

# Calvary's *Light*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | CALVARY BIBLE CHURCH, HANOVER | DECEMBER 2017

## The Wonder of Christmas

Pastor Mike Osladil

As a young child Christmas was a time of great anticipation. Much of the anticipation revolved around what gifts we would receive. I and my siblings would carefully examine our gifts hidden beneath the festive colored wrapping paper under the tree. Along with observing a gift's size and shape, we would pick it up to feel how heavy the package was, and sometimes shaking it for clues as to what might be inside. The mystery surrounding the gift added to its wonderment.

The wonder of Christmas has grown stronger as the years fly by. In an age when Amazon Prime can have most items delivered to our doors in two days, the wonderment revolves much less around "the gifts" of Christmas than "the Gift" of Christmas. The wonderment of why God would love me. With a heart prone to wander and with all my sin, why would God love me? Why would God love me so much He would send His one and only Son, His unique Son to die in my place for my sins?

This wonder revolves around the essence of our Christian faith. The answer to our question lies in the very nature of God Himself, His love for us. The wonder of God's love finds its fullest expression in the coming of Christ on our behalf.

As I think of the wonder of Christmas, I'm reminded of the wonder the young virgin Mary surely felt. Imagine her wonder and amazement as the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." 29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. 30 But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. 31 You will conceive and give birth to a Son, and you are to call Him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, 33 and He will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; His kingdom will never end.' 34 'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?' 35 The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy One to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. 37 For no word from God will ever fail'" (Luke 1:28-37 NIV).

Imagine the wonder Mary felt! She was going to bear the Messiah, and this would be a virgin birth!

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Mary displays her faith in God's Word as she responds, "I am the Lord's servant, may your word to me be fulfilled" (Luke 1:38).

And so it was. Mary experienced the wonderment of this Child conceived by the Holy Spirit growing inside the veil of her body. She felt His kicks within her womb.

Probably seeking moral support, as well as perhaps safety, Mary traveled to the Judean hill country around Jerusalem to visit her elderly cousin Elizabeth. Together, these two shared the wonderment of being pregnant—one too old and one a virgin. One to give birth to John the Baptizer, the other to Jesus, the Messiah.

When Mary entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth, Elizabeth felt her baby leap in her womb. Then Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit exclaimed in a loud voice: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the Child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!" (Luke 1:42b-45 NIV).

Have you ever wondered if your unborn child can feel? Here John the Baptizer leaps for joy as he hears the voice of the mother of the Messiah. John, who would go on to serve as the forerunner preparing the way for the Messiah, even now through God's Spirit knows this is a joyous occasion.

Through Elizabeth, God affirms to Mary what Gabriel the angel has told her. Mary's response shows the wonder she felt at this privilege of bearing the Messiah. "My soul glorifies the Lord 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, 49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is His name. 50 His mercy extends to those who fear Him, from generation to generation" (Luke 1:46b-50 NIV).

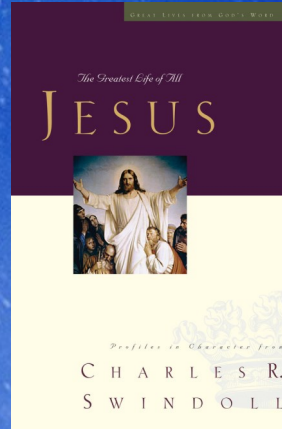
Just as the wonder of her pregnancy conceived by God filled Mary's heart with wonder and praise and worship, so may the wonder that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and unblemished in love fill our hearts with wonder and praise and worship to God. How thankful we can be God's mercy continues to extend to those who fear Him. A mercy that forgives our sin and saves our souls through our faith in God's Son-made-flesh, Jesus Christ.

On behalf of all the pastoral and church staff, I want to wish you and your family a blessed Christmas filled with wonder of God's love for us in Christ!

[In publication of Pastor Mike's article "Always Reforming," for the October newsletter he had given this credit which failed to appear in the newsletter: Adapted from Les Lofquist, "Always Reforming," in Voice: An Independent Church Journal, Jan/Feb 2017, 7-8.]

# Library Link

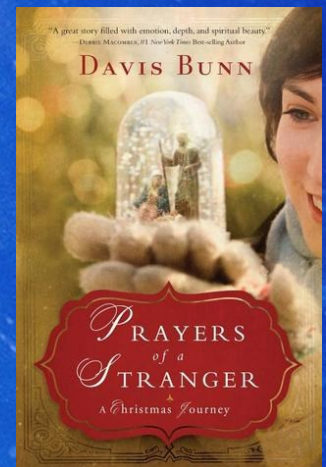
## Adult non-fiction: Jesus



Jesus by Charles R. Swindoll is another book in the series *Great lives from God's Word*. Without question Jesus is the most influential person in history. Swindoll introduces you to the carpenter from Nazareth as you have never seen Him before. Filled with biblical and historical insights, this biography takes you through the complex life of Jesus. This in depth profile reveals Jesus with great clarity and offers practical applications for your own life. Perfect for the holiday season!

