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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.

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**December 14, 2025**  
**8:45 AM** Prayer Gathering  
**9:30 AM** Worship Service  
**11:00 AM** Connect Hour

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# Worship Service

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

## MEDITATION

“Those who believe in God can never in a way be sure of him again. Once they have seen him in a stable, they can never be sure where he will appear or to what lengths he will go or to what ludicrous depths of self-humiliation he will descend in his wild pursuit of man. If holiness and the awful power and majesty of God were present in this least auspicious of all events, this birth of a peasant’s child, then there is no place where we can hide from God, no place where we are safe from his power to break in two and recreate the human heart because it is just where he seems most helpless that he is most strong, and just where we least expect him that he comes most fully.”

Frederick Buechner, *The Hungering Dark*

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

## CALL TO WORSHIP

LEADER: Therefore God has highly exalted Jesus and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

PEOPLE: *so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,*

*ALL: and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Philippians 2:9-11

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

## SONGS

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

### Helping Lead Today’s Worship Service

- Will Spink Senior Pastor
- Bill Harritt Associate Pastor
- Sam & Rachel Johnson Advent Reading
- DJ Baptiste Director, Music Ministry
- Newt Johnson Piano
- Nick Walker Bass Guitar
- Ron Poteat Electric Guitar
- Marcus Pope Drums
- Angela Baptiste Vocals
- Kathryn Jones Vocals
- Jarrett Kaempfer Audio
- Andrew Foreman Livestream
- Padyr Pearson Slides

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# Worship Service

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

## OLD TESTAMENT ADVENT SCRIPTURE READING

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. ... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

## PASTORAL PRAYER

### SONG

"God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen"

God places the sign of his promises on the children of parents who place their trust in Him.

### BAPTISM

*Ezra Lee and Noa Ann McAlister*  
Children of Nathan and Cayce McAlister

### SONG

"Away in a Manger"

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

## GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### OFFERTORY SONG

"You're Here"

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

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# Worship Service

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

## PREACHING OF THE WORD

Matthew 1:18-25  
“What’s in a Name?”

God invites us to taste and see his goodness in the bread and cup that represent the body and blood of Jesus for us.

## LORD’S SUPPER

The Lord’s Supper is the family meal of Christians. We invite all those who trust in Jesus and are baptized members in good standing of any church that preaches the good news of Jesus to partake in the meal with us. Children not yet received as communing members or others not partaking today are encouraged to observe and/or ask an elder to pray with you after the service.  
*\* Gluten-free bread is available in center front and back.*  
*\* Grape juice is in clear cups in the outer ring of each tray, while wine is in purple cups in the inner rings.*

## SONG OF RESPONSE

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

God sends us on his mission with his blessing.

## BENEDICTION

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

II Corinthians 13:14



### 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

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

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

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## Sermon Notes

1. Immanuel: “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

\*\*\* A Threat or a Promise?

2. Jesus: “He Will \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_ From Their \_\_\_\_\_ ”

### **Grace Group Questions** *(for fuller discussion guide, visit [southwood.org](http://southwood.org))*

1. What situation of your life do you most need to apply the truth that God is with you? What would look different in that situation if you did?
2. How would you describe your nearness to, confidence in, or relationship with God on normal days? In what situations are you uncertain God’s presence is for your good?
3. In what areas recently do you most feel yourself in need of a Savior? What aspect of these two names makes your joy in Jesus most full?

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# Announcements

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## Upcoming Connect Hour Schedule

Today: Joint Adult Discussion led by Derrick Harris and Bill Nash in the Connecting Spaces.

Sun, Dec 21: Christmas Fellowship

Sun, Dec 28: No Connect Hour

Sun, Jan 4: No Connect Hour

## Christmas Eve Worship Service

Join us on Christmas Eve at 6pm for our traditional candlelight service with the Lord's Supper. Nursery provided (ages 0-3).

## 2026 Bible Reading Plan

Beginning January 1, we will embark on another journey through God's Word together. We'll use "The Two-Year Bible Reading Plan" as we seek to slow down and engage prayerfully as we read God's Word. To learn more, visit [southwood.org](http://southwood.org) or scan this QR Code:



## 2026 Prayer Resource

As an aide to us in slowing down to talk with God as we read his Word, Southwood leaders have written daily prayers inspired by Scripture readings for that day. The booklet for January is available in the Narthex or Guest Center today and will be available electronically at the first of the year. Please pick one up and enjoy time with our Father in 2026!

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## This Week @ Southwood Sunday, December 14

8:45am – Prayer Gathering

9:30am – Worship Service

11:00am – Connect Hour (all ages)

7:00pm – No Sr. High-Life

*Join us on God's mission together by becoming part of a smaller community through Grace Groups. Women's groups, men's groups, and coed groups meet throughout the week. Sign up to get connected at [southwood.org/grace-groups](http://southwood.org/grace-groups).*

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## Deacon/Finance Update

*Quarterly Budget Need is based on Southwood's historical giving patterns.*

Oct-Dec Budget Goal: \$1,182,675

Oct-Dec Giving to Date: \$432,101

## Last Week's Giving

\$52,929



Scan this QR code to give electronically.

**Learn more, see full event calendars, and give electronically at [southwood.org](http://southwood.org).**

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# Prayer Guide

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## Core Commitment

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

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 Huntsville's business leaders as they seek to care well for their employees and continue bringing job growth to our city.

Ask that as we live with many battling loneliness, we would be tangible reminders to one another of the God who is with us always.

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## Specific Needs

Pray for Antonio and Gabriela Alvarado Zentella and their family as they relocate to Mexico this week due to job transitions.

Pray for Greg Ray as he has started radiation treatments for his prostate cancer this week.

Pray for Martha Brady as she heals from pneumonia and prepares for her daughter's wedding next weekend.

Pray for Marcelle Mahesh in the death of her brother-in-law this week.

Pray that our many celebrations of the Christmas season would continue to turn our hearts toward the hope of Christ himself.

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## Mission Focus

### Robert and Denine Blevins

Former Southwood members Robert and Denine Blevins serve in New York through two of Southwood's mission partners, MNA Mercy and Parakaleo.

Robert serves with MNA Mercy, helping churches respond to needs within their congregations and communities with clarity, compassion, and dignity. He also works with New City Network, supporting many of Southwood's domestic church plant partners. His efforts help churches recognize local needs and develop healthy care practices. Denine serves with Parakaleo, a ministry that supports women in church planting through training, community, and encouragement. Parakaleo helps women see their stories within God's redemptive story, leading to spiritual growth that blesses their families and churches.

Pray for Robert and Denine as they serve in New York and beyond.

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## Senior Member

### Sandy Newby

2816 Briarwood Dr. SE  
Huntsville, AL 35801

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## Expectant Mothers

**Libby Potts** — January 2026

**Rosemary Spooner** — February 2026

**Krista Fenton** — February 2026

**Ashleigh Lewis** — March 2026

**Amanda Tatum** — March 2026

**Megan Craig** — May 2026

**Email [prayer@southwood.org](mailto:prayer@southwood.org)  
to be included in this Prayer Guide.**

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### **Southwood's Mission**

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

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### **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](http://southwood.org)



Scan this QR code  
to let us know you're  
here.

Experience & Express  
*Grace*