

THE SALTSHAKER

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A NEW YEAR

LOOKING BACK • BEING PRESENT • FACING FORWARD

LOOKING BACK. 2022 did not disappoint as far as challenges, hurts, uncertainties, and changes go. There is no question that 2022 has been a year full of challenges for AVPC, both collectively as a church family, but also for our individual families as well. Since I began working in church settings - too many years ago now, I cannot remember a time when I have experienced more turmoil, more confusion, more disheartened atmosphere than I have this past year. There were times it seemed to permeate the very walls of our building. I guess it's true of any workplace, that once you pass the honeymoon stage with your new job, you start to realize that every place has a sewer - it's just that some places hide theirs better than others, and some people have become masters at sweeping their own dirt under the rug - hoping... praying that no one peeks. I should know. I have enough dust bunnies and dirt piles to fill the county dump. I'm not using that as bragging rights, but rather to let you know that I struggle - with lots of things - and you do too. In looking back at 2022, I can say without a doubt, it is one of the roughest years I can remember. I think quite a few of us could say the same thing. But isn't it great that we are not stuck there?

BEING PRESENT. 2022 did not disappoint where growth, understanding, support and cooperation are concerned either. By the grace of God, I have also seen a core of goodness that God has placed in the people of Altadena. Goodness that comes from Him. Goodness that will not disappear, will not diminish, will not tarnish and will not leave us abandoned or alone. I think I say this more for my sake really. As a sinner who is trying to remain in the "present", I need to be reminded that while I need to acknowledge my sadness, my failures, my anger and frustration, I am not mired down beyond repair. Depending upon the Lord for strength, compassion, endurance and understanding, I can set aside my own burden and come sit beside you, right where you are, even if it's in your "sewer". I can be present with you because He is present with me. You are family. You're *my* family. And while I don't know all of you on a personal level, in a way I feel like I do, because in reality, we are not that much different from each other.

FACING FORWARD. It takes an effort to turn from the 'known' towards the 'unknown'. It's scary. It's unsettling. It's worth it. I cannot make forward progress if I am facing backward. That's simple enough. The Lord has been faithful to me on my journey, and when I need to be turned around, He does so with loving, tender hands. He does so through you. You set me on the right path. You remind me of His goodness. You provide the map, and at times, you provide a walking companion, coaxing me forward, not back. A signpost - pointing me in the right direction. And so, therein lies the reason for this article - to say thank you and to encourage you in the knowledge the Lord is with you in the coming year, and so am I.

Christine

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Pastor's Pen

Brad Allison, Senior Pastor

The end of one year and the beginning of another invites some reflection. 2022 has been a memorable year for the Allison family, as well as the AVPC family. Among the significant events for the Allisons were the birth of our sixth grandchild, a trip to Spain for the Serge conference in the spring, Wendy's resumption of her art business, and making a decision about the timing of my retirement and announcing that decision to our church family. There is obvious overlap in that last item to our AVPC family. A little more than a year from now the church will elect its first pulpit committee in thirty years and engage in a formal search process. 2022 has also seen the resumption of a more normal, post-pandemic church life. The year has also seen personnel changes in the church staff. Among those are the Children's Ministry Director, Facility Manager, church Administrative Assistant, Nursery Director and several others.

Every change involves a little disruption, and disruption is an opportunity to trust God as we move into the unknown future. While it is a future unknown to us, it is not unknown to God. And he promises to work in our midst to accomplish his good purposes and bring about the flourishing of his kingdom through the very changes that we sometimes dread.

As our church looks ahead to 2023, what should be our focus? I would suggest again that we continue to pray that God would be pleased to use our church to bring people to faith in Christ. I would also like to see us continue to build on the strength God has given us as a loving, welcoming church. Finally, let's be hopeful for the good future God has for us as a church. We may soon experience a pastoral transition, but the only indispensable person in the church is not going anywhere. Jesus is that person, and he will continue to rule and reign his church for his glory.

minutes

SESSION MEETING • NOVEMBER 15, 2022

- The Finance Team presented a balanced budget for 2023.
- **Officer Candidates:** Three new officer candidates joined the meeting to be interviewed. The Elder candidates were Brent McClenny and Thomas Prettyman, and the Deacon candidate was John Peters.

