



# Antioch Connection

## TAYLORED TALK a message for His people

### The Coming of Christ: Advent

Dear Antioch Family,

As we enter the Advent season, we embark on a journey of reflection and preparation. Advent is more than a count-down to Christmas; it is an invitation to pause and consider what Christ's coming meant—and continues to mean—for humanity.

Each week, we will explore a theme that captures the profound gift of Christ's birth: **Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love**. These themes will guide our sermons and offer opportunities to deepen our understanding of God's plan for redemption through His Son.

On December 1, we will begin with **Hope**, the promise fulfilled in Christ. His birth assures us that no matter how dark the night, the light of God's faithfulness prevails. On December 8, we will turn to **Peace**, the reconciliation brought by Christ, healing the divide between God and humanity.

December 15 will focus on **Joy**, the resounding celebration of God's salvation that surpasses life's circumstances. Finally, on December 22, we will reflect on **Love**, the unshakable truth that Christ's coming is the ultimate expression of God's boundless love for us.

This Advent season, let us also reflect on Antioch's mission of Loving God and Loving Others. What does it mean to live this out during Advent? How can we show hope, peace, joy, and love to those around us in a way that reflects the heart of Christ?

I encourage you to take time to consider these questions. Through prayer, worship, and acts of service, may we live as people transformed by the miracle of Christ's birth.

I leave you with one final question: **What does Christ's coming mean to you?**

I love you, and there is nothing you can do about it!

Pastor T



## 2024

### "Shift...Greater Is Coming!"

*"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God<sup>[a]</sup> is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation." Isaiah 12:2 ESV*

#### Inside this edition:

- ◆ Reflecting on the Advent Season
- ◆ Joy Full
- ◆ God's Perfect Gift
- ◆ Children, Youth, and Young Adult News
- ◆ Member Recognition
- ◆ Freedom High School Visits Antioch
- ◆ November Highlights
- ◆ From An Early Age, God Was Preparing Him For More!
- ◆ Christmas Giving Tree Project
- ◆ The Year Ahead: 2025 Goals
- ◆ Save The Dates



### Join Us For

#### Tuesday Morning Prayer

7—7:30 AM Dial (945) 218-0090, access code 1846260 **Bible**

**Studies will resume on January 8th:**

Family Bible Study, Wednesdays at 12 Noon and 7PM; **January 9th:** SonRise Bible Study, Thursdays 6AM; and **January 10th:** Friday Morning Bible Study, 9:30–11AM. All Sunday School and C.A.R.E.S. Small Groups will start on **January 12th.**

## Advent



# Antioch Connection

## Reflecting on the Advent Season



*As the days grow shorter and the air turns crisp, the Christian community is entering the season of Advent—a time of expectant waiting and reflection leading up to Christmas. This special season of preparation invites us to reflect on the birth of Jesus the Christ in His first coming and the anticipation of Christ the King in His second coming.*

**Advent** is a four-week season in the church calendar dedicated to anticipating the “arrival” or “coming” of Jesus of Nazareth, the long-awaited Messiah and King. The focus of the season is two-fold: the past and the present. Advent symbolizes the spiritual journey of individuals and a congregation as we affirm that Christ has come, that He is present, and that He will come again. It is a season of preparation with a profound sense that we live “between the time” and that we are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God’s people.

There is an important connection between Jesus’ birth and death. The nativity, the Incarnation, cannot be separated from the crucifixion. The purpose of Jesus’ coming into the world and dwelling among us is to reveal God and His grace to the world through Jesus’ life and teaching but also through his suffering, death, and resurrection. To reflect this emphasis, Advent originally was a time of penitence and fasting, much like the Season of Lent. Today Advent is much more celebrated as a time of joy and happiness as we await the coming of the King.

Advent is a time of preparation that is marked by prayer and reflection – reflections on hope, peace, joy, and love. Advent is symbolized by the lighting of candles in an Advent wreath, or circle, with each candle representing a different virtue:

**Hope:** The first candle is known as the candle of Expectation or the Prophecy Candle.

**Peace:** The second candle, known as the Bethlehem Candle, reminds us of Mary’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem before Mary gave birth to Jesus.

