



To all who are weary and need rest ...
To all who mourn and long for comfort ...
To all who feel worthless and wonder if God cares ...
To all who struggle and desire strength ...
To all who sin and need a Savior ...
We do, too.

Welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, our great Hope and Joy, the reason we gather to celebrate and worship. Southwood opens wide our doors, our hearts, and our lives as our God has done for us.

December 17, 2023
8:45 AM Prayer Gathering
9:30 AM Worship Service
11:00 AM Connect Hour

Worship Service

We contemplate who God is and who we are as we gather to worship.

MEDITATION

“Christmas and the incarnation mean that God went to infinite lengths to make himself one whom we can know personally.”

Tim Keller
Hidden Christmas

God welcomes us into his presence and reorients our hearts to Him and each other.

CALL TO WORSHIP

LEADER: Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

ALL: For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.

Psalms 47:1-2

We express the worth of our God and the emotions of our hearts to Him.

SONGS

“Angels from the Realms of Glory”
“Joy to the World”

Helping Lead Today's Worship Service

- Will Spink Senior Pastor
- Derrick Harris Associate Pastor
- The House Family Advent Reading
- Cathy Mayer Announcements
- DJ Baptiste Director, Music Ministry
- Newt Johnson Piano
- Nick Walker Bass Guitar
- Michael Athey Drums
- Lyndsay Abel Vocals
- Nina Cash Vocals
- Jarrett Kaempfer Audio
- Leslie Ellis Livestream
- Wesley Chambers Slides

Worship Service

God reminds us from his Word of his glorious promises to his waiting people centuries ago.

ADVENT SCRIPTURE READING

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord. ... The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ... They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

Isaiah 11:1-10

PASTORAL PRAYER OF HOPE

SONG

“The First Noel”

We talk honestly with our Father about our weakness, brokenness, and need for Him.

CONFESSION OF SIN

God reminds us of his grace and forgiveness as the foundation of our relationship.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

SONG

“God Rest Ye Merry”

We celebrate how God’s grace flows through us in our relationships and community.

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prayer and Sending of Robert and Denine Blevins

OFFERTORY SONG

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

Parents may escort K-1st graders upstairs during offertory.

Worship Service

God speaks
to us from the
Bible explained
and applied to
our lives.

PREACHING OF THE WORD

John 6:38
"Doing God's Will"

SONG OF RESPONSE

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

God sends us on
his mission with
his blessing.

BENEDICTION

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face
to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up
his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26



Following the Worship Service

Pastor Will will greet and pray with people at the front of the sanctuary.

Join us for Connect Hour, relating with God and each other around his Word.

Adults: Gather in Connecting Spaces for a Christmas Celebration

High-Life Connects: Jr./Sr. High classes in the Lodge across the street

Kids Connect: Birth-5th grade classes in Nursery and upstairs

Sermon Notes

Why Christmas? Jesus came to do his Father's will.

1. The General Reality Should _____ Us (6:38).

* Is the Father's will MY life's purpose?

2. The Specific Reason Should _____ Us (6:37,39,40)

Grace Group Questions *(for fuller discussion guide, visit southwood.org)*

1. What aspect of Jesus' condescension into our world at Christmas most amazes you?

2. What filters do you sometimes (even unintentionally) put on God's will in your life? What practical steps might help you lay down those filters?

3. What about God's character or actions most inspires you to want to do his will?

Announcements

Adult Connect Communities

All adults gather this morning following the worship service in the Connecting Spaces for a casual Christmas celebration.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

Next Sunday (Christmas Eve), our regular worship service with Children's Moment begins at 9:30am. That evening, our traditional candlelight service with the Lord's Supper is at 6:00pm. Nursery is provided at both services.

2024 Churchwide Bible Reading Plan

Next year we will continue our two-year journey through the Bible together as a church family. What a great blessing to learn more of God and his heart for us together! The new year is a great time to jump in even if you didn't participate in 2023. Grab a pew card for directions to the Bible app or to the PDF on our website (southwood.org). If you prefer, grab a printed copy of the plan in the Narthex today. If you would enjoy a daily devotional written for this plan, order *For the Love of God, Volume 2* by D.A. Carson.

Express Grace Conference 2024

Save the Date! Our annual Express Grace Conference is January 27-28.

Lost and Found Items

Take a moment to stop by the tables set up near the Guest Center to claim any personal belongings that have been left at the church over the last several months. Remaining items will be donated after today.

This Week @ Southwood Sunday, December 17

8:45am – Prayer Gathering
9:30am – Worship Service
11:00am – Connect Hour (all ages)

Join us in pursuing God's mission together by becoming part of a smaller community through Grace Groups. Sign up anytime at southwood.org/grace-groups.

Deacon/Finance Update

2023 Budget

\$2,555,912

Weekly Budget Need

\$49,152

Last Week's Giving

\$70,661

Year to Date Giving

\$2,002,810



Scan this QR code to give electronically.

Learn more, see full event calendars, and give electronically at southwood.org.

Prayer Guide

Core Commitment

We seek the restoration of all creation in Huntsville and beyond.

Pray for us as we live with many battling loneliness to be tangible reminders of the God who is with us always.

Ask that Holy Spirit would give us eyes to see new ways to love our neighbors during the Christmas season.

Pray for wisdom and generosity for our business leaders as they seek to lead and care well for their employees.

Specific Needs

Pray for Mark Bogdanovich in the death of his mother.

Pray for Stephnie Blackwell in the death of her father.

Praise God for encouraging results from Jim Simoneau's heart tests this week.

Pray for Laura Wolfson as she remains hospitalized in ICU following last week's heart surgery.

Pray for Sue Urban as she recovers from a second cataract surgery this week.

Pray for patience to listen and boldness to speak in gospel conversations with family and neighbors this Christmas.

Missions Partner Requests

The Cornerstone Initiative

Debbi and Tony Akers

The CornerStone Initiative supports and equips individuals as they navigate a path through the unique challenges of poverty to a place of lasting transformation. You can support CornerStone by praying for these requests.

Please pray that our Faith and Finances graduates will continue to live within their budgets.

Pray for program participants who may be experiencing loneliness, anxiety, and depression this holiday season.

Thank God with us for all the partner churches that provide financial, volunteer, and prayer support for this ministry.

Senior Member

Cynthia Mann

8051-B Lenox Lane
Huntsville, AL 35801

Expectant Mothers

Libby Potts — December 2023

Beth Patton — February 2024

Lauren Taylor — May 2024

Sarah Nell Compton — May 2024

Shealy Holliday — May 2024

Sarah Collins — June 2024

**Email prayer@southwood.org
to be included in this Prayer Guide.**

Southwood's Mission

Southwood exists to experience and express grace in relationships that impact eternity.

Southwood's Core Commitments

We are committed to being Christ-centered.

We recognize our deep dependence and need for prayer.

We are driven by relationships.

We strive to love the least, the lost, the littlest, the lonely, and the left-out.

We seek the restoration of all creation in Huntsville and beyond.

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southwood.org



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here.

Experience & Express
Grace