

# Old Providence News

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Old Providence ARP Church

Dear Old Providence Family,

If you have not heard it yet, I am very pleased to be the first to wish you a very Merry Christmas! Yes, it's that time of the year again. That glorious time when we celebrate the advent of our Lord. And with it comes all sorts of other things, too. What comes to mind when you think of the Christmas season? Is it spending time with family and friends? Is it all the Christmas treats and goodies? Is it the Christmas carols and wonderful, old Christmas tunes? Christmas, or if I wanted to adopt the language of the day, I suppose I should say, the "Holiday Season" has become its own cultural machine.

But as we ponder this season together, is it really all of the trappings expressed in our culture that makes Christmas so glorious? Perhaps you find yourself in a different setting this year, facing different circumstances than those of years past. Perhaps you are facing problems that are new or the same problems that have troubled you for some time. Maybe this year you're just not in a Christmasy (if you'll allow me that word) kind of mood and you don't see Christmas as glorious, at all. If this is where you find yourself, then allow me to encourage you.

Of course, it isn't all the cultural trappings that make Christmas such a wonderful time. Nor is it even nostalgia from times past or the hope of things to come that makes Christmas so wonderful. To borrow a phrase from Andy Williams, what makes Christmas the most wonderful time of the year is the tangible reminder that there was a time when the world was full of darkness and without hope. Yet into that darkness came light, the True Light that gives life to all people - Jesus Christ. It is because of Jesus Christ that we have hope for the future no matter what we face. It is because of Jesus Christ that we can celebrate Christmas with the boldness of those who know the greatest gift ever given wasn't wrapped and placed under a tree, but instead, was hung upon a tree so that all those who would trust in Him would have life in abundance, even throughout eternity.

Know that the Lord is with you no matter what you are facing, whether it is the happiest of happy times or a time of sadness, or maybe even somewhere in between. Remember the promise of Christ that He will never leave or forsake His people. This Christmas, focus on the promises of God and Jesus Christ, the greatest gift of all.

Merry Christmas!

Patrick

## December 2023 Announcements



As of publication of this Newsletter, we have Sunday Morning Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. and Sabbath School at 9:00 a.m. Children's Church is available during the Worship Service. Nursery is available during the Worship Service and during Sabbath School. During the school year Youth Group typically meets every Sunday at 5:30 p.m., and Little Lambs meets the first and third Sunday monthly from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Pastor Malphrus will post his Sunday morning sermons on [Facebook.com/OldProvidenceARChurch](https://www.facebook.com/OldProvidenceARChurch) SpottswoodVa and will post the audio version of those sermons on [sermonaudio.com/oldprovidence](https://www.sermonaudio.com/oldprovidence). You may access our Facebook page, church calendar, edited newsletters, [sermonaudio.com](https://www.sermonaudio.com), announcements, and more by visiting our website at: [oldprovidencechurch.org](https://www.oldprovidencechurch.org). For a copy of a Sunday sermon on CD, or to add or update your contact information for notifications received through the One Call System, please call the church office.

Daily Devotionals with our pastor will take a break in December and will resume on January 15, 2024. Wednesday night Prayer Meeting and Bible Study with Pastor Malphrus will not meet through December and will resume on January 10, 2024.

Home Bible Study meets at Susie and Pat's home at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday evenings.

If anyone who **does not** currently receive offering envelopes but would like to have them for 2024, please contact Terri by December 15<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome to use them.

The Cemetery Trustees will be cleaning the cemetery on Saturday, February 24, 2024. 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 24<sup>th</sup> will be discarded.

Year End: Treasurers of all church organizations are reminded to submit their yearly reports as early as possible in January so the annual report to Synod and Presbytery can be prepared. Please leave them in the Administrative Assistance's mailbox in the hall next to the office. Committee Chairman, please provide event dates for the 2024 Church Calendar to Stephanie as soon as they are available.

