

THE SALTSHAKER

DECEMBER 2023 | VOLUME 274

December Events AT ALTADENA VALLEY

O come, let us adore Him.

DEC 3 | Christmas at Altadena Park

Join us on Sunday, December 3 at 5:00 PM for our 5th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting in Altadena Park. There will be cookies and hot chocolate, a craft for the kids, and a gospel presentation. Invite your friends!

DEC 3 | Congregational Meeting

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting on December 3 during the Sunday School hour. The purpose of this meeting will be to elect church officers and to amend our by-laws. The Elder nominees are Paul Barber and John Wimberly, and the Deacon nominees are Zac Campbell, Steve Driggers, Tom McCallum, Darren Popwell, and Drew Russell.

DEC 10 | Youth-led Christmas Hymn Sing

Join us Sunday, December 10 during the Sunday School hour for a time of worship led by the AVPC youth in the Fellowship Hall. This will be a great time of worship and fellowship. Please don't miss this special time of worship.

DEC 10 | Lessons & Carols

Our annual Lessons & Carols event will be held on December 10 at 6 PM. We look forward to celebrating Christ's birth through story and song! A reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a homemade Christmas sweet to share (enough for 25 people) and drop it off in the kitchen. Please note that doors will open for seating in the Sanctuary at 5:15 PM. You will not be able to save seats before this time. (Note: we will provide seating for kitchen workers.) Childcare will be provided through age three during the service.

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Pastor's Pen

Brad Allison, Senior Pastor

I wrote in this space last month about all the changes we are experiencing at Altadena currently. We are not the only ones, and I want to write again to inform you about the changes other PCA congregations in the Birmingham area are undergoing and invite your prayers for them as well. As you know, Briarwood lost their Senior Pastor, Harry Reeder, in a traffic accident earlier this year. They just recently called an Interim Pastor to help them through the next year or two of transition. Dan Doriani will be filling that role. Dr. Doriani is currently serving as a professor of theology at Covenant Theological Seminary. He also pastored Central Presbyterian Church in St. Louis for a time. Please be in prayer for him and for Briarwood during this challenging transitional season.

Oak Mountain Presbyterian just called and installed their new Senior Pastor. Caleb Click comes from Perimeter Church and will take up his new role in January. He was just approved by our presbytery in November. Bob Flayhart is the founding pastor of this church, where he has served for over thirty years. Following a long-tenured founding pastor is particularly challenging, so keep this church in your prayers as well. Cahaba Park Church in Liberty Park also has a new pastor. Claude McRoberts began serving there earlier this fall, also following that church's founding pastor, Murray Lee. Claude most recently served as pastor of Trinity Presbyterian in Montgomery.

Christ Church in Trussville is losing their Senior and founding Pastor, James Dickson. He will be taking up a position at Covenant Seminary. And, of course, our church is in the same situation, though I'm not a founding pastor of this 170-year-old church. All these changes remind us of our need to trust God and pray to him for the welfare of these precious churches. Transitions of senior pastors also remind us that no one is indispensable in a church except for Jesus (and he promises that he's not going anywhere!). So as you pray for Altadena's transition, don't forget to pray also for our brothers and sisters at these other Birmingham PCA churches.

minutes

SESSION MEETING • OCTOBER 17, 2023

- **Discussion of the recommendations from the staff and the Worship Ministry Team on the roles of women in the church:**
 - **Increase awareness of the Session's 1998 paper (revised 2023) on the role of women in the church at the November Sunday School brunch.**
 - **Use the shepherding process of the church to shepherd women and men to minister in roles for which they are biblically eligible.**
 - **The initial recommendation of the Worship Ministry Team was to allow a broader demographic of the congregation, including women and families in the church's usher ministry. The Worship Ministry Team is to bring their plan for implementation to a future Session meeting for approval.**
- **First draft of the 2024 Budget**
- **Matt and Lauren Hall, joining the church by reaffirmation of faith.**

DIACONATE MEETING • NOVEMBER 14, 2023

- **Hunter Boggs is not going to chair the Diaconate next year and invited other Diaconate members to consider nominations of a new chair.**
- **Facility Team Report: Jefferson County will replace Acton Creek bridge. Motion was made and unanimously approved to sell the land to the county.**
- **A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved that the Designated Diaconal Fund be replenished to equal a total amount of \$16,500.00 from the 2023 budget surplus.**

DECEMBER EVENTS CONT.

