

The Connection

Messages of Hope



HOPE
CHURCH | RALEIGH
WORSHIP . GROW . SERVE .

A Weekly Online Newsletter: Edition 710

December 21, 2022

“Christmas: A Call to Witness”

As we gather with family this week to celebrate Christmas, what should be a meaningful and cheerful time can often become stressful and strained. We forget the joy of the Christmas message: God with us. God gives us strength in the place of weakness, fellowship in the place of isolation, courage in the place of fear, and life in the place of death. God is always present and reachable to us as Immanuel. It is a message that everyone needs to hear but also a message that Satan is working around the clock to bury and suppress.

Satan is a schemer. He is crafty and cruel, he is on the prowl, and he hates Christmas. The fact that Jesus came to dwell among us and set us free from sin, makes Satan fiercely angry, and he wants nothing more than to destroy all of what Christmas means.

Christians must be on guard to keep the joy of our salvation ever before us. We must not allow Satan a foothold to distract us from the wonder of Christmas and render us ineffective to share the hope of Christ with our family, friends, and neighbors.

The New Testament warns us to “watch and be sober” (1 Thessalonians 5:6), to “live soberly” (Titus 2:12), to “gird up the loins of your mind, be sober” (1 Peter 1:13), and “be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8).

John 10:10 says that the thief comes only to kill and to destroy. But I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. So, whether you are eagerly anticipating this Christmas season or you are dreading what might come. I pray that you

would be mindful in not letting Satan rob you of the joy that it offers. Christmas is a time when we think about the birth of Christ and that he would come to live and to also die in our place.

One of the best ways that we can glorify God this Christmas and overcome the advances of Satan is to share the Good News of Jesus with the people He puts in our path. Some of those who hear our witness will receive it with joy, and others will not. Some will even be angry. Don't be intimidated; don't be fearful! Share your faith boldly in the power of the Holy Spirit. Don't think you can be a witness for Christ in your own strength—let the Spirit of God speak through you. Telling others what we experienced when we met Jesus is our duty as witnesses for Christ, and it should be our joy to do so. How can we keep the gift of salvation quiet and not share it with others?

I would like to close this Christmas message in prayer:

Lord, thank you for fulfilling your promises in Christ. May our hearts be filled with joy and peace this Christmas as we reflect on your message. Prompt our spirit to share this message with others and unleash its power. Open our eyes to opportunities you provide to invite people to hear the Good News of Christmas. Thank you for the privilege to be your heralds in this dark world. In your name I pray, Amen.

Blessings and Merry Christmas!

Ryan Hutchins - Elder, HOPE Church Raleigh

Worship . Grow . Serve

HOPE Calendar

Wednesday, December 21

NO Wednesday Night Devotion
& Prayer
HOPE4Kids Movie Night @ 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 22

Worship Team Practice @ 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight
Communion Worship @ 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25

Christmas Day

Worship Team Practice @ 8:00 a.m.
Worship @ 9:30 a.m.

Helping Hands Ministries

Fellowship Food - December 25

Church Will Provide

Soundboard - December 25

Elizabeth Floyd

Communion Steward - Dec.

Sandra Pierce

Greeter - December 25

Joan Rollinson

Volunteer for the Nursery - Dec. 25

Terry Duffell

This Sunday
Scripture Text and Sermon

*Christmas Eve
Luke 2:8 - 20
"The Birth of Love"*

*Christmas Day
Matthew 2:1 - 12
"Love Embraced"*



Outreach Ministries

January "Food of the Month"
for the Raleigh Dream Center Food Pantry
Boxed Cereal
We have a collection bin in the foyer

HOPE Meal Ministry
Take a meal from the freezer if needed
for you or someone else.

TLC Devotion
January 25 @ 11:00 a.m.

The Computer Lab
January 21 @ 9:00 a.m.

Spiritual Growth Ministries

**NO Sunday School on
Christmas Day and News Day**

WOMEN of HOPE
Saturday, January 14
@ 1:00 p.m.

**NO Wednesday Night Devotion
& Prayer Tonight**

HOPE4Kids
**Join us TONIGHT for a
movie night**
At
6:30 PM
For the kids and youth

Quote of the Week

**"Christ loved us when there was
no loveliness to draw His love."**

Jonathan Edwards

Prayer Requests:

Covid -19, Mark Drylie, Chandi Haswell & family, Revill & Mary Lane Mallory, Evelyn Doby, Jamie Baldwin, Donna Williams, Diane Williams, Renee Logan, Loretta (Sandi Underwood's daughter), Joan Summers, Jordan & Cinnamon (son and daughter of Lynn Joyner's family members), Tommy and Billy Lanphere (Lynn Joyner's brothers), Becky Hale's mom, Gene & Becky Hale, Dave & Dot Geil, Joy Forrest's daughter Haley and son Jude, Carlyle and Cynthia Franklin (Sandra Pierce's dad and stepmom), Brian Adam's dad, our Military, our Missionaries, our Nation, and the world. If you have those you would like added to our prayer concerns, please email me those names.

Dates to Remember

Saturday, Dec. 24
Christmas Eve Worship
@ 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 25
Christmas Day Worship
@ 9:30 a.m.

(No Sunday school on
Christmas Day)

Sunday, January 1
Worship @ 9:30 a.m.

Extended Fellowship /
No Sunday School

Sunday, January 8
Anniversary Sunday of HOPE
(Covered Dish Meal)
Bring a dish or two to share

HOPE Church Raleigh
An Evangelical Presbyterian Church
4911 Green Rd
Raleigh, NC 27616
919-508-6827

Worship Time: 9:30 AM

www.HopeChurchRaleigh.org

www.facebook.com/HOPEChurchRaleigh

Twitter: @HopeChRaleigh

YouTube.com (type "HOPE Church Raleigh"
in the search box)

Daily Devotions

For This Coming Week

Dec 25	Ezra	10
Dec 26	Nehemiah	1
Dec 27	Nehemiah	2
Dec 28	Nehemiah	3
Dec 29	Nehemiah	4
Dec 30	Nehemiah	5
Dec 31	Nehemiah	6