**Joy:** The third candle, also known as the Shepherd’s Candle, represents the joy Jesus brought to the world.

**Love:** The fourth candle, also known as the Angel’s Candle, symbolizes the message of God’s love that the Angels announced at Christ’s birth.

(Some include a Candle in the middle to represent Jesus Christ)

The beginning of Advent is a time for hanging green— decorating with evergreen wreaths, boughs, or trees that help to symbolize the new and everlasting life brought through Jesus Christ.

**For 2024, Advent starts on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>**, continues for four Sundays concluding on December 24<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Eve, with a joyous celebration of Christ’s birth, Christmas Day.

## Joy Full *by Deloris Witcher*

***“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence, there is fullness of joy.” Psalm 16:11<sup>a</sup> ESV***

Does thinking about eating Great Aunt Susie’s dry mac and cheese one more Christmas cause a stomach ache? Can lonesome thoughts bring a flood of tears? Are you anxious about finances, finding that perfect gift, or attending holiday office parties? You are not alone. The American Psychological Association reports that 89% of Americans feel stressed or overwhelmed during the holidays. So how do you remain full of joy? Here are a few suggestions: Avoid overspending by setting a budget and then sticking to it. Christmas is one day, but credit card debt can linger for months. Set boundaries regarding how and with whom you will spend time. Manage gift giving by considering a gift exchange or giving one meaningful gift. Combat lonesome feelings by not being alone, practicing gratitude, and volunteering. Most importantly, change your focus. Focus on the reason for the season, Jesus. The fullness of Joy comes from abiding in the Lord, regardless of the circumstances. Be Joy Full this holiday season!





# Antioch Connection

## God's Perfect Gift

Often, when buying a gift, we have a list of criteria that determine whether the gift is perfect. Typically, we find an item that meets most of the criteria but not all. The good news is that God has given us the only perfect gift, His son, Jesus Christ – the gift we cannot earn, nor do we deserve. All we can do in return is accept this remarkable gift and pursue a relationship with the greatest gift-giver of all.

We should never doubt God's love for us. He gave us His best so that we could have eternal life and be spared death, which is the penalty of our sins. It doesn't matter what we have done, how many mistakes we have made, or whether or not we feel worthy; God loves us. He didn't give us His best so we could have a sense of failure, condemnation, or even unworthiness.

John 3: 16 KJV reminds us, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." God gave His only Son so that we can have life and have it more abundantly.



Author Charles Sell declares in his book, *Unfinished Business*, that:

If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator.

If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist.

If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist.

If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer.

But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Savior.

## CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND YOUNG ADULT NEWS YOU CAN USE!

"Don't Give Up!" was the message delivered during our second Children's Church on November 17th. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9 NIV). I encouraged our young people to keep pressing ahead. We were blessed to have 29 participants in attendance. We will have a **Youth Lock-In on December 13th—14th from 6:30PM—7:30AM. On December 15th, Children's Church will celebrate Jesus' birthday. We are encouraging our children and youth to invite as many friends as they can to His birthday celebration.**

Our children, youth, and young adults continue to demonstrate growth and spiritual maturity. They are lending a hand with various ministry initiatives and volunteering to serve on Antioch committees. Thank you to all of our volunteers who assembled Thanksgiving baskets for families who live in the Potomac Gardens Housing Projects in Southeast Washington D.C. and for our Thanksgiving Basket Project here at Antioch.

Congratulations to Liana Baskerville and Aubrey Smith, the youth representatives on Antioch's Human Resources Committee. A special shout out to Sister Jamie Holman-Williams and Sister Kirsten Johnson, who serve on the Finance and Budget Committee and to Sister Jessica Horne who serves on the Missions Advisory Committee.

We are continuing to build strong relationships while exemplifying our C.A.R.E.S. values. If you would like to learn more about how you can help minister to our children and youth, contact Rev. Daniel Simpkins at [dsimpkins@antioch-church.org](mailto:dsimpkins@antioch-church.org) or Sister Tiffany Horne at [tiffanymhorne@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanymhorne@gmail.com).



