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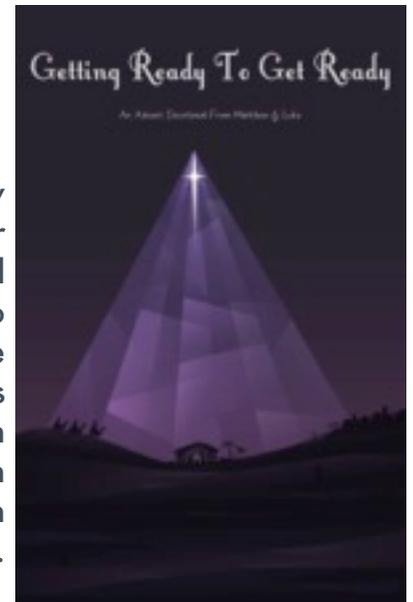
## Calendar And Events

- December 1: Student Ministries Service Project - Operation Christmas Child and Salvation Army.
- December 2: Sunday Worship Service @ 9:00 a.m., (Agape Meal; No Sunday School). First Sunday of Advent, children lighting advent Candles.
- December 5: Student Ministry Gathering (grade 6-12) @ 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Handke.
- December 8: Foundation Builders 2 Parenting Class @ the Feders Home. 9:30a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Babysitting available. RSVP by 12/6.
- December 9: Sunday Worship Service @ 9:00 a.m., Sunday School, Children Lighting Advent Candles.
- December 12: Student Ministry Gathering (grade 6-12) @ 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., Handke.
- December 15: Student Ministry Christmas Party @ 5:00 p.m., Aleckson's home.
- December 16: Sunday Worship Service @ 9:00 a.m., Sunday School, Children Lighting Advent Candles.
- December 19: No Student Ministry Gathering (grade 6-12).
- December 23: Sunday Worship Service @ 9:00 a.m., No Sunday School, Children Lighting Advent Candles.
- December 24: Christmas Eve Service @ 5-6 p.m., Handke
- December 26: No Student Ministry Gathering.
- December 28: Student Ministry Scavenger Hunt @ MOA. Time TBD.
- December 30: Sunday Worship Service @ 9:00 a.m., No Sunday School.



## Resource Highlights:

This family devotional for advent was created by Pastor Kevin to help you treasure Christ this Christmas. You can pick up a copy on Amazon.com or on Sunday at Church. This resource is written to be usable for a wide range of ages.



See more details on page two for the upcoming Winter Retreat for students Grade 6-12. This is always a great weekend to build friendships and study God's Word. We are partnering again with a really great group from Christ Redeemer Church (CRC) in Woodbury, a fellow TCT church.

# DECEMBER EVENTS AND NEWS

## CELEBRATING ADVENT

December 2 - December 24

Children will be lighting Advent Candles during the worship service on December 2, 9, 16, 23 and on the 24th.

GCF Kids will also be singing for us in our December 23rd worship service.

## STUDENT MINISTRIES SERVICE PROJECT - DECEMBER 1

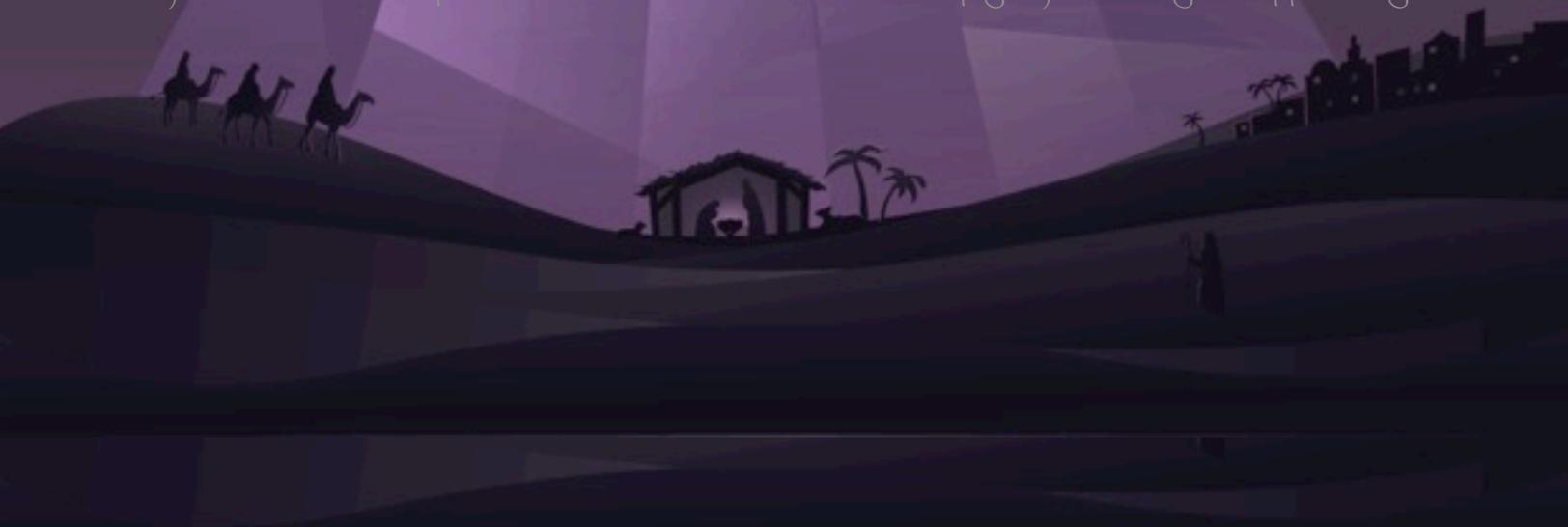
Students age 13 and up are invited to join us for a service project on Saturday, December 1. We will be packing shoeboxes with Operation Christmas Child. Meet at church office at Noon. Those under age 13 are invited to serve The Salvation Army at Coborns in Albertville from 3-5p.m. All students are invited back to the Feder's house for dinner and a movie after serving.

