



Shermont Baptist Church

December 2025 Newsletter



Senior Pastor: *Rev. Ryan Riley*

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Ryan's Reflections

Chippie the parakeet never saw it coming. One second, he was peacefully perched in his cage. The next he was sucked in, washed up, and blown over.

The problems began when Chippie's owner decided to clean Chippie's cage with a vacuum cleaner. She removed the attachment from the end of the hose and stuck it in the cage. The phone rang, and she turned to pick it up. She'd barely said "hello" when "ssssopp!" and little Chippie got sucked in.

The bird owner gasped, put down the phone, turned off the vacuum, and opened the bag. There was Chippie -- still alive, but a bit stunned.

Since the bird was covered with dust and soot, she grabbed him and raced to the bathroom, turned on the faucet, and held Chippie under the running water. Then, realizing that Chippie was soaked and shivering, she did what any compassionate bird owner would do . . . she reached for the hair dryer and blasted the pet with hot air.

Poor Chippie never knew what hit him.

A few days after the trauma, the reporter who'd initially written about the event contacted Chippie's owner to see how the bird was recovering. "Well," she replied, "Chippie doesn't sing much anymore -- he just sits and stares."

It's hard not to see why. Sucked in, washed up, and blown over . . . That's enough to steal the song from the stoutest heart!

What Chippie didn't realize, and perhaps we sometimes forget, is that we have One who is always watching over us, caring for us, and knows how *to work all things to the good of those who love Him*.

Chippie went through quite an ordeal, for sure. Perhaps you've been through a lot, too. This Christmas season let's try not to focus on the trials as much as the One who has seen us through them; not the isolation as much as the One who is with us always; and not on the gifts we still need to get and wrap, but on the gift He gave us so long ago: Emmanuel, God with us.

And may that promise from our God restore our hearts, our souls, and our song to praise our God for His mercy, grace, and the gift of His only begotten Son, Jesus.

Thankful to be singing alongside you,

Pastor Ryan



**Spread the word and invite your family,
friends, coworkers, and neighbors
to our Christmas Cantata**

“Behold Our God”

**on Thursday December 11th 6:30 pm
and Sunday December 14th 10:30 am**

The message of Christmas calls us to come and truly behold our God and Savior who is our Hope for today, and forevermore.

When we behold our God, we lift our eyes and catch a glimpse of His glory and majesty.

When we behold our God, we taste and see the beauty of His love and care for us.

When we behold our God, we experience the peace and hope He freely gives.

When we behold our God, we see ourselves as sons and daughters of the Father.

When we behold our God, we can't help but anticipate the day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is the King of kings and Lord of lords!

Just as Mary, Joseph, the kings, the shepherds, and the angels and heavenly hosts beheld the glory of God through the birth of Christ first-hand, the invitation to behold our God is here for us today. Will we gaze and observe with care the meaning of the season? Will we stop and see with understanding all that God desires for us? Will we fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith, and declare that the gospel is as powerful and life-changing today than it's ever been?

Will we humbly... yet boldly

BEHOLD OUR GOD?

(narration taken from Behold created and arranged by John Bolin)

I am Singing for Jesus,

Ellen



December Birthdays

Dec 1	Suzanne Carlton	Dec 21	Nancy Dalton
Dec 2	Channing Warren	Dec 22	Jensen Ford
Dec 4	Bobby Pleasant	Dec 26	Bobby Jones, Mackenzie Rouse, Natalie Rouse, Kiley Sheets
Dec 6	Beth Cassell	Dec 27	Susie Scott
Dec 9	Mary Hankins, Kathy McDaniel	Dec 28	Nelda Harris
Dec 10	Ron Gammon	Dec 29	Aaron Presley
Dec 14	Jackie Pleasant	Dec 30	Lily Harper
Dec 16	Mary Crider	Dec 31	Butch McDaniel
Dec 17	Nancy Cassada, David Collins		
Dec 19	Ezra Riley, Denise Smart		

Happy Birthday to All!

Library Spotlight—Patsy Poteat

Even though you will probably be busy in December with lots of family, fun, and food, you might want to carve out a little while to relax and enjoy a good book. Here are some suggestions:

If you are like me, you like to find an author you enjoy and then read whatever you can find that he or she wrote. This month I am suggesting Lisa Wingate. You might remember her from her bestseller *The Book of Lost Friends*. The library now has a number of her books, including *Larkspur Cove*, *Blue Moon Bay*, *Firefly Island*, and *Wildwood Creek*.

For teens, I would like to suggest *Mighty God Girls* and *A Boy After God's Own Heart*. These may offer you some insight into dealing with the issues in the world today.

Finally, on a more serious note, some nonfiction works look interesting. They include: *A Life Beyond Amazing* and *Everything You Need* by Dr. David Jeremiah, along with Francis Schaeffer's *How Should We Then Live*.

Please drop by the library on Sunday mornings or Wednesday nights and look for something that appeals to you.

If you have any suggestions, please let someone on the library committee know!

Happy reading!

