

The West End Herald

Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC



THINGS TO DO
WHEN
YOU
DON'T
FEEL
LIKE GOING
TO CHURCH



by *Quentin Falkena*

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Early in my ministry, I visited an elderly man in a retirement home whose body and mind had been steadily declining. As a result, he had not been to worship for some time. When I found him, he was sitting alone, rocking back and forth, repeatedly uttering the words, “Take me to church.” I was struck that in his condition, the deepest desire of his heart was to worship God in the assembly of His people.

That man died not long after, and I had the opportunity to speak at his memorial service. I told those who had gathered there that God had answered his request. He had been taken to church—not a Sunday worship service, but rather that great assembly (church) of God’s people gathered around the throne (Heb. 12:22).

I share the account above because it touches on two crucial aspects of Christian worship. First, this man presents a model of deep personal desire to attend the weekly gathering of God’s people for worship. This is something that we all can strive to cultivate. Second, it touches on the reality that when we gather for worship with a local congregation, by God’s Spirit, we join with that great assembly in the heavenly places. By the blood of Christ, we enter the presence of God. We will first look at what happens when we come to

worship. Then we will consider how to cultivate the desire and practice of weekly worship.

When Christians go to church, we do not merely gather in a local setting. In these earthly assemblies, we are lifted by God’s Spirit to His heavenly presence. The great

SCHEDULES THAT ARE TOO FULL, EVEN FULL OF GOOD THINGS, CAN ALSO BE A SINFUL REASON TO SKIP REGULAR WORSHIP.

privilege of every Christian, because of our Great High Priest, is to come to the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22) and enter the heavenly Holy of Holies to “offer up a sacrifice of praise . . . the fruit of lips that acknowledge his

name” (Heb. 13:15). Understanding this staggering spiritual reality transforms the way we think and how we feel about worship.

We also see throughout the New Testament that the early church gathered for worship on the Lord’s Day (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Heb. 10:25). These are joyful scenes as Christians hear God’s Word, rejoice in the deliverance from sin, give praise to God in song and prayer for His wondrous works in Christ Jesus, and serve others in love. We are called to continue this weekly practice of gathering for worship on the Lord’s Day.

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OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Missionary of the Week

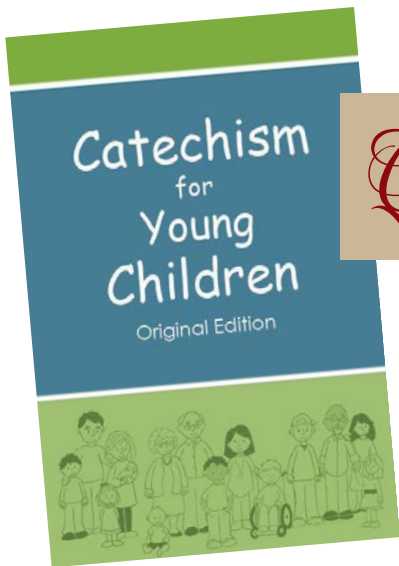
Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Mark 10:14

The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations.



In the summer of 1993, Samaritan's Purse President Franklin Graham received a call from a man in England asking if he'd be willing to fill shoeboxes with gifts for children in Eastern Europe. Franklin agreed, but figured Christmas was months away. He forgot about the promise until he received a call back around Thanksgiving asking about the gifts. Franklin asked his friend, the late Pastor Ross Rhoads of Calvary Church of Charlotte to see if he could help with the need. A Sunday shortly afterward, Pastor Rhoads demonstrated for his congregation how to fill a shoebox with simple gifts and encouraged them to include a letter to the child as well. Within weeks, the church had 11,000 shoeboxes lining their hallways. Due to their generosity and additional gifts from Canada, Samaritan's Purse sent 28,000 shoebox gifts to children in the Balkans that Christmas.

Every year since, Samaritan's Purse has collected shoebox gifts filled with toys, school supplies, and hygiene items for children around the world. Thank you, SPC, for participating! ♦



Question 107:

What has Christ given us to teach us how to pray?

Answer:

The Lord's Prayer.

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Luke 11:1



How does the Lord's Prayer begin? With praise to God. Sometimes we begin our prayer by speaking of what we want, but the Bible's prayers always begin with praising God. Next there is prayer for forgiveness and for strength to stay away from sin. Then we move to asking God for the things that He has promised to give us. Try to use this pattern in your own prayers. ♦

From the Lips of Little Ones, Jeff Kingswood



at the corner of

River & Rhett

The following men have been approved to stand for election to the office of deacon. A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, December 8, at 10:00 A.M.

