

# THE SUBURBAN CONNECTION

5132 Bellamy Manor Drive, VA Beach, VA 23464 [www.sccvb.org](http://www.sccvb.org) Phone: 757.495.0352

## SAVE THE DATE

Food Pantry  
December 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>  
12:30 – 2:00 pm

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study  
December 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>  
8:00 am  
Fellowship Hall

Belong Women's Ministry Event  
December 6<sup>th</sup>  
2:00 – 4:00 pm  
Fellowship Hall

Family Christmas Dinner  
December 10<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 pm

Come Adore Christmas Cantata  
December 14<sup>th</sup>  
Sanctuary

Senior Ministry Meeting  
December 18<sup>th</sup>  
11:00 am  
Fellowship Hall

Newsletter Submissions Due  
December 19<sup>th</sup>

Church Office Closed  
December 24<sup>th</sup> – January 2<sup>nd</sup>

## From the Pastor's Desk: The Gift You Cannot Buy

By John Piper

*"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything." Acts 17:24-25*

God does not want to be served in any way that implies we are supplying his need or supporting him or offering him something that he does not already own by right. "Who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" (Romans 11:35). "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine" (Psalm 50:12).

Therefore, we simply cannot negotiate with God. We have nothing of value that is not already his by right. We cannot service him. His car never breaks down. It never runs out of gas. It never gets dirty. He never gets tired. He never gets depressed. He never gets caught in traffic so that he can't get to where he wants to go. He never gets lonely. He never gets hungry.

In other words, if you want what Jesus has to give, you can't buy it. You can't trade for it. You can't work for it. He already owns your money and everything you have. And when you work, it is only because he has given you life and breath and everything. All we can do is submit to his spectacular offer to be our servant.

Continued inside . . .

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

For unto you is born this day, in the city  
of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:11

continued from front page

And this submission is called faith – a willingness to let him be God. Trust him to be the Supplier, the Strengthened, the Counselor, the Guide, the Savior. And be satisfied with that – with all that God is for us in Jesus. That's what faith is. And having that is what it means to be a Christian.

**Christmas means: the infinitely self-sufficient God has come not to be assisted but to be enjoyed.**



## 2025 Christmas Calendar

*December 5<sup>th</sup> – Belong Women's Ministry Christmas Event (2:00 pm)*

*December 7<sup>th</sup> – Christmas with the Children (During Worship Service)*

*December 7<sup>th</sup> – AYM Christmas Movie Night (Youth Room)*

*December 10<sup>th</sup> – Family Christmas Covered Dish Dinner (6:30 pm)*

*December 13<sup>th</sup> – AYM Christmas @ Joe & Maria Gewerth's Home*

*December 14<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Cantata (During Worship Service)*

*December 14<sup>th</sup> – AWAANA Christmas Store (4:00 pm)*

*December 18<sup>th</sup> – Senior Ministry Christmas Celebration (11:00 am)*

*December 21<sup>st</sup> – Raymer Sunday School Class Christmas Lunch (12:00 pm)*

*December 21<sup>st</sup> – Music Ministry Christmas Celebration (6:00 – 8:00 pm)*

*December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service (6:00 pm)*

*December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day - Merry Christmas!*





## Food Pantry Ministry

It truly is the most wonderful time of the year as we prepare to mark the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Lights shine brightly, trees sparkle, and voices sing praise in cantatas all to worship our King who came to be born to save us. The food pantry team is full of gratitude for your faithful support. Because of you, we were able to bless 31 families with meals to share at Thanksgiving time, and now we look forward to sharing the joy of Christmas with even more. Be blessed family now, and for the rest of the year. The Food Pantry Team

## Seniors Ministry

Merry Christmas! At our November meeting, Ron Raymer gave us a history of historical context of the New Testament. Hollice Wiggins cooked 2 delicious turkeys, and Evonne made her special carrots and green beans for us to enjoy.

We are looking forward to our December meeting on **Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00 a.m.** Larry Thomas will be speaking on "What I Got for Christmas" (Luke 2). Ham with macaroni and cheese will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.



## Operation Christmas Child

We would like to thank everyone who participated in Operation Christmas Child this year – donating items, putting together shoeboxes, coming to the OCC workdays, filling shoeboxes, and helping during the OCC Collection Week. Your continued faithfulness helps spread the Good News of Jesus around the world!