The sanctuary refreshing project continues to move along well. In the next few weeks, we should see: the completion of the Narthex lounge and bathroom; the installation of the choir loft, stage steps and safety railings; and plaster repairs and the beginning of paintwork will be underway. On-going electrical work will be moving into the basement, and the balcony safety railing work will begin. Then after the new year, we will paint and carpet the sanctuary, and look at audio-visual system improvements. Please continue to pray for the safety of the workers, as well as the Lord's guidance throughout this project.



## Little Lambs and Youth Group

Little Lambs will not meet in December. The next time we meet will be January 21<sup>st</sup>. The Youth Group will resume on Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 p.m.

## Women's Ministries Window

**Calling All Women:** The Women's Ministries of Old Providence is having a Potluck Lunch at their regular meeting on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m., so bring your favorite dish to share. Every woman in the church is invited to attend. The slate of Officers will be voted on as well as the budget for 2024. We will be discussing all types of projects for the coming year. Our Bible Study for 2024 will be on Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi - Minor Prophets of the Old Testament - using the book THE NEXT-TO-LAST WORD by Michael Barrett. The cost of the book is \$10.00. Shirley will be our teacher and will give us a synopsis of the study book. This will be a time of fellowship, spiritual renewal, and delicious food. COME and join us! We hope to see you there!



## Christmas Calendar

The Malphrus Family will have an Open House for our Old Providence Church family at the manse on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Please stop by anytime between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Our Congregational Christmas Dinner will be on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited for this covered dish meal and a time of singing carols. Beverages will be provided. Meat and meat casseroles are welcome.

Our Christmas Program/Cantata will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Join the choir as they present "Emmanuel Celebrating Heaven's Child."

The Homeschool Co-op has had a wonderful start to the year. Thank you all for your support! We would like to invite you all to join us for our annual Christmas program and potluck dinner on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. in Providence Hall.

## Thank You Note



Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes: What a wonderful feeling to have delivered 78 boxes for this program! Thank you all for participating! The drop off center (Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church) was very thankful for our delivery! Next step - start looking for those deals for next year's box! Have a wonderful Christmas season!

Carol

## PreSchool Fundraiser



The Old Providence PreSchool Committee is selling wooden Christmas ornaments to raise funds for the preschool. The cost is \$15, and you may contact Kay to order for pick up on Sundays. Make checks payable to Old Providence PreSchool.

## Community Event

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

## December 2023 Calendar of Events

### Sunday, December 3

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Helpers: Ashlie, William and Blake

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Carrie and Lois

5:00 p.m. - Diaconate Meeting

### Tuesday, December 5

7:00 p.m. – Home Bible Study



### Thursday, December 7

10:00 a.m. - Women's Ministries Potluck Lunch

### Sunday, December 10 – Annual Stated Congregational Business Meeting

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Helpers: Cindy and Amanda

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Amanda and Vicki

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Open House Drop-In at the Manse

5:30 p.m. - Session Meeting

**Tuesday, December 12**

7:00 p.m.- Home Bible Study

**Wednesday, December 13**

6:30 p.m.- Congregation Christmas Dinner

**Sunday, December 17**

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Helpers: Terri

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship (Installation of Officers)

Children's Church Leaders: Patcie and Sue

6:00 p.m. - Christmas Program/Cantata

**Tuesday, December 19**

Announcements for December 24<sup>th</sup> Bulletin Due to Office

7:00 p.m. - Home Bible Study

**Sunday, December 24 – Christmas Eve**

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

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Dabney and Tina

**Thursday, December 21 to Monday, December 25**

Church Office Closed - Merry Christmas!

**Tuesday, December 26**

7:00 p.m. - Home Bible Study

**Wednesday, December 27**

Announcements for December 31<sup>st</sup> Bulletin Due to Office



**Friday, December 29**

Church Office Closed

**Sunday, December 31 – New Years Eve**

Breakfast for Local Missions - TBD

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Helpers: Carol and Karleen

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children’s Church Leaders: Laurin and Kristi

**January 2024**



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|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 Church Office Closed – New Years Day  | 14 Youth Group Resumes      |
| 4 Women’s Ministries                    | 15 Daily Devotionals Resume |
| Women’s Bible Study                     | 21 Little Lambs Resumes     |
| 10 Prayer Meeting & Bible Study Resumes |                             |