

# Old Providence News

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Merry Christmas, everyone!

That's right! It's Christmas time. I don't know about you, but my heart fills with joy when I hear Bing Crosby, Dean Martin, and especially the Chairman of the Board himself, Frank Sinatra (my own personal favorite), sing the lines "Here we are as in olden days, happy golden days of yore..." These, and so many other Christmas tunes, bring back such wonderful memories. I love the Christmas season in its entirety. Everything from the busy stores to the decorated trees, from the increased traffic to the Christmas ham that I have had the honor of preparing since my grandmother passed. There's so much to enjoy and celebrate!

My first inclination is to ask what you celebrate this time of the year, but as I ponder this question it occurs to me that some do not celebrate. For some, Christmas isn't a time of comfort and joy, but instead, is a time bringing nostalgia that stings and cuts like a January wind blowing over the hill at Old Providence. There's no question about this time of the year's ability to stir up memories. For some, those memories are wonderful. For others, those memories are not. Arguably, Christmas is the most emotional time of the year for good or for bad. But whether this time of the year brings joy or sadness, there is much to celebrate.

Let me encourage you to focus on Christ and remember when God came near. Also, remember John 1:14 where we are told that "The Word took on flesh and made His dwelling among us." Consider this thought, alone! That Christ left Glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit in order to take on flesh, feeling cold for the first time and physical pain. Our Lord endured the hardship of being 100% human. Why did He do this? Philippians 2 tells us that though He was and is God, Jesus considered equality with God not something to be grasped, but that He humbled himself, and being found as a man, became obedient to death itself. He did this for His people. That means if you're trusting in Him, He did this for you.

I don't know what Christmas brings to your mind, but I pray that Christ would come first, and not only in your mind, but also in your celebrations, remembering His sacrifice for you. Also, please plan to be a part of the festivities at Old Providence, including events like our Christmas Cantata and Christmas Dinner with Christmas Caroling. Sharing in the season is about receiving blessings and being a blessing. The best way to do this is with your presence.

Merry Christmas!

Patrick



## December 2024 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 Sabbath School. **Youth Group** meets at 5:30 p.m. every Sunday and **Little Lambs** meets from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. every Sunday, unless otherwise announced. Pastor Malphrus will post Sunday morning sermons on Facebook.com/OldProvidence ARPChurchSpottswoodVa and audio versions on sermonaudio.com/old providence. To access our Facebook page, church calendar, edited newsletters, sermonaudio.com, announcements, and more, visit our website: oldprovidencechurch.org. For a copy of a sermon on CD, or to add or update your contact information for notifications received via One Call, call the church office.

Typically, Prayer Meeting and Bible Study meets at 6:45 p.m. on Wednesdays as well as Children's Ministry. Normally, Daily Devotionals are at 6:00 a.m. Monday-Friday. You may access recordings of Daily Devotionals on facebook.com/OldProvidenceARPChurchSpottswood Va and audio versions on sermonaudio.com/oldprovidence. For a copy of a devotional on CD, please contact Patrick.

Wednesday night Prayer Meeting and Bible Study as well as Children's Ministry will not meet in December or on January 1, 2025. They will resume on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, at 6:45 p.m.

Daily Devotionals will resume on January 6, 2025, at 6:00 a.m. See details above for information about accessing recordings.

The Tuesday evening home-based Bible Study is a study of the Westminster Shorter Catechism using G. I. Williamson's study guide. The group meets at the Pat and Susie's home (1742 Old Providence Road) at 7:00 p.m. each Tuesday. Please see Pat or Susie with questions.

There will be an Elder's Breakfast held on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 a.m. in Providence Hall. Newly elected Elders are invited to attend.

If anyone who **does not** currently receive offering envelopes, would like to have them for 2025, please call Terri, by December 20<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome to receive them.