## MEMBER RECOGNITION

**Congratulations** Brother Eddie Stephens, Jr. received Phi Lambda Lambda's "Omega Man of the Year" (OMOY) award at the annual Achievement Week Program held in Woodbridge, VA on November XX. The honor is the highest individual award presented by the chapter. OMOY recognizes a Brother who made extraordinary contributions to his Chapter, the 3rd District and the International level of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.





# Antioch Connection

## MEMBER RECOGNITION

**Congratulations** Sister Aubrey Eaton, the boys varsity volleyball coach at West Springfield High School and her son, Logan, on a phenomenal inaugural season! The Spartans ended the regular season with a 14-2 record and won the first ever boys volleyball Patriot District championship. Sister Eaton was named the **Patriot District Coach of the Year** while Logan — a dynamic outside hitter— was named the **Patriot District Player of the Year**. Logan, a senior at West Springfield, had 367 kills and 241 digs this season.

Although the Spartans fell short in their bid to advance to the state tournament, mother and son were recognized again for a remarkable run. Sister Eaton was named the **Northern Region 6A Coach of the Year**, and Logan was named the **Northern Region 6A Player of the Year**. The Spartans' overall record was 18-3.

Logan plans to continue his volleyball career at Fort Valley State University. Sister Eaton said she went into this inaugural season with no expectations and is humbled by God's amazing grace. She is looking forward to coaching at West Springfield again next season. Way to go Sister Eaton and Logan!



**Congratulations** Daniel Purvis, a senior at Chantilly High School, was this year's local winner of the International High School Essay Contest awarded by the Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated. Daniel attended the fraternity's Achievement Week Luncheon on November 16, 2024 at the Mount Vernon Country Club where he read his winning essay regarding the impact of social media on mental health. He was a \$500 cash prize at the luncheon.

Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter will enter his winning essay into Omega Psi Phi

Fraternity's 3rd District regional contest. The winning essay of the 3rd District regional contest will be entered into the International contest.

## Freedom High School Students Visit Antioch Baptist Church

Antioch recently welcomed students from Freedom High School in Woodbridge, VA for a memorable outreach experience. These students are part of the Student Activity Leadership Council. The visit, organized by church staff and their teacher — Antioch's own, Sister Rachel Jenkins — included a tour of the facilities and an engaging icebreaker activity with staff members.

Pastor Taylor led an inspiring workshop on servant leadership, which empowered the students to reflect on their impact as student leaders. Together, they assembled 225 boxes for Antioch's annual Thanksgiving Basket Project. A pizza lunch, generously sponsored by Antioch staff and Pizza Boli's, fueled their energy. The visit ended with a lively counting game that left everyone laughing and smiling. The students cherished this time at Antioch and departed reluctantly.







# Antioch Connection

## NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS



**Pastor Taylor delivered powerful messages on Giving** in November. He reminded us that God blessed us with His very best, so that we could be a blessing to others. In a two-part sermon series, "Don't Cheat God" he challenged us to be faithful with our tithes and generous in our offerings. In his sermon titled "Your Gift Matters" he encouraged us to understand the power of our blessings and to follow diligent instructions — making our giving both a priority and prosperous.

**1 for the Lord's table;  
9 for our table.** Check out  
"Don't Cheat God" Part 1.



**Veterans Day Celebration.** Introduced by his granddaughter, Rear Admiral Julius "J.C." Caesar, U.S. Navy, retired proclaimed, "God Loves Mighty Warriors" in his tribute to many of Antioch's very own military elite and their families.



**Lady Leona**  
welcomed the  
Holy Spirit into  
our Worship  
Service singing  
The Call.

**Justice Empowerment and Partners In Prayer**  
Ministries hosted a Election Day Prayer on 11/4.

Tyrone and Erika Crabb took 1st place in the **Married Couples Chopped** event. The Boyd's were fierce competition.



**Music to our ears.**  
**Kevin Joseph Tann,**  
aspiring classical  
pianist, delighted the  
congregation with  
Come Thou Fount.



**We welcomed new members and extended the RHOF.** A warm welcome to the Antione and Simmons families and two youth.



**ABC members of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.** joined by the Iota Epsilon Sigma Chapter, Northern VA Alumnae Chapter, Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. celebrated 102 years of greater service, greater progress on 11/10.



