

## Christmas Cantata & Cookies



From the beginning God had a magnificent plan for the redemption of humanity. On a still, starry night in Bethlehem, the Light of the world was born. The Light would pierce the darkness and bring hope to a hopeless world.

This year our Christmas Cantata, entitled *Let There Be Light*, will look back at the Christmas story and remind us of the responsibility of all who call on the name of Jesus. We are called to spread the Good News so that one day the presence of Christ will shine in every heart and every home.

Join us on Sunday night, December 13 at 6:00pm for this year's cantata as we celebrate the coming of the Light of the world.

And don't forget that we will have a Christmas Cookie Fellowship immediately following the performance. So bring along your favorite Christmas dessert, and join the party after the cantata.

## Meriday Christmas Program

This year, Meriday will be hosting their annual Christmas Program on Thursday night, December 17 at 6:15pm. And you're invited to come see the show. It's a great way to experience Christmas through the eyes of a child, as well as an opportunity to connect with our preschool families. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Sunday School Breakfast

On Sunday morning, December 20, we will be hosting our annual Sunday School Christmas Breakfast. You are invited even if you're not actively involved in Sunday School.

We're asking everyone to bring your favorite breakfast dish and join us in the Banquet Hall for a special time of fellowship this holiday season. The church will provide coffee, juice, and milk. The breakfast begins at 9:00am, but you can feel free to join us at any point during the Sunday School hour.

## Christmas Eve Communion

During the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season, we need to slow down and focus on what it is we're celebrating. Our Christmas Eve Communion is a simple service designed to remind you what Christmas is all about.

Join us at 6:00pm on Thursday, December 24, as we come together to celebrate the birth of Christ and be reminded that we are all called to carry the light of Christ out into the darkness of the world.

## December's Birthdays



December 1 | Cris Lloyd  
December 3 | Sarah Aten  
December 9 | Rene Jeanty  
December 21 | Leslie Brockelsby  
December 22 | Frances Simons



Melbourne Heights Baptist Church is an Accepting, Caring People Sharing Christ

## News from Melbourne Heights for December 2015

### In this edition

- From the Pastor
- Sermon Series
- Birthday Party
- Christmas Banquet
- Caroling
- Cantata & Cookies
- Meriday Program
- Sunday School Breakfast
- Christmas Eve
- Birthdays



### Merry Christmas from Our Staff

It truly is a blessing to serve this congregation, and to work alongside each of you as we share the "Good News" of the Kingdom of God together. May you and your families be blessed not only this Christmas season but also throughout the New Year.

*De Lesie Michelle To Beck*

## From the Pastor

by Adam Schell

The countdown to Christmas is officially on. And with it, I can't help but hum the Andy Williams Christmas classic, "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year." You remember how it goes, right?

It's the most wonderful time of the year. With kids jingle bells and everyone telling you be of good cheer, it's the most wonderful time of the year.

But have you really paid attention to the entire song? Andy Williams sings about holiday greetings, and happy meetings. He sings about hosting parties, toasting marshmallows, and caroling out in the snow. He sings about telling tales of the glories of Christmases long, long ago. He sings of mistletoeing, hearts glowing, and loved ones coming near.

To Andy Williams that may sound like the most wonderful time of the year...but to many of us, Christmas is the most hectic time of the year. But rather than getting swept up in the busyness of the season as a church, we want to slow down this Christmas and focus on what really matters.

So rather than cramming our calendar full of activities, we're going to simplify our schedules. We're going to take Sunday and Wednesday nights off in December (except for a few of special events). And we're going to prioritize celebrating Christmas and spending time together.

And that's what this month's newsletter is going to focus on. We're going to give you more details about everything we have planned for December...and invite you to celebrate Christmas with us and spend time with one another.

## December's Sermon Series



The Christmas story is a story of hope, love, redemption and relationship. So what happened? How did it turn into a season focused on stuff, filled with stress, and overflowing with debt? It's time we rediscover what Christmas is all about.

That's what we'll be doing in worship throughout the season of Advent. We will focus on worshiping God fully. After all Christmas starts and ends with Jesus, and entering the story of advent means entering this season with an overwhelming passion to worship Jesus to our fullest.

We'll focus on spending less. Americans spend \$600 billion dollars during Christmas, and most of it goes straight on the credit card. So we'll focus on spending wisely to free ourselves from the anxiety of debt so we can enjoy this season. But at the same time you'll be encouraged to give more. But how can you spend less and give more? By giving what really matters yourself and your time.

And finally, we'll be reminded that Christmas is about loving all. Christ came to this world out of his love for all of us, and Christmas should be a time when we show and share the love of Christ throughout this world.

So join us throughout December as we prepare for Christmas, and as we rediscover what it's really about.

## Birthday Party for Jesus

There is no better way to remind our children what Christmas is all about than by throwing a birthday party for Jesus. And that's something we've done at Melbourne Heights for years., but this year we're going to change it up a bit.

This year our Birthday Party for Jesus will be on Thursday morning, December 3 at 10:00am during our preschool's weekly chapel time. The children will hear the story of Christmas. They'll do crafts, play games. And of course there will be a birthday cake.

And what's a birthday party without presents? Each child is encouraged to bring along a small baby gift that will be donated to a local charity.

All of our children are welcome to come and celebrate Jesus' birthday with us. And, if you'd like to help out with the party, you can contact Michelle Cloud for additional information.

## Christmas Banquet



It wouldn't be Christmas at Melbourne Heights without our annual Christmas Banquet. This year's banquet, sponsored by our Senior Adults, will be December 4 at 6:00pm.

We'll have a wonderful catered meal. We'll enjoy plenty of fellowship around the table. And Brenda Butler, Daniel Wilson, and Leslie

Brockelsby will be singing some of our favorite Christmas carols to help get us in the Christmas spirit.

Tickets for this year's banquet are \$17 each, but the deadline to purchase is November 29.

## Christmas Caroling



Christmas is a time of celebration, but it's also a time when many people can feel left out from the celebration. Health issues and safety concerns may keep them from attending special services. But no one should be left out at Christmas because Jesus came out of love for us all.

So each year, during the Christmas season, we like to bring the celebration to members of our church who might otherwise be left out by doing a little Christmas caroling. This year we will be caroling on Wednesday evening, December 9 from 5:30 to 7:00pm.

It doesn't matter how well you sing, or if you know all the words to every Christmas carol. You're invited to join us as we bring the celebration of Christmas outside the walls of our church and into our community.

But that's not all. If you would like one of our caroling groups to come to your home, please contact our church offices to let us know because we would love to come carol for you.