

# Church news

## Weekly church calendar

**Hertford Pentecostal Church**  
A Christmas drama, "Anything can Happen on Christmas," by Alberta Hawse will be presented on Sunday evening, December 18 at 7 p.m. The church is located at 715 W. Grubb Street.

Hertford Pentecostal Church Sunday School will be at 10 a.m. Worship services will be at 11 a.m. Bible Study is held on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Rev. Gene Boyce is pastor. All are welcome to join us in these services.

**Hobbsville Baptist Church**  
Hobbsville Baptist Church, Hobbsville will have Special Sunday Worship Service Sunday, December 18 at 11 a.m. The Youth Choir and the Adult Choir will provide special music.

Our attendance goal in Sunday School is 130 and 140 at our Worship Service. The offering goal is \$1,200.00.

Our Christmas program will be Sunday, December 18 at 5 p.m. Following the Christmas Program, we will be having our Christmas meal. Rev. Dave Pyatte invites all to attend.

Come and grow with us in Christ. For more information call 297-2962.

**New Hope United Methodist**  
The New Hope United Methodist Church Choir, under the direction of Francis Jones, will present their Christmas Cantata entitled "Little Child, Mighty King" on Sunday, December 18th, at 9:30 a.m.

The public is invited. The Youth of the New Hope United Methodist Church will present their Christmas Program en-

titled, "Case of the Missing Christmas", on Sunday, December 18th, at 7:00 P.M.

**Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Church**

The Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Church will present a Christmas program, involving the children and youth of the church, on Sunday, December 18 at 7:00 p.m. Immediately following the service, a "Love Feast" will be held in the church fellowship hall.

The public is cordially invited to attend.

**First Baptist Church**

The First Baptist Church School will be at 9:45 a.m. Morning worship will be at 11:00 a.m. Pastor London will be preaching from the subject "His Name Shall Be Called the Everlasting Father" Isa. 9:6. The Senior Choir will sing under the direction of Sister Barbara Shannon. After the worship, the Pastor will visit all sick and shut ins and serve Holy Communion for the last of 1988.

**J.H. London Crusader Gospel Singers**

The J. H. London Crusader Gospel Singers invite the other choir members to join them in Christmas Community singing from door to door and street to street of Hertford Thursday night, December 21, 1988, beginning at the First Baptist Church Steps at 6:30 p.m. Come walk with us and share the good news that Christ is Born. Rev. J. H. London is the pastor of First Baptist Church and Rev. J. W. Law is the pastor of Milton Grove Baptist Church.

**Perquimans Fellowship**  
The Perquimans County

Fellowship Union will be held at the First Baptist Church, Sunday night, December 18, 1988 at 7:00 p.m. Rev. James Lightfoot and New Haven Baptist Church are in charge. Rev. J. H. London is the president. This is the last Fellowship meeting of 1988.

**Snug Harbor Community Church**

Snug Harbor Community Church holds a Worship Service Sunday at 9 a.m. followed by Sunday School for all ages at 10:15 a.m.

On Sunday evenings at 7 p.m., there is an Adult Bible Study; Youth Group Meeting (6-12 yrs.) and a Teen Group Meeting.

Bible Study is also held on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m.

We are an Interdenominational Church. Rev. Stanley Nixon is the pastor. All are welcome to join in our activities and fellowship.

**Bethel Baptist Church**

Bethel Baptist Church Sunday school will be at 10 a.m. Church service will be at 11 a.m. Rev. Gordon Shaw is the pastor. The public is invited to attend.

**Bethel Baptist Church**

The Bethel Baptist Church will observe a candlelight service Sunday evening, Dec. 18 at 7:30 p.m.

The joint choirs will present a Cantata - Love, Light and Life: the Gift of Christmas.

**Hertford Baptist Church**

The adult choir of Hertford Baptist Church will present John Peterson's "King of Kings" at 11 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 18. Taking part in the service also will be the men's chorus, youth choir and the children's choirs.