We would also like to thank Lynn Cooke for leading our OCC Ministry. She is very passionate about Operation Christmas Child and her love for OCC is evident. Thank you, Lynn, for your faithfulness!

We are also excited to announce that Suburban packed **826** shoebox gifts!



## Nursery Ministry

Date	Sunday School	Worship Service	Worship Service Assistant
12/7/25	Melissa Tucker	Latoya Rakes Nancy Herbst	Donovan Saucedo
12/14/25	Melissa Tucker	Samantha Haynes Barbara Skarupa	Ella Litzenberger
12/21/25	Melissa Tucker Stacey Super	Stacie Raymer Chris Bulaski	William Schnurr
12/24/25	<b>CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:</b> Barbara Skarupa & Melissa Tucker		
12/28/25	Melissa Tucker	Christine Rogers Laura Tyler	Nathaniel Schnurr



If you would like to be a part of this ministry to our church families, please contact Stacie Raymer ([sraymer@odu.edu](mailto:sraymer@odu.edu); 757-589-5731). We can always use substitutes. Please consider helping! Young teenagers are also welcome to volunteer.



**Rev. C. Todd Haynes**  
Senior Pastor



**Derrick J. Sloan**  
Associate/Next  
Generation Pastor

**MISSION:** Our desire at Suburban Christian Church is to help you **KNOW, SERVE, AND SHARE** Jesus Christ,

Visit us on Facebook! Search for  
"Suburban Christian Church" on [www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)  
We want to hear from you! Contact us at [office@sccvb.org](mailto:office@sccvb.org)

## Sunday School Ministry

Have you ever noticed that you listen to the sermon on Sunday, and a few days later you've forgotten what was taught? Children are the same way. Why not use the car ride home to share one thing you learned or one thing you remember. Adults and children can both share. It's a great way to review what God has shown you. Summarizing what you learned helps you focus on the main point and put it in your own words. What you learned can be summed up in 1-2 sentences. If you want to take it a step farther, talk about one thing you can do in the upcoming week to apply what you learned. Talking about Sunday school with your children will also give you insight into how God is growing them and give you an opportunity to clear up any misconceptions. The first few times you strike up a conversation in the car, you might just get blank stares from the back seat. But after a short time, the kids will come to expect it and be eager to share. Laura Tyler

YOU SHALL TEACH THEM  
DILIGENTLY TO YOUR  
CHILDREN, AND SHALL TALK  
OF THEM WHEN YOU SIT IN  
YOUR HOUSE, AND WHEN  
YOU WALK BY THE WAY, AND  
WHEN YOU LIE DOWN, AND  
WHEN YOU RISE.

Deuteronomy 6:7

## Children's Church News ~ Salvation is a Free Christmas Gift

Have you ever had a big problem that you couldn't fix on your own? Maybe you got a bad grade in school or you messed up and caused a sibling to get hurt. Who helped you understand that what you had done was wrong? Maybe your teacher explained the right answers for the assignment, or your parents showed you how misbehavior can affect other people.

Paul made the worst choices and messed up in a huge way. In Acts 22, Paul tells his life story about how even though he used to put people who loved Jesus in jail, Jesus still saved him. Of course, you haven't done the incredibly bad things Paul did, but no one – not Paul . . . not you . . . not me – can earn God's forgiveness. Just as Jesus had done for Paul, he helps us recognize our sin. It's Jesus who can pay the price. Remember the Christmas story: God sent Jesus to pay for all the wrong that we've done.



So what do we do now? In thankfulness for God's forgiveness and Jesus' sacrifice, Christians are called to spread the good news about God's mercy. Be patient with family and friends, and forgive those who cause trouble for you. By showing patience and forgiveness to others, you can help your family and friends celebrate a peaceful Christmas and focus on its true meaning: the birth of Jesus, God's merciful gift to the world.

