



THE INTERIM

The children's choir portrays the manger scene at the Christmas cantata on Sunday, December 16.



Volume 75 Issue 26

December 23, 2018

From the Pastor...

Merry Christmas! I hope this article finds each and every one of you having a wonderful Christmas. It is truly a blessed time of year, but what if you're just not feeling joyful? The reality is that many people experience bouts of sadness during the holidays.

Lots of issues can trigger our sorrow. It might be as simple as our plans not going the way we had hoped. One of my favorite sayings is, "an expectation is a premeditated resentment." Or it might be as deep as unresolved grief over those we've lost.

Sometimes we're away from those we love and the season seems empty. Other times we realize that we have broken relationships that not even Christmas can heal. In fact, everyone else's joy can magnify our losses. As much as I love Hallmark Christmas movies, few of them are truly realistic.

So what do you do if you're having a Blue Christmas? My pastor friend, Courtney Krueger of Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Chattanooga, shared some advice with his congregation that I think is relevant to us as well. Here are some of Courtney's thoughts interspersed with my own:

KNOW, this is normal.

We all struggle emotionally from time to time. Christmas is a time when we sometimes feel as if we **HAVE** to be full of joy or there is something wrong with us. The added pressure may actually make things worse. It is OK and normal to be a little "blue" now and then at Christmas.

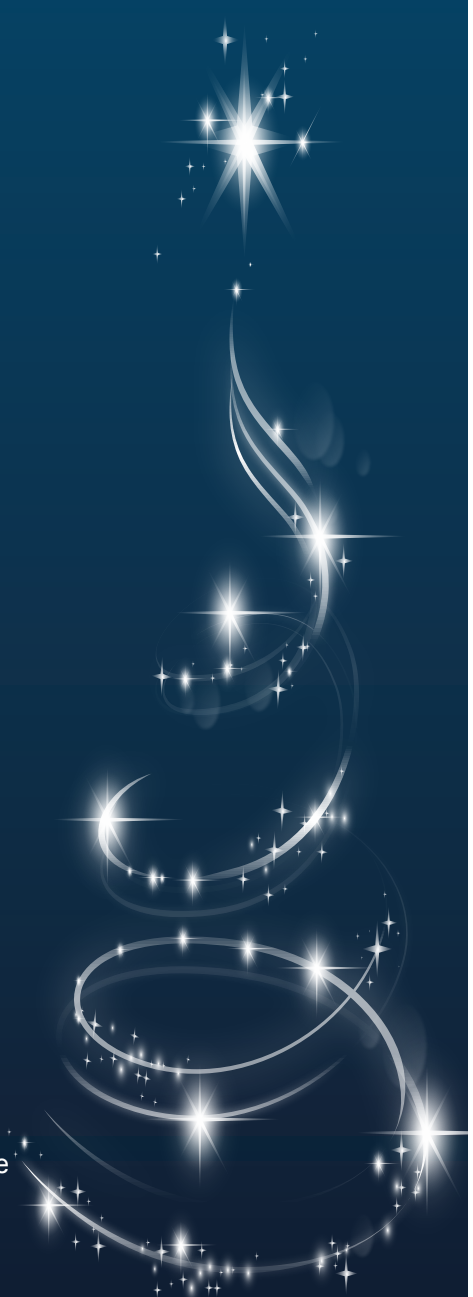
ACKNOWLEDGE your feelings.

We can't turn feelings on and off like a light switch. Accepting the way you feel is half the battle. You can't deal with something that you are denying or trying to suppress. Feelings often lose their power when they are brought into the open.

TALK about it.

Talk with God – who already knows how you feel. Take the example of the Psalmist who trusts God enough to pour out feelings of how life can seem not right and unfair. Talk to a trusted friend who can both empathize and give you perspective. Don't be afraid to speak to a pastor or a counselor, we are here to help.

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A Christmas Prayer By Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father,
Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds,
and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate
and open the door of love all over the world.
Let kindness come with every gift
and good desires with every greeting.
Deliver us from evil by the blessing
which Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning
make us happy to be thy children,
and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
with grateful thoughts,
forgiving and forgiven,
for Jesus' sake.

Amen

May this prayer help us to keep the joys (and sorrows) of this
season in perspective

Praying for all of you the most blessed Christmas,
Ginny Stikeleather

Spiritual Statistics

Weeks of December 16, 2018

	12/16
Church in Bible Study	152
Church in Worship	244
Tapestry of Light	215

Note: Due to inclement weather, there were no services on December 9.

Financial Statistics

	December	Year-to-Date
Giving Goal	158,165.00	296,999.00
Budget Receipts	89,789.00	187,612.00
Needed to Meet Goal	68,367.00	109,387.00
Alms	816.00	1,947.00
Designated	15,652.00	39,363.00

Church Staff Directory

Dr. Nelson Granade.....Senior Minister
Mr. James Martin.....Minister of Music & Worship
Ms. Melissa Wilson.....Minister of Children & Families
Dr. Larry Gregg.....Minister of Christian Education & Administration
Rev. Justin Cox.....Minister to Students
Mr. Eddie Wiseman.....Accompanist / Music Assistant

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Schedule

Sunday, December 23

9:00 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
10:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary
5:00 p.m. Venture Students

Monday, December 24

Church Office Closed
4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 25

Merry Christmas Church Office Closed

Wednesday, December 26

Church Office Closed

Thursday, December 27

Sunday, December 30

9:00 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
10:00 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary
5:00 p.m. Venture Students

Monday, December 31

9:00 a.m. Prayer in Sanctuary

Tuesday, January 1

Happy New Year!