Patsy Poteat



Channing and I were recently in a department store, and I could not help but take note of the vast array of Christmas decorations that were present right as we entered the store. Not only did I note the volume present, but I also noted the amount that had been sold. Some ornaments were no longer available, certain Christmas shirt sizes sold out, and empty shelves of Santa figurines just to name a few items. Through the years, our society seems to steadily move Christmas preparation up; it's the time of the year that we cannot wait to celebrate due to the nostalgia, beautiful décor, cheery music, and festivities. Of course, the Christmas preparation in which we all participate is driven by the commercialization of our society; retail businesses know their customers and know how much this time of year means to them. Make no mistake, our culture did not begin earlier Christmas prepping because it is excited to celebrate the birth of Christ; rather, the engine of large retailer advertisement and profit has caused the increase in excitement and has influenced us to start earlier.

Now, despite this seemingly cynical viewpoint of Christmas, it should spur a question for all of us: why do we not possess the same joy and spark regarding the coming of Christ all year around? Why do we need big box retailers to put us in "the Christmas Spirit"? This season is a time where we remember and thank our Creator for coming to this Fallen world to reconcile us unto Himself. We remember that our Savior was wrapped in swaddling clothes, the same clothes in which the Passover lamb was wrapped as it was prepared for sacrifice. We remember that He was destined to die as that was the plan of the Father so that we could again tabernacle with Him. During this season, let us not just celebrate His birth, but let us celebrate the Gospel itself. Jesus' ultimate glory was not His birth; His ultimate glorification was His death. In His death, Jesus fulfilled the prophecy, adhered to the Father's plan, and revealed who He is. He conquered this Fallen world and gave us a lifeline by which we could reunite with the Father. Through His sacrifice, a new world was created, a world in which we can now experience our Father through the Holy Spirit and eventually spend eternity with Him. The Christmas story is the second creation story as the second Adam came so that we could then participate in the third creation story: a new heaven and new earth with our Creator. It should remind us that what Christ did is both now and not yet. Let us keep the words of Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones in mind this season: "You're not going to understand Christmas unless you understand Calvary."

Yours in Christ,

Colby Warren, Chairman





November Highlights

- Thank you, church family, for your unwavering support of the **“Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry.”** Your prayers and giving are not just a part, but the heart of this ministry's success. Your efforts will bring joy and hope to countless recipients. Please continue to lift the Shoebox ministry in prayer, trusting that the recipients of the boxes will be blessed.
- Thank you for supporting the **“Good News Ministry Bags.”** The money collected during our Thanksgiving service was used to purchase Hershey's bars and a few other necessary items. These bags, given to inmates and deputies during the Christmas season, are not just gifts, but powerful tools to demonstrate God's love to others. We pray that they will spark life-changing conversations and plant seeds that will grow the kingdom of God.

Wow! How can it be December already? I've always been told that the older you get, the faster time goes, and boy, do I believe that statement to be true!

December Missions

The primary focus for December is the **“Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.”** What a fitting way to celebrate the Christmas season than to support the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, which has profoundly impacted countless lives and missionaries worldwide. Together, let us continue to be part of the light through the “Lottie Moon Christmas Offering!”

Shermont's goal for 2025 is \$15,000.00! Every dollar you give becomes more than a gift; together, it brings hope and light. One hundred percent of your offering supports missionaries who carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. This Christmas, have the light of Christ shine on others. Together, we can shine in the darkest places.

Let's continue to pray for our own **missionaries Ross & Erin Riley, and their family**, as they will soon be leaving us once again, being obedient to God's calling on their lives. What a blessing it has been to have them back with us at Shermont and to be able to hear first-hand how it is to serve in Africa and the impact they have had on others by being able to share the gospel with others who otherwise may never have been told about the love of our Savior! Ross, Erin, Macey, Ezra, Jude, & Hazel, you all are loved and prayed for daily!

Serving Together With Each Of You,

Amanda Crews

“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3: 13-14 (NIV)

Christmas Knight

'Twas the night before Christmas... but it was also the arrival of Christmas Knight. So often we think of a cute, quiet baby wrapped in clean cloths, but something far greater was happening. Imagine you pick up a book that has bottles, blankets, and baby toys on the cover—only to open it and discover an epic tale of a knight sent to conquer an evil empire and set captives free.

From the beginning, God promised a Champion who would crush the serpent (Genesis 3:15). Christmas is the moment that Warrior arrived! Without armor or sword, this baby would one day bring His enemies to their knees.

My challenge to you is to keep the real magic of Christmas at the forefront of your family's minds. The truth is so much greater than fiction, and it's worth celebrating with joy, awe, and wonder!

Events



Christmas Party/ Escape Rooms!

Youth on Saturday, December 6th— we are doing another escape room for this Christmas Party. Youth will meet at the church from **5:30-7:00pm**. During the Christmas Party, students can expect dinner and an escape room—all while we point them back to Jesus!

Children on Wednesday, December 17th
Parents, please join your little kids for this escape room/Christmas Party adventure!
Kids will meet at the church from **6:30-7:30pm**.

Family Movie Night

On December 19th, we invite families to join at Danville Cinemas to watch **David**. The church will purchase the tickets for children who are at the theatre by 4:15pm. (the movie start time is 4:45pm)



In Christ,
Dylan