<https://kidscomer.net/devotions/salvation-is-a-free-christmas-gift>

## December Children's Church Ministry Calendar

Date	Leader	Assistant	Helper
12/7/25	<b>NO Children's Church – Christmas with the Children in the Sanctuary</b>		
12/14/25	<b>NO Children's Church – Christmas Cantata in Sanctuary</b>		
12/21/25	Sammy Saucedo	Andrew Saucedo	Donovan Saucedo
12/28/25	Susan Haynes	Jeff Haynes	



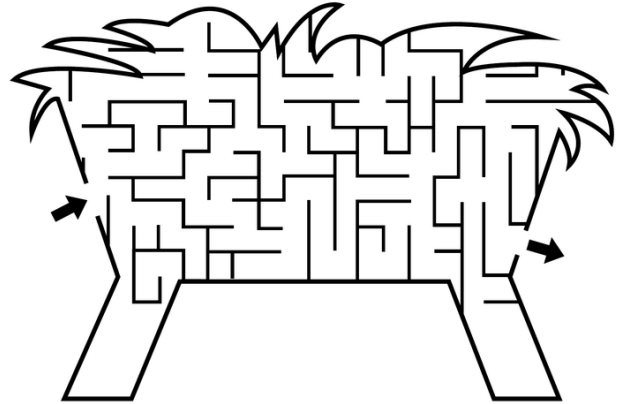
## Color Me:



Just for ...

Suburban  
Kids

## Manger Maze

Bible Jokes  
for Kids ...

Need an ark?

I Noah guy.

What time of day  
was Adam created?

A little before Eve.

Where is the best place  
to get an ice cream cone?

Sundae School.

## Nativity Story

W C N I N Z A J X X X Y T B P Y N C M D V C Q J  
 G J N F B T I T P T I L I G C S V V M C A G C P  
 T O H Y Y Q M I X M U V V P T X I E E D J H B F  
 P B G Y L P Y Q Y B D U G L C L F W G U Q O A M  
 F N S H E P H E R D G B I F K R N E A M V B V A  
 Y X X T I K Y Q Y G O L D Q V U N F B E D B P D  
 D A I T A P N Z Z C V S R D D S L X R B M Q N S  
 T T E G D T L O M U J K T K S J X Y I H D J U U  
 S N N W R X J P D X M Z R T R O B J E G B S P D  
 I C N X P D E S G N M I W B P Q E S L L E B L Y  
 N H Y P T E A N X G E J K Y N P V D H J X I D Z  
 W V U J H F B P Z R G M L W E U V C O N K O Y N  
 E I K S X Y Q I P G S D E S N E C N I K N A R F  
 E X S B M I S B E P P K Z S U O J A O Z U S N I  
 M P A U E G T E L T G H S V I I H G O V O W N G  
 W C D P Q R P T B S R Z H V I W P Q C V T N S Q  
 L H W Q G U J H A L O K J Q A J E D B W G V N M  
 Q H L Y R A M L T G E M L C Z M O E S G J I R O  
 U R A W R L W E S G J M W U C G Z S R U Q N V I  
 J A H A Z C R H W L K N A Z O O Y I E H C L J Y  
 N H R R Y M P E N K P I E C V N M V N P T J O D  
 T O K N G A V M X R F C O C N F V L O C H Y Q G  
 I O O O P O R H T P Q V C P Q U Y P X R O D C X  
 P E T D J M O Y E Q Q K V R V Z Z H E T M H G E

Three Wise Men  
Shepherd  
Stable  
Sheep  
Gold

Frankincense  
Gabriel  
Joseph  
Myrrh  
Mary

Bethlehem  
Donkey  
Camel  
Jesus  
Inn

## Ambassador Youth Ministry ~ Merry Christmas!

Brothers and sisters, this year for Christmas I want to give you the gift that you have all been so eagerly waiting for. That's right, an article regarding the Greek textual variant found in Luke 2:14! You can thank me later.

If you are like me, you grew up using the King James Version of the Bible. It is a good translation and one I still reference today. When I switched over to a more modern translation however like the English Standard Version, I noticed something different around Christmas. While I was reading the gospel of Luke, I stopped in my tracks when I got to 2:14. It says, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace among those with whom he is pleased*." I found this strange as I was used to the verse saying, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth *peace, goodwill toward men!*" So, which one is it?

