

# Old Providence News

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Old Providence ARP Church

Dear Old Providence Family,

Well, it's hard to believe but Christmas is upon us. If you have a television, you've probably already seen the commercials. If you've walked into almost any store you've probably seen the decorations. Yet despite the visible signs of celebration and happiness, the Christmas season does not always lead to joyfulness. Sometimes Christmas can evoke sadness and even despair. At this time of the year when everyone is supposed to be downright chipper, some are very sad. There can be several reasons why Christmas just isn't a happy time for you. Perhaps you've lost a loved one. Maybe your health is in decline. It could be that your financial situation isn't what you want it to be, or maybe things aren't too jolly when it comes to your personal relationships. No matter how you feel about Christmas, allow me to suggest a mindset as we make our way through the Christmas season together.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> Psalm, David asked God "What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?" In other words, David is pondering how God, in all His majesty and glory, could possibly care so much for us, His children. Have you ever considered David's question? The idea that the God of the Universe has a deep desire for a relationship with you and me is incredible! Yet what's even more incredible is what God had to do to secure His relationship with us. This is where Christmas comes in.

Instead of viewing Christmas through the lens of Hallmark movies and Norman Rockwell paintings, view Christmas as what it really is. According to Isaiah 9, Christmas marks the dawning of hope for those dwelling in darkness. Yet this dawning of hope was the start of humiliation for our Lord, Jesus Christ. It was at that first Christmas that he took on flesh in such a lowly fashion, feeling cold and other human sensations for the first time. And instead of being greeted by kings and ambassadors, He was instead greeted by lowly shepherds. Instead of being dressed in royal garments, He was wrapped in rags.

By human reason, and especially in light of what the cultural Christmas has become, none of the circumstances were right for the first Christmas. Yet Christ came all the same. And He faced all of the aforementioned humiliations (and even more) willingly, in order to continue God's amazing plan of redemption, ultimately culminating in His own death on the cross. Christ's love is what Christmas is all about. Because of this, no matter what circumstances you face, you can be filled with joy. Why? Because Jesus loves you. Because God sent Jesus, His one and only Son to bridge the gap between Himself and His people, thus providing you with a Savior. And it is with these things in mind that I happily say, "Merry Christmas!"

Your Pastor,

Patrick

## December 2021 Announcements



As of publication of this Newsletter, there are two Worship Services each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. with the exception of December 5<sup>th</sup> (see “Change to Calendar” below). Sabbath School classes for all ages meet at 10:10 a.m. Children’s Church is available during the 9:00 a.m. service only. Nursery is available during the 9:00 a.m. service and during Sabbath School. Youth Group meets on Sundays at 5:30 p.m. and Little Lambs meets the first and third Sundays at 5:30 p.m. Pastor Malphrus will continue broadcasting his sermons on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. through Facebook.com/OldProvidenceARChurch SpottswoodVa, and will post the audio version of those sermons on sermonaudio.com/oldprovidence. If you need help accessing online sermons, contact Patrick. You may access our Facebook page, sermonaudio.com, our church calendar, edited newsletters, announcements, and more by visiting our website at [www.oldprovidencechurch.org](http://www.oldprovidencechurch.org). If you would like a copy of a Sunday sermon on CD, please call the church office.

Daily Devotionals take place Monday through Friday with our pastor. They are available live at 7:00 a.m. through our church’s Facebook page, or after through sermonaudio.com or the sermonaudio app. Please see Pastor Malphrus if you need help accessing our Daily Devotionals.

Bible Study and Prayer Service are on Wednesdays at 6:45 p.m. with our Pastoral Intern, James , leading our time of study.

Pat and Susie are hosting a study of the book of Hebrews in their home on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. It’s not too late to join.

**Change to Calendar:** On December 5<sup>th</sup> we will have one church service at 11:00 a.m. Communion will take place that Sunday as well as our Annual Stated Congregational Business Meeting to approve the Budget and elect Congregational Officers. Sabbath School will meet at 10:00 a.m. and Nursery will be available during Sabbath School and the Worship Service. Children’s Church will not meet.

