



STILLWATER CHURCH

"People helping people love and serve Jesus!"

DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER



A Special Message from Pastor Tony Barnes

Joyful Noise

There is something sacred about the sounds of Advent. Long before the Christmas lights glow or the candles are lit, the season begins with a stirring in the heart—an invitation to lift our eyes, open our mouths, and join the ancient song of God's people. This year at Stillwater, our Advent theme, "Joyful Noise," reminds us that praise is not merely something we offer to God; it is something God uses to reshape us from the inside out.

The story begins in a quiet house in Judea where Zechariah, who had spent months in silence, suddenly found his voice again. After four hundred years without a recorded prophetic word, heaven broke the silence—not with thunder, but with praise. Luke tells us that when Zechariah confirmed the name of his newborn son, "*his mouth was opened... and he began to speak, praising God.*" (Luke 1:64) It's no small thing that the return of his voice was marked not by complaint or explanation but by worship.

In that moment, praise changed the atmosphere. A home that had known doubt and waiting was filled with the sound of faith. Zechariah's story invites us to consider the power of our own praise—how our words can shift discouragement into hope, fear into trust, and silence into joyful expectation. Advent begins with a mouth filled with praise.

But the story continues in the heart of a young woman from Nazareth. When Mary received the angel's message, her world turned upside down. Yet instead of collapsing under the weight of uncertainty, she responded with a song—a soul-deep proclamation of God's goodness. Her Magnificat is more than poetry; it is the testimony of a heart being healed even as it surrenders.

Mary teaches us that praise begins inner healing. When our souls magnify the Lord, we loosen our grip on anxiety and make room for God's renewing strength. Advent invites us into that same kind of soul-filled worship—quiet, honest, and transformative.

Then, on an ordinary night in Bethlehem's fields, heaven's praise spilled onto the earth. A multitude of angels appeared, lifting their voices in a chorus that lit up the sky. It was not a private moment; it was communal worship. The shepherds heard the sound not as a solitary melody but as a swelling harmony of heaven.

This reminds us of the beautiful truth that we are strengthened when we praise God together. Congregational singing is more than tradition—it is a gift. When voices blend in worship, burdens lighten, hearts come together, and the faith of one encourages the faith of another. Advent calls us back into that shared song, where we discover again that we are not alone.

Finally, as we approach Christmas Eve, the song widens beyond Judea, Nazareth, or Bethlehem. Scripture gives us a glimpse of a future gathering—a multitude from every nation, tribe, and language standing before the throne of God, crying out with unified praise. This is where the story is heading.

On that holy night, when we lift our voices in worship, we join a song that spans centuries and crosses continents. The birth of Jesus was never meant for one people alone; it is God's gift to the whole world. Our Christmas Eve worship becomes a small echo of that great, coming chorus of all nations.

So, this Advent, as candles are lifted, we join together as one voice, and the story unfolds once again, may our mouths be filled with praise, our souls renewed with joy, our community strengthened in worship, and our hearts awakened to God's mission.

May we, together, make a joyful noise that honors the Savior who has come—and who will one day gather all creation into His everlasting song.

Blessings,
Pastor Tony

Mark Your Calendars!

- Mondays - Food Pantry, 9-11am
- Tuesdays - Prayer Team Meeting, 6pm, Sanctuary
- Thursdays - VIBE Ministry, 6:30pm, Sanctuary
- Dec. 3 - Wednesday Night Dinner (5:30pm) & RamCorps Concert (6pm)
- Dec. 4 - Nurture Team Meeting, 10am, Choir Room
- Dec. 7 - Men's Breakfast, 7am, Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 7 - Threads of Grace Ministry, 2pm, Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 10 - Christmas Party with Santa & Potluck Finger Food Dinner, 5:30pm
- Dec. 12 - Club 345, 6-8pm
- Dec. 14 - Stillwater Christmas Concert, 6pm
- Dec. 21 - Missions Team Meeting, 12pm, Choir Room
- Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, 4pm & 6pm, Reception @ 5pm
- Dec. 25 - Christmas Lunch (Don't Spend Christmas Day Alone!), 12pm
- Jan. 7 - Wednesday Night Dinner & Programs begin, 5:30-7:15pm

Wednesday Night Dinners in December

December 3 - Join us for Wednesday night dinner at 5:30pm, followed by a concert by the University of Mobile RamCorps at 6pm! RamCorps is an elite, auditioned high-impact brass and percussion performance group which presents over 100 concerts every year. Meal cost is \$9/adults, \$7/children, \$28/family max. First time guests and college students always eat for free. *A love offering will be collected for the RamCorps.*



What's for dinner on Dec. 3? Cajun pasta, salad, bread & dessert!



