

December
2024



We Could Make Millions!



A Special Message From Pastor Mike Hoppe

If we could bottle up “church” into pill form and somehow sell it to Mobile county residents, we could make millions!

A Harvard study revealed that being active in church provided “numerous aspects of human flourishing.” Which of the following benefits in this study sounds best to you...greater happiness in life, improved mental health, greater feeling of purpose, and deeper social relationships compared to those who did not attend any church regularly? It also discovered that active church-goers were less likely to be engaged in drug or alcohol abuse, and they found that respondents were 30%-50% less likely to divorce!

I have two thoughts after reading this study. First, I wonder if plummeting nationwide church attendance might be one factor in the surge of nationwide mental health struggles. Second, I wonder, how all of us do our part to get more people connected to church!

Being active in church provides powerful health benefits because the gospel message of Jesus Christ provides freedom and purpose. Further, a church family is a powerful support system in times of need, and serving at church provides us a deeply fulfilling sense of serving something higher than ourselves.

Jesus is changing lives everywhere, including right here at Stillwater. He is freeing people from addiction, helping people experience forgiveness, and saving marriages. Hungry people are being fed and sick people are receiving prayer. Read just one testimony, below, from a Stillwater member whose life has changed:

“When I started going to Stillwater, I was leaving an emotionally and physically abusive relationship and felt utterly alone. For the first time in my forty-four years, the love and support of my Stillwater church family helped me discover my worth in God’s love and the truth that I am not wasted space. It feels good to have people in my corner. I don’t know how I would have made it without my church being there for me. Stillwater is my home, and words cannot express the gratitude in my heart.” -LeeAnnea Lumley



At Christmas, Jesus came to bring light into our dark world. He brought hope in this world and in the world to come. He is passionately seeking for all people to return to God.

Receiving health benefits of “church” might be worth millions. However, the church’s mission is not to make millions. The church exists to tell the world about the life-changing gift of Jesus Christ that is free of charge and available to everyone. As we prepare for Christmas, who is one person you can pray for, invite to worship, or talk to about what Jesus wants to do in their life?

God Bless,
Pastor Mike
mike@stillwaterchurch.com

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE LOVE AND SERVE JESUS

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT STILLWATER

CHRISTMAS LIGHT
AN ADVENT SERIES
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
DEC 24 @ 4PM & 6PM
CHRISTMAS CONCERT
DEC 15 @ 6PM
SUNDAY WORSHIP
8:30AM TRADITIONAL - 10:30AM CONTEMPORARY

Join us **Dec. 15**, at 6pm, as Stillwater begins its Christmas celebrations with a Christmas concert. The Kids Christmas Pageant will be incorporated into the concert. A reception with a special guest for the children will immediately follow the program. Then, on **Christmas Eve** we will have two candlelight services. The Contemporary Candlelight Worship Service will be at 4pm, and the Traditional Candlelight Worship Service will be at 6pm. Nursery will be available during both candlelight services. Refreshments will be served between the candlelight services. Invite your family and friends to enjoy these special events at Stillwater!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS IN DECEMBER!

Join us for Wednesday Night Dinners and Christmas activities in December! We will have dinners on Dec. 4, 11, and 18. The activities that are planned include making Christmas ornaments (Dec. 4), games (Dec. 11), and singing carols (Dec. 18). Dinner starts at 5:30pm with the activities following at 6pm. Meal cost is \$8 for adults, \$6 for children, \$25 family maximum, and first-time guests and college students eat free. **The Dec. 18 dinner is potluck (no charge) - just bring a dish to share and join us!** The winter Wednesday night program will begin Jan. 8.



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER IS GOING ONLINE

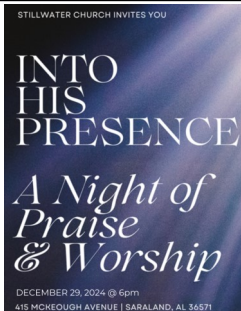
The monthly newsletter is going to transition to online only in early 2025. You can now find the newsletter on our website under "Media & Events." If you would like to continue having a paper newsletter mailed to you, please contact the church office at (251) 675-2728.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mondays - Food Pantry, 9-11am
- Tuesdays - Prayer Team Meeting, 6pm, Sanctuary
- Dec. 1 - Men's Breakfast, 7am, Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 5 - Nurture Team Meeting, 9am, Choir Room
- Dec. 8 - Missions Team Mtg, 12pm, Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 8 - Kids Christmas Pageant Mtg, 2pm, F. Hall
- Dec. 8 - Student Christmas Party, 4pm, F. Hall
- Dec. 15 - Stillwater Christmas Concert, 6pm
- Dec. 19 - ELC Christmas Program & Party, 10:30am
- Dec. 20 - Club 345, 6pm
- Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, 4pm & 6pm
- Dec. 29 - Night of Worship, 6pm

NIGHT OF WORSHIP, DEC. 29

Stillwater Church will host "Into His Presence," A Night of Praise and Worship, on Sunday, Dec. 29, at 6pm. Join us for an evening filled with singing, praying, and testimonies, all surrounded and led by the Holy Spirit!



ALPHA STARTING IN JANUARY

Are you, or someone you know, new to faith or curious to learn more? Starting in January on Wednesday nights, Alpha at Stillwater is a safe place to seek and ask questions about faith. If you have been through the Alpha course, please consider being a table leader or helper. Other additional Wednesday night study options will soon be announced.



