

December 2020



 Omega Baptist Church

A circle of believers with Christ at the center.

BEACON

“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

The Hope We Have in Jesus

One of the benefits of suffering is that it tends to reveal what people actually trust in.

Circumstances of life remove physical abilities, opportunities, even people we love from us. Our reactions show what we are looking to for meaning, purpose and fulfillment in our lives.

Often we discover that we have been trusting in those temporary things much more than the Lord for our well being. That discovery can be very disconcerting or even discouraging. We may realize that we don't really know how to trust the Lord in the details of everyday life. Here are a couple of truths from the Lord that I hope will help you to increase your trust in Him.

Just hours before Jesus went to the cross he said this to his disciples, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” Notice that in this instance Jesus doesn't talk about overcoming sin and death and hell, as great as those victories are. How did Jesus overcome the world? I think of two ways. One, He did not allow the good things in the world to distract him from his mission. Jesus could and did enjoy many of the same things we do; food, family, friends, laughter to name a few. What He didn't do was look to those things for his well being and direction. His trust was in the Heavenly Father for all of his needs.

Two, Jesus did not allow the unpleasant and evil things in the world to distract him from his mission. He had tremendous opposition from all kinds of people. He had the disappointment of

those who heard the message and would not believe. He faced the horrors of physical death on the cross and willingly endured that so that his mission would be accomplished. It says in the book of Hebrews that it was “For the joy set before him he endured the cross...” The process was far from pleasant but the result was worth it.

Jesus is our example in this. Also in the same Hebrews passage it tells us, “...run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” We are to keep growing in our faith until our race is over. Jesus, the one who has overcome the world, will help us if we keep looking to him.

In His Joy,

Pastor Rodney



DECEMBER SERMON SCHEDULE

Prophecies of Jesus in Genesis

- 6 “The LORD Will Provide” Genesis 22:1-18
- 13 “The Lion of Judah” Genesis 49:8-12
- 20 “The One Who Is a Blessing to All the Peoples” Genesis 12:2-3, 26:1-6, 28:10-14
- 25 Julotta; “And He Will Reign for Ever and Ever” Revelation 11:15
- 27 TBA





YOUTH MINISTRY



So I was thinking...

about Advent. I surprised myself with how little I know about it. I grew up with Advent calendars and even did them with my boys, but celebrating Advent wasn't a tradition in my family or my church. I never really put much thought into what it was about.

Last year, at this time, Advent was not on my mind. I was planning Districts (the huge student ministry conference in Green Bay), and we had just returned from a conference in the cities on apologetics. It was so good. We were also selling pizzas and getting ready to order supplies to make them. I don't remember what else was happening, but my son, Aidan, was loving college and I'm sure I was already going to two basketball games a week. This year...

Well, I don't even have to finish that sentence for you to know what it might say. You know because we are all living this crazy year together. One of the things that "Ronadoom" has taught me is that when I look out, at the world, I am fearful, frustrated, and angry. At the beginning this caused me to look within, to what I couldn't do, what I was missing. This also left me frustrated. I still do both of these things from time to time. I throw myself little pity parties and feel sad, but I have found that when I look up, and put my focus where it should be, I do much better. I think that's why I really wanted to focus on Thanksgiving this year. I wanted to change my attitude and keep my focus pointed up. I wanted to force myself to think about all the good things God has given me over the years and to recognize that it's still here! As November ended, I realized I was still not mentally prepared to let my focus wander or to just go with the flow. I needed to do something to keep my focus on God, which (for me) means I must find something to do. Something to make me keep my focus. I needed a plan. So, I started looking into Advent. Not at all the rituals and candles and meanings behind colors, but at the idea behind it all.

I found a devotional book for Advent by RZIM Ministries, the organization founded by Ravi Zacharias. It's called "*Hope, Faith, Joy, Peace, Light*." I ordered it not only to learn more about Advent, but to use it to keep my focus. It's set up to give me a devotional to read, to focus on, each day from December 1 to January 6. My plan is to share on social media pieces of what I learn, like my November thankfulness posts. Mostly this is to keep myself accountable, as a way to focus and remember to do it, but also because we need to share the good news more this year than ever.

