



DECEMBER 2025

Dates to Remember

- * 10th - BOP Luncheon 11AM
- * 11th - Senior Christmas Light Tour
- * 13th - Worship Ministry Dress Rehearsal 10:00 AM
- * 14th - Worship Ministry Christmas Presentation 11AM
- * 18th - Pastor's Book Club @ Smyrna 11:30 AM
- * 22nd - Deacon's Meeting @ 6:30 PM
- * 24th - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 5PM

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PASTOR'S CORNER

As we enter the month of December, I look back on an absolutely incredible year of ministry and growth at Smyrna. God has given us many gifts, and His desire is that we praise Him for all that He has done. I do think it wise, and necessary, to praise the Lord for all that He has done but I don't want to write this entry for the purpose of recounting all of the temporary things that God is doing. Don't get me wrong, it is right and good to thank the Lord for the fruit we are seeing but it is also important that we remember that the ultimate gift God has given us is eternal in nature. Let's take a moment to reflect upon these things together.

I suppose I have a particular subset of our congregation in mind today. There are some of you who are grieving in this season, perhaps for the very first time. If that's you, I want to remind you that the birth of Christ is actually not the pinnacle event of our faith. While it was good, and necessary, that Jesus take on flesh and dwell among us, the purpose of His living was to die and subsequently to rise again. Jesus' life commenced on the first Christmas morning, but His life's goal was not fulfilled until three decades later when He emerged from the tomb on the first Easter morning and it is this resurrection that makes the joy of Christmas robust.

Dear grieving believer, remember that your hope is anchored in a future, eternal life. Paul said it this way, "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:20-23).

As you sit around the tree and open presents without someone that you dearly love, remember that those who are in Christ have every reason to hope in a future reunion! This does not mean that grief will disappear, but it does mean that grief is undergirded by hope and that hope will not disappoint! The greatest present mankind has ever received is salvation and that salvation is finally and fully realized when we are resurrected to rule and reign with Christ forever. The day of our reunion with Christ is coming but until that moment, remember that God loves you and He has made a way for you to enjoy Him forever. This is why we can celebrate through the tears, and I pray the Spirit comforts you with these truths until He wipes away those tears from your eyes forever.

Blessings,
Pastor Aaron



Dear Smyrna Family,

Oh, my heart is full this Sunday afternoon as I type. The Homeschool Bazaar is being so well attended, I just know so many of our families and children are being encouraged. Pastor Aaron just finished his wonderful sermon on Exodus 10 about an hour ago, and boy, were we challenged, encouraged, and reminded of the necessity to tell our stories of God's faithfulness through the amazing stories of the Bible, as well as in our own personal lives. We do this so that the generations who come behind us will know of our God's greatness that they too might believe and follow Him.

We are so used to hearing good sermons that I hope we never take for granted the blessing that the preaching of God's Word is here at Smyrna. As we were leaving today, Ricardo said, "Pastor, this church is on fire." I believe that he is correct. I hesitate to say that we are on the verge of "revival," because in many ways we have continued to see and experience the gracious hand of God in powerful ways in the lives of our people for quite some time now. But then, there are those times like this morning when the Spirit just appears to move in a way that is unusual even for us.

As I watched individuals and couples approach the altar one at a time to kneel before the Lord and to pray, I literally fell apart. When Brad, as he was singing "Abide", just stopped and said I can't sing as his heart and mind filled with memories of our dear friend Chris Jones, who went to be with the Lord back on January 8th this year, I thought I would fall out. They were beautiful tears and expressions of love, of pain, of gratitude, and of hope in the promises of God. Dear church family, I am so thankful that we are family and that we get to share these moments together.

Even as I believe God has shown so much favor on our church family, I do believe He gave us just a little more visibility through a window into heaven of what life can be like when we all surrender, seek to restore, let go of old hurts, and desire more of Him. Beloved don't ever forget that God is gracious to forgive us for the mistakes (sins) we've committed at times in our lives, and He is able to "restore the years the locust have eaten" in judgment against our disobedience (Joel 2:25). Our job is to be certain that we do not allow emotions, convictions, and decisions to fade as the days go by. Joel said, "Yet even now, declares the Lord, return to Me with all your heart...and rend your heart and not your garments. Now return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in mercy" (Joel 2:12-13). God bless you, dear church family, as we continue to pursue the Lord, follow Him with all our hearts, and keep on loving each other. I love you dearly. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Humbly,
Pastor Robert



happy new year

My book for November was titled Authority, and it was written by Jonathan Leeman. He is the president of 9Marks, a parachurch ministry that exists to help pastors build healthy churches. In this work, Leeman provides a foundation for what good authority looks like in different stages and areas of life.

