

December Newsletter 2016

To Know Christ,
To Make Him Known,
To Build His Kingdom.

From The Pastor's Desk:

I found this post from The Gospel Coalition fascinating and I thought I would share it with you.

9 Things You Should Know About Christmas

1. No one knows what day or month Jesus was born (though some scholars speculate that it was in September). The earliest evidence for the observance of December 25 as the birthday of Christ appears in the Philocalian Calendar, composed at Rome in 336.

2. Despite the impression given by many nativity plays and Christmas carols, the Bible doesn't specify: that Mary rode a donkey; that an innkeeper turned away Mary and Joseph (only that there was no room at the inn); that Mary gave birth to Jesus the day she arrived in Bethlehem (only that it happened "while they were there"); that angels sang (only that the "heavenly host" spoke and praised God); that there were three wise men (no number is specified) or that the Magi arrived the day/night of Jesus' birth.

3. Rather than being born in a stable, Jesus was likely born in a cave or a shelter built into a hillside. The hills around Bethlehem were dotted with small caves for feeding and boarding livestock. The exact site of Jesus' birth is unknown, but by the third century, tradition had established a probable cavern. Constantine's mother, Helena, erected the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem over the small space.

4. During the Middle Ages, children were bestowed gifts in honor of Saint Nicholas (the namesake for Santa Claus). In an attempt to turn away from the Catholic veneration of saints and saint's days, Martin Luther laid gift-giving in his household on Christmas Eve. He told his children that "Holy Christ" (Christkind) had brought their presents. The tradition caught on with many Lutherans, though later St. Nick would get the credit as often as Christkind.

5. Martin Luther is widely credited as the first person to decorate Christmas trees with lights. Walking toward his home one winter evening, composing a sermon, he was awed by the brilliance of stars twinkling amidst evergreens. To recapture the scene for his family, he erected a tree in the main room and wired its branches with lighted candles.

6. The X in Xmas was not originally intended, as some people believe, to "take Christ out of Christmas." The written symbol X was frequently used to represent the letter in the Greek alphabet called Chi (the first letter in the Greek word Christos). In many Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, X abbreviates Christos (Xristos). This practice entered the Old English language as early as AD 1000 and by the 15th century, "Xmas" was widely a used symbol for Christmas.

7. The Puritans objected to the celebration of Christmas. In 1647, the Puritan government canceled Christmas, forbidding traditional expressions of merriment, ordering shops to stay open, churches to stay closed, and ministers arrested for preaching on Christmas Day.

8. Alabama was the first state to officially recognize Christmas in 1836 and Oklahoma the last in 1907, even though it was declared an official holiday on June 26, 1870.

9. Origin of Christmas terms: "Christmas" is a compound word originating in the term "Christ's Mass," derived from the Middle English *Cristemasse*; "Nativity", meaning

“birth”, is from Latin nātīvitās; in Old English, Gēola (“Yule”) referred to the period corresponding to January and December, which was eventually equated with Christian Christmas; “Noel” (or “Nowell”) entered English in the late 14th century and is from the Old French Noël or naël, itself ultimately from the Latin nātālis (diēs), “(day) of birth”.

Merry Christmas

Pastor Jason

Sunday Morning Schedule

Bible Studies and Sunday School at 9:30 am
**In observance of the Holidays there will be
No Sunday School On 12-25-16 and 1-1-17**

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

- *Children's Sunday School ~ Infants-6th grade
In the classrooms
- *Youth Bible Study 7th-12 grade
In the youth room
- *Adult Bible Study
In the front room in the parsonage

Worship Service

10:30 - 11:30

Fellowship following service

Wednesday Night Bible Study

**Bible Study does not meet on the first
Wednesday of the month.**

**In observance of the Holidays there will be
no Bible Study on 12-21 and 12-28.**

In the Sanctuary at 7:00 **A Study on the
Incarnation.** Join us for a time of prayer,
singing, and bible study. Pastor Jason is
teaching. Children's Ministry in the fellowship
hall classrooms, they are learning The Ten
Commandments.

St. Paul Youth

Youth Christmas Card Delivery Fundraiser
Support the St. Paul Youth and send some
Christmas cheer! Instead of mailing your St.
Paul family and friends holiday cards this year,
bring the cards to church and have the St. Paul
Youth deliver them for almost half the cost (only
25 cents per card)! Here's how the Christmas
card delivery works:

1. Bring your Christmas cards for your St.
Paul family and friends to the Youth
Christmas table in the greeting area.
(Print First and Last name only on the
envelope or Last Name only if there are
no duplicates. Example: Jason Ford or
The Ford Family)
2. Leave the cards in the “Drop Box” and
place your donation in the collection tin.
Its .25 cents per card. Cash or check
accepted (Make checks payable to St.
Paul and place Youth Cards in the memo
line) Example: .25 x 40 cards = \$10.00
3. Our youth students will “process” all the
cards and deliver them before or after the
worship services between **November
27th – January 8th.