Michael Carey*

Mark Diggs

Paul Hastings

James Leathers*

previous deacon*

Richard Olsen

Kevin Phillips

Connor Roy

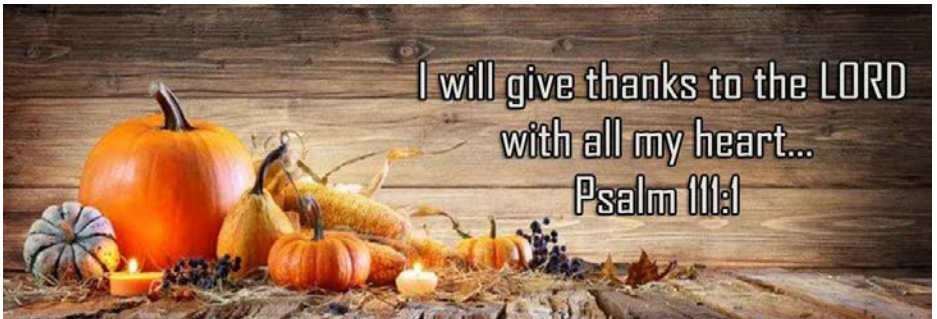
Please pray that God would provide qualified and godly men to serve the congregation.



NOVEMBER

Birthdays

- 24 Audra Atwood, Frida Barbier, Isaac Fultz,
Luke Hoopes, Tucker Weaver
- 25 Caroline Scott
- 26 Bill Nowak
- 27 Aaron Bouchillon, Don Bulla, Rachel Enggasser,
Jonathan Frost, Byron Senn, Henry Welch
- 28 Susan McDaniel, Daniel Plourde
- 29 Mott Altman
- 30 Jack Gamble Jr., Kathryn Reed



This Week

MORNING SERMON

Rev. David Henderson

A FORTRESS FOR HIS PEOPLE

Psalm 46:1-11

EVENING SERMON

Rev. Jeffrey M. Early

CUT OFF

Obadiah 1:10-15

Sunday, November 24

- 8:30 A.M. MORNING WORSHIP
- 9:55 A.M. Children's Chapel (*Sanctuary*)
- 10:00 A.M. Sunday School
- 11:00 A.M. MORNING WORSHIP
- 5:30 P.M. Season of Prayer (*Chapel*)
- 6:00 P.M. EVENING WORSHIP
- 7:30 P.M. Informational Congregational Meeting

Monday, November 25

- 6:30 A.M. Men's Bible Study (*Fellowship Hall*)
- 9:30 A.M. Rafiki Bible Study (*Conference Room*)

Tuesday, November 26

- 10:00 A.M. WIC Bible Study (*Fellowship Hall*)

Wednesday, November 27

- 5:30 P.M. FAMILY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP SUPPER (*Gym*)
- 6:45 P.M. Thanksgiving Service (*Sanctuary*)

Thursday, November 28

Thanksgiving Day!
Church Offices Closed

Friday, November 29

Church Offices Closed

Saturday, November 30

- 10:00 A.M. Sr. High Boys Bible Study (*Youth Hut*)
- 10:00 A.M. Sr. High Girls Bible Study (*Fellowship Hall*)



Upcoming Events

spcgreenville.org/calendar

- November 27** Thanksgiving Service
- December 1** New Member Reception and Luncheon
- December 8** Congregational Meeting
- December 8** Missionary Prayer Band
- December 14** Masculine Mandate Seminar
- December 15** Christmas Oratorio
- December 22** The Lord's Supper in the Evening Service

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When Christians go to church, we do not merely gather in a local setting. In these earthly assemblies, we are lifted by God's Spirit to His heavenly presence.

So, if you are working through feelings of not wanting to go to church, it is important to examine your heart and motives. Humbly bring this to the Lord in prayer: Why do I not feel like going to church? The answer to this question could be a serious spiritual matter or reflect competing priorities that result from the complexities of life.

Sometimes our own sin can keep us from wanting to worship. If this is the case, confess your sin and find the freedom and assurance of forgiveness in Jesus. If perhaps it is the sin of a brother or sister in Christ, lovingly confront him or her and seek reconciliation (Matt. 18:15). If you find that you are not in awe of God, meditate on His attributes until you can ask with the prophet, Who is like God? (Mic. 7:18). If you find worship boring, ponder the spiritual realities highlighted above and discover why your church worships the way it does.

Schedules that are too full, even full of good things, can also be a sinful reason to skip regular worship. If worship is the most important thing to which God calls us—for His glory, for our own good, and for the blessing of others—then we need to cultivate the conviction and discipline to clear the calendar and make worship our highest priority.

There may be other obstacles you face when considering weekly worship. Some of these include the realities and challenges of different stages of life: discipling little children, difficult college studies, demanding work schedules, and debilitating health issues. You might

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think staying home would be more restful. But in fact, it is Jesus who offers true rest (Matt. 11:28–30). Come to Him and find rest for your soul.

