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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 8, 2024**  
**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

As a deer pants for flowing streams,  
so pants my soul for you, O God.

My soul thirsts for God,  
for the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm 42:1-2

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

## CALL TO WORSHIP

LEADER: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

PEOPLE: *For by him all things were created — all things were created through him and for him.*

LEADER: And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

PEOPLE: *And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*

LEADER: For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

ALL: *May Jesus Christ be praised!*

Colossians 1:15-20

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

## SONGS

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

“Joy to the World”

## PRAYER OF PRAISE

### Helping Lead Today's Worship Service

- Will Spink Senior Pastor
- Bill Harritt Associate Pastor
- The Taylor Family Advent Reading
- Cathy Mayer Announcements
- DJ Baptiste Director, Music Ministry
- Newt Johnson Piano
- Tim Adcock Organ
- Nick Walker Bass Guitar
- Ron Poteat Electric Guitar
- Julian Newsome Drums
- Michael Babin Vocals
- Angela Baptiste Vocals
- Tamara Bodie Vocals
- Jarrett Kaempfer Audio
- Lance Cooper Livestream
- Amanda Tatum 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.

## **ADVENT SCRIPTURE READING**

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And he shall be their peace.

Micah 5:2-5

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

## **CONFESSION OF SIN**

## **SILENT CONFESSION**

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

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

“Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.”

Isaiah 1:18

## **SONG**

“Who Is This, So Weak and Helpless?”

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

## **GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **OFFERTORY SONG**

“What Child Is This?”

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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

Isaiah 55:1-3  
"The Free, Filling Feast"

*K-1st grade may join Kids Worship after Children's Moment.*

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

"What Child Is This?"

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 rooms on hallway across from the Nursery

**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

## Introduction: Christmas Food

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ Feast of Christmas

\* Who pays the tab for the Christmas feast?

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ Feast of Christmas

\* Why do we still sometimes feel so empty?

## Conclusion: The Sign of the Forever Free, Filling Feast

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

1. What does Christmas taste like to you? Why would you say feasting is appropriate in the celebration of Christmas?

2. What are the “sand” and “sawdust” or “other streams” this Christmas that you’re tempted to think will satisfy your thirst? Where have you looked for satisfaction before?

3. What about Christmas helps your heart embrace the free nature of the feast of Jesus? How does receiving the feast for free enable you to share it with others?

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## Announcements

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### Christmas Adult Connect Hour Today

All adults gather in Room D following the worship service for an Advent-themed study led by David Clark.

### Hark the Herald Southwood Sings!

Invite friends and join the Southwood Worship Team, kids, and other musical guests TONIGHT at 6pm for our musical Christmas celebration for the whole family. Stick around for cookies afterwards!

### Christmas Eve Worship Service

Join us at 6pm for our traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service with Lord's Supper. This is a special time of celebration for the whole family. Nursery provided.

### 2025 Bible Reading Plan

Beginning January 1, we will embark on another journey through God's Word together. We'll use "The One-Year Chronological Bible 365-Day Reading Plan" in an effort to grow our understanding of the historical context and order in which biblical events unfolded. Learn more at [southwood.org](http://southwood.org).

### Express Grace Conference

Save the date for our annual Express Grace Conference, January 25-26, where we talk about our "Motives for Mission" and focus on serving alongside our local community development partners.

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### This Week @ Southwood

#### Sunday, December 8

8:45am – Prayer Gathering

9:30am – Worship Service

11:00am – Connect Hour (all ages)

6:00pm – Hark the Herald SW Sings!

#### Tuesday, December 10

1:00pm – Grief Group@Brookdale Place

#### Wednesday, December 11

3:30pm – Bible Study@Fleming Farms

*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](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 Need: \$1,117,132

Quarterly Giving To Date: \$358,692

### Last Week's Giving

\$72,964



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 Commitments

**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 our city's business leaders as they seek to lead and care well for their employees.

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 Dennis Glover as he cares for his mother who is undergoing rehab and relocation after a recent fall.

Pray for several members of our congregation and community who are facing job transition during this season.

Pray for Sunday night's Hark the Herald Southwood Sings to be a joyful and encouraging Christmas celebration together.

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## Missions Partner Requests

**Alex & Suzanne Sarran in Lyon, France**

*The Sarrans have been involved in full-time ministry since 2001, the year they were married. Alex pastors The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Lyon, France, where Suzanne helps lead the women's ministry and choir. The church is an important source of Gospel teaching in a spiritually dark city. You can support the Sarrans by praying for these requests.*

Praise God with us for the 16 guests who attended a recent welcome lunch for newcomers.

Please be praying for our two interns and their families who are discovering the joys and challenges of full time ministry.

Pray for our upcoming outreach event at an outdoor market; our choir will sing and we will hand out invitations for our Christmas service.

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## Senior Member

**Cynthia Mann**

8051-B Lenox Lane  
Huntsville, AL 35802

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## Expectant Mothers

**Sarah Riley** — Feb 2025

**Lydia Moore** — Feb 2025

**Amy Dobrowsky** — May 2025

**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)



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here.

Experience & Express  
*Grace*