



We Strive to Be: A church devoted to making disciples of Jesus Christ, growing together in knowledge and relationship with God and each other.

Today's Events:

Elders/Deacons/Minister Meeting:
7:30 a.m.

Upcoming Events:

- Dec. 18** – Pantry: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.
- Dec. 24** – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
- Dec. 25** – Christmas (Office Closed)
- Dec. 26** – Office Closed
- Dec. 28** – H. O.P.E. Group: Christmas Party. Leave the church building at 5:30 p.m. for pickleball & gift exchange at the Webbs' house—\$10 limit.
- Dec. 31** – New Year's Eve (Office Closed)
- Jan. 1** – New Year's Day (Office Closed)
- Jan 21** – Meal: Pulled Pork, Baked Beans, Coleslaw, Chips, TX Sheet cake

Additional Info:

There are **no** meals provided before class on Wednesday nights in December.

Order of Worship

.....	<i>Lord, We Come Before Thee Now</i>
Song Leader/Call to Worship	Brandon Jones
.....	<i>Unto Thee, O Lord</i>
.....	<i>No Tears in Heaven</i>
Opening Prayer	TBD
.....	<i>This Is My Father's World</i>
.....	<i>He Lives</i>
.....	<i>Low In the Grave He Lay</i>
Communion Talk	Dee Plummer
Servers	Dallas Darrow, Brett Thornton, David Burford
.....	Dudley Darrow, George Gordon, Brian Wright
.....	<i>Listen To Our Hearts</i>
.....	<i>Angels We Have Heard On High</i>
.....	<i>The Greatest Commands</i>
Sermon: An Old Man & His Wife	Erik Granberg
.....	<i>There Is Power In the Blood</i>
Shepherd's Prayer	Roger Owen
Door Attendants	Dan Kent, Roger Unruh
Nursery	Michelle Pettus, Kira Granberg
Sound Booth/Slides	Jim Coker
Children's Church Teacher/Helper	Gina Thornton, Ally Coker

Sermon Scripture:

Luke 1:5-80

Sermon Thought:

Zechariah and Elizabeth had lived faithful lives, yet their lives weren't perfect. Through this, they remained faithful to God. Both Elizabeth and Mary received the miracle of new life. This was the beginning of God coming into the world and taking on the form of mankind so that mankind could be saved.

Sermon Questions:

1. Both Zechariah and Mary asked questions when Gabriel spoke to them. What can we learn from the difference between Zechariah's doubt and Mary's faith-filled curiosity?
2. John the Baptist's birth restored Zechariah's voice and pointed to his mission of preparing the way for Jesus. In what ways can we "prepare the way" for Christ in our own communities?
3. Zechariah's joy was delayed because of his unbelief, but God's promise was still fulfilled. How does this encourage us when our faith falters or when we struggle to trust God's timing?

This Week's Birthdays:

17th Brigitte Elledge
19th Kim Burford

Next Week's (12/21/25) Servants:

Song Leader

/Welcome: Jim Coker

Communion

Talk: Chris Taylor

Servers:

Wayne Williams
Houston Moore
Bryce Thornton
Cooper Thornton
Cory Moore
Aaron LeCrone

Shepherd's

Prayer: Dan Kent

Sound Booth/

Slides: Robb Mills

Nursery:

Lisa & Jasmine
Granberg

Children's

Church: Gina Thornton
Macy Mills

Door Attendants: Wendy Taylor
Bruce Swart

Welcome

Center: Gene & Pam
Denney

Greeters

for Dec.: Carol Baxter
Patrece Allen

Wash Baptismal

Garments: Gina Thornton

Bake Bread

for Visitors: Reeta Williams

Fill Communion

Trays: Cheryl Kent

Wed. Teacher: Kelli Moore
(Dec. 17)

The Essence of Life - *The Beginning*

Introduction

It is amazing to look back over life and see all the things we have accomplished. We are filled with a sense of wonder trying to figure out how we did what we did as we navigated the challenges we have embraced. As we reflect on these things, I believe we can truly see the hand of God molding and making us into the human vessels we have become. He is the one who makes it possible for us to successfully complete the tasks we are given. Yes, **the essence of life** lies in God's hands and how we surrender ourselves to his will for us.

Therefore, **the essence of life** lies within the things we have done – those things that give meaning to our memories and stories. As Solomon concluded, *"I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live"* (Ecc. 3:12). God wants the very best for us, and guides us on the pathway of righteousness so we can fulfill our hearts desires (Ps. 23:3). He needs us to do our part in fulfilling his eternal order of all he created. We will then be rewarded with the wonderful blessing of an eternal home with him. Again, Solomon, gives us this simple perspective of life after examining everything under the sun. *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven, There is a time to be born and a time to die"* (Ecc. 3:1-2). So just as God created mankind from the dust of the earth and gave us the spirit of life, Solomon concludes, *"the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it"* (Ecc. 12:7). That is **the essence of life** here on earth, and we look forward to what God has in store for us when our spirit returns to him. I invite you to look back on your life and see the hand of God working in the things you have done. It will touch your spirit and give your life added meaning.

Gordon Jantz

Women's Involvement Form for 2026

Please fill out and return the form to Bill Oldham or Pam Denney by Sunday, December 21. If you have not already received a new involvement form, they will be available at the Welcome Center.

We hope there is something on the form that each woman and girl in our congregation can choose to be a part of in serving others. Filling out the form also helps the ladies who have volunteered to coordinate these ministries.