

# The Vine

I am the vine; you are the branches...John 15:5

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

December 2023

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1). Matthew 1:23 says, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus. God the Son emptied himself and came to the earth, born in the likeness of men. God is with us.

Some people think when Jesus came, God changed to become more personal and loving. Yet, God has never been impersonal or uninvolved. He walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It was the decision of the first man to sin which brought a sin nature and separation to all his offspring.

Yet, God still wanted to draw close to us. In the Old Testament, he often said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." He interacted with the world through the Jewish people, who he chose to show the world who he was. Throughout the Old Testament years, he was preparing the world for the Messiah and waiting for just the perfect time for his birth.

At his advent, Jesus came and 'tabernacled' with us. The word tent, or tabernacle, is translated 'dwelt' in John 1:14. For a while, he put on flesh and blood and actually lived with us. Even then, he said he did not come to judge us, but to seek and to save the lost.

His great act of salvation was his death on the cross to pay for our sins, and his resurrection which confirmed his promise was sure and brought eternal life.

When he ascended into heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit. God with us is also now God IN us! One of the things he commanded us was to make disciples. His promise at that time: "I will be with you always, to the end of the age." He is still Emmanuel.

One day, he WILL return bodily. At that time he will judge and set up his perfect kingdom where we will dwell with him forever!

As we thank God for birth of Jesus, rejoice in the presence of the Holy Spirit and anticipate his return, I encourage you to prepare your hearts and minds for Christmas by reading these scripture selections that speak of the presence of God being with his people.

*Mike*

## GOD WITH US

- Dec 1: Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7-8, 15-17; 3:8-11
- Dec 2: Genesis 32:24-30
- Dec 3: Deut 31:6-8; Joshua 1:5-9
- Dec 4: 2 Chronicles 7:12-15
- Dec 5: Jeremiah 24:4-7; 31:33-34
- Dec 6: Daniel 3:16-28
- Dec 7: Psalm 16:5-11
- Dec 8: Psalm 23
- Dec 9: Psalm 139
- Dec 10: Matthew 11:28-30
- Dec 11: John 6:35-40
- Dec 12: John 15:1-11
- Dec 13: Revelation 3:20-22
- Dec 14: John 7:37-39
- Dec 15: Romans 8:9-11
- Dec 16: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
- Dec 17: Philippians 4:4-9
- Dec 18: Hebrews 10:19-25; 11:6
- Dec 19: James 4:5-10
- Dec 20: Matt 18:20; John 12:24-26
- Dec 21: Hebrews 13:1-6
- Dec 22: Isaiah 7:14; 9:2-7
- Dec 23: John 1:1-5, 9-14
- Dec 24: Matthew 1:18-25
- Dec 25: **Christmas Day** Luke 2:1-20
- Dec 26: John 14:15-21, 25-28
- Dec 27: John 14:1-6
- Dec 28: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- Dec 29: Revelation 7:15-17
- Dec 30: Revelation 21:1-8
- Dec 31: Matt 28:18-20

**Ladies' Christmas Party** is Dec 3rd, 2-4p.m. at Cecelia's house, 13197 Blue Mound Dr. Please bring a snack and come have fun!

**Dec 10 Food Box Day;** We will be filling and delivering boxes right after church. Food Boxes are for shut-ins. Goodies needed are teas, fresh fruit, little fruit containers, hot chocolate, fresh baked cookies, bread, and snacks, all items should be individually wrapped. We fill about 30 boxes. If you know someone who would enjoy a box, let Debbie Gerstner know.

**Dec 10 Christmas Caroling @ 5 p.m.** Jay Welborn is bringing his tractor and hay wagon for a ride around town. Bring a snack and meet in the fellowship hall. Wagon pulls out at 5 p.m. Upon returning to the church we will have a Christmas Party, bring snacks. Dress warm and come help us spread Christmas Joy!

**We will adopt a family** through God's Storehouse again this year. The List and instructions are in the foyer.

**Dec 24<sup>th</sup> Children's Christmas Program @ 10 a.m.**



**Dec 24 Candlelight Christmas Eve Service @ 7 p.m.**

**JAMs** - Wednesdays through the end of April, grades K-5, 3:30-5pm. Plenty of space still available. **Don't forget to pick up a prayer slip in the foyer to pray for the needs of our kids.**

**NEED VOLUNTEERS** - We need 1 or 2 to direct Vacation Bible School in 2024. See Aisha with questions and to find out what is involved.



**Men's Breakfast:** Saturday, December 9th, 8 a.m. Jay is cooking.

**Pocket Change for Progress:** We take a special offering every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the pocket change you have been saving. The money is divided between VFCC Youth programs and the School Supply Giveaway Fund.

**Online sermon opportunity:** For those who need to watch at home, church service will be available to live stream on YouTube (and Facebook). Also available on YouTube, previous services.

**Past sermons are available online at [www.valleyfallscc.org](http://www.valleyfallscc.org).**

Don't forget to subscribe to Valley Falls Christian Church YouTube channel.