**Cards can be dropped off anytime between
these dates! We'll deliver Christmas or New
Year's cards (whichever you have time to
prepare.)

Not only are we bringing a smile to our
congregation, but our youth are getting to know
all of you better! Hope all of you will consider
participating in our Christmas card delivery
fundraiser.

Questions? See Stephanie Ford or email me at
stephanie@stpaulcibolo.com

Stephanie Ford

Youth Ministries Coordinator

Upcoming Events

Women's Fellowship ~ Thursday, December 1st at 11:00 am. Lunch at La Cabana, 170 buffalo Pl., Cibolo. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874 or admin@stpaulcibolo.com.

Theology on tap ~ December 2nd and 16th. For more information, contact Pastor Jason. Locations to be announced soon.

Youth Sunday School Holiday Party ~ Sunday, December 4th from 6-8 pm. Bring an appetizer or dessert and a "white elephant gift" to exchange. RSVP by December 2nd to Stephanie Ford at Stephanie@stpaulcibolo.com.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Wednesday, December 7th at 6:00 pm.

Ladies' Book Groups ~ Wednesday, December 7th at 8 pm, "Treasuring Christ." For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

The Sewing Sisters ~ December 8th & 22nd They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month in the parsonage from 9-11 am. All are welcome to come and enjoy good fellowship and ministry. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874 or admin@stpaulcibolo.com.

Cibolo City Parade Participation

St. Paul will participate in the 3rd Annual City of Cibolo Holiday Parade and Holiday Extravaganza Saturday, December 10, 2016. All are invited. We will be riding on a flatbed trailer. Dress in Christmas attire. We will sing Christmas carols. We will meet at 8:00 am at Everyday Christian Church, 950 N. Main St. The parade starts at 10:00 am and will end at City Hall. Santa will come for a visit! Parents bring your cameras. Holiday vendors will be at city hall from 10 am to 7 pm. School choirs will perform. For more information, please contact

the church office at 210-658-5874 or by email at admin@StPaulCibolo.com.

Ladies' Idea Exchange ~ Sunday, December 11th from 6pm-8pm. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share and come hang out together! We'll be sharing some of our favorite "Pinterest" ideas for the upcoming holidays. We may even try our hand at a few of them and see how they turn out! For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

Council Meeting ~ Monday, December 12th at 7:00 pm.

12th Annual Christmas Breakfast

St. Paul will again host a community wide free breakfast on Thursday, December 15th from 8:30 – 10:30 am. All are invited and welcome. There will be delicious food, door prizes, entertainment, fun and fellowship. We need the congregation's assistance. Baked goods, door prizes, and help with cooking and serving will be needed. We will be setting up on Wednesday, December 14th at 3:30. This involves a lot of heavy moving so all the help we can get will be appreciated. If you are able to help with this worthwhile community effort, please see Rich A or Ann S.

Children's Music ~ Dec 18th – "Silent Night" during worship. Calling all kids (birth to 6th grade)! We would love to have you come join us on Dec. 18th during worship to help lead the congregation in singing "Silent Night". Have your parents or grandparents help you practice at home for the performance. Wear your Christmas best if you'd like, or we'll have costumes available if you'd like to participate in a nativity scene following the song. We'll be organizing and singing together during Sunday School on Dec. 11th if you'd like to run it through with us, but no worries if you can't make it. We'll see you on the 18th to help ring in the Christmas holidays together!

Ladies' Book Groups ~ Tuesday, December 20th at 7 pm, "Prayer". For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

Ladies' "Happy Hour" ~ Thursday, December 22nd from 5-7 pm. Location – TBA. For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

Taking Down of the Greens

Saturday, January 7th, at 10 am. All are invited to come and help take down the Christmas decorations. Many hands make light work. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874 or admin@stpaulcibolo.com.

General Announcements

Christmas Eve Service ~9 Lessons and Carols~ Readers needed for scriptures during the worship service. There is a signup sheet on the table in the hallway. Please see Pastor Jason for more information.

Christmas Sock & Mitten Tree

Benefiting Trulight 127 Ministries, Cibolo. Socks and mittens/gloves for boys and girls size infant to 17 years as well as "Placement Care Packages", including such items as shampoo, lotions, brushes, combs, wipes, germ x, special blankets, bottles, etc. Just pin them to the Christmas tree in the hall, or place in the basket next to the tree. If you have any questions, contact the church office at 210-658-5874. Donations will be accepted through December 18th.

Church Offices Closed ~ For floor maintenance the church offices will be closed Monday, December 19th.

