



From the Pastor

For those of us who did not grow up in a Jewish home (which makes most all of us), the celebration of Hanukkah, also known as Chanukah or, the Festival of Lights, is foreign territory. Today, this is an eight-day festival beginning at sundown, at which time parents give their children one present every night as the first candle is lit on the beautiful 9 candle menorah, proceeded by an additional candle according to the number of days they have advanced into the festival. The 9th candle in the center is used to light the others.



Wonderful festive foods are also eaten, like potato pancakes (called latkes) smothered in applesauce or sour cream. In Israel, jelly donuts are also a Hanukkah staple. While these are not some of the traditional foods, they are still looked forward to each year with great anticipation, as both oil and light illustrate two of the great themes of the holiday. But just how did this tradition begin?

The story of Hanukkah takes place during the biblical “silent years”—the roughly 400 years between the ending of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New. In 168 B.C., the Jewish people rebelled against the Syrian-Greek General, Antiochus the 4th, whom the Jewish people called “Antiochus the Madman.” This evil Seleucid king took the name “Epiphanes,” which means “God manifest,” as he believed he was the manifestation of one of the Greek gods. Antiochus wanted the Jewish people to worship him rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which was at the heart of the reason for Israel’s resistance.

A priestly family called the Maccabees led the rebellion. They lived in a town called Modi’in, which is just a few miles from Jerusalem. As the story goes, a representative of Antiochus entered the village and demanded that the Jewish people in Modi’in bow down and worship a statue of Antiochus, or face death. In doing so, the people of Israel would affirm belief in the gods of the Greeks, loyalty to the madman, and rejection of the God of the Hebrews.

This godly family waged guerrilla warfare against the mighty Greek-Syrian army and managed to defeat Antiochus. This victory was a miracle as once again, Israel beat the odds and defeated a much larger and more powerful enemy. Jewish people traditionally view this as God’s blessing upon the Maccabees for their faithfulness to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

After their victory, they traveled to the Holy City of Jerusalem to rededicate the Temple. However, the victorious band of priestly guerrillas became horrified as they entered the Temple. There they discovered that Antiochus had sacrificed a pig on the altar, indicating the Syrian Greeks’ contempt for the Jewish people. The Maccabees tore down the stones of the altar as it was deemed beyond cleansing. According to Jewish tradition found in the books of Maccabees, the Maccabees set the defiled altar stones aside until “a prophet” comes, who would tell them what to do with the stones.

Then, according to tradition, they discovered the eternal light in the Temple had only enough oil to last for one day. So, they immediately began to make fresh olive oil to keep the eternal light from being extinguished. According to tradition, even though it usually takes eight days to complete and cure the oil, the one day’s worth of oil miraculously lasted for eight!

We do not know whether the story is true or not. The books of Maccabees are part of the “apocrypha” (hidden things), books written in the 400 year period between the Old and New Testaments, and not always found in Christian Bibles. However, many traditional Jews are taught to believe it was true! Either way, the victory of Hanukkah is one of the great stories of both Jewish heroism and God’s loyalty to His chosen people. For these reasons and more, the Jewish people celebrate Hanukkah.

Yet, this festival is far more than an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of family gatherings, Hanukkah parties, or even giving presents. The holiday is more than a

wonderful time of playing games with their families, like spinning little tops called dreidels and singing some of the most moving songs within the Jewish tradition. For Messianic Jews, the holiday connects to Jesus as Messiah in so many ways.

After all, Yeshua, or Jesus, is the Jewish Messiah. He is the Light of the world, who like the center candle of the menorah spreads His light to the others. He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12) So, there is nothing like the lights of the Hanukkah candles to remind us, that Jesus the Messiah is the true light that illuminates mankind.

But as Rabbi Jason Sobel, author of *Mysteries of the Messiah* would say, “there is more!” Hanukkah is recorded as observed by the Jewish people in the New Testament—not in the Old! The apostle John wrote that Jesus celebrated the Feast of Dedication, a title that commemorates the rededication of the Temple after the desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes. In John 10:22–30, we read: Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade. The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered, “I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

In the midst of this moment of intense and heated debate with the Jewish leaders of the day, Jesus makes one of the most remarkable declarations about Himself that is found in the entire Bible. He is not only the light of the world, but He is God in the flesh! This message of His incarnation, light, and the deliverance He offers humanity through His birth at Christmas, and through His death and resurrection, is the message we hope to bring to every person here on earth.