Church Office Closed

Wednesday, January 2

2:30 p.m. Wonderful Wednesday After School Program

5:00 p.m. Family Night Meal

6:00 p.m. Activities for Children & Students

6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study Options

7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Practice

Thursday, January 3

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

FLC Activities Schedule

Thursday, December 27

9:00 a.m. Pickleball

7:00 p.m. Senior Men's Basketball

Friday, December 28

11:45 a.m. Line Dancers

Monday, December 31

9:00 a.m. Pickleball

11:45 a.m. Linedancers

Tuesday, January 1

Church Office Closed

Wednesday, January 2

5:00 p.m. Family Night Meal

6:00 p.m. Activities for Children & Students

6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study Options

Thursday, January 3

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

7:00 p.m. Senior Men's Basketball

Friday, January 4

11:45 a.m. Linedancers

From the Pastor - continued from page 1

DO something to help reframe your experience. Here are few actions you can take:

Worship – Staying away from Christmas celebrations won't help. Being with your church family in the presence of God (even when you don't feel like it) can be powerful. Perhaps a hymn, a prayer, a scripture, or something in the sermon might touch you deeply.

Help Someone Else – Getting your mind off of yourself and onto those less fortunate can often change your attitude. Visit one of our homebound members. Write a check to your favorite charity or contribute a toy to a good cause. Find a service project and get involved.

List Your Blessings – The best way to alleviate the blues is to shine the light of grace and truth upon them. For what are you grateful? To whom are you thankful? Write a letter/text/email or call a friend and tell them how grateful you are for them. It might just change your attitude and theirs.

Don't be afraid to be happy – Sometimes when we are down, it can almost scare us to experience a moment of joy. We're afraid that if we embrace it, it might go away as quickly as it came. Neither our joys or sorrows last forever, so don't miss the good stuff when it comes.

Trust that God is at work in your life – Advent and Christmas are about the incarnation (God entering into the world). Jesus experienced all the pain and sorrow this world can give and He overcame it! God is always seeking our welfare and never forsakes us.

Again, I hope that you do have a very merry Christmas and that the joy of the season comes richly upon you. Remember, Mary and Joseph had quite a time of it. Nothing seemed to go right until Christ was actually born. May Christ be born in your life afresh and anew this season!

Tapestry of Light A Celtic Christmas Celebration Sunday, December 16, 2018





CBF Misson Bites

Bite 109: True freedom in Christ

"We spend a lot of our time with people from a Muslim background. They come from all over the Middle East and North Africa to find refuge, hope and a future in Belgium.

By the time they arrive in Europe, many of them have even abandoned their Muslim faith, believing God cannot exist since people are killing each other in their homelands.

That is where we come in...we love to tell our new friends about Jesus, the Son of God who is God. He is our refuge, hope and future!

Recently, we were visiting in the home of a young family from Iraq. I sat and listened as the wife told me about the hardships of her life in the Middle East and the freedom she has not only found in Belgium, but in Christ. She smiled when she said her favorite moment was writing 'Christian' in the line designated for religion on her son's school form.

There is true freedom in Christ!"

Janée Angel, CBF field personnel in Antwerp, Belgium

Bite 110: "Better" is what transformation work is all about

I asked her, "Why do you come out here before you go to your paying job every day to work in this garden? You're consistent, dependable and we're always able to count on you to know what the needs are out here."

"It's important work I do in this garden," she said. "People can get this food that they might not be able to otherwise."

When part of your ministry is growing fresh food and making sure people in the community are able to access it, lives can be changed for better. Better health, better availability, better options, better futures. And "better" is what transformation work is all about.

Pray for workers like this woman, who sees the great need and wants to learn how to use what she has to help meet that need for others.

- Anna Anderson, CBF field personnel serving in Conetoe, North Carolina



Announcements



Precept Bible Study Begins January 8 & 9

"Revelation Part 2, Unveiling the Book of Revelation (Chapters 4-22)" will begin Tuesday, January 8, 6:00-8:00 p.m., and Wednesday, January 9, 9:30-11:30 a.m. You may sign up at the Welcome Center now. If you have always wanted to understand Revelation, now is your time. The class discussion and video make understanding it much easier; plus, by doing the homework, you will learn to discover Bible truth for yourself. If you did not take Revelation Part 1, no worries! We will do a review of chapters 1-3 to bring you up to speed. Please join us for this revelation of future events.

**Habitat for Humanity Day
Saturday, January 12, 2019**

Habitat for Humanity has asked our church for volunteers on January 12 to do punch list work and cleaning at 1115 Partnership Way. The work day will begin at 7:45 a.m. There will be a short safety talk and then tasks will be assigned. We should have everything accomplished at 12:00 or 1:00 p.m. If you would like to volunteer, please call David Potter at 704-657-7227.

**Senior Adult Trip
Rescheduled for Tuesday, January 29, 2019**

We have some extra tickets to the Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre to see a hilarious musical comedy entitled NUNSENSE AMEN!! Please see Loy Devine or Gale Hall or call Gale at 704-873-4029 to reserve a seat.