Church Offices Closed ~ In observance of Christmas the church offices will be closed Monday, December 26th.

Flower Calendar/Fellowship

Servers/Ushers ~ For the 2017 year we have a sign-up sheet for each, flowers, fellowship serving and ushering. They are on the wall in the Fellowship Hall for your selection of a Sunday. Sign up early to choose the Sunday you prefer.

Hymnals Available ~ The church has several hymnals that are available for free, there is a box in the fellowship hall.

St. Paul Logo Coffee Cups For Sale
\$5.00 each by the book table.

Liturgy Sign Up ~ If you would like to contribute to the worship service by reading the liturgy, there is a sign-up sheet on the table in the hallway.

Service Opportunity ~ If you are looking for a way to serve the church and like working with computers, we have the perfect spot for you. The A/V Team runs the computer and sound for the service on Sunday mornings. You would be able to serve the church and not miss worship. The computer part is a simple program to use and the sound board is basic as well. Please consider sitting upstairs for a Sunday or two, to find out what all is involved. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874 or admin@stpaulcibolo.com.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Community Outreach
Preparing and serving a meal for the needy of the community once a month on the first Wednesday. Your thoughts and prayers are appreciated as we attempt to help our brothers and sisters that may need a helping hand. Donations as well as volunteers are always welcome. Please see Rich A, Don & Marion D, or Willie & Ann S.

Women's Fellowship Recycled Card

Program ~ In Support for St. Jude's Children's Homes ~ Used greeting cards, front cover only, can be dropped off in the designated box located in the Fellowship Hall. They will then be sent to St. Jude's Children's Home, for use by Kids' Corp., a program of the

children at St. Jude's Ranch to learn entrepreneurship skills. The children participate in making the new cards by attaching a new back and then selling them. For information on purchasing of cards go to http://www.stjudesranch.org/help_card.php. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874 or admin@stpaulcibolo.com.

Prayer Team ~ If you are willing to receive e-mails or phone tree messages with prayer requests, please give Pastor Willie S your e-mail address or phone number.

Ushers and Greeters ~ If you can help usher on Sunday mornings, please sign up on the sheet in the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Women's Fellowship Cookbooks Available
The cookbooks are available in the church office or after church in the Fellowship Hall. They are \$15.00 each and have over 800 recipes. They would make a wonderful gift for family and friends.

GREAT NEWS!! RACAP now has a new drop off location for nonperishable food donations!! What could be easier, as you leave our FM3009 HEB, than to swing by the Schertz Cibolo Emergency Clinic and drop off your donations of nonperishable foods for RACAP. Donation boxes are available in the lobby. The clinic is open, 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week!! The clinic is located at 4825 FM 3009, Ste. 200 Schertz, TX 78154, On 3009 next to Bush's Chicken.

R.A.C.A.P. Pantry Needs: URGENT NEED of the following items: Brown Paper Bags / Canned Soups / **MACARONI AND CHEESE** / Canned Pasta with Meat / Canned Fruits / Cereal / Canned Tomato products / Muffin Mixes
Reminder: Due to health regulations R.A.C.A.P. is not allowed to accept any donations that are not in their original container or have been opened.

Notification of Events - If you would like to be notified of St. Paul events, via Google calendar alerts, please send your e-mail to admin@stpaulcibolo.com with a notation for e-mail alerts.

If your church organization needs an announcement put into the Newsletter, the cutoff date is the 23rd of the month and if you need an announcement put into the bulletin, the cutoff date is Tuesday of that week at noon.

Church Office Hours ~ Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 12:00 pm

Heidelberg Catechism

90 Q. What is the coming-to-life of the new self?

A. It is wholehearted joy in God through Christ and a delight to do every kind of good as God wants us to.

91 Q. What do we do that is good?

A. Only that which arises out of true faith, conforms to God's law, and is done for his glory; and not that which is based on what we think is right or on established human tradition.

Lord's Day 34

92 Q. What does the Lord say in His law?

A. God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or **your** cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.
5. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.
6. You shall not kill.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's.

93 Q. How are these commandments divided?

A. Into two tables. The first has four commandments, teaching us what our relation to God should be. The second has six commandments, teaching us what we owe our neighbor.

Read Through the Bible in a Year program
from Tabletalk daily devotional
(Tabletalk is \$23/year and can be ordered at 1-800-435-4343)

December Readings

Old Testament: Ezekiel 45 - Genesis 1

New Testament: 1 John 3 - Matthew 1

Serving the Lord since 1876

A mission-focused, kingdom-building family of Christ-followers seeking to be faithful to
Jesus' Great Commission {Go and make disciples ...} Matthew 28:19 and
His Great Commandment {Love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself.}

Luke 10:27

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