

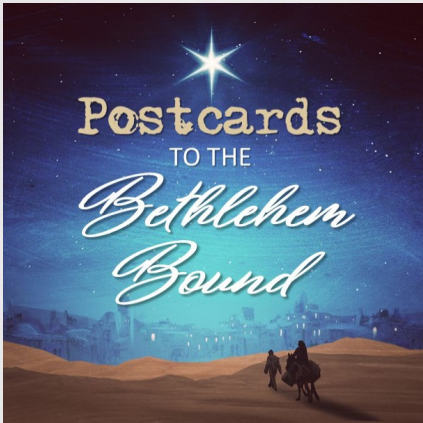


Calvary Herald

DECEMBER 2023 - VOLUME 54 - ISSUE 12

Invitation to an Advent Journey

Every year, the Advent season invites us to prepare our hearts for the celebration of our Savior's birth. However, for those of us who've made the journey to Bethlehem for many years, it can be challenging to hear the good news of Christmas in a fresh way. That's why Pastor Alex will be drawing his sermon



inspiration from the letters of the New Testament this year, in a series of messages called "Postcards to the Bethlehem Bound." Each week, we'll allow the Bible's instructions for the earliest churches to instruct and encourage our church! And with God's grace, we'll be ready to kneel in awe and wonder beside the manger by the time we get to Christmas Eve. So please pray that "every heart will prepare him room." And please invite a friend to worship with us.

Christmas Missions Offering 2023

During the month of December, Calvary will be receiving the annual Christmas Offering for World Missions, which plays a key role in allowing our church to participate in sharing the good news of Jesus around the globe. Our goal for this year's offering is \$3500; and as always, you can designate your gift for Andy and Cari Robertson, the Lottie Moon Offering (SBC), and/or the Global Missions Offering (CBF). Alternatively, you can leave your gift undesignated, and we will divide it among all three recipients. The offering closes on December 31.



Christmas Cantata

On Sunday, December 3, singers from Calvary, Antioch, Bannertown, New Hope, and other local Baptist churches will combine voices to present "Joy, Unspeakable Joy!"—a musical celebration of our Savior's birth. The only performance will take place in Calvary's sanctuary at 6 o'clock that evening. Those who were here for last year's multi-church cantata will remember that we had a full house. So if you plan to attend in this year's event, be sure to arrive early to get a good seat!



PRESENTING: *HOTEL NOEL*

Calvary's Kids have been hard at work, preparing for this year's Christmas program. And at 6 o'clock in the evening on Sunday, December 17, they'll present "Hotel Noel"—a fun and energetic retelling of the Christmas story. It's going to be a fantastic night; and as always, there will be some delicious treats to share after the performance! So mark your calendar and plan to join us. And if you see Leah Hauser, Melissa Bracey, and Melissa



Sumner, be sure to thank them for their commitment to and leadership of this ministry!

HOLIDAY WORSHIP

December of 2023 presents us with one of those rare occasions when Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve both fall on Sunday. And because we want to worship God and allow those who participate in our church to maximize their time with family and friends, we'll be observing a special holiday worship schedule. On Sunday, December 24, we'll have Sunday School at 9 o'clock in the morning, followed by morning worship at 10 o'clock, and a Christmas Eve service at 5 o'clock in the evening. On Sunday, December 31, we'll have Sunday School at 9 o'clock in the morning, followed by morning worship at 10 o'clock. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

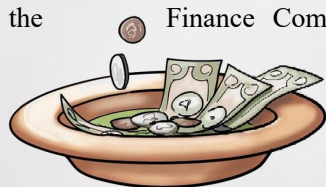
*"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

~ Luke 2:13-15

BUDGET VOTE

At the church business meeting on Sunday, November 19, participants had the opportunity to discuss the Finance Committee's church budget proposal for 2024. Church members will be asked to vote on this proposal by ballot in both of our worship services on Sunday, December 10. If you were not able to attend the business meeting and would like a copy of the budget—or if you have any questions—please contact a member of the



Finance Committee (Karen Moser, Tony Martin, Lilnette Phillips, Steve Simandle, Charlotte Hudson, Clay Nowlin).

CHRISTMAS POST OFFICE

The Christmas Post Office, which allows the Calvary church family to provide a special holiday blessing to the members of our "Silver Circle," will "open for business" until Wednesday, December 13. To use the Post Office, just prepare your cards and write the name of the recipient on each envelope. Drop the envelopes in one of the boxes that will be available in the church office and in the hallway between the sanctuary and the educational building. Then we'll take care of the rest—no postage required!



