

# SYCAMORE HIGHLIGHTS



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Pastor  
Rev. David Roberts

Deacon of the Month  
Tricia Davis

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## THE BEST CHRISTMASSES

As I sat thinking about another Christmas that is coming rapidly upon us, I realized how many times the season has become special to me. There is no way to minimize the importance of celebrating the coming of Christ into our world, and every trip to the manger has the potential of becoming a pivotal point in our lives. Naturally, all of us also have our favorite Christmases. I simply want to share a few of mine. Naturally, I cannot share all the special ones, but some stand out in my memory. The first was the Christmas when I received my first Lionel electric train, a gift I now realize meant real sacrifices for my family to fulfill my desire. It's still in our attic, not because I still pull it out regularly, but because of the special memories.

The second Christmas that sticks with me was the first time I helped deliver Christmas baskets in my hometown and became aware of the poverty of some of those who lived in hidden spots I never visited before. I realized these people were literally dependent on the food we brought for their Christmas dinners, and the toys we shared would be all their children received. The next was the first Christmas I sang in the chorus of Handel's "Messiah." I had never worked so hard to learn music nor had I ever appreciated the meaning of Christmas more than when we finished with the "Hallelujah Chorus."

Another Christmas that stands out in my memory was the first Dawn and I spent together in our little apartment in Louisville, Kentucky. The tree was small, didn't have many lights, and was sparsely decorated. The presents were not very costly, but they were all we could afford. We felt blessed. I remember the first Christmas after Matthew was born when we laid him under the tree and looked in amazement at our most precious gift that Christmas. (I already know this Christmas will rank high, because it is our first with a granddaughter to love, and I can hardly wait.)

I also treasure some sad Christmases in my life. Three stand out for me. The first was the Christmas following my mom's death when we tried hard to create the perfect Christmas for my dad, but we didn't know the special touches to my mom's recipes. Then there was the Christmas after my dad died when we still had their house and tried to make it look cheery, but it was empty of the people who made it so rich. Then there was the Christmas when Dawn's dad was in the nursing home in the last stages of cancer. Each of those was hard, but in each I sensed the deep presence of the Christ who had come at the very first Christmas. He shared the joys and the pains with us.

As this Christmas nears, I pray that God will richly be in your life and that the baby of Bethlehem's manger will be the Lord of your life. May you find your own anchoring events that fill your life in this season. Many of the best are found in church, and I look forward to sharing this season with you as we join in remembering God's very best gift of the one who became as we are so that we might become as he is.

Love in Christ

*Dave*

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

We will be decorating the church for the Christmas Season at the Hanging of the Greens on Wednesday, December 4, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. If you have never participated in decorating the church for the Christmas Season, join us and you are sure to get into the Spirit of Christmas.

## ANGEL TREE

The Angel Tree is located in the Fellowship hall. Each angel represents a child in need of some Christmas cheer. After selecting your Angel, sign your name on the list beside which angel you select. Gifts may be wrapped in regular Christmas paper and must be at church by Wednesday, December 18. Thank you for sharing with "the least of these."

Elaine Wiley

## MISSIONS MAILBOX

The Missions Mailbox will open for the season Sunday, December 1. Bring your Christmas cards for **ACTIVE** and **HOMEBOUND** members **ONLY**. Include the price of a stamp (55 cents) for each card. Proceeds will go to the Global Missions Offering.

## FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER SCHEDULE

If the assigned dates are not suitable for your class or group please trade with another group and let Dianne know the change.

December 4	Covered Dish
December 11	Mixed Adults
December 18	Up and Coming
December 25	No Family Night

## MISSIONS GIFT CERTIFICATES

Have you started your Christmas shopping? Are you having trouble finding a meaningful gift for each person on your list? How about a **CBF Global Missions Gift Certificate**? Give a gift to Global Missions and give your loved one a gift certificate stating that a gift has been made in their honor. Gift certificates are available by the church office or in the vestibule. What better way to celebrate Christmas than the gift of sharing the gospel! Tricia Davis

## PRAYER TEAM REQUESTS

Sycamore's prayer team is here to lift you in prayer. If you have a prayer request, please let the prayer team know by one of the following means:

1. Prayer Request Boxes – They are located in the vestibule and elevator lobby.
2. Prayer Team Chairs – Contact Tricia Davis 377-6610 or Holly Giles 651-8652 (team chairs)
3. Online Requests – Online prayer requests may be securely submitted on the church website.
4. Community Prayer Box – Requests may be placed in the community prayer box at Checkerboard Corner.