DEC 16 | Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Saturday, December 16, there will be a rehearsal for all children who will be participating in the Children's Christmas pageant. This rehearsal will be in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Following this rehearsal there will be a pizza party. See you there!

DEC 17 | Children's Christmas Pageant

Children age 4 - 6th grade will perform the Christmas story for the congregation during the Sunday School hour (9:45 AM) in the Fellowship Hall. Then, join in the singing of some all-time favorite hymns that celebrate Christ's birth.

DEC 24 | Christmas Eve Candelight Service

There will be Christmas Eve services at 4:30 and 6:00 PM. Childcare will be provided through age 3 for both services.

DEC 24 & 31 | Christmas & New Year's Eve Worship Services

For both the Christmas and New Year's Eve worship services there will be only one service at 10:00 AM with no Sunday School.

Please note: the Church Office will be closed on December 22, 25, 29 and January 1.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

December is one of my favorite months at Altadena Valley. During this last month of the year, our covenant body intentionally slows down individual ministries in order to pause and gather as a covenant family. Together, we are a community of Christ's coming kingdom, bringing hope to a watching world. It would be easy to hustle through these events, lumping them with cultural chaos of the season. I challenge you instead to enter our AVPC December moments prepared to push back the darkness. What does this look like? It might look different for all of us. However, for me personally, I am asking for God's grace to enter this month with a posture of worship, humility and preparedness to connect with the church family He has gifted to me. My longing is to live out John 13:35 with you, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

- Catie Lumpkin , *Children's Director*

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given"

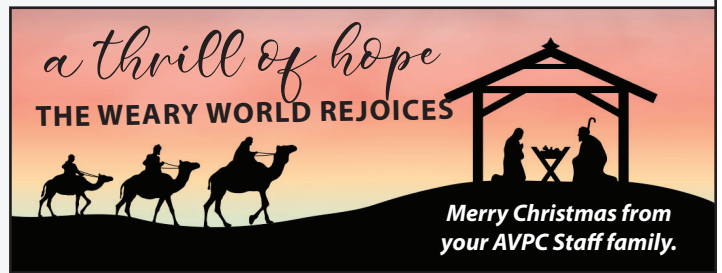
Join your AVPC family as we are "On the Road to Bethlehem" throughout this Advent season. Pick up your Advent family resource packet in the Welcome Center, Parlor, or the AVPC Kids table. You can also find an electronic copy by scanning the QR.



AVPC NEWS

OUR SYMPATHY

We would like to express our heartfelt sympathy to Denise Davidson and her family, following the death of her sister, Laurie.



Thank you to everyone who came out to help decorate AVPC! It was a great service to our church family as we prepare our hearts for the Advent season.



Missions Conference: February 7-11

Join us from February 7-11 for our annual AVPC Missions Conference! This is a wonderful time to learn about what God is doing through our missionaries all over the world. Your presence and participation are vitally important in achieving our Missions vision and goals. Please mark your calendars and make plans to attend!

2024 General Fund Budget

Preliminary copies of the General Fund Budget are now available. You can find a copy of the budget in the Parlor, Welcome Center, or by scanning the QR code below.



MISSIONS NEWS

Please continue to be in prayer for our Faith Promise giving through the end of this year. Your giving has, as always, been so encouraging, and we are excited to see how the Lord will continue to provide through the faithfulness of our congregation. Please pray that giving to Faith Promise this year will meet or exceed our budgeted goal. Pray also that our missionaries will be strengthened in their faith as they partner with us to take the Gospel of Jesus to the hurting and the lost around the world.



The holidays are a special time to connect with family & friends, but our missionary partners are often located in distant places where they are unable to connect with loved ones in a personal way. Remember to lift them up before our God throughout this time. Why not take a minute to reach out to a missionary family and send them a note, a small gift, or an email? These small connections are important and meaningful in their lives and your words of encouragement and thanksgiving would mean so much to them. Just contact the AVPC office for details on how to reach one of our missionaries.



GOD'S HOUSE KINDERGARTEN



The last few months of the year always fly by as we bustle around with activities. November's activities included hat days, thanksgiving feasts and all sorts of fun!

