



Screven Baptist Association
many churches, one mission.



THE DIGEST

Volume X Issue 10

December 2017

For to us a child is born...



..to us a son is given
Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

Christmas Giving

I love the Christmas season. The decorations, the gathering of friends and family, the music and the retelling of the Christ Child being born. I think for most people Christmas is a time centered around gift giving. I also love to give and receive gifts at Christmas. Some of my fondest memories are centered around Christmas morning as a child. The anticipation and excitement of seeing what was under the tree was almost overwhelming. That childhood joy and delight of Christmas morning still warms my heart.

When we look at the Biblical story of Christmas we see each of the key characters giving as well. Mary, Joseph, the angels, the shepherds and the wise men all gave something very special. However, their gifts are a little different than what is typically thought of at Christmas. Let's look at their gifts and allow their examples to guide us as we consider what gifts we might give this Christmas season.

Mary was a young girl excited by her preparations for marriage. Suddenly the angel Gabriel appeared to her and told her she would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit and give birth to Jesus. She was initially confused and overwhelmed. However, after hearing all the angel had to say, "Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." (Luke 1:38) Mary gave the gift of Submission to the Lord's will!

Joseph faced a terrible dilemma considering what to do when he found out the girl he was engaged to was pregnant. To marry her would open himself to ridicule and scorn from family and the community. However, after an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, everything changed. "When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife." (Matt. 1:24) Joseph gave the gift of Obedience!

An angel of the Lord along with a multitude of angels appeared to the shepherds to announce to them the Birth of Jesus. After the announcement, "13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." The angels gave the gift of Praise and glorified God!

The shepherds were awestruck when they saw the angels. It was an amazing and terrifying sight. After hearing the angel's announcement, they quickly went to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby lying in a manger. "17 After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. 18 All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished." The shepherds gave the gift of Witness to what they had seen and heard!

The wise men had come such a long way following a star. They continued to follow the star until it stopped over where Jesus lived. "10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! 11 They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matthew 2:10-11) The wise men gave precious and costly Gifts!

Each Christmas season the Lord God Himself should be at the top of our gift giving list. I hope you will consider giving gifts to Him like those in the Christmas story gave. Submission to His will. Obedience to His Word. Praise and glory to His Name. Witness to His love gift to us, the Gospel message. And finally, the most precious and costly gift we have is our life. Let's give it unreservedly to Him. Giving gifts as these will give us great joy and delight this season.

Merry Christmas!

James Holliday



Prisoner Packets—644 FROM 15 Screven Churches
24,806 Christmas packets for SCDC inmates and 460 for DJJ



From the Director of Church and Community Ministries

Susan Harris sharris@screvenbaptist.org

It seems like just yesterday it was the beginning of spring, but yet here it is...The Christmas season! As we rush through the seasons, just to get to the next one, I wonder if Mary and Joseph ever felt rushed? I'm sure the urgency of finding a place for Mary to give birth was traumatic, and afterwards the need to escape the city was terrible, but I can only imagine the sweet moments of her looking into baby Jesus' eyes. What must she have felt? What about Joseph? Did they really know what life was ahead of them? As I ponder this while I can hardly catch my breath to get it all done, I am reminded God gives us the calming peace when we let Him steer our thoughts. Is He guiding you today? I pray you will find peace and rest this Christmas season to really relish in the joy of what it's all about.

This season of giving was tremendous for the Screven Churches. Not only did you provide so much hurricane relief supplies and monetary donations in the fall but continued that generosity for the prison ministry. This I believe was a record year for new toys given and for prison packets collected. The MacDougall Toy Shop was a huge success! Over 450 toys were collected by 11 churches. Ninety –Seven men were able to send gifts to 225 children. Twenty-six volunteers from 10 churches helped the men pick out age appropriate gifts, wrapped them, and packaged them all for shipping. The boxes were then taken to the Dorchester Post Office to be mailed directly to the children. After the gifts were wrapped and ready for shipping, the inmates of MacDougall served us a meal. This was a first! The men have been so touched and thankful that this ministry exists; they wanted to do something to show their appreciation. This was paid for out of their own pockets! After the meal, several wanted to speak and give testimonials of the positive effect the toys have on their family. One man said he was able to share in his son's first fish because he was able to send his son a fishing rod for Christmas. Now I'm sure as you are reading this you are not tearing up, but let me just tell you, there was not a dry eye in the place after that! So I can say THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart for all the toys you send. One of the groups that brought toys this year was from the Children's Sunday School Class from Harristown Road Baptist Church. They are ages 3-8. They raised over \$400.00 by selling donuts, performing skits, and collecting donations. They then took the money as a group and picked out the toys and purchased them. Wow! Teaching the children about giving to others....what a win-win! I am thankful for all efforts to

collect toys throughout the Association. The extra toys will be used in several other local ministry projects through the Screven churches.

Then there were the prison packets.....our associational goal was 400. You crushed it with 644 received! Thank you to the wonderful leadership of our associational WMU and the church leadership who got the word delivered to the congregations and put these packets together. There are over 25,000 inmates incarcerated in South Carolina. This includes women's facilities and the Department of Juvenile Justice. As a collective goal the South Carolina Baptist Convention hopes to give one packet to each inmate in the state. I think that goal was reached.

(See pictures on page 3)

Thank you for your continued support of the ministries we have partnered together with this year. I look forward to serving with you in the coming year!