Thanks to Those Who Gave

Calvary expresses appreciation to all those who gave this month in memory and in honor of those they love.

In Memory of Lonnie Jackson

**Rachel Jackson, Glenda Laster, Johnny and Paulette Surratt, Linda Gordon
Owen and Sandra Stone, Jimmy and Sandra Byrd, Lille Mae Haynes
Men's Sunday School Class**

In Memory of Pam Jackson Saunders

by Rachel Jackson

In Memory of James Belton

by Roger and Donna Keck

In Memory of Jessi Beverly

by Roger and Donna Keck

In Memory of Detra Blackman Michaels

by Lonnie and Rachel Jackson

INTRODUCING CALVARY'S "SILVER CIRCLE"

For many years, the Calvary church family has felt a deep commitment to care for our homebound members. But especially as more people live into their 80's and 90's and experience temporary seasons of being "shut in," defining who's "homebound" has become more difficult! And that's why, beginning this holiday season, we're introducing the "Silver Circle."

The "Silver Circle" will include everyone at Calvary who's 90 or older – along with those of any age who are unable to participate in the life of the church for an extended time due to ongoing health issues, recovery from illness or surgery, or other significant interruptions to their normal church involvement. And because we want to support and encourage these friends in a special way, we're inviting you to pray for them, call them, or send notes and cards to them – and not just at Christmas, but throughout the year!

Of course, there's always room in the circle for those who need our special care. So if you know someone in our church family who is entering a time that will prevent them from being involved in our activities, please notify the pastor.



END OF YEAR GIVING

Calvary's Finance Committee would like to thank everyone in our church family for the faithful way that you've supported the ministry of our church this year with your tithes and offerings! Thanks to your generosity, we're ending 2023 with a solid fiscal foundation that will allow us to continue worshiping, growing, and serving in the year ahead. As you make your final contributions to the church this year, please remember:

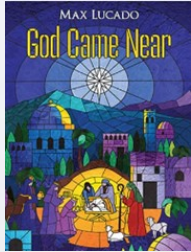
1. To be included on your contribution statement for 2023, your gifts must be given, dated, or postmarked on or before December 31.
2. If you're 70 or older, you might be able to make contributions to the church (or other qualified charity) directly from your IRA, and they won't be taxed on your tax return. This counts towards meeting your required minimum distribution. For more information, discuss with your financial advisor.



AVAILABLE RIGHT NOW at RIGHTNOW MEDIA

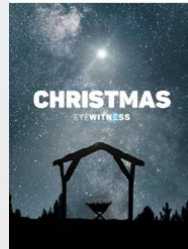
Did you know that, if you're part of what God is doing here at Calvary, you have free access to a wide variety of Christmas resources on RightNow Media? You can take advantage of videos, study guides, interactive presentations, and more. And here's a sample of just a few of the titles available for individual, small group, or family devotions.

"God Came Near" by Max Lucado



Travel back in time and relive the coming of Christ to Earth, as He gives up His throne next to God the Father to enter this world as a baby born in a manger. Filmed at England's beautiful Blockley Church, join acclaimed author and pastor Max Lucado as he provides insights on the season of Advent.

"Christmas" Eyewitness Series



This series is a collection of ten videos designed to be watched on the three Sundays prior to Christmas week, plus the seven days of Christmas week, ending on Christmas day.

"The StoryKeepers Christmas"



This 70-minute feature film, commissioned by Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment in the U.S. features new animation, together with celebrity voices (Tim Curry, Adam Wylie, Debbie Boone, Robert Guillaume, Sheryl Lee Ralph), a new score and songs.

If you and your family aren't already enjoying everything that's available on RightNow Media and want to know how to start your all-access, free membership, please contact Pastor Alex.



Dear Calvary...

The family of James Belton would like to extend their sincere appreciation for all the prayers, visits, cards and calls during my dad's recent illness. He has always loved Calvary Baptist Church and its people. The church still has those wonderful cooks! Thank you for putting out such a spread.

In Christian love, Debbie and Family

Thank you for all your support during this time of sorrow as I begin my life without Lonnie. Each act of concern, compassion, and love are treasured. May God bless each of you as you continue to minister in Christ's name.

Sincerely, Rachel Jackson

I want to thank you for all the lovely cards, food, and remembrances you shared with me as you learned of my accident. As I have experienced being bed-bound for several weeks, it has meant so much to know the caring friends at Calvary.

Sincerely, Anita Greene