**ABC members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.** celebrated 113 years of service and brotherhood on 11/17.



**Missions Advisory Committee Chair, Deacon James McCall and Rev. Michael Coppedge, Associate Pastor of Missions** were surrounded by nearly 40 volunteers at the Thanksgiving Basket Project which was led by Sister Jessica Horne. 200 baskets were assembled on Sunday, 11/24 and delivered on Monday, 11/25.





# Antioch Connection



Kevin B. Taylor

## From an Early Age, God Was Preparing Him For More!

We wanted to know what made our Senior Pastor the man he is today, so we asked Lady Leona for the scoop. She, in turn, posed the question to her mother-in-law, Mrs. Mary Taylor, who chuckled and said, "Girl, I don't think anybody saw him becoming the man he is today." She then proceeded to share a few key experiences that shaped Pastor Taylor's life and, ultimately, foreshadowed his future:

**As a young boy**, he enjoyed going to church and Sunday school. At 8, during a Sunday night revival, she believes he was touched by the Holy Spirit for the first time. She remembered him crying nonstop and saying that he felt "different" and wanted to be baptized. Reluctantly, she advised him to wait; back then they weren't baptizing children that young in age. Plus, he looked even younger than he actually was.

**As a teenager**, he was always motivated and excited to participate in the fundraising efforts their church would organize to take youth on various trips. He would assist with making cold cuts, cupcakes, or whatever else they were preparing at the time. She said it was during this time that he stressed how much he did not like public speaking.

It was also during this time that he shared with his mom that he no longer cared for going to their home church where he grew up. She thinks it was partly because his older brothers had gone off — one to college and the other just on his own way. Furthermore, many of his friends' parents weren't making them go, so he didn't want to be forced to attend either. She told him that was fine as long as he was attending somewhere that would make him happy. That's when he started attending his paternal grandfather's church, First Elizabeth Baptist Church.

**When he got to college**, she found out that he, along with his best friend at the time, Clarence Jackson, had organized a program to help prepare high school males for college. They advised them on what they could expect, what to do, and — most importantly — what not to do. She remembers him telling her, and I quote, "Mama, if some of these parents knew what their kids were doing on campus, they would disown them!"

On one of his breaks from college, his mom noticed that he was different. She told him that she dreamed that he was going to become a preacher, but he brushed it off. Later that same day, he visited his maternal grandmother, and she told him he had a certain glow about him and how she dreamed he was anointed to preach. He was in disbelief, but deep down, they think he also knew.

**At the age of 22**, he delivered a powerful eulogy for his grandfather. This was the major turning point in his public speaking. After fighting the call for a number of years, he finally submitted. And now we are all blessed to have the Rev. Dr. Kevin B. Taylor, Senior Pastor, Teacher Extraordinaire, Man of God! Please **Join us in congratulating our Senior Pastor on twenty-seven years as God's servant and in wishing him a**

**Happy Birthday Pastor Taylor! (12/20)**

## 2024 Christmas Giving Tree Project

The purpose of Antioch's Giving Tree Project is to minister to families in need during the Christmas holiday season. Our efforts will provide gifts to a number of individual families as well as families at Freedom High School, Key Middle School, Mountain View Alternative School, Rose Hill Elementary, Woodbridge High School, and Woodley Hills Elementary. The Giving Tree will also provide gifts for Youth for Tomorrow and Key Center.



Please consider supporting the Giving Tree Project by picking a star, or multiple stars, from the Worship Center lobby and bringing the new, unwrapped gift(s), with the star attached, back to the lobby by **Sunday, December 8th**. You also can make a monetary donation via online giving. The Giving Tree Ministry invites everyone of all ages to come out **December 8th—13th** to help sort, shop, and package gifts for the recipients. Pick up will be on December 13th. For more information on the Giving Tree Ministry, please contact Sister Tiffany Horne, 571-215-1486 or [thorne@antioch-church.org](mailto:thorne@antioch-church.org).