It is a daunting task to take on such a wide-reaching topic. Leeman teaches about authority from many different angles. He covers the authority of husbands and parents. He also addresses the authority of managers, pastors, and governments. This is a beneficial book for anyone to read. I say this because all of us are under some form of authority, even those who are the authority figures. The clarity that Leeman brings to this topic comes from a solid biblical foundation.

Some of the most powerful words in this book come from his section on parenting. He talks about discipline and consequences, as well as play time and being engaged with your children. He does not sugar-coat the challenging times of parenting. However, in all of this the following words about parents and their children were the most impactful for me. "Yet we also love them most by pointing them to the Beloved Son. In fact, we don't love them at all unless we love them with respect to Christ. Our love is no match for his and they need His love more than ours." The full quote is worth the read. Stop by my office if you are interested in reading it. The book is on my desk, and the quote is highlighted on pages 194-195.

Parents, I want to leave you with some words of encouragement. Many of you are living out the truths Leeman has written about. I see it as you walk the halls of our church and interact with your children. When I hear the kids reciting their verses in the Sparks AWANA class, I know your dedication to teach them is having an impact. When I teach Sunday School, I get to interact with high schoolers who are growing deeper in their faith as a result of your influence in their lives. I am just beginning my journey as a father. I want you to know that you have encouraged me and impacted me by the way you are faithfully raising your children. Thank you for your example!

Sincerely,

Daniel Watson

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YOUTH

Today's youth entry is really just a reminder of some of what is coming down the tracks in December and January. We are looking forward to our annual Youth Christmas Party on Wednesday December 17th. As always, this is a great time of food and fellowship and our prayer is that your student will be involved. We provide the food and drinks and games, all that your student needs to bring is a gift for the gift swap (10 dollars or less). If, for some reason, you are unable to bring a gift, we will have some available so that every student can be involved!

Additionally, please note the high school outing which is planned for January. Scan the QR code below to register!

Blessings,
Aaron Bobo

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH DAY TRIP TO A LIBERTY BASKETBALL GAME

DELAWARE

VS

LIBERTY

24th January 2026 | 6:00 PM
Liberty University

TICKETS ARE \$25 PER PERSON

THE CHURCH WILL PRE-PURCHASE TICKETS ON DEC. 4TH TO BE ABLE TO GET THIS DISCOUNTED RATE AND SEATS TOGETHER.

ALL ARE INVITED!!

IF SOME YOUTH ARE INTERESTED IN GOING EARLIER ON THAT DAY, RYAN CLAY AND MACKENZIE GAMMON CAN SHOW THEM AROUND CAMPUS.

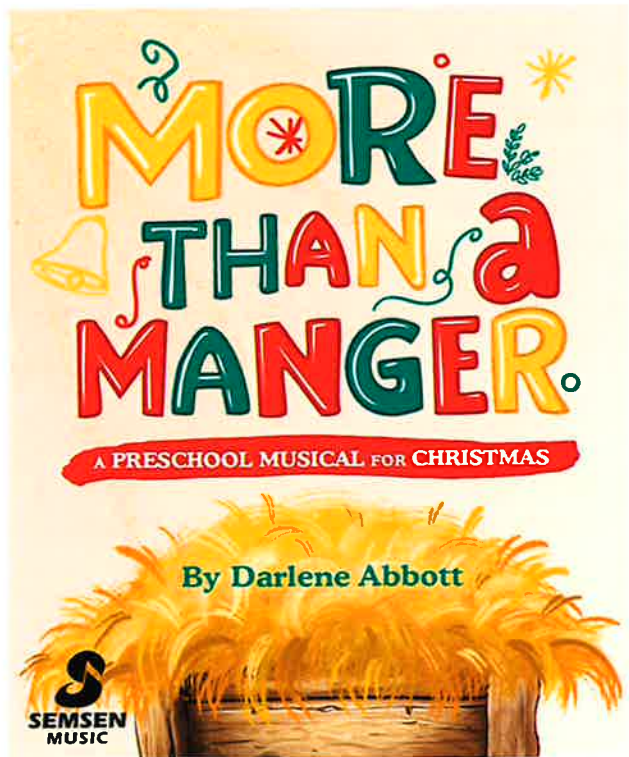
DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH!