Join us for our **CHURCH-WIDE CHRISTMAS PARTY!!**

Wednesday, December 10

5:30 - 7 p.m.

Everyone is asked to bring finger food or party food to share. We will sing some Christmas songs, have a visit from Santa (great picture opportunity!) and enjoy some Christmas fun!



Christmas at Stillwater

December Sermon Series: "Joyful Noise"

Dec 7 "Praise-filled Mouth" Luke 1:57-64

Dec 14 "Joy-filled Soul" Luke 1:46-55

Dec 21 "Heaven-filled Chorus" Luke 2:8-14

Dec 24 "Nations-filled Worship" Revelation 7:9-12

Dec 28 "The Moment They Had Been Living For"
Luke 2:28-32, 36-38



Stillwater Christmas Concert - Join us **Dec. 14, at 6pm**, for the Stillwater Church Christmas concert! The Kids Christmas Pageant will be incorporated into the concert.

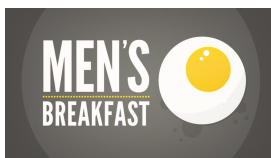
Christmas Eve Candlelight Services - Join us on **Christmas Eve** for our candlelight worship services. The Contemporary Candlelight Worship Service will be at 4pm, and the Traditional Candlelight Worship Service will be at 6pm. Nursery will be available during both candlelight services. Refreshments will be served between the candlelight services at 5pm. Invite your family and friends to enjoy these special events at Stillwater!

Don't Spend Christmas Day Alone!



Nurture Team Meeting, Dec. 4

The Stillwater Nurture Team is a group that cares for the people in our church in their time of need. Members of the team visit, call, and send cards to shut-ins and those recovering at home after surgery. Anyone who is interested in being part of this team is invited to attend the next meeting on Dec. 4, at 10am, in the Choir Room.



Men's Breakfast, Dec. 7

All men of the church are invited to Men's Breakfast on Dec. 7 at 7am in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is a freewill donation, and we enjoy casual conversation and a short devotion. Join us Dec. 7!

Threads of Grace, Dec. 7

Threads of Grace Ministry will meet for the first time on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 2pm, in the Fellowship Hall. We will have a devotional, light snacks, and begin working on a service project! Anyone who enjoys knitting, sewing, weaving, macrame, crocheting, embroidery, cross stitch, or any other textile craft is welcome to join us! Those who are interested in learning one of these crafts are welcome to join, too! Please bring your own tools and yarn. Patterns will be discussed at the meeting.



Director of Contemporary Worship

Stillwater Church will be hiring a part-time director of Contemporary Worship to work with our band in leading people into God's power and presence. The director oversees volunteers and staff who serve together to present the gospel through worship. The position includes



recruiting, leading rehearsals, leading in worship, and participating and/or leading contemporary worship in a variety of creative worship settings. Optional Add-On: Disciple students and lead a student worship band within our Student Ministries. Approximate hours per week: 5-9. For more information, contact Pastor Mike Hoppe at mike@stillwaterchurch.com.

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Kids Korner

ATTENTION PARENTS! Our annual **Children's Christmas Pageant** will be a part of the Christmas Concert again this year. The Christmas Concert will be on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 6pm. If your child would like to participate in the Children's Christmas Pageant, please attend an information meeting on **Wednesday, Dec. 3, at 5pm**. ALL of our children are encouraged to participate! If you cannot attend this meeting but your child wants to participate, please contact Betty at betty@stillwaterchurch.com or 251-604-0949.



NURSERY WORKER NEEDED! We need an additional nursery worker for Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. If you are interested or know someone that may be interested, please contact Betty at betty@stillwaterchurch.com or 251-604-0949.

Children's Worship Bulletins are available every Sunday morning under the TV in the lobby. Two types are available. One is for children 3 years and older. The other one is for children 7 years and older. These bulletins include activities based on the Scripture reading for morning worship. Bulletins from past weeks are on the bottom shelf and the current week is on the top. A pencil case with crayons, a pencil, smarties, and a chocolate kiss are on the second shelf. Please return the pencil case to the shelf after the service so it can be refilled for the next week.

Student Ministry Update



Student Christmas Party - On Dec. 7, 4-6pm, the students are having a Christmas Party! All students and friends in grades 6-12 are invited! Wear your pajamas and join us for chicken fingers and Christmas games!

Dec. 14 - Join us for our regularly scheduled student gathering, 4-6pm. Afterwards, families and friends are invited to join us for the Stillwater Christmas concert at 6pm!

