

The Brightest Christmas Light



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

WWW.GSBCFAMILY.ORG

My family and I recently shared the joy of decorating our house for Christmas. The event is always special. Our favorite songs playing in the distance, dad “patiently” dealing with the crooked limbs, the glow in my children’s eyes, and my wife organizing all the trinkets – yes it’s a glorious occasion. This year was no different. My creative wife was organizing everything, I was putting our artificial tree together, and the kids were playing in the empty boxes. The excitement of Christmas was in the air. As Heather and I finished the straightening of the tree limbs we began to move on to the most exciting part, the lights. What is a Christmas tree without some lights? So as always, we pulled the lights out and began unraveling them. Once we completed our tedious mission we knew that we had to check to see if they work. We plugged in the first set and the strand magically lit. We tested the second and everything was great. I sat in amazement. Could it be possible that all three strands will actually work? Hope filled my mind. But, to my chagrin when the final lights were tested I knew something was wrong. On that whole strand of 100 hundred mini lights, there were only a few working. I carefully looked it over. I checked the bulbs. The lights all seemed to be fine. I checked the source of power. Yes, it was also perfectly capable of lighting the bulbs. But somewhere in that strand was a short – a barrier that was hindering the light from accomplishing its purpose. Here was a set of lights that once shined bright. In my hands, was something that was once very useful, but now it was worthless. Because they were inept I did the only thing I could do. I took them to the kitchen, lifted a lid, and threw them into the trash. They will never shine again.

When I get a task in my mind I am very mission driven. I only had a set amount of time to decorate for Christmas and nothing would stand in my way. So, off I went to the store looking for some new lights. I was confident that I’d find some that would shine brightly and give me no problems. Within a short matter of time I found what I was looking for and I returned home to complete the project. Of course, we did complete our task. Heather and our children have made our house a beautiful home. But, there is still something nagging at me. What about that strand of lights I threw away?

As believers, Jesus tells us in Matthew 4:14, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.” And then He commands us in verse 16, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Brothers and sisters, this is our calling and command from our Lord. **Philippians 2:15** also reminds us that we are “children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.” In the midst of this dark world God has strategically placed each one of us so that we can shine His light to others. But, sadly many of us aren’t shining His light. We have become much like the ineffective lights on that strand. That single strand had 100 lights and only a few of them were working. Ironically, that is what recent statistics tell us. It takes an average of 88 Christians one entire year to reach one person for Jesus Christ. That is up from 55 Christians less than a decade ago. It demands careful evaluation as to why. Why are you not shining the Light of Christ? Why are we not effectively shining the Light of Christ? Could our light be burned out? Could our light be covered by dirt and dust? Is there some sort of barrier in us that hindering us from accomplishing our purpose? Are we truly connected to the Source of power? I’m glad to know that God doesn’t deal with us as I did to my faulty décor. We have a loving Father who will heal us, clean us, and fix us when we come humbly to Him. Christmas is a holiday filled with lights. I pray that the brightest light that shines this year will be the Light that you and I shine for Christ.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Matthew

RELAY FOR LIFE FUNDRAISER AT CICI'S PIZZA



Join GSBC's Relay for Life team Tues, Dec 29 4pm-9pm at Cici's pizza. ***Tell the cashier you're there for GSBC's relay team*** and the team will receive 10% of your sale (dine in or carry out). Also, when you tell them you're there for GSBC's relay team you will fill out a card to be registered for a \$50 Walmart card to be drawn shortly after 9pm, you do not have to be present to win. Thank you for supporting our Relay for Life team! Less cancer means more birthdays!

JOIN US for CHRISTMAS CAROLING!

December 13, at 7PM (immediately following the children's Christmas program) we will go caroling to the various neighborhoods around the church. This is a great opportunity to minister to others and share the love of Christ through singing! Following, there will be a time of refreshments and fellowship! Sign up in the back of the sanctuary.



LIBRARY CORNER

If you are looking for a Christmas ministry opportunity, please consider a donation to your library. Your library has many books, videos, music, etc for adults but could use more of these items for young children, older children, teens and pre-teens. Many people have commented on how much they love the library, so it definitely is a worthy ministry.



CHRISTMAS CARD DROP-OFF BOX



A cubby-hole box has been placed in the church lobby for you to use in giving Christmas cards to church members and regular visitors. The cubby-holes are labeled with alphabet letters. This is a great way to save on postage and also to minister to our GSBC brothers and sisters. When you save money on postage, you can give more cards. Please remember to check it each Sunday because there might be something in it for you!

"CHRIST"MAS ROAD SIGNS

You've seen them in your neighborhood and in the countryside; Now's your turn to display your faith at Christmastime by these very simple, yet effective signs. They are \$5 each, available between Sunday morning services, and proceeds go to GSBC Youth Ministries.



