on Dec. 15 for the worship service and Christmas Cantata at Gregory Memorial. Refreshments will follow in the Fellowship Hall. Don’t forget to bring a friend!

CONGREGATION DIRECTORY - Thanks to all who have signed off on their info in the DRAFT Pocket Directory and our appreciation to the Faith Committee/ Congregation Care who diligently reviewed the information to ensure we have everyone covered.

This year due to popular demand, there’s 2 copies per congregant (1 for personal use, car, purse, etc. and 1 for keeping at home for reference.) Copies are in the Narthex. Just in time to address your Christmas greetings!

HAVE A SAFE & BLESSED CHRISTMAS!

HOLY COMMUNION SCHEDULE FOR 2024

February 4, 2024 April 7, 2024	June 2, 2024 August 4, 2024	October 6, 2024 December 1, 2024
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ANNOUNCERS FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

December 1 Larry Johnson	December 8 Susan Shockley	December 15 Rose Scott	December 22 Mary Holc	December 29 Donald Hunter
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BE INSPIRED



WAITING IN ADVENT: A PRAYER

by Joanna Hipp

God, it is not easy for us to wait, but that is what this season is about. Waiting is what Advent calls us to do. Help us to wait patiently for you. As we wait, help us not to remain stagnant. Guide us to the top of the mountain to see the beauty of the world, and aid us in running down the mountain to proclaim Your handiwork.

During this Advent season of waiting for the birth of Christ, be especially with those in need of your healing and your comfort. Let them feel that you are waiting with them, strengthening them. Help us know your loving presence, help us feel your gracious peace.

God of hope, God of peace, God of joy — as Advent moves forward, our minds are filled with thoughts of Christmas. During this emotionally charged season of Advent, we wait in anticipation for a baby born in a stable. We anticipate true living in a hope that only you can provide, O God of joy. We pray this Advent that as you created the world, you might yet again create the hope, peace, joy and love that our hearts need immediately.

This season, offer us signs of hope in our earthly siblings in Christ. So, open us now, O God, to one another. Open us to hope that others bestow upon

us. Open us now, O God. Open up our hearts to the joy that awaits us this special season. Open our hearts to the real joy of Christmas — a joy that doesn't come in the presents we find under our tree, but in the presence of your light in our lives, the presence of your grace and the presence of your love.

Sparkling and Shimmering God,
Thank you for calling us to walk in the light —
light that can brighten gloomy cities, light that can make planets glow, light that can warm cold hearts.

Gleaming and Glistening God,
Thank you for calling us to be light —
light so bright that even when we try to hide among the shrubs, burning bushes appear.

Twinkling God,
Thank you for calling us to share light —
light that stretches beyond...

Amen.

Joanna Hipp is a free-range pastor in the Presbytery of Charlotte. She is a member of the presbytery's ministry resource committee, president of the alum board of Louisville Seminary and serves on the executive board of Charlotte Clergy Coalition for Justice.

DECEMBER, 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1 1st Sunday of Advent "HOPE" 9:30a Sunday School</p> <p>11a Worship service & Holy Communion</p> <p>Service by: Rev. Dr. K. C. Jackson</p> <p>Last day to Order Poinsettias</p>	2	<p>3 Place church Poinsettia order w/florist before 11 a.m.</p>	4	<p>5 6a Clean church</p> <p>6-8p BSA Cub Pack 910 Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>	6	<p>7 11a Worship Cmte & volunteers decorate church</p> <p>2:p Faith Cmte meets at Fellowship Hall</p> <p>3p "Cookies & Cocoa" Open House after PG Christmas Parade</p> <p>8p PG Study Group AA (Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>
<p>8 2nd Sunday of Advent "PEACE"</p> <p>9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship service</p> <p>Service by: Rev. Nancy S. Clark</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6:30p BSA Crater OA (Fellowship Hall & kitchen)</p>	10	11	<p>12</p> <p>6a Clean church</p> <p>7-9p GSA Tr 5000 Fellowship Hall (multi rooms)</p>	13	<p>14 8p PG Study Group AA (Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>
<p>15 3rd Sunday of Advent "JOY"</p> <p>No Sunday School or morning worship service at GMPC</p> <p>3p Worship Service & Christmas Cantata ("Celebrate! The Joy & Wonder of Christmas") at Gregory Memorial</p> <p>Service by: Rev. Marvin Daniel</p> <p>Refreshments will follow in the Fellowship Hall</p>	16	<p>17</p> <p>1p Circle meeting (Luncheon at S. Shockley's)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>5:30-9p BSA Tr 900 Honor Court (Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6a Clean church</p> <p>Poinsettias Delivery; Arrival time TBA Payment on delivery</p> <p>2p Newsletter (Jan) articles due in office</p> <p>6-8p BSA Cub Pack 910 Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>	20	<p>21</p> <p>8p PG Study Group AA (Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>
<p>22 4th Sunday of Advent "LOVE"</p> <p>9:30a Sunday School</p> <p>11a Worship service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 5 Cents-a-Meal Offering ➤ Christmas Joy Offering <p>Service by: Rev. Marvin Daniel</p> <p>Deadline to bring in your not-wrapped Angel Tree gifts</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Church office open</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve</p> <p>Church office open</p> <p>7p Christmas Eve Worship Service</p> <p>Service by: Rev. Dr. K. C. Jackson</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day</p> <p>Church office closed</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Church office open</p> <p>6a Clean church</p> <p>2p Newsletter (Jan) out</p>	27	<p>28</p> <p>8p PG Study Group AA (Fellowship Hall, Kitchen)</p>
<p>29 1st Sunday of Christmas</p> <p>9:30a Sunday School</p> <p>11a Worship service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local Emergency Aid Offering <p>Guest preacher: Rev. Marvin Daniel</p>	30	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p> <p>Church office open</p>	<p>New Year's Day</p> <p>Church office open</p>	<p>Church office open</p>		

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Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church
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STAMP

DECEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER



COME AND JOIN US!
Sunday School 9:30 A.M.
Worship 11:00 A.M.

We're on: [Facebook.com/gmpcva](https://www.facebook.com/gmpcva)