## CHRISTMAS CANTATA

The choir will present "Emmanuel: Celebrating Heaven's Child" Sunday, December 15 at 10am. It is a musical that provides an intimate look into Christ's first moments in the world filling the air with Christmas celebration. Come worship with us! Tricia Davis

## CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

The Sycamore Baptist Church cookbook, Seasoned with Love, has 425 pages of tried and true recipes for all occasions and would be a great gift for someone on your Christmas list. Contact Tricia Davis or any WOM member for your copy.

## CHILDREN/YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & CAROLING

Please join us for the Children/Youth Christmas Program Sunday, December 15 at 5:30 p.m. Our youth and children are excited to present *Go and Tell*. Immediately following the program we will have a special visitor for children of all ages in the fellowship hall. Caroling and refreshments will conclude the evening's activities. We look forward to seeing each of you there for a fun and meaningful time of worship and fellowship during this Christmas season.

## OUTREACH NEWS

Meals are being delivered on Wednesday nights to shut-ins and those recovering from an illness or surgery. To volunteer or request/cancel a meal call Elaine Wiley at 562-4332.

December 4	Ronnie B. and Wayne C.
December 11	Elaine W. and Nell D.
December 18	Elaine W.
December 25	No Family Night

Please have take-out meals ready by 5:15 and be sure a dinner is saved for those who are delivering meals.

The Backpack program is in full swing and help is needed to pack every other Wednesday night. Contact Elaine Wiley to volunteer. And please consider sponsoring a child as this will give a child food for the weekend.

Elaine Wiley

## SINGLES MINGLES

There will be no gathering for the Singles Mingles this month. We will resume in January.

## FRANKLIN COOPERATIVE MINISTRY

Franklin Cooperative Ministry needs muffin mix, crackers, pasta and tea bags. If you can help, please place your items in the grey basket outside the library. Thank you for your help.

Robin Davis and WOM

## CHURCH COUNCIL

Church council met Sunday, November 17 with 6 members present. The following items were discussed:

- Communion will be Sunday, December 1st. Flower committee will have the Advent wreath in the sanctuary by this date.
- Dave is thinking about doing the children's/youth time for the month of December using the Advent wreath for each.
- Hanging of the Green will take place on Wednesday, December 4 after the family night meal.
- WMU - Christmas mailbox will be put up in hallway across from the office. Dave stated that the promotional materials for Global missions had come.
- Outreach - The Angel tree is up and Elaine is lining up a truck and helpers to deliver the items collected from the Angel tree.
- Sycamore will be participating in the Community Nativity beginning December 18 through 20 at Barrett's Landing in Franklin. Volunteers will be needed.
- Dave reported that he would not be here for the Christmas Eve service and wondered if a program of scripture and songs would work and if the deacons would be able to handle communion. It was agreed this would be fine and Peggy will bring up at December deacon's meeting to make sure this is covered.
- Dave reported that he will not be here Sunday, December 29th but has lined up Dr. Elizabeth Pugh Mills for the worship service.

(Both of Dave's items had something to do with a new grandchild's first Christmas!

Imagine that!)

Peggy Rush

## DECEMBER PRAYER FOCUS

During the season of Advent, may we pray each week for God to help us share the gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

**Week 1: Hope** – It's easy to lose hope and live in fear in today's world. As Christians we should be the bearers of the good news of hope. Pray this week for God's help to continually point toward a different kind of future where "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat." Isaiah 11:6. Pray that we may share the gift of hope to those living in fear – a hop that can open the door to possibilities they never imagined.

**Week 2: Peace** – We all want peace in the world – globally as well as in our families, congregations, and communities. Pray this week that God helps you to be a catalyst that ignites a process of peace to heal fractures between friends, family members, coworkers, and communities. Bringing peace to a situation is hard work but is something we can all do with God's help, beginning with those closest to us. Pray for God's help and guidance for peace and thank him for His Peace.

**Week 3: Joy** – Not everyone has joy in their lives especially during the holiday season. Pray for those who need to experience God's love during Advent. Pray that God helps you focus on bringing joy to others, that you may take time from the hustle and bustle of the season to offer companionship to someone who needs it, show kindness to others, and spread the gift of joy.