### Sermons

Dec 3 Nehemiah: Take Courage  
Nehemiah 4:15-20

Dec 10 Esther: Gentle Beauty  
Esther 4:12-17

Dec 17 John the Baptist: In Your Face  
Matthew 3:1-6

Dec 24 **Christmas Sunday**  
Christmas Lights  
John 1:1-5 [preach 1-18]

Dec 31 Barnabas: Son of Encouragement  
Acts 15:36-41

| Dec | Greeters<br>Communion prep | Scripture   | Communion<br>Devotion | Servers                          | Nursery        |
|-----|----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 3   | Boyce                      | R Mitchell  | Brian Barret          | Jay/Brian/ <b>Steve</b> /Jackson | Debbie/Rhonda  |
| 10  | Gatzemeyer                 | Nancy       | Brian Barret          | Jay/Stan/ <b>Brian</b> /Steve    | Brittany/Malia |
| 17  | Welborn                    | Jay Welborn | Brian Barret          | Jay/Stan/ <b>Ray</b> /Chad       | Leane/Kinze    |
| 24  | Farr                       | Donetta     | Brian Barret          | Jay/Stan/ <b>Clinton</b> /Kyle   | Aisha/Jodee    |
| 31  | Gerstner                   | Debbie      | Brian Barret          | Jay/Stan/ <b>Jarret</b> /Charles | Tiffany/Abby   |

### November communion devotion and prayer: Brian Barret

| Camera Monitor | Dec 3 | Dec 10  | Dec 17  | Dec 24 | Dec 31  |
|----------------|-------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| Sunday School  | Jay   | Charles | Tiffany | Kevin  | Donetta |
| Worship        | Carol | Ray     | Jarret  | Lori   | Brian   |

**Prayer Requests:** Jill Boyce's brother - Health issues. Tracy Bull - Fighting Cancer. Jill Godfrey - for healing and pain relief. Christy Arnold, Natalie Barrett, Pat and Dave Petesch, Barry Farr, Emma Dockweiler, Joan Hosler, Allene Mattox, Elaine Worner, Students, Teachers and support staff in our schools. Israel, Ukraine and Afghanistan.

**OUR SOLDIERS:** Curtis Mitchell, Aaron Cook, Jacob Mitchell, Matthew Branam, Noe Garza, All of our troops and leaders. Our President, our nation and our government. (1 Tim 2: 1-2) Decisions being made in our nation's leadership.

#### Church Offerings:

|        |         |
|--------|---------|
| Oct 15 | \$1663  |
| Oct 22 | \$1162  |
| Oct 29 | \$1801. |
| Nov 5  | \$2428  |
| Nov 1  | \$ 717  |



**Gyve on line:** Scan the QR code to download the Gyve app.

**New email address** - to get items included in the newsletter: [news@valleyfallsc.org](mailto:news@valleyfallsc.org)  
Or call Cecelia Ragan - (785)-762-2195.

#### December Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 3 Matthew Boyce
- 4 Allison Thomas
- 15 Mike & Gina Kirby (1984)
- 18 Ray & Rhonda Mitchell (1982)  
Jeff Starkey
- 21 Dan & Janet Strang
- 28 Chad Spencer  
Alucard Heinen
- 30 Jacob & Kari Mitchell (2005)
- 31 Jarret & Aisha Mitchell (2014)

**Sunday, Dec 24th, 7p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.**

**Bible Study** - Wednesday 7PM. We are studying the Minor Prophets. (There will not be Bible Study on Dec . 20th and 27th)

**Thank you** - Mike and Gina want to thank everyone for the generous gift for Pastor Appreciation Month. It is a blessing to serve alongside you!



**Return Service  
Requested**

Phone: 785-945-6757  
Email: office@valleyfallsc.org  
On the web: www.valleyfallsc.org  
Find us on Facebook!

Mike Kirby, Pastor

***You are welcome to join us!***

**Sunday Service times:**

Bible Study (all ages) - 9:00 AM  
Worship - 10:00 AM  
Youth Group (grades 7-12) - 5-7 PM

**Wednesday:** JAMs 3:30 -5PM  
Bible Study - 7:00 PM

**December**

| Sun  | Mon   | Tue | Wed   | Thur/Fri | Sat |
|--|---|-----|---|----------|-----|
|  |   |     |   | 30/1     | 2   |
| 3<br>2p.m.Ladies Christmas Party @ Cecelia's<br>5 p.m. Youth group       | 4<br>1:30 p.m. Sunflower Crafters             | 5   | 6<br>3:30-5 p.m. JAM's<br>7 p.m. Bible Study  | 7/8      | 9   |
| 10<br>11a.m. Food Boxes<br>5 p.m. Christmas Caroling                     | 11<br>1:30 p.m. Sunflower Crafters            | 12  | 13<br>3:30-5.p.m. JAM's<br>7 p.m. Bible Study | 14/15    | 16  |
| 17<br>5 p.m. Youth group   | 18<br>1:30 p.m. Sunflower Crafters            | 19  | 20  | 21/22    | 23  |
| 24<br>10a.m. Children's Christmas Program<br>7p.m. Christmas Eve Service | 25<br>Christmas Day<br><b>Merry Christmas</b> | 26  | 27  | 28/29    | 30  |
| 31   |   |     |   |          |     |