Finally, I want to encourage you to work through the short list below. I hope it will help you develop a deeper desire for weekly worship, anticipating the spiritual realities and blessings of worshiping in God's presence:

- 1 Pray that God would open the eyes of your heart so that you might know the hope and riches that are yours in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:18).
- 2 Pray that God would fill you with songs of praise and thanksgiving as you meditate on the great things He has done (Eph. 5:19–20; 1 Peter 2:9).
- 3 Listen carefully to the Word of God as it is read and proclaimed. Respond in faith to His promises and in obedience to His commands (Col. 3:16).
- 4 Participate in the public prayers by praying along and bringing those prayers to the Lord through the week (Eph. 6:18).
- 5 Receive the sacraments with faith and thanksgiving (Luke 22:19–20).
- 6 Find fellow believers whom you can encourage and serve after worship (Heb. 10:24). ♦

Dr. Quentin B. Falkena is pastor of Cornerstone Christian Church in Medford, Oregon.



Announcements

New Member Reception

On December 1 following the 11:00 A.M. Worship Service, all are invited to welcome our new members at a luncheon in the Gym. Meat and drinks will be provided. Please bring generous portions of a side dish or dessert to share.

Friday Night Alive!

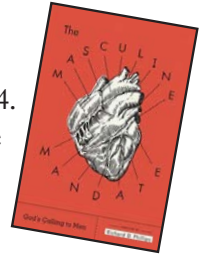
All singles are invited to the Phillips Home for a meal, fellowship, and teaching time on Friday, December 6. Please contact Sharon Phillips if you need a ride or have questions.

Congregational Meeting

A Called Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 8, at 10:00 A.M. All adults will meet in the Sanctuary. We will be electing deacons, voting to receive and support the 2025 Budget, and hearing an update on *A Time to Build*.

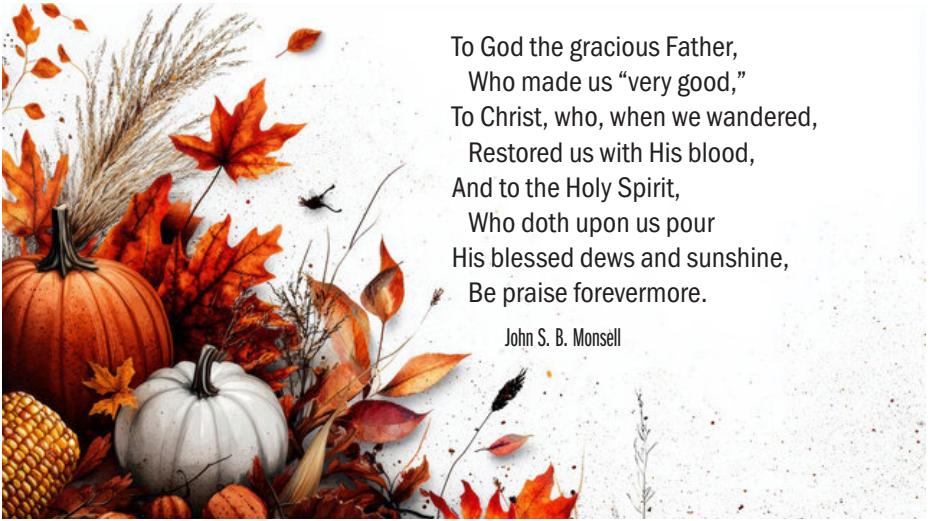
Masculine Mandate Seminar

The November meeting has been rescheduled to December 14. Breakfast will be provided beginning at 8:00 A.M. All men are invited to attend!



Family Thanksgiving Service

Join the SPC family for a special meal and service on Wednesday night, November 27. A delicious meal will be served in the Gym beginning at 5:30 P.M. (Costs are child/\$3, adult/\$5, family/\$18.) A Thanksgiving Service in the Sanctuary will follow the meal. Children's activities are suspended that night.



To God the gracious Father,
Who made us “very good,”
To Christ, who, when we wandered,
Restored us with His blood,
And to the Holy Spirit,
Who doth upon us pour
His blessed dews and sunshine,
Be praise forevermore.

John S. B. Monsell

Sunday, December 15 Evening Worship Service

J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio, parts 5 and 6

On December 15, our Chancel Choir along with a chamber orchestra, will be presenting parts 5 and 6 of Johann Sebastian Bach's masterwork, *The Christmas Oratorio*. This oratorio, similar to G.F. Handel's *Messiah*, is an unstaged sacred musical work for soloists, choir, and orchestra that tells the story of the birth of Christ. It is written in six parts, each celebrating a different event in the story of Christ's nativity. Bach wrote each part to be performed separately in the worship services of the Christmas season for the St. Thomas church in Leipzig, Germany in 1734. This Christmas the music ministry of Second Church will be presenting the final two sections which tell of the coming of the wise men to worship Christ and the conniving of wicked Herod. A tenor soloist sings the part of the Evangelist which follows the biblical narrative of Matthew's gospel. The story is punctuated by chorales (short choir pieces), arias (longer solo pieces), and recitatives (short speech-like pieces) by the choir and soloists which respond to and explore the theological and devotional depths of the events of Christ's birth, inviting the Christian listener to respond in worship, gratitude, and awe. ♦