Treasurers of all church organizations are reminded to submit your yearly reports as early as possible in January so the annual report to Synod and Presbytery can be prepared. Please leave them in the Clerk of Session mailbox.

Committee Chairman, please provide event dates for the 2022 Church Calendar to the church office as soon as they are available.

If anyone who **does not currently have** offering envelopes but would like to have them for 2022, please contact Terri by Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Women's Ministries Window

Women's Ministries will meet on Thursday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. with Bible Study following at 7:30 p.m. We will be studying Daniel 12 in Chapter 15 of our study book "Daniel" by Iain Duguid.



### Little Lambs

Little Lambs will be having our Christmas party on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. All children ages 3 to 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to attend. Contact Amanda with questions.

### Christmas Dinner



The annual congregational Christmas Dinner will be held on Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited for this covered dish meal and a time of singing carols.

### Christmas Open House

The Malphrus Family will have an Open House for Old Providence Church members at the manse on Sunday, December 12. Please stop by anytime between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

### Homeschool Co-op Christmas Program

The Homeschool Co-op would like to invite Old Providence members to their Christmas program. It will be held on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 p.m. The program will be in the sanctuary and a potluck dinner will follow in Providence Hall. Please see Amanda B for questions.



### Cemetery Cleaning

The Cemetery Trustees will be cleaning the cemetery on Saturday, February 26, 2022. All flowers/decorations that you wish to save need to be removed prior to this date. Any flowers/decorations remaining in the cemetery on Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> will be discarded.

### Community News

The Raphine Volunteer Fire Company will host Santa at the Raphine Christmas Tree on Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m.

## December 2021 Calendar of Events

Wednesday, December 1

6:45 p.m. – Bible Study and Prayer Service

Thursday, December 2

7:00 p.m. - Women's Ministries

7:30 p.m. – Women's Bible Study



Saturday, December 4

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Youth Group Holiday Drive Thru Dinner

Sunday, December 5

9:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Kevin and Tonya

10:00 a.m. – Sabbath School

11:00 a.m. – Worship – Annual Congregational Meeting

No Children's Church

5:30 p.m. – Little Lambs and Youth Group

Tuesday, December 7

7:00 p.m. – Home Bible Study

Wednesday, December 8

6:30 p.m. – Congregational Christmas Dinner

Sunday, December 12

8:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Amanda and Isabella

9:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church leaders: Amanda and Vicki

10:10 a.m. – Sabbath School

11:00 a.m. – Worship

5:30 p.m. – Youth Group

Tuesday, December 14

7:00 p.m. – Home Bible Study

Wednesday, December 15

6:45 p.m. – Bible Study and Prayer Service

Sunday, December 19

8:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Lois and Shirley

9:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church leaders: Patcie and Sue

10:10 a.m. – Sabbath School

11:00 a.m. – Worship

5:30 p.m. – Little Lambs and Youth Group

Tuesday, December 21

7:00 p.m. – Home Bible Study

Wednesday, December 22

6:45 p.m. – Bible Study and Prayer Service

Thursday, December 23 and Friday, December 24

Church Office Closed



Saturday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 26

8:45 a.m. – Nursery Helpers: Terri and Vicki

9:00 a.m. – Worship

Children's Church leaders: Dabney and Tina

10:10 a.m. – Sabbath School

11:00 a.m. – Worship

Tuesday, December 28

7:00 p.m. – Home Bible Study

Wednesday, December 29

No Bible Study and Prayer Service

Thursday, December 30 and Friday, December 31

Church Office Closed for New Years



**January 2022**

6 Women's Ministries & Bible Study

9 Youth Group

Diaconate Meeting

16 Little Lambs & Youth Group

Special Offering for WRE

23 Youth Group

30 Youth Group

\*Please keep in mind, calendar dates are tentative and could change or cancel after publication of the newsletter.