- Lydia Moore,
GHK Administrative Assistant

YOUTH HAPPENINGS

**“They shall call his name Immanuel” (which means God with us).
Matthew 1:23**

God with us. What an amazing truth in the midst of darkness and uncertainty. What an amazing truth during a season of celebration. We know that God is with us because He has already walked among us, as one of us. Jesus knew what it was to celebrate as He participated in the calendar of temple worship and turned a wedding feast into something truly special with what was surely the best wine ever tasted. So, too, we have celebrated in our youth ministry this fall (without wine). In October we celebrated God’s goodness to us through His creation and Christian community as we enjoyed the 6th Annual Hippie Games. In November the senior high unplugged for a weekend and celebrated God’s goodness through creation (again), community (again), and the freedom from shame that we have been given through Jesus. We also celebrated Guy Fawkes’ Day with our brothers and sisters across the pond. (I’m pretty sure we scared some other churches in the process.)

For many, this season is one of lament, whether it be due to loss, loneliness, or strained relationships with family. Jesus knew the pain of that as well. He was doubted by His own family when His ministry began, with them thinking He was out of His mind. He was grieved by the suffering He saw all around. He was abandoned and betrayed by those closest to Him. The Incarnation is the reminder that God is with us. He knows. It is a reminder that Jesus did not just come to die for us, He came to live for us as well. To live in the mess that we have made in order to begin cleansing and restoration. So, too, we have walked alongside each other in our youth ministry this fall. I have seen students cover one another through many trials this fall, ranging from illness to heartbreak. This Christmas season, regardless of whether we are laughing or crying, may we know that God is with us because Jesus has walked on this earth. Immanuel came.

Peace,

Clint



LOOKING AHEAD...

DECEMBER 6 | Youth Christmas Party

DECEMBER 10 | First Mission Trip Meeting

TRUNK OR TREAT

Thank you to everyone who served and helped make this year's Trunk or Treat a wonderful event. It was a sweet time of fellowship and community.



YOUNG ADULTS NEWS

YOUNG ADULTS' Christmas Party

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Join us December 15 for our annual Young Adult's Christmas Party at the home of Marsha Wakefield for a Christmas feast and a rousing game of white water bear (like white elephant but more hip). Bring a gift \$10 or less to participate!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/2 Ashley Hood	12/16 Elijah Putman	12/25 Jason Allday
12/2 Melanie Richards	12/17 Judy Bates	12/25 Elizabeth Ward
12/4 Jude Allday	12/17 Zephaniah Putman	12/25 Kathryn Whitner
12/4 Lucy Cwynar	12/17 Michael Bobo	12/26 John Oliver
12/9 Alan Halbrooks	12/18 Jim Anderson	12/27 Elizabeth Mather
12/10 Becky Gray	12/18 Naomi Washington	12/27 Ellie Joy Peters
12/11 Tatum Popwell	12/18 Steve Whitner	12/28 Laura English
12/12 Abi Bostrom	12/18 Katey Windsor	12/28 Heather Tate
12/13 Beth Lloyd	12/19 Finneas Ireland	12/30 Alexys Labreche
12/14 Ethan MacCaughelty	12/19 Becky Cambron	12/30 Russell Lloyd
12/14 Daniel Williams	12/19 Tom Jackson	12/30 Jamie Lumpkin
12/15 Ruthie Armstrong	12/22 Brent McClenny	12/30 Danny Price
12/15 Judy Steele	12/23 Amanda Amerson	12/31 Kelly Driggers
12/15 James Tate	12/23 Chris Light	12/31 Tom McCallum

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Our annual Women's Retreat will take place on March 1-2, 2024.
More details to come.

Please join your Altadena Valley sisters as we connect in meaningful ways with one another through fellowship, prayer, sharing of the word, and worship.



OCTOBER FINANCIAL REPORT

	BEGINNING BALANCE	INCOME	EXPENSES	TRANSFER	ENDING BALANCE
GENERAL FUND	(\$-11,155)	\$112,273	\$126,135	(\$-7,406)	(\$-32,423)
MISSIONS	(\$-2,492)	\$24,609	\$32,534	\$7,406	(\$-3,011)
TOTAL	(\$-13,647)	\$136,882	\$158,669	\$0	(\$-35,434)