

311 Parker Road  
Salisbury, MD 21804

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www.providencesalisbury.org

**Sunday Schedule**

9:30 am **Worship Service**  
11:00 am **Sunday School**  
6:30 pm **Evening Service**

What was confusing was the unclear communication of the extent to which the Church is to participate in this more expansive redemptive work of God. The reasoning seemed to go like this (pieced together from vague memories of class lectures, readings and student sermons/testimonies): "If God is about the business of redeeming all of creation, then nothing lies outside the purview of redemption. Thus, the Church should participate in that redemptive work by expanding its ministry beyond the Word, sacraments and prayer to include soup kitchens, food pantries, international clean water initiatives, tree planting, environmental endeavors, labor reform, artistic endeavors, the alleviation of poverty, orphan care, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*." As a (potential) pastor, I felt overwhelmed to say the least.

That is the main reason why I have appreciated a book entitled *What is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom and the Great Commission* by Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert. I'm only about half-way through it and I'm already relieved.

One of the most helpful distinctions they make is between the Church as an institution and the Church as a collection of individual Christians. They are concerned primarily with the former and conclude that "The church is sent into the world to witness to Jesus by proclaiming the gospel and making disciples of all nations" (26). Stated another way elsewhere: "The mission of the church is to go into the world and make disciples by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into churches, that they might worship the Lord and obey his commands now and in eternity to the glory of God the Father" (62). Thus, the mission of the Church, as an institution, is essentially disciple-making via verbal proclamation. And that's it.

When we lose sight of this "we sometimes put hard 'oughts' on Christians where there should be inviting 'cans.'" For example, someone might say, "you ought to do something about human trafficking, AIDS, lack of good public education, etc.," implying "that if the church does not tackle these problems we are being disobedient. We think it would be better to invite individual Christians, in keeping with their gifts and calling, to try to solve these problems rather than indicting the church for "not caring" (22).

To be clear, this is not to say that ministries within the local church that meet practical needs are illegitimate. However, those ministries should serve the mission of the Church. For example, Operation Christmas Child meets a material need and also communicates the gospel. ESL meets a practical need and also communicates the gospel. To the extent that an endeavor can be shown to assist in the propagation of the gospel (perhaps even in a preparatory way), it can be legitimized. But the vast majority of the "good works" that Christians are to do so that others "may see them and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 5:16) should be undertaken by individual Christians, in keeping with their gifts and calling.

I hope that you find this as relieving as I have. Neither you nor I can do everything; and the good news is that we're not called to. However, we are called to do what we can, in keeping with our individual gifts and calling, in the spheres of influence in which God has placed us. With that in mind, and with the aid of God's grace and Spirit, let's accept that mission and do it well.

Michael D. Williams, *Far As the Curse Is Found* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005), 273 and 284.

**Worship Volunteers**

**December**

Head Usher, Ted Cogswell, Ray Griffith 12/4

- 12/4 Dan Bacon, Rob Anderson, Jon Sherwell, Jonathan Freed, Blessey Jacob
- 12/11 Jared Votta, Peter Render, Steve Hallman, George Winsor, Ford Waggoner
- 12/18 Matt Smith, David Spinnato, Dave Schrey, Ryan Simms, Andrew Seipp
- 12/25 Chris Williams, Tom Hayes, Tim Kraemer, Bert Meyer, Kai Schrodt

**Guest Services Team**

Ted & Laura Cogswell, Donna Griffith, Faye Hickman

**Nursery**

- 12/4 Suzanne Taylor, Faith Shelton, Caroline Smith, Tim Harr, Sarah Skolka, Ryan & Lauren Simms, Emily Cross
- 12/11 Donna Griffith, Trish Robins, Lois Hart, Jeanne Kotiash, Stan Robins, Rob Anderson, Ashley Bennett, Beth Britt, Meaghan Conley
- 12/18 Amy Ingersoll, Gerri & Micaiah Votta, Alice Downes, Hope Harr, Kathy Price, Luke Harr, Josh Ingersoll
- 12/25 Kathryn Badger, Luke Williams, Jeanne Kotiash, Donna Anderson, Meredith Conley, Vanessa Smullen, Seth Williams

**Refreshments**

- 12/4 Kirk & Grace Franks
- 12/11 Kevin & Tammi Griswold
- 12/18 Barbara & Ravi Arya
- 12/25 Bob & Joanne Hayes

**Children's Church**

- 12/4 Sue & Hope Harr, Emily Price
- 12/11 Ken & Bobbi Spicer, Stan Wilson
- 12/18 Emily Cross & Helper

**Church Open & Lock-Up**

- 12/4 Eric Schultes
- 12/11 Dave Smith
- 12/18 Paul Katzaman
- 12/25 Andy Anderson