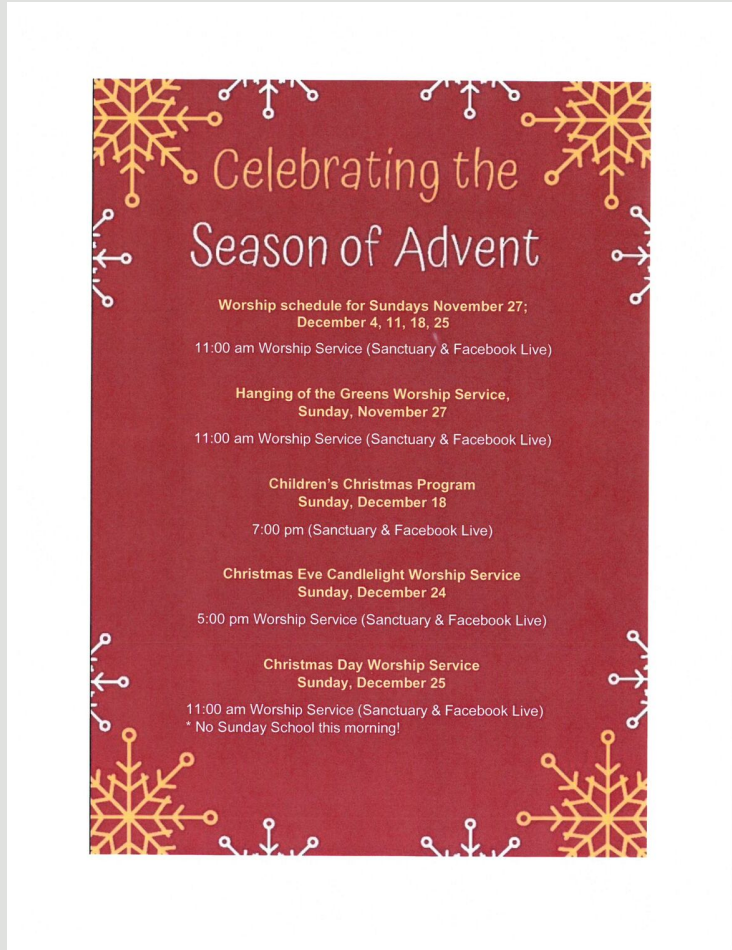
So, this Christmas, please pray for all people who have not yet come to hear the story, or who have not yet come to believe this story that the Lord has come into this world at Christmastime. As we have been filled with His Spirit, enabling us to believe in Him as our Messiah, our savior, let us not be afraid or ashamed or intimidated in telling His story, the real Christmas story of true freedom from sin and bondage, to all who need to hear it. Better yet, invite them to a safe worship service this Advent season, or on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. And then invite them to join with you and all believers throughout the world in proclaiming Him Messiah, Christ the Lord. Oh, Come Let us Adore Him! Have a most blessed, joyful, healthy, and peace filled Christmas. From my family to you and yours!

Pastor Tim



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Children's Christmas program taking place on December 18th, will be followed by food and fellowship in the fellowship hall. We hope you can join us for this festive event!!



Victoria Baptist Church Advent Schedule 2022



COMMUNITY CORNER

Victoria Christmas Parade

Friday, December 2 on Victoria's Main Street beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Good News Club

Good News Club is on it's way thanks to Barbara Wilson, director of training for CEF (Children's Evangelism Fellowship), and her team! Volunteers have been background checked and fingerprinted for safety, and training has been conducted for the material we will use to teach. We were approved with the school board in November to start at Victoria Elementary School. We are hoping to have a Christmas party for the children at the school in December and first meeting in January.



Refreshments Needed for Good News Club Christmas Party

We are preparing for our first Good News Club - a Christmas party at Victoria Elementary School in mid-December. If you would like to help with the provision of refreshments, please contact Blair McCoy for more information. Attendance at the party is not required. mccoybg@sbcglobal.net; (775) 895-0670 (text)

VBC Preschool

The Victoria Baptist Church Nursery School students gained so much knowledge about our country this past month as they learned about veterans, pilgrims, and Native Americans. The academic study of our history helped us to understand why these groups of people are recognized and respected while daily Bible study continually teaches us how to honor God through our thoughts, words, and actions.



