

Pastor's Pen

Joy To The World!

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

This week, many tables will be full, many rooms will be lit, and many songs will be sung. Christmas traditions differ, but at the center of every godly celebration is a single, astonishing fact: God has acted — not from afar, but in flesh. Isaiah's prophecy compresses both the wonder and the functionality of that action: a child is born, yet the child is the one on whose shoulders the government rests. The babe of Bethlehem is also the reigning King.

This truth reshapes everything — worship, hope, fear, family life, and our understanding of God's covenant faithfulness. We do not simply celebrate a sentimental birth; we worship the sovereign God who brings salvation according to His eternal plan.

Isaiah references a child and a son — language that emphasizes human vulnerability and family bonds — then gives Him titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. Each of the four names in Isaiah 9:6 comforts the weary and addresses our deepest needs.

Wonderful Counselor — Christ knows the human heart and guides his people with wisdom. He does what we cannot: counsel sinners into repentance and faith.

Mighty God — The one born as a child is omnipotent. He accomplishes salvation by power, not merely persuasion.

Eternal Father — This title stresses care and the permanence of his covenant love. In Christ we are adopted into the household of the triune God.

Prince of Peace — Peace here is restored relationship — reconciliation with God, with neighbor, and ultimately a healed creation. Peace comes through the cross and resurrection, not through human compromise.

The prophet Isaiah declares that He was given to us. Salvation is not earned; it is a gift. Scripture affirms that our receiving depends entirely on God's initiative: from election to justification, sanctification to glorification, all is by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8–9). Christmas proclaims that the greatest gift, Jesus, was given to all who would believe.

Merry Christmas from your shepherd,
Pastor Mark.

Grace Gems

"When Christ came into the world, he said, Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure." - Hebrews 10:5–6

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke introduce us to a whole cast of Christmas characters with whom we've grown quite familiar: Joseph, Mary, the shepherds, the wise men, and so on. Sometimes we even consider those who are less known, such as Zechariah, Elizabeth, Anna, and Simeon. With each passing Christmas season, we have probably been treated to sermons and studies from the perspective of just about every cast member. Yet there is one notable exception: surprisingly few of us have pondered Christmas from Jesus' vantage point.

Quote of the Week

"What we celebrate at Christmas is not so much the birth of a baby, but the incarnation of God Himself."

— R.C. Sproul

In this verse, the author of the letter to the Hebrews tells us that when Jesus stepped onto the stage of history, He took the words of Psalm 40 upon His lips. Just as Cinderella's glass slipper fit only her foot, these words fit nobody but Jesus.

God was preparing for the first Christmas throughout the centuries of the Old Testament, for all the Old Testament sacrifices were mere shadows of the reality to which they pointed. Those sacrifices involved the death of animals that had to be prodded to the altar. They had no choice in the matter; they were simply pressed into service. But before He even experienced humanity, Jesus knew His role—His sacrifice—would be different. He willingly consented. In the humblest of forms and in an unexpected setting, God the Son took on a body that was prepared for Him—prepared ***"as a ransom for many"*** (Matthew 20:28). He looked at this broken world and its sinful people, and He said to His Father, Yes, I will go there. I will become one of them, and I will die for them.

Peter grasps the weight of Christ's death when he writes, ***"He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed"*** (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus, being fully God and fully man, entered this world to do in His body what no animal sacrifice could do: He has borne our punishment, cleansed our consciences, and held out divine mercy. He perfectly accomplished all that is necessary for sinful men and women to enter into fellowship with God.

This is very different from the promise of mere religion, in which rules and effort become futile mechanisms for trying to climb into heaven. In contrast, the manger's message is one of liberating mercy. God has wonderfully taken the initiative and come to rescue us through Jesus. We don't need to make a long journey to find God, because Christ, the newborn King, knew His role. What is the right response? Simply to bow before Him humbly, praise Him wholeheartedly, and wait for Him expectantly all of our days.

Christmas According to Christ -Alistair Bregg

Weekly Gatherings



Sunday Bible Classes

Elders- Old Testament (Sanctuary A)
Bereans- New Testament (Sanctuary B)
Ladies- (Downstairs B, Gray Room)
Young Adults- (Downstairs B, Red Rm.)
Youth and Surge (5th-6th)- (Upstairs C)



Weekday Meetings

AWANA—Wednesday's 6:30-8:00 pm
Trail Life—Monday's at 6:30 pm



Family Groups

All Family Groups began **Sept 25th**
Host Families: Tom & Penni Cox, Jesse &
Deborah Royall, Larry & Gina Covington,
Jeff & Bridget Brown, Alan & Leigh Anne
Chambers and Mark & Trisha Keffer



Build the Body Teams

If you would like to serve on a BtB Team
and need to sign up, please contact the
team leader at the appropriate email



Youth Study

Wednesdays @6:30PM
Youth Study & Surge!



Service Times

Sunday School 9:00AM
Children's Church 10:30AM
Sunday Services 10:30AM

Giving from service on 12/14/2025

General Offering	\$8,465.36
Building Fund	\$743.00
Uganda	\$400.00
Benevolence	\$30.00

Total.....\$9,638.36
Attendance 194

Build the Body Ministries

Women's Ministry-women@ghbcva.org
AWANA-awana@ghbcva.org
Outreach Ministry-outreach@ghbcva.org
Worship Ministry-worship@ghbcva.org
Men's Ministry-men@ghbcva.org
Children's Ministry-children@ghbcva.org
Youth Ministry-youth@ghbcva.org
Prayer Team-prayer@ghbcva.org
Maintenance-maintenance@ghbcva.org
Fellowship-fellowship@ghbcva.org
Communications-communications@ghbcva.org
Front Line-frontline@ghbcva.org
Widows-admin@ghbcva.org
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GRACE HARVEST BIBLE CHURCH

GO GATHER GROW GO

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Grace Harvest Bible Church

Dec 21, 2025