## STUDENT MINISTRIES SCAVENGER HUNT AT MOA

Students grade 6-12 are invited to the annual scavenger hunt at MOA on December 28. Adult volunteers needed. We will depart from the church office at 12:30 p.m. and head to the mall. Weather permitting, we will end our evening in Maple Grove with ice skating (free with your own skates). Bring \$5 for gas, money for dinner at the mall and skate rental if needed.

## STUDENT MINISTRIES WINTER RETREAT

Mark your calendars for the upcoming Winter Retreat at Lake Beauty Bible Camp, January 11-13, 2019. This year GCF will be partnering with a fellow TCT church called Christ Redeemer Church in Woodbury. The cost of the weekend is \$135 per camper and includes everything from Friday through Sunday afternoon. Scholarships available. We don't want cost to keep you from this great opportunity.



## MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

**Volunteer Needed:** Do you know how GCF has a rose for newborn infants at the church? Pastor Kevin could use some help with this task. If you are fairly in-tune with babies being born in our congregation and you have a heart to serve, please contact Pastor Kevin.

### Prayer (from Psalm 112:5-10)

It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice. For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD. His heart is steady; he will not be afraid, until he looks in triumph on his adversaries. He has distributed freely; he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever; his horn is exalted in honor. The wicked man sees it and is angry; he gnashes his teeth and melts away; the desire of the wicked will perish!

*Father in heaven, we thank you for your steadfast love and your promises to your people. Jesus, you are a solid rock for us to build our parenting upon and you are a solid rock for our children to build their lives upon. May they do so, even from a very young age we pray that you will demonstrate your steadfast love to them. Give them eyes to see that what you promise always comes to pass. May they never be moved. We pray they would love justice and never be afraid of bad news. Cause them to be firm in heart, trusting the LORD all of their days so that they can confidently say "if God is for me, who can stand against?" Honor your people for your name's sake. Amen.*

### Blog - [www.gcfmn.blogspot.com](http://www.gcfmn.blogspot.com)

If you go through my advent devotional titled Getting Ready To Get Ready you will glean some of the very same thoughts I am expounding on here, particularly as we get to Mary and Joseph.

The reality is there is a lot of intrigue around the way God worked in and through this couple. For starters, it is probable that Mary was between 12-14 years old and Joseph just a few years older. Isn't it a little bit of a wonder that God would choose someone so young to carry such a huge responsibility? Perhaps it is fitting with the overall narrative: Jesus was born in lowly town of Bethlehem in a stable that was cold and smelly and noisy from the animals. Oh, and he was carried by a young teenage girl who didn't even have her drivers license yet. And the shadiness and difficulty doesn't stop there. Let me point out a few more things surrounding the birth of Christ that might help us to appreciate the meaning of Jesus entering the world.

#### **Jesus Inherits A Bad Genealogy**

You probably wouldn't like it much if your genealogy was recorded as clearly as it was for Jesus and publicized. Interestingly, Matthew records Jesus' genealogy and there are five women that are included. Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary. The Bible isn't sexist, as some people say. The reason women were excluded from genealogies is simply that Jewish custom was to record family lines through the fathers. Yet there are five women mentioned when it isn't customary to do so.

You will also notice that all five women highlight controversy. Tamar was raped, Rahab was a prostitute, Ruth was not an Israelite, Bathsheba (the wife of Uriah) was an adulteress, and Mary was blameless yet mistaken as a fornicator. In other words, you wouldn't go out of your way to include these women, especially when it wasn't customary to do so in the first place. One is left wondering...

*Visit the GCF blog to continue reading.*