I will start posts on November 29th, the first Sunday of Advent, and I already started reading the book. I discovered that Advent means "coming" or "arrival" in Latin. The custom of Advent is a way to anticipate the arrival of Christmas day, Christ's arrival. That makes sense when I look back at the Advent calendars. You open a little box for a piece of chocolate each day leading up to December 25th. However, Advent is also a reminder to look forward, in hope, faith, joy, and peace to the second Advent, when Christ returns. (You know a year has been hard when even teenagers say that it's ok if Christ returns soon. That breaks my heart a little.)

In traditional Advent, a set of candles sit inside a wreath. One candle is lit on the four Sundays before Christmas and the focus of each week is on Hope, Faith, Joy, and Peace. (I guess some churches celebrate the 12 Days of Christmas and Epiphany, which marks the revelation of Christ to the Magi, so the devotional includes this information.) I've also discovered online that "love" is used in place of "faith", so I guess different groups celebrate it differently. To me, it doesn't matter because it's the idea behind Advent that is my focus. I want to live in anticipation and experience hope for a future that holds promise. I want to renew my faith in the Lord and find joy in every day, not just in December. I want to learn to live and experience the peace that only the love of God can truly bring. My plan is to use this time, Advent, to rediscover hope, faith, joy, and peace and share it! So, whether or not you celebrate Advent, I hope (with great anticipation that 2021 will be better) that you and your family have a very Merry Christmas!

...until next time, Rebecca Anderson, OBC Youth Director



"Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, And heaven and nature sing."
Joy to the World by Isaac Watts



December OBC Meetings & Ministries

	<u>WORSHIP TEAM</u>	<u>ORGANIST</u>
6	Youth Group	Jody
13	Eric Stolhammer	Ellen
20	Linds	Dolly
25	Julotta	Karen
27	Steve & Krista, Jim & Pattie	Anja



AUDIO TECH - Nathan Lind VISUAL TECH - Sam B/Jane S

MEETINGS

Christian Education Board	Tuesday, 1st	7:00 p.m.
Mission Committee	Thursday, 3rd	7:00 p.m.
Trustee Board	Monday, 14th	7:00 p.m.
Deacon Board	Monday, 28th	7:00 p.m.

Prepare the Way

“He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God ... to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.” Luke 1:16-17

What John the Baptist did for Israel, Advent can do for us. Don't let Christmas find you unprepared—I mean, spiritually unprepared. Its joy and impact will be so much greater if you are ready! Here are some ways to prepare your heart for Advent:

First, meditate on the fact that you need a Savior. Christmas is an indictment before it becomes a delight. It will not have its intended effect until you feel your need for a Savior desperately.

Second, engage in sober self-examination. ... “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” (Psalm 139:23-24) Let every heart prepare Him room ... by cleaning house.

Third, build God-centered anticipation, expectancy, and excitement into your home—especially for the children in it. If you are excited about Christ, they will be too. If you can only make Christmas exciting with material things, how will children get a thirst for God? Bend the efforts of your imagination to make the wonder of the King's arrival visible for children.

Fourth, be much in the Scriptures... “Is not My word like fire? declares the LORD.” (Jeremiah 23:29) Gather 'round that fire this Advent season. It is warm. It is sparkling with the many-hued colors of grace. It is healing for a thousand hurts and light for dark nights.

~from Joy to the World, daily readings for Advent by John Piper
copyright Desiring God. Website: desiringGod.org

God became one of us, so we could become one with Him!

God invites you to **choose joy** this day, to follow the happy commands of the psalmist: **Sing! Praise! Proclaim! Declare! Worship!** (see Psalm 96)

For your own sake do what the angels did: make a big deal about the arrival of the King ... Do you love God? Let Him know. Tell Him! Out loud. In public. Unashamed. Let there be jubilation, celebration, and festivity!

And you can choose joy in quiet ways as well. Be watchful for “every small experience of Jesus,” knowing that He often shows up in unexpected ways. Treasure up and ponder all the ways Christ reveals Himself to you—in events, music, meals, relationships, beauty, and the comfort of His presence with you. The joy and promise of Christmas is that the miracle of Bethlehem still happens. God still enters into the reality of our messy everyday lives and loves us.

~from Because Of Bethlehem - Love Is Born, Hope Is Here, by Max Lucado
Advent Devotional Guide prepared by Christine Anderson

Coming in January ... **Through the Bible in 90 Days**
January 10 - April 25, weekly discussions on Sundays at 4:00 p.m.



Julotta

December 25, 6:00 a.m.