DIACONATE MEETING • DECEMBER 13, 2022

The following deacons were nominated for leadership positions: Hunter Boggs, Chair; Trey Holmes, Vice Chair; John Peters, Clerk; Josh Moore, APIC Chair; Trey Holmes, GHK Representative; Matt Jackson, Mercy Team Rep.; Russell Lloyd, IT Team Chair and Finance Rep; Bill Sommer, Facilities Chair; Ed Wofford, Missions Team Rep.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

BOILER ROOM PRAYER AND PEW PRAYER CARDS

The Prayer Ministry Team would like to invite you to check out Boiler Room Prayer. On Sunday mornings, during both services, members of the prayer team and church family are actively praying for our church family and loved ones. Specific prayers are lifted for the service happening right at that moment; that God would work in the hearts of those participating and in attendance. Other church family needs are also placed before the throne of God, such as the salvation of family and friends, the resoration of broken relationships, the healing of those who are sick, and many other needs. Have you seen the prayer request cards in the pews? These are a way for you to communicate your prayer needs with staff and the Prayer Ministry Team. The Prayer Ministry Team encourages you to fill out one of these forms and let us know when you have a prayer need, and also let us know how and when the Lord answers those prayers.



AVPC BIBLE READING PLAN

Created especially for our AVPC church family, we have a Bible reading plan that allows you to read certain Bible passages, 5 days a week, and in doing so, by year's end, you will have covered the entire Bible. We encourage you to join others in our church family already participating in this program. The printout of the plan for the entire year can be found in the Parlor and Welcome center, or week by week, it is listed in the bulletin. You can join at any time, but why not start the new year off right, and begin today!

MISSIONS NEWS

Warm Winter Coat Thank You

Thank you all for participating in the recent "Winter Coat Donation". I don't know if we had an official title for this, but AVPC gave generously nonetheless. During the month of November, AVPC collected your coats and winter clothing to help our new missionary, Stephen Merwin at UAB. Stephen is with RUF International and is reaching out to hundreds of international students on the UAB campus. It is a wonderful local ministry with an international impact. The purpose of the donations was to help international students who were in need of clothing to help keep them warm during the coming cold months. There are a lot of young adults on the UAB campus that come from tropical countries and are underprepared for winter in Birmingham. Stephen was able to share the love of Christ with the young adults on campus and make meaningful points of connection and engagement through simply giving away the winter coats and clothing that was collected.

We were also able to provide coats for the children of Derek and Lauren Weber who serve in Kenya with a medical ministry. Lauren sent this thank you in response, "Thank you so much! I can't tell you what a weight lifted that is to have just one less thing to logistically think about as we are settling in. I truly appreciate you doing that for us." Thank you for giving and serving the needs of those around us both locally and globally. It is a privilege to serve Christ together with you all!

PEOPLE NEWS

OUR SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathies to Lyn Brogan, following the death of her mom, Billie Catherine Funderburke. Our prayers are with you and your family.

We are grateful to God for the election of officers at the December 18 Congregational Meeting. All the nominees received votes of approval by an overwhelming majority. Please pray for these men as they begin a three-year term of service. Brian Beckett, Brent McClenny, Jack Morris, Karl Poythress, and Thomas Prettyman will serve as elders in the class of 2025. Woody Armstrong, Al Foster, Trey Holmes, Matt Jackson, John Peters, Josh Putman, Bill Sommer, and Ed Wofford will serve as deacons in that class. The ordination and installation of new officers will take place at the late service on January 8.

SUNDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP MEALS RESUME

Don't forget we resume our Sunday night meals starting on January 8. Meal time is 6 :30 PM - right after community groups, chancel choir practice and other Sunday evening happenings.

MEMBERSHIP WEEKEND

Are you thinking about church membership at Altadena? Come to our next Membership Event, Friday, January 20. There, you will meet church staff members, hear about ministry opportunities, and get to know others who are new to the church. Attendance at this or another weekend offered throughout the year is required for church membership. You can visit the Events tab of the church website, drop down Event Registration; email Christine (christine@avpc.org) or call the church office to register and request childcare. Deadline to register is January 16.

Happy
New
Year!

from the AVPC staff



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

January is my least favorite month of the year. As I was reflecting on this recently, I realized I am perhaps like the Jews who longed for a Messiah to brazenly enter and change their circumstances and oppression. Although a Messiah did come and forever change everything, those desiring the first version found themselves still longing in unbelief. That's January for me.

Throughout the season of Advent, I'm saturated with reminders of God invading earth to rescue His people, and we are flooded with the symbols of light piercing the dark. And then January...which in Alabama means dark, cold rain. I often spend the month quickly forgetting what we just spent four weeks celebrating.

Beginning in August, God regularly began impressing on my spirit to be sober-minded and watchful, taking every thought captive, like I Peter 1 5:8, because the Enemy's darkness and whispering lies are real – and so often they start with a small seed, which then spirals. However, when I call out the whispers, the doubt, the lies of darkness and isolation, they no longer have power.