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Many Blessings

Susan



From the Director of Missions

Robert Bailey bbailey@screvenbaptist.org



Your associational staff works hard to strengthen our **existing churches**. Your Director of Missions visited 47 churches during 2017, trained three Pastor Search Committees, spoke on Associational Missions, participated in a Church Missions Fair, and led our churches in partnering with Lexington Baptist Association to assist Hurricane Irma victims. Your Associational staff loaded water, baby supplies, toiletries, medical supplies, and cleaning supplies onto a 17-foot truck and drove to Lexington Baptist Association and unloaded the supplies. These supplies were driven to Orlando, Florida to be distributed to an impoverished community impacted by the storm. In addition, our churches gave \$4,143 to Screven to be distributed for Hurricane Relief in Florida and \$2,125 worth of Visa gift cards were given for Florida relief. I am so grateful for your faithful giving in response to such human need.

However, **not all of our financial news is good news**. At the end of November, we are \$20,000 short of our 2017 budget. Our staff has done a good job of keeping our expenses level within our revenues. We are hopeful that December will be a good month of giving from our churches. Faithful programs and ministries of our association can only continue with the faithful support of our churches. Let me encourage each of our churches to increase their giving by **one percent** in 2018. That increase will enable our Associational staff to continue providing resources, leadership training, and support for our churches. We believe the association provides essential ministries and support that are vital to impacting our communities with the gospel. Next year can be a great year of ministry and mission with your faithful prayers, volunteer efforts, and financial support.

Finally, we encourage our churches to **partner with new churches in Baltimore, Maryland**. Our association is partnering with Agape Praise Fellowship in East Baltimore. We sent a mission team in May to support and encourage their pastor and leadership team. This new church celebrated its first anniversary in September. We are planning at least two mission trips to Baltimore in 2018. The first one is May 9-13,

2018. The second one is tentatively planned in June or July 2018. We encourage more of our churches to be involved in our Baltimore partnership.

Our associational staff is here to serve our churches. We want to see our churches impact their communities with gospel influence. We want to see you exercising your spiritual gifts in ministry and mission to schools, businesses, and to citizens living in your neighborhoods. May God bless you this Christmas..



Men's Ministry Meetings

7PM

January 15 Cordesville First Baptist
February 19 Givhans Baptist
March 19 Sandridge First Baptist
April 16 Changed Lives Ministry
May 21 Calvary Moncks Corner
June 18 Open

July 16 New Journey Community Ch
August 20 FBC Holly Hill
September 17 Cornerstone
October 15 Berkeley Baptist
November 19 Memorial Baptist
December no meeting

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Thank You for Your Faithful Financial Support!

	OCTOBER	YTD		OCTOBER	YTD
Berkeley	655.96	5,295.04	Mt. Zion	119.00	1,198.00
Bethel	258.55	2,163.62	North Trident	480.90	4,758.53
Beulah	0.00	750.00	Oakbrook, The Fellowship of	200.00	1,980.00
Bonneau First	0.00	2,166.31	Old Fort	3,061.00	36,940.88
Brookhaven	0.00	0.00	Old St. George	500.00	2,250.00
Calvary, Moncks Corner	784.00	8,534.00	Pleasant Grove	136.02	1,917.88
Calvary Pregnall	0.00	0.00	Providence	190.63	3,205.50
Chaparral	30.00	300.00	Reevesville	200.00	2,000.00
College Park	0.00	2,964.11	Ridge	0.00	0.00
Cordesville, First	429.60	3,231.68	Ridgeville	298.70	2,992.45
Corinth	200.00	2,000.00	St. John's Bethel	351.44	4,424.80
Crossroads	400.00	3,550.00	St. Matthews	208.33	2,230.77
Eutawville, First	100.00	1,250.00	St. Stephen, First	461.64	1,136.64
Faith	131.39	1,510.74	Salem	0.00	3,648.00
Gethsemane	0.00	0.00	Sandridge	0.00	2,246.25
Givhans	0.00	466.23	Sangaree Baptist Church	0.00	1,200.00
Harleyville, First	333.85	4,032.69	Santee Circle	167.00	1,501.98
Harristown Road	0.00	1,436.00	Summerville	2,138.26	23,491.40
Holly Hill, First	600.00	6,000.00	Tall Pines	252.00	2,692.00
Hopewell	0.00	0.00	Wassamassaw	2,191.67	10,783.03
Iglesia Nueva Vision	0.00	0.00	The Journey Church	1,250.00	3,750.00
Jamestown	175.00	700.00	Compass Church	316.66	621.22
Jedburg, First	1,124.91	6,944.98	Creekside Church	0.00	169.00
Knightsville	358.93	2,599.77	The Pines Church	200.00	600.00
Lighthouse Community	261.00	845.00	Solid Rock Ministries	1,121.00	7,521.00
Limestone	157.00	1,858.00	Cornerstone	150.00	1,497.00
Lydia	254.59	2,437.77	The Church at Cane Bay	0.00	2,450.00
Memorial	1,666.52	5,100.00	Ministerio Hispano de la Ridge	0.00	0.00
Midway	0.00	2,857.77	Trueway Missionary Baptist	0.00	0.00
Miles Road	0.00	4,000.00	Total Revenues	22,665.55	209,280.65
Moncks Corner, First	750.00	7,500.00	Total Expenses	20,623.62	209,359.99
Mt. Olivet	0.00	1,580.61	Tyner-Jackson Offering	285.59	6,450.15