Join us bright & early Christmas morning to worship the **King of kings!**
“And He will Reign for Ever and Ever”



Please Note:



There will be no regularly scheduled Wednesday evening programs on December 23 & 30

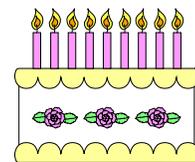


The Children's Christmas Program will be part of our Sunday morning worship service on December 20

Our annual Sr. Adult Christmas Party is canceled this year to protect the health of our beloved seniors

December Birthdays

- 1 Nathan Blomberg, Cale Ulrich
- 2 Julie Jast
- 4 Sara Donahoe, Dawn Komuek
- 5 Sarah Gasser, Gavin Jones
- 6 Jean Jones
- 7 Dan Bruner, Mary Jo Ulrich
- 9 Annette Johnson
- 10 Don Rhody, Kelly Lind
- 11 Dave Polzin
- 12 Eric Gasser
- 13 Kati Isaacson, Autumn Gedde, Kortana Blomberg
- 15 Dawn Smalley
- 16 Brenda Isaacson, Luna Donahoe
- 17 Mary Pearson
- 18 Elliott Rhody
- 21 Christina Hallstrand, Tarek Scott, Chase Swan, Josiah Moore
- 22 Ed Blomberg
- 23 Mike Gasser, Doug Mattson
- 25 Matthew Swan
- 26 Jayne Gilge, Bryce Swanson
- 27 Jane Smugala, Jim Swan, Lizzie Olson
- 28 Jared Belan, Landon Page, Boaz Stolhammer
- 29 Jody Isaacson, Georgeanne Ulrich
- 31 Laura Blomberg, Dawn Thums, Melinda Price, Ethan Winter



Happy Birthday!

Please contact us if:

- You or someone in your family (on our mailing list) has an address change
 - You no longer want to be on our Beacon mailing list
 - You would rather receive your Beacon by email
- Email: info@ogemabaptistchurch.org Thank You!

OGEMA BAPTIST CHURCH

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Sunday School - 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service - 10:15 a.m.

or online at www.ogemabaptistchurch.org

Wednesday Evening Programs:

6:30-7:30 p.m. Kingdom Quest and Spot 68

7:00-8:00 p.m. Ground Zero and Adult Prayer Mt.



"I bring you good news that will bring
great joy to all people.

The Savior

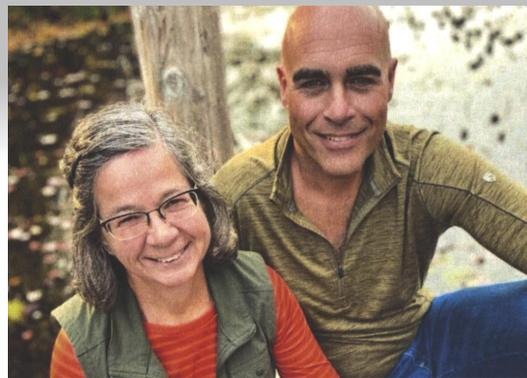
—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—
has been born today in Bethlehem,
the city of David!"

Luke 2:10-11 NLT



Missionary Spotlight Dale & Desi Haskins Crescent Lake Bible Camp

Dale and Desi Haskins serve at Crescent Lake Bible Camp in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, where they have been part of the missionary staff for 14 years, providing Program Maintenance and Waterski Ministry. Here are excerpts from their latest newsletter to OBC.



"The past several months have looked a lot different than normal here at camp, but praise God we have still had many ministry opportunities! I'm sure each of you have felt the impact of the Coronavirus in one way or another over the past few months as we have here at camp. When everything first shut down, we ... (began) running a day camp program for essential workers who had childcare needs. ... The majority of these families were new to us and from unchurched homes. Chapel provided a huge ministry opportunity as these kids were able to learn about Jesus and ask questions ... which (led to) many great conversations."

"Summer programs started later than normal this year and with a smaller staff than usual. ... During this extra time, Dale and I were able to help in other areas at camp. ... In July things picked up and felt a little bit more like summer as we began to have residential youth and family camps. ... Many people commented on how they loved that camp felt 'normal' or how camp was their light during these dark days. ... I watched camper after camper leave spiritually fuller than when they came. It is in these moments Dale and I say to each other, this is why we are here, to see God work in people's lives like this."

"Ogema Baptist Church, thank you for your faithful support over the years. You continue to bless us."

To learn more about the ministry of Crescent Lake Bible Camp, visit their website at www.crescentlake.camp.