



The Scroll



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JESUS, BRIGHT MORNING STAR

Message from Pastor Linda

Many of my friends who live in cities and/or large towns have commented how surprised and amazed they are when they visit our home here in Washington and look up in the sky. They had no idea one could see so many stars at night! The darker the night, the brighter the stars seem to shine. As I consider the stars, it's impossible for me to not think about Night.

There is nothing inherently wrong or even 'bad' about night. Many people love the night with its solitude and quiet. Night was created by God. Genesis tells us, "*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness (chaos) was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day,' and the darkness he called 'night.'*"

To be more specific, it is not the *night* that brings uncertainty or fear for so many, but rather what *darkness holds*. In her book, Prayers in the Night, Tish Harrison Warren, writes, "Imagine a world without electric light, a world lit dimly by torch or candle, a world full of shadows lurking with unseen terrors, a world in which no one could be summoned when a thief broke in and no ambulance could be called, a world where wild animals hid in the darkness, where demons and ghosts and other creatures of the night were living possibilities for everyone... For much of history, night was simply terrifying." She goes on to quote 18th century theologian, Edmund Burke, who said there was no other "idea so universally terrible in all times and in all countries as darkness."

People, through the ages, and still today have always felt most vulnerable when darkness comes – literally and/or figuratively. Darkness holds unknown threats, uncertainty, and anxiety. We don't know what is lurking in the shadows. It is in the dark, as we lie in bed, that our imaginations often take hold of us, or our fears and worries run unchecked. Morning can't come soon enough.

Darkness takes on even greater meaning in the Bible. Most often, it symbolizes misery, destruction, death, ignorance, sorrow, or wickedness. People living in 'darkness' are living in a place of despair and hopelessness.

It is no wonder the Bible speaks then of the glorious Light – Jesus Himself.

Darkness cannot overcome light.

Darkness cannot deter God's plan or purposes.

Darkness cannot hinder God's work.

Darkness cannot obscure His sight.

It is while it is yet dark the **bright Morning Star**, Jesus, appears. The bright Morning Star is the sign of Hope. It signals that a new day is coming. Darkness is fleeing. As the apostle John writes in 1 John, "the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining."

As we begin the new year, we cannot know nor see what lies ahead. The future is obscure. Therefore, let us keep our eyes fixed on Christ, our bright Morning Star. Just as the star so long ago guided the wisemen, may Jesus lead us through times of uncertainty, He will keep our way straight and true. And in those times or seasons of darkness, may we see the Bright Morning Star as a sign of hope that morning is coming. There will be a new day – a fresh beginning full of promise. Jesus has promised us: I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. Have a blessed and bright New Year.

DECEMBER BEGAN WITH A BIRTHDAY PARTY!

When we stop and consider, the fact that our church celebrated its 134th year, it is remarkable and evidence of the Lord's favor upon Salem. On the first Sunday of December, the church enjoyed its birthday with a healthy lunch, birthday cake, and lots of presents! Thank you to everyone who blessed Salem with gifts great and small! We have so much to give thanks to God for!



DECEMBER – FULL OF NON-STOP ACTIVITY!

It comes as no surprise that the month of December was filled with special Worship services and events as we anticipated the celebration of Christ's birth. The air was filled with song and laughter. The sweet aroma of brunch, cookies and other birthday cake swirled about us. We heard the Christmas story of hope, peace, joy and love each week told through Scripture, preaching and the Children's Christmas Pageant.

Breaking from our tradition of having individual households lead the congregation in the Advent Liturgy, we focused on the aspect that we are family in Christ. This meant our Advent readers were a combination of different church family members!

Below are pictures highlighting life at Salem Church throughout the month.

Our Advent readers on several Sundays:

Left: Patti Anderson and Janet Smith

Right: Jillian DeRosa, Nya Cannavaro, and August Cannavaro



Annual Christmas Brunch

Right: John Varley, Larry Richter, Doug McHan and Ron Smith.

Below left to right:

Our 'live' music: Jennifer Anthony-Bogue and Susan Anthony-Klein

Our servers:

Diane Swanson, Robin McHan and Holly Camp, and Starr Evans.