## Sunday school lesson

**GOD'S PROMISE FULFILLED (Luke Chapter 2)**  
"She brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7)"

In last week's lesson we studied about Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she would become the mother of God's Son. The text given for today's study records the birth of the baby Jesus. The intervening verses tell of Mary's three month visit to her cousin Elisabeth who was to give birth to a son who would be called John, the Baptist or, John, the Baptist. John's spiritual assignment was to announce the coming of Christ Jesus and to call the people to repentance. To the Hebrew people names carried great significance. The Lord's given name was Jesus; His title was Christ. He was the Messiah, the One for Whom His kinsmen had waited so long.

**EVENTS BEFORE THE BIRTH OF JESUS. (Luke 2:1-5)**

Luke had already informed us that Herod was the ruler over Judea, appointed by the Roman government. Now he gives us further information to provide the historical setting for the birth of Jesus. Julius Caesar, called Caesar Augustus, was the Roman emperor. The title Augustus, added to his name, indicated pre-eminence, and no doubt led to later emperors declaring themselves to be deity. It was from the Caesar that the order came to King Herod that the people were to be taxed. The usual Roman practice was to count people where they lived. The Jews, however,

were accustomed to enroll their people by tribes and families, and the enrollment usually occurred at the place where the family records were kept. This practice probably accounted for the fact that Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

**THE BIRTH OF JESUS (Luke 2:6-7)**

"And she brought forth her first born Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger. (Verse 7)"

We have no way of determining the exact date of Jesus' birth, but we celebrate it on December 25th. Scholars usually date the birth of Jesus between six and four B.C.; the exact date is really not important. That He was born of a virgin, that He died an atoning death on the cross, and that he arose from the tomb is all important. These are the pillars on which Christianity rests. The birth of Jesus is given in one brief sentence.

Surely there must be significance to the fact that He was born in an animal shelter. Luke tells us that He was born there because there was no room in the inn. But, someone may say, "This was God's Son, King of God's Kingdom, shouldn't He have been afforded a royal birth in princely surroundings and with pomp and majesty?" Jesus was born as He lived and died. He did not come as a princely leader of a great army. He came as the prophet Isaiah said that He would, the suffering servant. He would change the lives of people, by changing them within. Those who see Jesus only as a good person and a moral teacher will miss it all.

**ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE**

**SHEPHERDS. (Luke 2:8-16)**  
"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field..." (Verse 8)

It is significant that the first to receive the news of the Saviour's birth were the shepherds. It was a night when heaven came down to earth. Picture the scene which took place in the shepherd's fields outside Bethlehem that night. First there was the light from the glory of God with appeared and lit up the whole countryside. The messenger angel announced the birth of God's Son. Suddenly the heavens were full of angels. The shepherds looking heavenward saw a multitude of angels stretching heavenward as far as the eye could see. Their voices blended into an angelic choir praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, food will toward men."

## Mysterious mistletoe brightens Christmas

There are two holidays I think of as bright.

Fourth of July, or course, is bright with music, laughter, and fireworks. But Christmas is truly bright, with its twinkling lights, family gaiety, gifts wrapped in shiny papers, glistening greenery.

That's why I love mistletoe. It twinkles and shines. It's a little magical, too.

Hidden unnoticed during the warm season by leaves of host trees, mistletoe plants suddenly appear, forming a festive silhouette against the stern gray skies of winter. Or perhaps, because it is Christmas time, we start looking for it. This intriguing parasite once again reminds us that holiday decorating is at hand.

As with many Christmas legends, the use of mistletoe in revelry began with our free-swinging, party-loving predecessors, the Romans. Starting with the festival of Saturn on December 17, rowdy revelers hung the mistletoe up—and let their morals hang out.

Abandoning sin for sacrifice, mistletoe became important to the secret rites of Druids in pre-Christian Britain. It was believed to restore fertility, give magical power, and protect its bearer from physical harm. Pretty heavy responsibilities for one plant, I'd say.

But back to the Romans—they knew how to lighten things up. When they finally conquered Britain, they met the enemy under sacred mistletoe sprigs, laid down their arms, kissed, and made up.

From then on, mistletoe's reputation has been one of benefit and gaiety. Scandinavians still hang mistletoe above front doors to ward off evil spirits.

Christmas "kissing balls," made of gay ribbons and mistletoe, hung from high-moralled ceiling and doorways of Victorian parlors. Their presence tended to loosen many a stiff upper-lip.