Missions Team December Focus



The cold months are here! That means it is time for our annual blanket drive, "Blanket Mobile." Throughout December, we will be collecting new or gently used blankets. These blankets will be donated to a local ministry or directly distributed to those in need. We encourage you to pray over the blanket(s) you donate: a prayer of blessing, a prayer of protection, a prayer that the person using the blanket would know the warmth of being wrapped in the loving arms of Christ, a prayer that they would know Christ as their Lord and Savior. It's more than just a blanket. It's showing someone the love of Jesus!

If you are interested in joining the Missions Committee for 2026, please reach out to Stephanie Moye at smoye427@gmail.com for more information.

Food Pantry Update

November was a challenging month for the Food Pantry. The Food Pantry had regular distributions and did a community-wide distribution. With the government shutdown, recipients of food stamps did not receive food stamps. We signed up about 60 new neighbors in November, mostly due to no food stamps. The Food Pantry was blessed to hand out 140 turkeys to our neighbors for Thanksgiving.



In just November, the Food Pantry distributed over 55,272 pounds, or 27.6 tons, of food. We served 759 households, which equaled 2,281 individuals.

I want to give a huge THANK YOU to all of the wonderful volunteers working in the Food Pantry. Thank you for the monetary donations, the prayers, and patience with the Food Pantry.

May we give God all the Glory for His many blessings on this ministry.

In His Service,
Therese Brown
Food Pantry Director

You may give directly to this ministry by clicking [here](#) with "Food Pantry" noted on the memo line. Your gift helps touch the lives of people needing nutritious food, prayer, and a listening ear.

Stillwater Resale Store

5104 Hwy 43
Satsuma, AL 36572
Phone: 251-800-9928

Website: www.stillwaterchurch.com/stillwater-resale/

Stillwater Resale is a store with a mission, and we need your help! LOTS of hands are needed to keep the store organized and running smoothly. Workers are needed during the following times each week:

- Tue-Wed, 8:00-Noon & 1:00-4:00pm
- Thu-Fri, 7:30am-6:30pm (the days are divided into 3 shifts)
- Sat, 9:00am-2:30pm & 2:30-5:00pm

Please consider giving 3-4 hours each week. We need people to clean, sort, price, organize, greet, move heavy items, repair items...there is a job for every skill level!!

A weekly sign-up sheet is located on the ledge in the church lobby or call Kim Smith (936-777-4019) or Betty Moye (251-604-0949) to sign up.

Another way to serve is through donations. We need a constant supply of nice, used furniture for the store. If you or someone you know is getting new furniture or simply needs to move out some furniture, please consider donating to Stillwater Resale!

Stillwater Resale

NEW

STORE HOURS

BEGINNING OCTOBER 23RD, 2025

THURSDAY	9AM - 6PM
FRIDAY	9AM - 6PM
SATURDAY	9AM - 4PM

*Donations accepted during store hours

Located at 5104 US-43, Satsuma, AL, 36572



Backpack Ministry

Our Backpack Ministry feeds hungry students at all four of the Saraland schools. We need your help to pack bags, deliver bags on Fridays, and to donate food items throughout the school year.

Sign-up sheets for packing bags and delivering bags are available at the Welcome Desk in the church lobby.

Food items needed include ravioli, spaghetti-o's, soup, pop tarts, Vienna sausage, canned chicken, canned tuna, fruit cups, pudding cups, jerky sticks, small boxes of raisins, small packages of cookies, cheese crackers, breakfast bars, Ramen Noodles, instant grits and oatmeal packets, macaroni and cheese cups, and juice boxes. No items with peanut butter are needed due to allergies. Donated items can be dropped off in the lobby at our missions table. Thank you for serving students who require food assistance on the weekends.

December Birthdays

12/02 Heath Brown, Andy Smith
12/03 Robin Bolen
12/05 Brian Watson
12/08 Ann Carter
12/12 Carson Whitten
12/14 Olivia Boutwell



12/15 Korey Barbetta, Letty Whetsel
12/18 Anna Camille Gervais, 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, Lainey Coxwell
12/30 Tyler Crook, James Currie, Alexis Epperson, Trae Weeks



Thank you to everyone who helped with the Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner! We had a great time of fellowship, wonderful food, and lots of fun!

Weekly Prayer List

To submit a prayer concern or a praise to be shared on our weekly prayer email, or to sign up to receive our weekly prayer emails, please contact the church office at info@stillwaterchurch.com.

Telephone: (251) 675-2728
Email: info@stillwaterchurch.com
Website: stillwaterchurch.com

To give online, [click here](#) or scan the QR code below!





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