Tithes and Offerings

As we strive to maintain the ministry of our church, we hope and pray you will continue to tithe during this time.

For online bill pay or mail in offerings (please no cash), send to:

P.O. Box 911
Victoria, VA 23974

We have added online giving and text giving for your convenience. There is no charge to the church or you to use it through the rest of this calendar year. To give you have three options now:

1. Mail
in
Offering
2. [Click
here
to
give](#)
3. Text

GiveVBC
to
73256

We appreciate your faithful support to Victoria Baptist Church as we weather these difficult days.

OUR GIFTS TO GOD FOR NOVEMBER 27, 2022

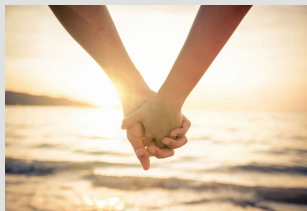
REGULAR OFFERING (weekly goal \$3,520.19) \$2,710.00

LOTTIE MOON \$100.00

PRESCHOOL \$100.00

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD \$185.00

TOTAL \$3,095.00



Remember Those on our Prayer List and Our Shut-Ins:

PRAYER LIST UPDATES - Names in bold print are new this week to our prayer list or are experiencing new difficulties. If you have a family member or loved one on our prayer list, please contact the Church Office with an update. If the Lord has answered prayers and all is well, please ask us to remove their name from our list.

You can help our shut-ins by writing a letter, sending a card or giving a call! Phone calls are an especially good way for them to hear your voice and be comforted. Please respect the rules of the nursing home and care facilities when planning visits.

PRAYER CONCERNS December 4, 2022

Members Who Need Prayer

Bay Tomlinson
Susan Hawks
Jon Coffinan
Dianne Griffin
Stephanie Millican Powell
Peppi and Gary Dayton
Roger Pennell
Peggy Green
Vernon and Jean Harding

Margie Paynter
Ronnie Bishop
Grant Foley
Sandra Tomlinson
Linda Clark

In Our Community - Keep In Your Prayers

Martha Clark
Helen Fitzgerald
Dr. Andrew Apostle
Rev. Mike Day
Amanda Garrison
Jonathan Stroup
Ray Martin
Peggy Townsend
Carol Driver
Kevin Ashworth
Mark Coming

Bill Finch
Wade Harding
Leann Driggers
T.J. Smith
Thomas Chumney
Margaret White
Anna Jones
Mary Jordan
Paige Berkley
Nena Dunavant
Bledsoe

Scott Crawford and family
Alan White
Mike Armstrong
Kris Earwood (Linda and Mike Walker's niece)
Carolyn Hitt
Elizabeth Perez
Mac Bailey

SYMPATHY to the family and friends of Faye Carol Overbey McGaughey

PRAYER LIST UPDATES - Names in bold print are new this week to our prayer list or are experiencing new difficulties. If you have a family member or loved one on our prayer list, please contact the Church Office with an update. *If the Lord has answered prayers and all is well, please ask us to remove their name from our list. We want to include everyone who needs our prayers, so please keep us informed. Thank you.*

AWAY FROM HOME PRAYER CONCERNS

Phyllis Hood (Room 118) Jackie Clement (Room 126) Anne Hudson (Room 203) Heritage Hall, Room 118 900 S. Main Street Blackstone, VA 23824	Curtis Jones Waynie Pennell Chase City Nursing and Rehab 5539 Highway 49 Chase City, VA 23924
Betty Schumaker (birthday November 20) Amelia Nursing and Rehabilitation Center 8830 Virginia Street Amelia, VA 23002	Shirley Garrett Manor House 13500 N. Gayton Road Henrico, VA 23233

SHUT-INS

Jean Overton, 2003 6th Street, Victoria, VA 23974
Betty Lindsey, 1505 Tidewater Avenue, Victoria, VA 23974
Holly Crenshaw, 1521 12th Street, P.O. Box 83, Victoria, VA 23974
Ella Harrell, 1615 10th Street, P.O. Box 644, Victoria, VA 23974



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