SCAN QR CODE FOR
MORE DETAILS



It's hard to believe December is already here! We have been hard at work on our Christmas music presentations! Please invite your family, friends and neighbors on Dec. 14, at 11 a.m. Not only will we sing about Christ's birth, but the entire gospel message will be presented in song! The adults, teens and children will be leading in worship that day and then on Dec. 21, at 11 a.m. our preschoolers will open the service with a special musical presentation. It is our desire that these presentations will help keep the focus on the true meaning of Christmas as we worship together and carry on the message of Christ's birth in our home and community.

There will be no rehearsals Dec. 17-Dec. 31 for the worship choir, band or Kids choir. The preschoolers will rehearse, parents will receive a notification of date and time from Carla Temple. We will resume January 7, 2026.



“Let the world sing gloria, the light has come our death undone in wondrous love. Let the world sing, gloria, the Kingdom comes to everyone our God with us, sing gloria.”

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14

May your family enjoy a blessed Christmas and a very happy New Year!

Singing His Praise,
Melodie Parsons & Brad Perkinson

Hello Families,

December has arrived—a season of wonder, worship, and celebration! As we reflect on all God has done this fall, our hearts overflow with gratitude. Now we look with anticipation toward the miracle of Christmas: the arrival of our Savior, the light in every season, and the hope that anchors our hearts.

★ A Season Filled with Joy

Our ministry is buzzing with excitement as children learn the story of Jesus' birth—the greatest gift we have ever received. Through songs, Scripture, and hands-on learning, our kids are discovering that Christmas is more than twinkling lights and wrapped presents... its God's love made visible!

Thank you, parents and volunteers, for investing so faithfully in their growing faith. Every moment matters, and this season offers rich opportunities to point young hearts to Jesus.

✿ A Warm Check-In Reminder

As we head into the Christmas season, our building will be filled with extra joy—and extra visitors! We absolutely love welcoming new families, grandparents, and friends during this special time of year.

Because of this, we want to make sure every child in our ministry is safe, accounted for, and cared for from the moment they arrive. One of the simplest and most helpful ways you can support this is by checking your child in every single week.

Using the check-in system:

- Helps us match each child with the right adult at pick-up
- Ensures we can quickly reach you if your child needs you
- Gives our Security Team a proactive and accurate picture of who is in our ministry spaces and creates a safer environment for *all* our children—especially on busy Sundays with lots of guests.

Your faithfulness in checking in isn't just a routine—it's a partnership. Together, we're creating a safe, welcoming space where kids can learn, worship, and grow with confidence and joy!

✿ Winter Break Schedule & Sunday Programming

- **Last AWANA Night of December:** December 17
- **AWANA Resumes:** January 7

Sunday Programming Continues: Nursery, Preschool, and Elementary classes will remain open each Sunday.

We also want to encourage families to have their littles join you in the service on December 14 so they can watch their friends perform and experience the Christmas musical as a family. These moments create beautiful memories and help children feel included in the life of the church. At the same time, please know that Children's Church will still be available during the service for those who need it. Whether your child sits with you or attends Children's Church, we're grateful to partner with you in creating a meaningful and joy-filled Christmas worship experience.

▮ How to Pray This Month

As we approach Christmas, would you join us in praying for:

- **Our children:** That they experience the true meaning of Christmas—Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us.
- **Our families:** That homes are filled with peace, connection, and joy amid full schedules.
- **Our volunteers:** That they find rest, renewal, and encouragement in this season of giving.
- **Our Christmas program:** That it blesses our church family and points every heart toward Christ.