**Communion Service**

- 12/18 Wanda Perkins & Joanne Katzaman

**January**

Head Usher, Eric Schultes

- 1/1 Josh Ingersoll, Walker Cogswell, Eric Lagstrom, Luke Williams, Luke Downes
- 1/8 Les Heineken, Bob Hall, Stephen Keim, Richard Townsend, Mark Comolli
- 1/15 George Conner, Jon Sherwell, Jonathan Freed, Ted Evans, Jerry Lankford
- 1/22 Rob Anderson, Steve Hallman, George Winsor, Blessey Jacob, Dan Bacon
- 1/29 Peter Render, Dave Schrey, Ryan Simms, Ford Waggoner, Jared Votta

**Guest Services Team**

Suzanne Taylor, Kathryn Badger, Dawn & Brooke Rogers

**Nursery**

- 1/1
- 1/8
- 1/15
- 1/22

**Refreshments**

- 1/1 Tim & Debbie Kraemer
- 1/8 Tom & Joy Hayes
- 1/15 Kirk & Grace Franks
- 1/22 Kevin & Tammi Griswold
- 1/29 Barbara & Ravi Arya

**Children's Church**

- 1/1
- 1/8
- 1/15
- 1/22

**Church Open & Lock-Up**

- 1/1 David Linde
- 1/8 Dan Bacon
- 1/15 David Schrey
- 1/22 Tim Kraemer
- 1/29 Kevin Griswold

**Communion Service**

- 1/29 Bob & Joanne Hayes

**December 2011**



FYI...

January Submission deadline will be Tuesday, December 27th



**Angel Tree dates**

**Sunday, Dec. 11**  
Please return unwrapped gifts with tags attached.  
**Wed., Dec. 14**  
We will meet in the fellowship hall at 7:00pm to wrap the gifts.  
**Sat., Dec. 17**  
We will meet in the lobby at 10:00am to deliver the children's gifts.



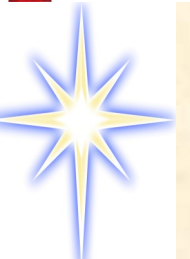
**NY Mission Trip Testimony, December 4th**  
**Communion Sunday, December 18th**  
**Christmas Eve Service Saturday at 7 pm**  
**Christmas Day Service 10:30 am**  
**No Evening Worship Service**

**Church office will be closed**  
**Friday, December 23rd**  
**Monday, December 26th**

**December 10th is our annual "Secret Shop"!**  
**The Secret Shop is a "store" that we set up for children to do their holiday shopping. This is a wonderful opportunity for children to purchase gifts "on their own" for a very reasonable cost. Parents wait in the lobby while the children enter into the shop through a special gingerbread house. With their prepared lists, they make their selections and then go to the amazing gift wrapping section. This is a wonderful activity for children, parents and helpers. All money raised goes to the Deacon's fund. Children to middle school age from PPC as well as other churches and schools are welcome to participate. We are in need of adults to help, either as shopper's helpers or gift wrappers. Please contact Mae Higgins or Cindy Shelton for more info or to volunteer.**



Two special music programs are planned for December. December 4th, 2nd hour will be the Adult cantata, "Mary, Did you Know?". A light lunch will be served following the presentation. Our children will perform "Beneath a Shining Star" on Sunday evening, Dec 11th at 6:30. A new activity for this year will be congregational Christmas caroling in place of the evening service on Dec.18th. Stay "tuned" for more details! Please plan to join us for any or all of these



**On the Mission of the Church**

I have to admit that as a seminary student and recent graduate I was a little confused about what exactly a local church should be doing in terms of mission. Some of that had to do with my insensitivity to the fact that the Lord was calling me to vocational ministry, a reality that I didn't honestly grapple with until God had shut every other door during our last semester in seminary. Had I been more cooperative earlier in seminary I would have begun thinking earlier and more seriously about the mission of the Church.

But my confusion stemmed from elsewhere, too. Let me explain: One of the things I'm most grateful to have learned in seminary is that God's redemptive intentions extend beyond the souls of his people. Upon entering seminary I, like many contemporary evangelicals, understood salvation as "going to heaven when I die." That is, upon death or Jesus' return my soul would go to heaven to be with the Lord forever. My body and the earth in which it was buried would, I don't know, burn up? Go away? Whatever happened to the material universe would be immaterial (no pun intended) because salvation was immaterial. Right?

Wrong. Without going into all of the biblical detail, suffice it to say that our final salvation will be anything but immaterial. Rather, it will be experienced in a new heavens and a new earth where our souls will be reunited with our bodies and we will dwell with the Lord forever in a restored, material existence. As one of my professors puts it, "The people of God will not escape physicality nor will God create an utterly different world or alternative world for them. Rather, God will renew, purify, and cleanse this world of sin;" and in the consummated kingdom salvation will entail "restoring man in the entirety of his existence, including his bodily existence." Wow. That is a much more comprehensive, satisfying and biblical understanding of salvation; and having been clearly demonstrated from Scripture it wasn't confusing in the least.

(Cont'd on page 2)