Now, American lips are more relaxed to start with. They tend to loosen and linger on other American lips with far less trepidation, whatever the season. However, mistletoe still counts heavily in holiday decorations. Well-wishers are prompted to look around and see if they've missed a kiss.

Mistletoe (Phoradendron serotinum) is a partial parasite, calling 62 different trees home. Among these are oak, apple, persimmon



and nut tree. It is capable of its own photosynthesis, but relies on its host for water and minerals.

Watery-white berries are borne by the female plant surrounded by yellow-green leatherish leaves. Each berry has one seed inside which is surrounded by a viscous, sticky substance. When a bird feeds on the white berry, the seed sticks to his beak against the tree trunk. It sticks to the bark and eventually germinates. Within seven to nine years, the plant has sunk its vascular system deep into the tree and can attain a diameter of two to three feet.

As for its reputation as poisonous plant material—its true-so be careful of ingesting the leaves or stems, though it is beyond me why anyone would even bother to take a bite. The berries are not as poisonous, unless ingested in very large numbers.

The actual toxin is a lectin called Phorotoxin. Symptoms of poisoning include abdominal cramping, eme-

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sus (vomiting), and diarrhea, resulting in a stoppage of protein synthesis in the intestinal wall. Excessive handling will cause dermatitis.

It is obvious that these symptoms are the same as those, ah, other poisons we over-indulge in during holidays liquid and solids alike. So my advice is don't eat mistletoe. Stick to cranberry relish.

Lastly, don't use foolish methods for gathering mistletoe. You wouldn't actually climb that high tree and crawl out on a limb to pluck a plant, would you? And you are definitely not going to shoot it off with a rifle, setting off a rain of ricocheting bullets that will surely raise your neighbor's ire, are you?

Why not just purchase a few bunches, place them at strategic kissing areas, and enjoy the holidays—without a possible body cast, or an arrest warrant for assaulting an oak with a deadly weapon.

Dear friends,



Educator Donald W. Steel, Ph.D. writes: "In our experience with our own children, nieces and nephews when their grandmother died, we found that they benefitted greatly from participation in the funeral. The children learned that:

- A funeral is a healthy way to say goodbye.
- A funeral is a way that people give support to one another in their grief.
- A funeral is a way of expressing tribute to the deceased.

Respectfully,  
*Larry J. Swindell*  
**Swindell Funeral Home, Inc.**  
509 Dobbs Street  
Hertford, N.C.  
426-7311

**"WHAT'S IN A NAME"**  
Samuel R. Swinney  
Bagley Swamp Wesleyan Church

What's in a name? In the Bible, names had meaning and spoke about the person's character. Isaiah gives us some of the names of Jesus. I wonder why He was given these particular names?

Maybe Isaiah looked down the corridors of time and was able to see Jesus in action and thus attributed these names to Him. Isaiah may have seen Jesus as a twelve year old boy talking with the doctors in the Temple. He would have observed the great wisdom of such a young person and exclaimed "WONDERFUL."

Maybe Isaiah saw Jesus as He proclaimed the Beautitudes for right living, or heard Him face the accusers of the woman taken in adultery (they all left in shame) and exclaimed "He is a great COUNSELOR."

Just maybe Isaiah watched as Jesus raised the widow's only son back to life, or as He stood at the grave of His dearest friend and called "Lazarus come forth." When those who were dead returned to life again, Isaiah said "Only God can do such works He must be THE MIGHTY GOD."

I wonder if Isaiah saw Jesus as He gathered the children around Him and said "we must come as little children," or if he saw the compassion of Jesus as He wept over Jerusalem and their waywardness, or heard Jesus say, "I and the Father are one," or "If you've seen Me you've seen the Father," aybe Isaiah heard the discourse from John 14, and decided "He must be THE EVERLASTING FATHER."

Just maybe he saw Jesus cast out the demons from the Demoniac, or calm the troubled sea and still the winds; when he said "He is the PRINCE OF PEACE."

Of all the names given Him, the one I like best was spoken by the angel, "Ye shall call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins."

What's in a name? When it's the name of Jesus, it's everything.




**Photos By George**

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