My prayer for us as a church family this year is the same as my own. That we would be sober minded in the Truth. We are not people who dread the darkness for ourselves and our children. We are watchful, knowing the light cannot be put out, remembering we are children of the King.

- Catie Lumpkin, *Children's Ministry Director*



YOUTH HAPPENINGS

“I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.” -Isaiah 63:7

Even if 2022 was rough, I encourage you to look back and reflect on God’s goodness in your life. It is there, and it will be there in 2023 and beyond.

Peace, Clint



MEN'S MINISTRY



THE YOUNG ADULTS continued their tradition of celebrating Friendsgiving together. Looks like a good turnout!



NEW MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Join us Monday's, from 6:30-7:30 AM in Fellowship Hall, for a study series on the book *True Community* by Jerry Bridges. Books are \$9. See Blake with questions.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

NEW WTW BIBLE STUDY The Gospel of Mark paints an important portrait of Jesus as Israel's promised Messiah. Mark's account also makes clear how Jesus' kingship confounds public expectations by emphasizing his humility, suffering and sacrifice. Please join your AVPC sisters this semester as we study through this powerful book together. Study books are available in the Parlor for \$7.

EXPANDED TIMES & LOCATIONS:

Monday afternoon | 3:00-4:30 PM | At the home of Wendy Allison, starts Jan 23 with spring break week off.

Wednesday morning | 9:00-11:00 AM | in the Church Parlor. Childcare provided, starts Jan 18, 28 with spring break week off.

Wednesday Night offers an optional 5:00 – 6:00 PM bring your dinner for fellowship, with Bible study from 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the home of Lea Anne Parker. Starts Jan. 18, with spring break week off.

Friday afternoon offers a study, from 1:00 - 2:30 PM at the home of Judy Bates. Starts Jan 20, with spring break week off.

Questions? Contact Amy MacCaughelty at 205.706.6016.

SAVE THE DATE:
Women's
In-House Retreat

Friday, March 3 -
Saturday, MARCH 4

More details
coming soon!

Ladies

THE WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM WOULD LIKE
YOU TO KNOW THAT YOU
ARE BEING PRAYED FOR,
BY NAME, ON A REGULAR BASIS.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/1 Walker Bobo	1/12 James Walls	1/21 Brenda Church
1/2 Roderick Jackson	1/13 Cooper Campbell	1/21 Claire Russell
1/3 Laura Edwards	1/13 Angie Klose	1/23 Joanna Linder
1/4 Steve Driggers	1/13 Jim Sheetz	1/24 Ava Chick
1/6 Ric Lewallen	1/14 Anna Waldrip	1/26 Lauralyn Bobo
1/7 Peter Gamble	1/15 John Wimberly	1/28 Paul Barber
1/7 Brice Jackson	1/16 Will Cvacho	1/28 Gary Gray
1/8 William Boggs	1/16 Michael MacCaughelty	1/28 Brenley Peters
1/9 Nikki Armstrong	1/18 Abigail Amerson	1/29 Ben Black
1/9 Melissa Ireland	1/19 Kevin Drace	1/29 Lisa Campbell
1/10 Randy Friday	1/19 Danny Richards	1/31 Jim Bryant
1/10 Amy MacCaughelty	1/20 Nancy Jackson	1/31 Denise Davidson
1/11 Susan Baird	1/20 Emily Shepherd	

GOD'S HOUSE KINDERGARTEN



God's House had a full house for our 4K and 5K Christmas program! This is always such a sweet tradition, and this year was no exception as we heard from AVPC's Youth director, Clint Cvacho, as well as our music teacher, Mrs. Carlee Green, who sang "Messiah" for us. Mrs. Carlee is expecting her 3rd child next year, and we are sad to lose her as our music teacher, but excited for her growing family. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from the God's House Kindergarten Staff!

Please also be aware that registration for 2023-24 school year will be on Monday, January 9 starting at 9 AM in the church fellowship hall for both current families and church members. Please email susan@avpc.org for more information.

NOVEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

	BEGINNING BALANCE	INCOME	EXPENSES	TRANSFER	ENDING BALANCE
GENERAL FUND	\$-31,090	\$102,489	\$104,563	\$-6,572	\$-39,736
MISSIONS	\$-12,576	\$27,989	\$35,572	\$6,572	\$-13,587
TOTAL	\$-43,666	\$130,478	\$140,145	\$0	\$-53,323