## Adult fiction: Prayers of a Stranger

Prayers of a Stranger by Davis Bunn begins in the setting of the Holy Lands. This visit marks a momentous shift in the main character's soul and in her marriage as she begins to realize her journey did not end in the Holy Lands. God doesn't just answer prayers of strangers...but also those of her own heart. Great reading!





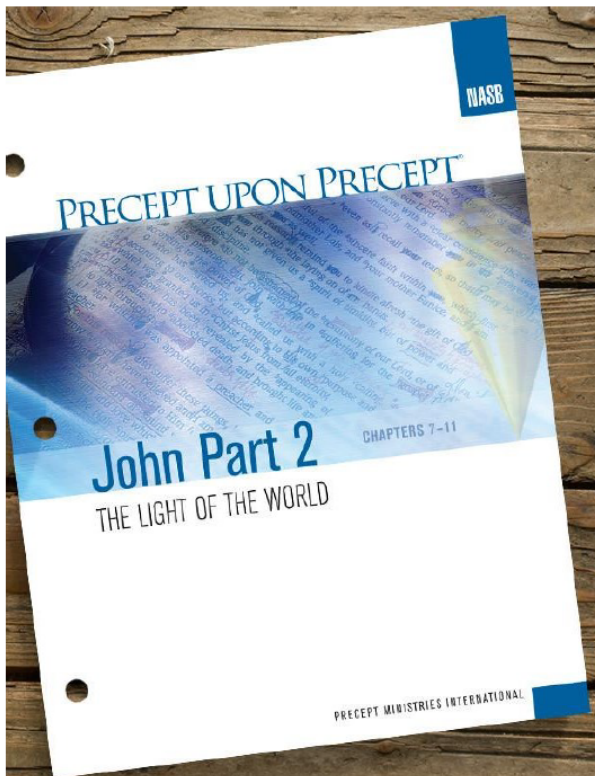
# CALVARY'S CHRISTMAS Celebration

You are invited to join us in worship as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. You'll be blessed by the joy and inspiration of the Adult and Children's Choirs; accompanied by the Orchestra.

**Come, let us adore Him!**

Saturday, December 2, 7:00 PM  
Sunday, December 3, 10:25 AM

*Admission is complimentary*



## Coming January 2018

We invite you to join us for \*Part 2 of this three-part study in the book of John as we study chapters 7-11.

From chapters 7-11 you will learn to walk in Jesus as the Light of the World, and your relationship with Him will become more intimate.

*John 8:12, "Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."*

Registration begins in December. Watch your bulletin for more information!

\*Taking Part 1 is not required to take this study. Each part is designed for anyone to jump right in, so please, join us!



# Elder Express

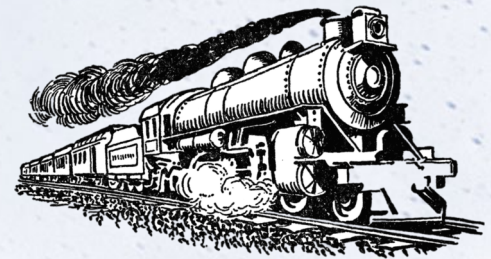
Charles Dickens "A Christmas Carol" is one of the most beloved Christmas stories of all time. The tale of a miserly, miserable old man who considers Christmas humbug is magically transported to his past, his present, and finally his future to see how he got to be where he is. In the end, Ebenezer Scrooge embraces the Christmas spirit and comes to agreement with Tiny Tim: "God bless us one and all!" However, a more appropriate story which we rarely see at Christmas time is Mark Twain's novel *The Prince and the Pauper*. The story of two boys, the one a son of royalty, the other a son of poverty whose paths cross, and fascinated by each other's life, and their uncanny resemblance, decide to switch clothes, and lives, temporarily. Tom tries to cope with court customs and manners. Edward experiences the brutish life of a pauper first hand. In the end, the boys assume their former identities, each gaining a greater appreciation for the lot of the other. God's Word says in Galatians 4:4-5 "When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons." God's Son left glory and became as we are in order to reconcile us back to God through His sacrificial death on the cross. The King of Glory taking our place. Now that's a Christmas story!