GREETER MINISTRY

Plans are underway to begin a Greeter Ministry. This will supplement what we are already doing Sunday mornings, to make our visitors feel more "at home" at GSBC. We would like individuals and/or couples who will do one of three things:

- Host our "Welcome Center" before services.
- Identify and greet visitors during our "greeting moment" while children are being dismissed to go downstairs.
- Help take visiting families from the Welcome Center, downstairs to help them get oriented with the nursery, children's classes, etc.

If this is a ministry you feel God is leading you to participate in, please fill out the information below and return to the church, place in the offering plate, or give to Paul deGastyne. **There will be an informational meeting on December 13 after both Worship Services, at the front of the Sanctuary.**

Yes, I would like to help with the Greeter Ministry

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

THE SOUR GRAPES SHIELD

by: Paul deGastyne

Sniffle, cough, ache, shiver and heave. These words many of us are hearing, and maybe experiencing, too often these days. Do I inoculate my children or risk it? Do I send them to school and other activities or keep them home? Do I walk around constantly sanitizing everything, or do I “just trust God?” Educating ourselves to the threat is important, but is there really anything we can do to be safe from these unseen enemies and is there a shield for me to wield?

There are many unseen enemies that require a daily fight. Germ, virus, mental disease, fear; you name it. When one of these attacks, what can we do?

Those “things” that are passed from one generation to the next some call “the facts of life,” while the scientifically minded may say it’s genetics and others generational curses. While getting my daughter fitted for glasses last night the eye doctor was especially talkative and used all three, I guess not knowing which would connect with me. No, we just can’t control some things. However, there is One who has overcome all things and He makes all things new (my favorite line from *The Passion of the Christ*). “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation” (Gal 6:15).

In the Old Testament children were responsible for the sins of parents, God “...visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations” (Exd 34:7). He hates sin and desires to keep us from its destructive power! God has provided for us: “In those days they will not say again, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’” “But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge (Jer 31:29-30). This promise is for us so that we don’t have to “accept it” because it’s the way dad, mom or granny was. Now don’t think I’m anti-family, a strange thing for a Family Pastor to be wouldn’t it? I’m just saying that when we have the choice to be like our Father, God, we need to put Him first!

It has always been that people inherit from the one they most identify. Sons of disfavor are written out of wills, and well pleasing slaves have been given everything. Yes, it is true that negative things are handed off from one generation to the next, but God gives us the opportunity to be “born again” (Jhn 3:7 and 1Pe 1:3&:23). He has given us “better promises” (Heb 8:6) than the sour grapes of our ancestors. He wants to re-make us like Himself; “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.” If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay {on earth;} knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, {the blood} of Christ” (1Pe 1:16b-19).

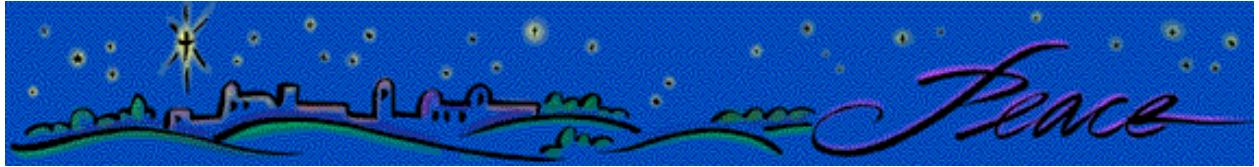
Though it is this blood that makes us clean, and He can heal any infirmity, it is clear that God is more concerned about the health of our eternal spirits than that of these expiring bodies. Among all the questions, the one that determines our well-being is “Have we forsaken the ‘futile way of life’ passed down to us, and have we embraced Christ as our all-in-all. If you have not, then you are still holding on to “inherited” ways and are likely watching rottenness eat away at the fruit God is wanting to develop in you, your marriage and your children?

Do you have a problem with “unseen enemies” that constantly steal your joy? If so, then know that God is a shield! “But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You. For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD, You surround him with favor as with a shield” (Psa 5:11-12). We can’t protect ourselves from these unseen enemies but God by His Grace can. If we “live by faith” and keep our eyes on Him then we will be filled with His goodness and leave the sour grapes squashed under foot!

BUY A WADES GIFT CARD AND HELP SUPPORT OUR YOUTH!!