# Antioch Connection

## The Year Ahead

Antioch's Vision is to be a six-generational church that **C.A.R.E.S.** Our Purpose is **Loving God, Loving Others**. Our Mission is **Worshipping** God, studying God's **Word**, volunteering to **Work** in ministry, and reaching the **World** for Jesus Christ. Our 2025 goals are directly connected to our vision, mission, and core values. In order to accomplish these goals, we need your help. No one person can do it alone. But with each member actively engaged, we can make great progress in growing God's kingdom. In 2025, we will focus on God's will and purpose for our church.

The first step is to create the 2024 baseline. The Antioch Member Toolkit - an online questionnaire - was developed to collect and aggregate member engagement data. This data will be used to measure our churchwide progress next year. It will also be used to jumpstart our 2025 spiritual growth journey. This information will assist in planning spiritual growth opportunities and C.A.R.E.S. small groups for next year. All members will receive an email with a link to the questionnaire. **Please complete the Member Toolkit Questionnaire by December 31st.**

## Save the Dates:

**Dec 6: Women's Ministry 6:30-9PM**

**Dec 7: Gen-C Christmas Fellowship**

**Dec 7: Starting Point 9-11AM**

**Dec 8: Giving Tree Donations due 8th; Volunteer (8th-13th)**

**Dec 10: Surviving the Holidays/Grief Share 7PM Zoom**

**Dec 12: Donovan Angel Foundation Gala 5PM\***

**Dec 13: Friday Bible Study Christmas Fellowship 12-3PM**

**Dec 14: New Member Orientation 9AM-1PM**

**Dec 15: Children's Church Jesus Birthday Celebration 10:30AM**

**Dec 15: Life Waters Ministries Annual Gala 4PM\***

**Dec 17: Greece/Turkey Study Tour 7PM Zoom**

**Dec 20: Pastor Taylor's Birthday**

**Dec 22: Christmas Worship Service**

**Dec 24: Feed The Homeless 4:30PM Prep/6PM Delivery**

**Dec 24: Church Office Closed (24th-31st)**

**Dec 24: Christmas Eve**

**Dec 25: Christmas Day—Happy Birthday Jesus**

**Dec 29: Last Sunday Worship Service of the Year**

**Jan 8: Antioch's 36th Anniversary**

**Jan 27: DMV Musicians & Singers honors Todd Gholar\***

**Apr 5: Noah—Sight and Sound Trip/Women's Ministry**

**Apr 6: Pastor Taylor's 1 yr Anniversary Celebration**

*\* Third Party Events hosted by or honoring Antioch members*



**Theme for 2025: "Focus"**

Mark 8:24-25

## Antioch Goals 2025

- 1. Win 50 souls for Jesus Christ**
  - Reaching the **World** for Christ
  - E**vangelizes
- 2. Be a tithing church via missions and community outreach:**  
50% locally; 35 nationally; 15% globally
  - Reaching the **World** % for Christ
  - C.A.R.E.S.**
- 3. 50% of active membership serving in ministry and missions/community outreach**
  - W**orking in Ministry
  - S**erves, **C**haritable, and **R**elational
- 4. 200 members engaged weekly in Christian education and discipleship.**
  - Studying God's **W**ord
  - A**dapts and **R**elational
- 5. 50 children and youth engaged weekly**
  - Studying God's Word and **W**orshipping God
  - C.A.R.E.S.**

And he looked up and said, "I see people; but they look like trees, walking."  
Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. Mark 8:24-25 ESV

**For more information on the Greece and Turkey Study Tour, attend the Information Meeting via Zoom on December 17th at 7PM**

*Walking in*  
**THE FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL**  
September 20 - 27, 2025

Join Pastor Taylor on a study tour to Greece and Turkey—September 2025. Please register by Dec 20th Contact: Rev. Rochella Marable at [rcmarable@cox.net](mailto:rcmarable@cox.net)



## Antioch Fairfax (FFX)

Help us spread the good news and increase our social media presence.



Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/AntiochFFX](http://www.facebook.com/AntiochFFX)



Instagram  
[www.instagram.com/antiochffx](http://www.instagram.com/antiochffx)



X (formerly Twitter)  
[twitter.com/AntiochFFX](http://twitter.com/AntiochFFX)



YouTube  
[www.youtube.com/antiochfairfaxstation](http://www.youtube.com/antiochfairfaxstation)