

## TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Daniel Balch /Opening Prayer by: Bobby Rader

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#869 We're Marching to Zion

#864 Where the Gates Swing Outward Never

Scripture Reading by: Cameron Cantu

#350 When My Love to Christ Grows Weak

**Lord's Supper and Contribution**

#957 This World Is Not My Home

**Sermon: "Are You Ready For Christmas?"**

**Matthew 1:18-25**

#867 To Canaan's Land I'm On My Way

#851 I'll Fly Away

Closing Prayer by: Robert Ward

Welcome by: Daniel Balch

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#731 Take Time to Be Holy

#797 Lord, We Come Before thee Now

Scripture Reading: Parker Balch

Prayer by: Bob Parker

#611 Heavenly Sunlight

#968 Oh, They Tell Me of a Home

**Sermon: "The Parables of Jesus: Perseverance"**

**Luke 18:1-8**

#643 Sowing the Seed of the Kingdom

#634 We'll Work Till Jesus Comes

Closing Prayer by: Wayne Noonkester

### **Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth**

**Sunday:** 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

**Wednesday:** 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

December 16, 2018

## ***"Stand Firm in...Liberty"***

Galatians 5:1

### **Joy to the World**

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!*

*Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;*

*the world and those who dwell in it!*

*Let the rivers clap their hands;*

*let the hills sing for joy together*

*before the Lord, for he comes*

*to judge the earth.*

*He will judge the world with righteousness,*

*and the peoples with equity.*

**- Psalm 98**

Isaac Watts is considered the father of English hymnody, almost single-handedly moving us from merely chanting the Psalms to singing the gospel songs we know today. John Calvin, one of the leaders of the Reformation, was extremely influential in his view that all hymns should be direct quotations from the Scriptures rather than original compositions. Watts changed that, while still writing songs that were completely saturated in Biblical thought and language.

Watts was born in Southampton to a family of Congregational Dissenters from the Church of England. His family was, thus, subject to persecution from the established church; in fact, his father was in prison at his birth. But Watts obviously was reared in a deeply religious home.

In addition, he had a keen intellect. By the age of five, he was learning Latin; at nine, he added Greek; by the time he was 13, he had learned French and Hebrew, too. Beyond his work in languages, he studied philosophy and theology.

At that time, English hymns were dreary translations from the Psalms, first read by a deacon and then repeated by the congregation. Consider an example typical of the songs Watts was subjected to in his youth:

Ye monsters of the bubbling deep,

Your Master's praises spout;

Up from the sand ye docclings peep,

And wag your tails about.

# Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Privilege to Serve  
Sunday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>

## Our Sick

**Tim Watts**, Lois Watts' grandson, has been diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

**Richard Williamson** has been ill with pneumonia/bronchitis.

## Continued Prayers

### (Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Bill Lunceford, Eric Davis, J. P. Williams, Mark Wilcox, Dayla Hale, Ann Rogers, Phillip Cottle

## Shut Ins

### (Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Pauline Taylor, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Ronnie Rubit, Joe Leonard, Dr. Ronald Davis

## Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

## Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags. A barrel is in the foyer.

## Upcoming Activities

**Elders, Minister** meeting Monday, Dec. 17th at 7pm.

**Caroling at** Magnolia Place Health Care, Monday, Dec. 17th at 6:00 pm. We will meet there and then car pool to several other locations.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Dec. 20th at 8:00 am.

The office will be closed Dec. 24th & 25th.

Several pair of eye glasses have been found in the auditorium. If you have misplaced yours, check in the office.

<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Ken Coleman	Daniel Balch	Bryant Perkins
Bob Parker	Danny Balch	
Bobby Rader	Shannon Smith	
Don Taylor	Phillip Strickhausen	
Robert Ward		

Communion Preparation: Debra Faneros  
Nursery Attendants: Raven & Sharon Lartigue

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>: Jeraldine Frazier  
Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>: Tania Balch

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Not surprisingly, someone with his gifts became dissatisfied by these songs. One Sunday after returning from a service with this type of singing – while still just a teenager – Watts complained to his father about the quality of their hymns. His father responded, “Well then, why don’t you write something better?”

So he did. He wrote some 750 songs by the end of his life, among them such enduring classics as “Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?” and “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.” We probably think of those as eloquent, magisterial hymns today, but they were not universally appreciated then. Because of his departure from the Psalms and, at times, deeply personal lyrics – he speaks of himself (even in those two titles), his sin, his gratitude – Watts was considered quite radical (an excellent reminder that all old songs were once new songs, viewed with suspicion; we might think of that when we are introduced to new songs or when trying to cast aside the old ones, for that matter). But his compositions have endured, not only because of their beauty, but because they are bursting at the seams with Scripture.

That is certainly the case with “Joy to the World,” the most popular Christmas hymn in North America. Watts wrote this for his 1719 hymnal, *Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Applied to the Christian State and Worship*. His purpose was to take the Psalms and read them with the eye of faith from the perspective of a Christian, paraphrasing all but a dozen of the 150 Psalms. This one is from **Psalm 98**, now read with a Christological interpretation: the source of joy is the coming of the king, who will rule over the nations.

We owe a great debt to Isaac Watts for his contribution to congregational singing. As he put it in the preface to another of his hymnals, “While we sing the praises of God in His Church, we are employed in that part of worship which of all others is the nearest akin to heaven, and ‘tis pity that this of all others should be performed worst upon earth.” May we all take our worship in song as seriously as Watts did. And may we all make a joyful noise to the Lord in response.

*Bryant Perkins*

## ***“Stand Firm in...Liberty”***

is the weekly bulletin of the Liberty Church of Christ 3201 North Main, Liberty Texas 77575  
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