Year End: Treasurers of all church organizations are reminded to submit their yearly reports by January 15<sup>th</sup> 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 2025 Church Calendar to the church office as soon as they are available and any changes for bulletin backs no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **Women's Ministries Window**

Women's Ministries will meet on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 a.m. for a short business meeting followed by our annual Christmas Luncheon. We will have a synopsis of our new study book: Lessons from the Upper Room, *The heart of the Savior*, by Sinclair B. Ferguson and a potluck lunch. All women are invited to attend. Beverages will be provided.

Women's Ministries is having their Christmas Breakfast on Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, at Hometown Grill and Buffet in Staunton at 8:45 a.m. The cost of the buffet is \$10.00 not including drink, tax or tip. The meal is dutch treat and everyone is invited. Instead of a gift exchange, we will be taking a "Monetary Love Gift" donation for Kingsway. If you have questions or need a ride, contact Martha.

## **Officer Elections**

In a congregational meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup> the Congregation elected four deacons: Neal, John, Lenny and Gary. We thank them for their willingness to serve the church. Our Annual Congregational Business Meeting is after worship on December 8<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of approving the 2025 Proposed Budget and electing Congregational Officers.

## **Christmas Calendar**

Our Christmas Program/Cantata will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Join the choir as they present "Good News from Home".

The Malphrus Family will have an Open House for our Old Providence Church family at the manse on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. Please stop by anytime between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Our Congregational Christmas Dinner will be held on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to this covered dish meal and a time of singing carols. Beverages will be provided. Meat and meat casseroles are welcome.

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 19<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. in Providence Hall. Meat will be provided.

The Raphine Volunteer Fire Company is hosting Santa at the Raphine Christmas tree on December 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

## **Operation Christmas Child**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Operation Christmas Child shoebox campaign this year! Please continue to pray for the children who will receive boxes and for their families.

## **Cemetery Cleaning**

The Cemetery Trustees will be cleaning the cemetery on Saturday, March 1, 2025. 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, March 1<sup>st</sup>, will be discarded.

## December 2024 Calendar of Events

### **Sunday, December 1**

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

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Carrie and Lois

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Little Lambs

5:30 p.m. - Youth Group

### **Tuesday, December 3**

7:00 p.m. - Home-Based Bible Study

### **Wednesday, December 4**

6:00 p.m. - Young Adult Ministry Group Christmas Party

### **Thursday, December 5**

10:00 p.m. - Women's Ministries & Lunch

### **Friday, December 6**

7:00 a.m. - Elder Breakfast

8:45 a.m. - Women's Ministries Christmas Breakfast

### **Sunday, December 8 - Annual Congregational Business Meeting**

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

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Amanda and Vicki

Youth Group Christmas Angel Tree Shopping after Worship

4:00 p.m. - Diaconate Meeting

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

**Tuesday, December 10**

7:00 p.m. - Home-Based Bible Study

**Sunday, December 15**

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

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Patcie and Sue

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

3:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Little Lambs Christmas Party

5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. - Youth Group Christmas Party

**Tuesday, December 17**

7:00 p.m. - Home-Based Bible Study

**Wednesday, December 18**

6:30 p.m. - Congregational Dinner

**Thursday, December 19**

6:00 p.m. - Co-op Christmas Program and Dinner

**Sunday, December 22**

8:45 a.m. - Nursery Helpers: Vicki and Sally

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Dabney and Tina

**Tuesday, December 24 - Wednesday, December 25 – Merry Christmas**

Church Office Closed for Christmas

## **Sunday, December 29**

8:00 a.m. - Breakfast for Local Missions

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

9:00 a.m. - Sabbath School

10:00 a.m. - Worship

Children's Church Leaders: Laurin and Kristi

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Little Lambs

5:30 p.m. - Youth Group

## **Tuesday, December 31 - New Years Eve**

7:00 p.m. - Home-Based Bible Study

7:00 p.m. - 7:00 a.m. - Youth Group Lock-In

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

## **January 2025**



- 6 Daily Devotionals Resume
- 8 Prayer Meeting and Bible Study Resumes
- 15 All Treasurers Yearly Reports Due
- 15 Changes for Bulletin Backs Due
- 19 Special Offering for WRE