



Southside Baptist Church
11th Ave. & 19th St. South
Birmingham, AL 35205

"Building an Inclusive Community of Grace"



SOUTHSIDE COLUMNS

December 2016 Vol. 2 No. 12

Advent, Christmas and Epiphany

Signs of the season are all around us, and what a wonderful season it is. Our hearts warm in anticipation of family gatherings and celebrations with friends. I imagine that you, like me, find that your calendar now contains numerous events for which you are committed. Each year, I remind myself to find a way to really experience, as best I can, the days of Advent in meaningful ways; however, year after year I find myself filling the days with tasks and events that rout out my best intentions. The celebration of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany involves much more than the nativity of Jesus, although, that is certainly central and foundational. It involves the wonder and mystery of God's activity in caring for and nurturing his creation. This season calls for us to consider all that God has done throughout all time, what God is doing today, and what God promises to accomplish in the future. This season is a time to prepare our hearts and minds through prayer, introspection, confession, and thanksgiving. It is a time to decisively turn away from the clutter and noise in our lives and pray for a renewed spirit. To remove the obstacles that hinder his coming in our life or that prevent us from seeing God's work around us and even in us. It is a time to

take to heart the words of the prophet Isaiah, *A voice of one calling in the wilderness, Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him, by opening our lives to the love, power and grace of our Lord.*

We are asked time and again to view the past, present and future through the lens of a merciful and loving God who through the Incarnation became "God with Us" and desires for everyone to experience fully the transforming power of his presence. Yes, we are to celebrate with thanksgiving the birth of Jesus the Christ Child, his resurrected presence with us daily, and the promise of his coming again.

This is indeed a wonderful, glorious and awe-filled season.



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HAPPENING AT SOUTHSIDE



You are invited to our church-wide
Christmas Party!
Wednesday, December 14th
5:30pm in Drennen Hall



Experience our Christmas Eve Service
and Candlelight Communion.
Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th
5:00pm in the Sanctuary