In this article, "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men?", Andreas Köstenberger addresses how this difference comes down to a single letter, a sigma (ς) to be exact. While the waters of this article might get a little deep if you are unfamiliar with biblical Greek, what you can certainly walk away with is the wonderful peace you possess in Christ. He is the Prince of Peace who has brought you eternal peace with God through his perfect life, death, burial, and resurrection. Merry Christmas Suburban!

Christmas cards frequently proclaim, and Christmas carols echo, the well-known angelic pronouncement at Jesus' birth of "peace on earth, good will toward men."<sup>[1]</sup> Or do they? A closer look at the actual passage in [Luke 2:14](#) proves both intriguing and illuminating. In context, Luke opens his narrative of the birth of Jesus Christ regarding the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus (31/27 BC–AD 14) who presided over the "Golden Age" of Rome and was widely heralded for having ushered in the period of *Pax Romana*, the "Roman peace." Jesus was born during the reign of Augustus, the Roman "Prince of peace." In keeping with Isaiah's prophecy, Jesus, too, came as the "Prince of peace," and yet, the peace he came to bring was of an entirely different kind (cf. [Isa 9:6](#); see also [John 14:27](#)). Jesus' peace was not coercive, backed up by Roman military might; it was an otherworldly, supernatural peace—peace with God—that no human power can procure and no amount of money can buy.

In God's providence, the census ordered by Caesar Augustus brought Joseph, Jesus' adoptive father, and Jesus' mother Mary from Nazareth where they lived to Joseph's ancestral home of Bethlehem, the town of David. Per Micah's prophecy, this was the city where the Messiah was to be born (cf. [Mic 5:2](#), cited in [Matt 2:6](#)). In the tradition of David, the shepherd-king, it was there—in Bethlehem—that Mary gave birth to Jesus. Local shepherds became the bewildered recipients of an angelic visitation pronouncing good news: "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger" ([Luke 2:11–12 NIV](#)).

At this announcement, a contingent of angels appeared, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to *those on whom his favor rests*" (NIV; δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας). Grammatically speaking, the subject of the first clause is δόξα ("Glory") and the subject of the second clause is εἰρήνη ("peace"). The contrasting locations are ἐν ὑψίστοις ("in the highest") and ἐπὶ γῆς ("on earth"), and the respective recipients θεῷ ("God") and ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας ("those [lit., the men/people] on whom his favor rests"). Most modern English translations render the noun εὐδοκίας (literally, "of good pleasure") as denoting an attribute of the recipients of peace rather than as a second subject on par with "peace."<sup>[2]</sup> Are those Christmas cards and carols that proclaim "peace on earth, good will toward men," then, wrong? Let's look.

First, there is a text-critical issue.<sup>[3]</sup> Does the original text of [Luke 2:14](#) read εὐδοκίας ("of good pleasure," genitive case) or εὐδοκία ("good will," nominative case)? In Greek, the difference is only a single letter, a final sigma (ς). A look at the oldest and most reliable manuscripts makes clear that all three major codices—Sinaiticus (κ), Alexandrinus (A), and Vaticanus (B)—point to εὐδοκίας as the original wording. Interestingly, in both Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, later correctors erased the final sigma to change the harder genitive to the easier nominative reading which subsequently found its way into many Byzantine manuscripts and writings by the Church Fathers. Later still, the King James Version based its rendering of [Luke 2:14](#) on this textual tradition, issuing in the translation, "on earth peace, good will toward men." And many Christmas cards and carols followed suit!

But, you may ask, what difference does it make whether "good will" is in the nominative or genitive case in the present passage? Is there an actual difference in meaning between these two renderings? In fact, there is. The traditional English translation "peace on earth, good will toward men" pronounces peace and good will toward...

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AYM continued . . .

all people, that is, humanity at large. While at some level, this is doubtless true regarding Christ's birth (see the reference to "great joy for all the people" in Luke 2:10), the angels' pronouncement is almost certainly restricted more specifically to "those on whom God's favor rests," that is, "the people of God's good pleasure."<sup>[4]</sup> And how does one become the recipient of God's good pleasure? In short: by putting their faith in Jesus the Messiah.