PRAYER TEAM

The Prayer Team is selling "Read Me When" prayer jars with color-coded bible verses inside for when you are happy, thankful, angry, anxious, lonely, or sad. The prayer jars are \$20 each or two for \$30. See Terry Hopper or any Prayer Team member to purchase them. Proceeds from these great stocking-stuffers will go to the Stillwater General Fund.

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE LOVE AND SERVE JESUS

DECEMBER SERMON SERIES, "CHRISTMAS LIGHT"

Join us in December for the sermon series, "Christmas Light." Jesus is the light of the world. During this Advent season, we celebrate the ways His goodness spreads throughout our world, invading the darkness and changing our lives.

SERMON SCHEDULE

Dec. 1	"From Darkness to Dawn"	Isaiah 9:2, 6-7a
Dec. 8	"Shining Through Shadows"	John 1:1-5
Dec. 15	"Light of the World"	John 9:1-5
Dec. 22	"Heaven's Radiant Announcement"	Luke 2:8-15
Dec. 24	"The Illuminated City"	Revelation 21:22-27
Dec. 29	"The Light Leading to the Light"	Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11



KIDS KORNER

Calling all angels, shepherds, sheep, and other nativity characters! The Children's Christmas Pageant will be a part of the Christmas Concert on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 6pm. All children from birth through 5th grade are invited to participate in the retelling of the Nativity story. To keep things simple and fun for our children, this will be a mostly "unrehearsed" pageant. A parent information and planning meeting will be held on Sunday, Dec. 8, at 2pm. Elementary age kids are encouraged to attend this meeting as well. **Please note that a church-wide Christmas party will be held immediately following the Christmas Concert.** Santa will make an appearance at the party!



STILLWATER
KIDS

All 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders are invited to a **Club 345 Christmas Party** on Friday, Dec. 20, 6-8pm. We will be making our own pizzas, playing some silly reindeer games, and working on a Christmas mission project. Parent help will be needed! See Betty Moyer for details.

A new **Kids Ministry Team** is being formed! This team will consist of parent representatives from each age group (birth-5th grade) and a variety of people who work with our Kids Ministry in either volunteer or paid staff positions. The purpose of this team is to discuss ministry needs for each age group, implement new programming, encourage volunteer participation in programming, and dream for the future. If you would like to become a member of this new team, please contact Betty Moyer at 251-604-0949 or betty@stillwaterchurch.com.

STUDENT MINISTRY UPDATE

On **Dec. 1**, students will have the regularly scheduled gathering at 4pm. Then, on Sunday, **Dec. 8**, 4-6pm, our Student Ministry will celebrate Christmas together! Students wearing the most festive or creative Christmas attire will win a prize! We will have food and special games. Friends are invited! On **Dec. 15**, we will have a casual "Share and Prayer" gathering, 4-5:30pm, and hang out prior to the church-wide Christmas concert at 6pm. Student Ministry is off on **Dec. 22 and 29** for Christmas break. Mark your calendar for Winter Revive, **Jan. 17-19!** This event at Blue Lake Camp is for all middle and high school students. We will join hundreds of students from other churches for amazing worship, messages, and fun activities.



Student Ministry Director Position

Tony Feaster will remain on staff as a Student Ministry Leader. He will continue to help lead youth group and many other functions, though his growing family and job responsibilities require more and more of his time. We will be hiring a part-time Student Ministry Director to work with Tony. Please keep your ears open to candidates and send them our way! Our program will continue to offer all of the same great opportunities during the week for your student to grow in faith. Pastor Mike will be working with Tony and others to continue serving our students! Thanks for your support of this important ministry!

Happy Birthday!



12/02 Heath Brown
Andy Smith
12/03 Robin Bolen
12/05 Brian Watson
12/08 Ann Carter
12/11 Jordan McBride
12/12 Carson Whitten
12/14 Olivia Boutwell
12/15 Korey Barbetta
Letty Whetsel
12/16 Jayden Burch
12/18 Anna Camille Gervais
Michael Herrin
Shane Hopper
12/19 Noah Jinright
Rylee Ladnier
12/21 Jennifer Milner
Jarrod Stubbs
12/22 Paula Matthews
12/24 Nell Beckman
12/25 Tim Love
12/26 Cullen Beckner
Mary Cleveland
Carolyn Holley
Lyn Stokley
12/27 Steven Wallace
12/28 Smitty Armour
12/29 Caden Pearce
12/30 Tyler Crook
James Currie
Alexis Epperson
Trae Weeks

Find us online at
stillwaterchurch.com and
Facebook. Email us at
info@stillwaterchurch.com.

Monthly Financial Update

	Attendance		General	Capital
	In-Person	Online	Fund	Fund
Nov. 3	140	59	\$ 10,999	\$ 474
Nov. 10	169	52	\$ 9,642	\$ 60
Nov. 17	185	42	\$ 8,723	\$ 40

THANK YOU TO...

~ Everyone who helped make the Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner a success!



WELCOME TO...

~ New members Lyn Stokley, Barbara Bunker, and Timothy and Linden Davis.

SYMPATHY TO...

~ Larry Lindy and family on the passing of his wife, Linda Lindy.
~ Chuck Whisonant and family on the passing of his stepfather, Jim Daniel.

WAYS TO GIVE

1. Scan the QR code with your phone.
 2. Mail your gifts to the church at P.O. Box 415, Saraland, AL 36571.
 3. Recurring giving online by creating an online giving account at <https://www.stillwaterchurch.com/online-giving>.
- Thank you for your faithful giving to God's work!