We only have a few days left to say "so long" to our senior pastor and Janel. We hope you will make it a point to honor them at their farewell luncheon after the morning service on December 10 in Boyer Hall. One of the best gifts you could give them is the sacrifice of your time and effort assisting Thom Whitcomb in the arrangement and cleanup of the luncheon. As the Pennsylvania Dutch say, "Many hands make light work!" And you'll notice that it is NOT a goodbye celebration. That implies that we may never see them again. With Jonathan, Lauren, Carson, and a baby to be named later remaining with us, and knowing Mike and Janel's propensity for travel, it's a surety that we will be seeing them off and on in the future.

December is elder nomination month. Each year I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 men are to be approached by members of CBC and asked to be considered to serve on the elder board for a three year term. If agreeable, there are elder nomination forms available at the Welcome Center. The nominating member must sign his or her name as well as the nominee, signifying their consent to be considered. The form is then to be given to a member of the elder nomination committee, a pastor, or an elder. When you agreed to be considered for membership you agreed to be loyal to the interests of this church. This is one way to fulfill that promise.

Be in prayer for your elder board as we begin the winnowing process in determining the man who will lead CBC in the future. The anticipation and joy of the holidays passed, our attention will be turned to pulpit supply, committee selection, and final determination of that man whom God has already chosen for us. We are reminded of the succession process God used when it was time for the prophet Elijah to depart. He already had a successor in place, and Elisha went on to perform twice as many miracles as his predecessor had. It was God who prepared the way, and it was God who prepared the man, so, for a time such as this, we rest, knowing that it is God who guides the process.

It is our intent to be as open and transparent as possible during times such as these. If you have a question, ask. We may not know what the future holds, but we know Who holds the future.



## CBC Market Place

All submissions will remain for three months unless you sell your item(s). Please call the church office if your items have sold.

- **FOR SALE:** Used Horizon 1.1T Treadmill. \$100.00 or best offer. Call Patricia at 717-624-3797.
- **FREE:** If you know of someone needing a hospital bed or lift chair, please contact Judy Feather at (717)-624-8673.
- **HELP:** Bob and Kathleen Landvater are looking to pay someone who is able to assist with cleaning, 1 time a week. Please call Kathleen, 717-637-3372, to discuss details.



# CBC December Event Calendar

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Room</b>
<b>2</b>	Saturday	8:00 AM	Men's Breakfast	Gym
		7:00 PM	Calvary's Christmas Celebration	Sanctuary
<b>3</b>	Sunday	10:25 AM	Calvary's Christmas Celebration	Sanctuary
		6:30 PM	Divorce Care/DC4K, PM Service	
<b>5</b>	Tuesday	3:15 PM	Good News Club	128
<b>6</b>	Wednesday	9:30 AM	Widows Fellowship	202
		6:15 PM	Teen Ministry	201
		6:30 PM	Awana, ESL, Grief Share, Prayer Meeting	
<b>9</b>	Saturday	9:00 AM	Adopt A Family	Gym
<b>10</b>	Sunday	10:25 AM	AM Service	Sanctuary
		12:00 PM	CBC Luncheon following AM service	Gym
		6:30 PM	Children's Choir, Divorce Care/DC4K, PM Service	
<b>12</b>	Tuesday	3:15 PM	Good News Club	128
<b>13</b>	Wednesday	6:15 PM	Teen Ministry	201
		6:30 PM	Awana, ESL, Grief Share, Prayer Meeting	
<b>14</b>	Thursday	6:30 PM	The Shepherd's Fold: Christmas Wonderland Program	Sanctuary
			Elder's Meeting	
<b>15</b>	Friday	6:00 PM	ESL Christmas Party	Gym
<b>16</b>	Saturday	12:00 PM	Calvary Ambassadors: Lunch & Caroling	Gym
<b>17</b>	Sunday	10:25 AM	AM Service	Sanctuary
		6:30 PM	Children's Choir, Divorce Care/DC4K, PM Service	
<b>19</b>	Tuesday	3:15 PM	Good News Club	128
<b>20</b>	Wednesday	9:30 AM	Widows Fellowship	202
			No PM Activities	
<b>24</b>	Sunday	10:00 AM	Christmas Eve Communion Service	Sanctuary
			No Sunday School / No PM Activities	
<b>25 - 29</b>	Mon - Fri		Office Closed: Merry Christmas!	
<b>27</b>	Wednesday		No PM Activities	
<b>31</b>	Sunday	10:00 AM	New Year's Eve Service	
			No Sunday School / No PM Activities	