At his baptism, and again at the Transfiguration, Jesus himself was uniquely declared to be God's beloved Son with whom God was well pleased.<sup>[5]</sup> Now, through Jesus' human birth and ultimately through his sacrificial cross-death on our behalf, peace with God is available to those who become recipients of divine favor through faith in God's beloved Son. This is the "good news" the angels proclaimed at Christ's birth, and this is the gospel we are called to proclaim to others in our day. Thus, knowledge of textual criticism and Greek grammar, along with careful study of the context of Luke 2:14, reap rich dividends in theological understanding. The angels rejoice and praise God for working out his salvation in and through the birth of the Messiah. And "the people in whom God draws near through Jesus will experience the harmony and benefits that God bestows on his own."<sup>[6]</sup>

[1] An example is *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*, written by the Unitarian minister Edmund Sears.

[2] ESV: "on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased"; HCSB: "and peace on earth to people He favors" (footnote: Or *earth to men of good will*).

[3] See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: UBS, 1994), 111.

[4] The Dead Sea Scrolls attest to the fact that this was a common Semitic phrase. Metzger mentions 1QH 4.32–33; 11.9 ("the sons of his [God's] good pleasure"); and 8.6 ("the elect of his [God's] good pleasure"; *Textual Commentary*, 111). See also Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 220.

[5] While the noun *eúdokía* is rare in the biblical Gospels (elsewhere only in Matt 11:26 // Luke 10:21), the verb *eúdokéō* is found in the Synoptic accounts of Jesus' baptism (Matt 3:17 // Mark 1:11 // Luke 3:22) and Transfiguration (Matt 17:5). Luke 12:32 also includes reference to Jesus' saying that it was the Father's "good pleasure" to give his followers the kingdom.

[6] Bock, *Luke 1:1–9:50*, 221. For a study of the NT birth narratives as well as John's prologue, see Andreas Köstenberger and Alexander Stewart, *The First Days of Jesus: Virgin-Born Messiah, Lowly King, Word Become Flesh* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015).

Originally published at B&H Academic Blog: <http://www.bhacademicblog.com/peace-earth-good-will-toward-men/>



## College & Young Adults



The College & Young Adults will be meeting on December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. for their Christmas celebration. If you would like to find out more information, please see Derrick Sloan.





## Music Ministry

December is one of the most wonderful times of the year for the music ministry (to borrow a secular term). For without Christ's coming we could not have His death, burial and resurrection to celebrate at Easter. Yet, that isn't even the best part. We can look forward to His second coming - He is coming again! Our Christmas music eloquently shares about His first coming but helps us focus on His return.



neighbors and family members who don't have a church to come with you.

Then, the third Sunday (12/21) is Christmas Sunday where Pastor Todd will bring his Christmas message and will include more special music. That is followed by a very special Christmas Eve candlelight and communion service, a worship service unlike any other. There are cards available to take with you and share with others you want to invite to these services.

Make sure you mark your calendars for these special events this year and THEN, in January we begin praying for new choir members again. This year "six" in '26!

### Candlelight and Communion Christmas Eve

Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>  
6:00 pm



## Men's Ministry

During the month of December, we will be finishing the book of First Peter as we focus on chapter 5. Ron Raymer and Tom Tracy will be teaching the final 2 lessons. We are looking forward to January when we will be diving into Second Peter. This is a great opportunity for you to invite a friend to come enjoy a wonderful breakfast, great fellowship, and teaching from God's Word. We are so thankful for the men who come each Saturday to prepare the breakfast for everyone to enjoy. Pastor Todd

## AWANA Ministry

Just for ... **Suburban Kids**

Now is the time to donate items to the Awana store! We need gifts for men (work gloves, travel coffee mugs, sports apparel, specialty cooking accessories) and siblings (stuffed animals, crafting kits, Legos). Please donate up to December 4th.

In November we packed 26 shoeboxes for OCC! Our clubbers look forward to packing boxes every year because they know how exciting it is to open up a gift filled with lots of wonderful surprises. They also realize that we did a quick game of Who's Who where they formed 2 teams and guessed Bible characters from brief descriptions. These kids are so smart! They got EVERY single person right and they tied! Parents & teachers . . . keep going because whatever you are doing is working! Carol Brooks



December 7 - Backwards Night (no walking backwards!!!)  
December 14 - Store Night  
December 21 - Family Celebration (awards, games, dinner)  
December 28 - No Club for Christmas break



MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