Annual Christmas Concert



Our Choir Members, L-R: Cathy Greiner, Betsy Bailey, Julie Fredlund, Patti Anderson, Diane Swanson, Craig Nelson, Robin McHan, Roger Cannavaro, Jim McDonough, Tim Meeker (hidden behind John), John Quist, and Laura Cannavaro.

Music Minister/Piano: Susan Anthony-Klein

To the Right: John, Julie and Betsy singing Mary Had a Baby.



Our Children's Christmas Pageant



Top row: *Narrators* – Lily, Addyson;
Angels – August, Jillian, Nya, *Lamb*- Dax

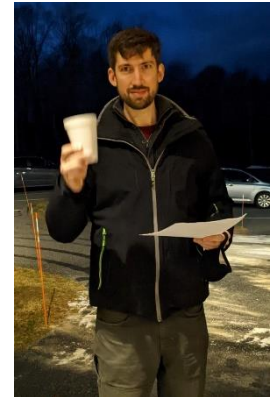
Second Row: Our Cast
Narrators – Lily, Addyson; *Wise men* – Liam, Finn; *Angels* – Nya, Jillian, Elli, *Star* – Aubrielle, *Chicken* – Jane; *Sheep* – Dax, Owen; *Donkey* – Nathan; *Joseph* – Connor; *Mary*- August

Wise men – Finn, Liam

Fleeing donkey - Rowan

Third Row: *Joseph and Mary* - Connor, August; *Star* - Auburielle

Christmas Caroling, Cocoa and Candy Canes



Blue Christmas Service and Christmas Eve



Thank You!

Greetings from your friends at the Washington Garden Club and many thanks for the use of the Salem Covenant Church for our Christmas Greens Workshop. We made thirty table arrangements with greens donated by our members. They will add a festive note to the holiday dinners that are given to our food-compromised neighbors by the town.

The downstairs room was the perfect place to work. I hope that we left everything in good order and want you to know how much we appreciate your generosity.

With best wishes for a joyous holiday,

Susan McGee
Co-President, Washington Garden Club

Dear Salem Church family,

Thank you so much for the lovely Christmas gift. It is my pleasure to assist and be a part of Salem.
Happy Holidays!

♥ Stephanie

Dear Salem Family and Friends,

Thank you so much for your Christmas gift. I am deeply humbled by your generosity toward me. Being able to live, serve and minister alongside and with you is truly a gift to me. I thank God every day for calling Michel and me to this place and especially to you, His beloved.

In His hands,
Pastor Linda

JANUARY CALENDAR

January 1 – Happy New Year!

-Worship & Communion

- Family and Fellowship

January 4 – Staff Meeting, Off-site, Noon

- Council meeting, 7:00 pm

January 5 – Loaves and Fishes, 3:30 pm

January 8 – Pastor Marlon Simpkins, Guest Preaching

- Church programs for children, Youth and adults resume

- Fellowship Committee Mtg, after worship

January 16 – **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

January 29 – Salem’s Annual Business Meeting, following worship

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Deb Andrews	3
Adam Douskey	12
Bob Dickinson	14
Claire Caco	16
Susan Anthony-Klein	18
Mike Andrews, Jr.	19
Tim Meeker	19
Helga Hershey	19
Caroline Marich	22
Haleigh LaBoy	25
Edward Caco III	25
Cathy Greiner	27
Rachael Andrews	29
Owen Light	29
Marilee Becker	30

JANUARY IN REMEMBRANCES

January 1, 2015 - Ethel Hollister (Holly Camp's mother)

January 7, 2021 - Robert Haas (Steve Haas's brother)

January 17, 2011 - David Taylor (Sara's husband & father to Sebastian and Oliver)

January 17, 2022 – Bill Houldin (Peter Houldin’s father)

January 18, 2021 - Delores Davenport (Pastor Jeisha Hawley's mother)

January 19, 2020 - Norma (Peterson) Cummings (Ginny Napolitano and Elaine Babiyan’s aunt)

January 19, 2022 - Julie Hicks (Tiara Hicks’ mother)

January 22, 2009 - Lois Butler (Robin McHan's mother)

January 25, 2019 - Ruth Alex (Mike Alex's mother)