WADE'S GROCERY GIFT CARDS. Wade's is a great local grocery/deli/flower shop, and you can support the hometown and our youth by purchasing gift card(s) to use in the store. A percentage of the total gift card amount purchased is written back directly to the youth program. Similar to Scrip, we need your order & money on Sundays, and the cards will be available that evening. (You may direct questions/orders to Dee at thegoodlife00@aol.com)





Christmas Eve
Service

December 24th 5:00PM and 6:30PM

at

Good Shepherd Baptist Church

155 Dunlap Drive † Christiansburg, VA

*This will be a great time for believers to come together and
worship the Lord.*



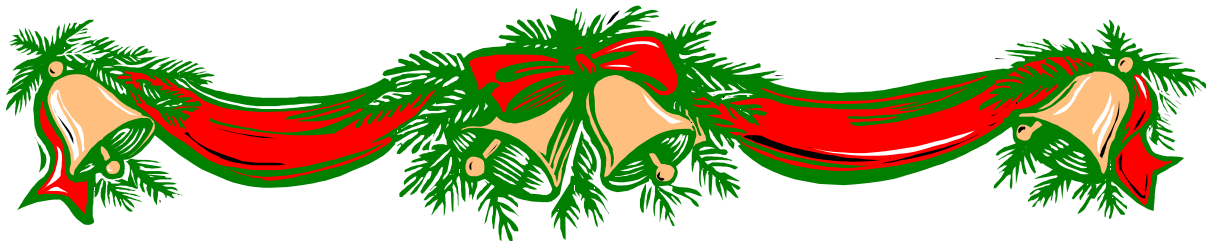


*Good Shepherd Baptist
Adult and Youth Choir*

Presents

A Christmas Cantata

*Saturday,
December 19, 7PM
And
Sunday,
December 20, 6PM*



December 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1) 6:30a Prayer time in sanctuary 8&9p Volleyball 7 pm Deacon's Mtg.	2) 5:30-6:30p – Fellowship Meal 6:45-8:15p Youth & Adult Bible Studies, Children's Choir 6:45p Praise Team Practice	3) 10a Senior Saints Fellowship 6:30p Choir Practice	4)	5) 9a Prayer time in Sanctuary 11a – 1p – Cookie Exchange 6p – deGastynne SS Christmas Party
6) 8:30a Worship Service 10a Bible Fellowship 11a Worship Service Youth Worship & Serve 5:15-6:45 pm Home Group	7) 7 p Men's Monthly Mtg.	8) 6:30a Prayer time in sanctuary 6, 7 & 9p Volleyball	9) 6:45-8:15p Youth & Adult Bible Studies, Children's Choir 6:45p Praise Team Practice	10) 6:30p Choir Practice	11)	12) 9a Prayer time in Sanctuary 10a – 2 pm – Christmas Bible School
13) 8:30a Worship Service 10a Bible Fellowship 11a Worship Service 6p Children's Choir Presentation 7p Christmas Caroling	14)	15) 6:30a Prayer time in sanctuary 7p In His Steps Preschool Christmas Program	16) 6:45p Adult Choir Dress Rehearsal	17) 10a Senior Saints Fellowship	18)	19) 9a Prayer time in sanctuary 7p Adult Christmas Cantata
20) 8:30a Worship Service 10a Bible Fellowship 11a Worship Service 6p Adult Christmas Cantata	21) 7 p Sisters of Grace Meeting	22) 6:30a Prayer time in sanctuary	23) No Evening Activities	24) 5 pm and 6:30 pm – Christmas Eve Service	25) Christmas	26) 9a Prayer time in sanctuary
27) 8:30a Worship Service 10a Bible Fellowship 11a Worship Service	28)	29) 6:30a Prayer time in sanctuary	30) 6:45p Praise Team Practice	31)		

NUSERY HELPERS NEEDED FOR THE CHRISTMAS CANTATA

We will be celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with a Christmas Cantata on Saturday, December 19th at 7pm and Sunday, December 20th at 6pm. I am asking for volunteers to assist with the nursery during this time. The service should be a little over an hour. Please feel free to contact me at 998-7920 or email me at jlchesler@yahoo.com if you are able to assist with this. The need will be 2 workers for toddlers and 2 for infants each night. Thank you so much for this service. I look forward to hearing from those who can offer help. My hope is that we could enjoy the service one night and serve another so that we might all be able to enjoy this special event.

PIE FUNDRAISER FOR THE KITCHEN



Are you short on time and need a pie or two for the Christmas holidays? We have the solution. Our very own chef, Gwynne Ryan, will bake them for you! The available flavors are: Pecan, Apple, Pumpkin, Brownie Pie (with or without pecans), Hot Fudge w/Pecans, Chocolate Chip Cookie Pie, and Japanese Fruit Pie. The cost will be \$12 each or two for \$20. Checks should be made payable to Good Shepherd Baptist Church with notation saying "pies". There is a sign up sheet on the table near the sound booth.

SAVE THE DATE

December
 12 Christmas Bible School, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" 10-2pm
 13 Greeter Ministry Meeting after both services
 13 Children's Choir Program— "Three Wisemen and a Baby" 6:00pm
 13 Christmas Caroling immediately after the Children's Program
 15 In His Steps Preschool Christmas Program— 7:00pm
 17 Senior Saints Fellowship— 10am
 19 Adult Christmas Cantata— 7pm
 20 Adult Christmas Cantata— 6pm
 21 Sisters of Grace meeting at Pam Wade's home— 7pm
 24 Christmas Eve Service at 5:00pm and 6:30pm
 25 Christmas