✦ A Closing Blessing

As Christmas draws near, may your heart be warmed by God's faithfulness, your home filled with joy, and your spirit renewed with the hope only Jesus can bring. My prayer is that in the midst of traditions, gatherings, and celebrations, you'll sense His presence in every moment!

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given..." —Isaiah 9:6

With Gratitude and joy,
Erica Chaplin



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:45 am - Sunday School
 11:00 am - Worship Service
 6:00 pm - Smyrna U classes

DECEMBER 2025

BIRTHDAYS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Wyatt Leshar	4	5 Jan Chappell	6 Girls Day Out @ Old Towne Petersburg 9AM
7 Jack Bowers	8 Drew Berry Adi Brewer	9 Elizabeth Bobo Sarrah Healy David Marston	10 BOP Luncheon @ 11 AM	11 Magie Bowers Danna Gammon Willi Kennedy Layla Montgomery Megan Wells	12	13 Worship Ministry & Kids Choir - Dress Rehearsal @ 10AM Cheyenne Rusek
14  Worship Ministry Presentation 11:00 AM service	15	16 Leigh Dimiao Sid Wood	17 Sarah Brewer Holly McCaffity	18 Pastor's Book Club - 11:30AM @ Smyrna	19 Kim Davis	20 Natalia Trimarco
21	22 Deacon's Mtg @ 6:30 PM Lilly Miller	23 Angel Dahowski Harvey Tarleton	24  Candlelight Service @ 5:00 PM	25  William Barton	26 Candi Cornett Judy Schmidt Ryker Williams	27 Kaylee Sneade
28 Neely Lowery	29 Shannon Williamson	30 Luke Perkinson Colton Spain Jan Thomason	31 No Evening Activities Jeff Cobb Ruby Green Rick Mohr	 <p>Senior Adult Holiday Events Dec. 11th - Christmas Light Tour at Lewis Ginter Gardens Dec. 18th - Progressive Dinner Details coming soon!</p>		



★ ★ WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

5:30-6:15 - Dinner
 6:00 - 6:30 - Kids Choir
 6:30 - 7:30 - Mid-Week Bible Study
 6:30 - 8:00 - AWANA, Youth & Worship Ministry Practice
 8:15 - 9:00 - Youth/Adult Choir Practice

NO regular evening activities on Wednesday, December 24th & 31st..



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MISSION STATEMENT

Smyrna Baptist Church exists for the purpose of building up a community of fully equipped believers who give glory to God with every aspect of their lives.

December 2025 - Children's volunteer schedule

DATE	9:30 - 10:45		10:45 - 12:15				
	CHECK-IN DESK	NURSERY	CHECK-IN DESK	NURSERY	1'S & 2'S	3'S	CHILDREN'S CHURCH
7 th	Angie Adkins	Krista Jones	Chuck Page	Amelia Servis	April Green	Jennifer Miller	Brad & Ashley Perkinson
14 th	Rudy Etheredge	Angel Dahowski	Amanda Joyner	Lisa Barnhouse	Nathan & Brooke Daniels	Faith Driggers	Jamie Morini
21 st	Kim Davis	Andrea Peavyhouse	Kim Davis	Meredith Outlaw	Kristen Berry & Laura Foley		Amie Davila & Megan Demaline
28 th	Angie Chappell	David & Mykalah Tench	Danna Gammon	Ashley Bobo	Brittney Chappell	Sarah Brewer	

SMYRNA 'U' CHILDREN'S VOLUNTEERS

Dec 7 th -	Ashley Elder & Laura Hoyle
Dec 14 th -	Angel Dahowski & Ashley Perkinson
Dec 21 st	Ashley Bobo



SS Class Dinner Schedule

- ◇ 3rd - Middle School Youth
- ◇ 10th - Families in Fellowship
- ◇ 17th - Refocus on Christ
- ◇ 24th & 31st - No Meal - Christmas & New Year's Holidays



AT A GLANCE

December 2025



SUN
14

Worship Ministry Presents
Let the World Sing Gloria
 11:00 AM worship service

Pastor's Book Club

11:30 AM
 Smyrna Baptist Church youth room



THU
18



WED
24

Candlelight Service

5:00 PM
 No other evening activities

No Wednesday Evening
 Activities



WED
31