**Week 4: Love** – In some ways, we are more loving during the Advent season. We give more to charities or help more in other ways this time of year but we tend to stay in our comfort zone. Pray for God's help in loving outside of our comfort zone. Pray that we expand who we see as our neighbor and engage those whom we often overlook and join with them as our neighbors in celebrating God's love.

## DEACON REPORT

The deacons met on November 4, 2019

Deacon Team Ministry reports for October:

- Bereavement: none
- Casserole: none
- Hospital/Homebound: 10 visits
- Prayer: 4 requests
- Transportation: no requests

Old Business:

- Deacon Team Ministry – getting others to sign up  
Description of each team on the bulletin board across from the library  
Put description on screen and bulletin on Sunday
- Van – notebook has been placed in van to keep track of when gas has been put in, oil changes, etc. Reggie Rush has agreed to be in charge of making sure the oil changes get done and anything else that may be needed. The carport for the van is coming soon.
- Roof materials have been ordered.
- Pastor Search continues looking for a pastor.

New Business:

- John Jenkins will be meeting with the ushers and making a new list when they are ushering.
- Need a list of computers and printers in the church with serial numbers and locations.
- Community Nativity – Dec. 18-20  
Time: 5:30-7:00  
Sycamore will be doing the second scene of Joseph's Dream  
Need volunteers for the scene, music, and provide refreshments
- Dave will be away Dec. 24 and 29.
- Children's program will be on Dec. 15.

Tricia Davis is the deacon of the month for December.

The next meeting will be on December 2.

Debbie Oliver

## YOUTH NEWS

The youth, like everyone else, will be busy this month. Tis the season but let's not forget the reason!

Several Youth will be heading to Charlotte to the Operation Christmas Child processing center.

The Youth will be preparing for the Christmas program on Wednesday, December 11. The program will be presented on the evening of Sunday, December 15.

Do you need help with your Angel tree shopping or personal shopping? The Youth would love to help you with this! Let one of the Youth or leaders know and we will get it coordinated.

The Youth will be part of the community nativity as they are available.

Be in prayer for Benjamin and Chloe who have exams during this time.

We are looking at some time for fun & fellowship with youth & friends from Southampton Meadows. Look for more information on that in the bulletin. Preliminary decisions on IMPACT will be made soon in order to receive the early bird discount. The group is leaning toward serving on the Eastern Shore again from July 26-August 1.

We will continue going to EP every 4th Wednesday for Bingo and continue packing backpacks in the new year.

Holly Giles

## CBF GLOBAL MISSIONS OFFERING

December 8-15, 2019 is our Week of Prayer and offering for CBF Global Missions. The Global Missions Offering supports international missions through Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Help support these mission efforts through your prayers and giving. Envelopes and prayer guides will be available in the bulletin. Thank you in advance for your gifts. Robin Davis and WOM

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The deadline for the January newsletter is December 22, 2019.

[pcfalls@charter.net](mailto:pcfalls@charter.net)

Thanks in advance.

## ADVENT PHOTO A DAY CHALLENGE

Pause. Reflect. Prepare. Repeat.

Advent is a season of waiting, anticipation and preparation. This year, we invite you to prepare by hitting the "pause" button...daily. We have a word for reflection for each day of Advent. Take a moment of pause and reflection and share a response to that word through a picture.

You can post your picture on Facebook. If you'd like your picture to be shared by Sycamore's Facebook page include #SycamoreAdvent in your post. Join us as we prepare for the celebration of Christ's birth and through our pictures reflect on the journey to the manger and the presence of Christ all around us.

Day 1- Hope  
Day 2 – Promise  
Day 3- Journey  
Day 4 – Star  
Day 5 – Wise Men  
Day 6 – Patience  
Day 7 – Seek  
Day 8 – Peace  
Day 9 – Angel  
Day 10 – Candle  
Day 11 – Wreath  
Day 12 – Prepare  
Day 13 – Waiting

Day 14 – Light  
Day 15 - Joy  
Day 16 - Shepherd  
Day 17 – Gift  
Day 18 - Holly  
Day 19 - Reflect  
Day 20 – Stable  
Day 21 - Behold  
Day 22 - Love  
Day 23 - Manger  
Day 24 - Baby  
Day 25 - Christmas

