

## A Word From The Pastor

As a child, Christmas always seemed to take such a long time to get here. For me, when people began to talk about Christmas approaching, the hours turned into days, the days turned into weeks, and the weeks turned into FOREVER! I thought Christmas would never come! All the while presents were beginning to appear under the Christmas tree in tantalizing patterns and colors of different Christmas wrapping paper. It was simply agonizing as a child – waiting for Christmas to finally get here so that those beautiful presents could be unwrapped and their contents enjoyed.

Waiting for Christmas as a child makes me think of those who were waiting for the coming of the Messiah before the birth of Jesus. I can only imagine how those living before His birth anticipated the coming of the Messiah. Peter wrote this regarding the prophets of old:

Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, *searched intently and with the greatest care*, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things. – 1 Peter 1:10–12.

The anticipation experienced by those Jewish people living before the coming of the Messiah continues to be expressed by devout Jews of our day in their prayers. As a part of the daily morning prayers said in many congregations, the Yigdal prayer is often sung or chanted. This prayer focuses on the 13 Articles Of Faith that The Rambam (Maimonides) says every Jew should believe in. The 12th principle is stated as “I believe with complete faith in the coming of Moshiach (Messiah). And though he may tarry, I shall wait anticipating his arrival each day.”

Even before the birth of Jesus there was a great anticipation among the Jewish people for the coming Messiah. Every young girl wanted to be the mother of the Messiah, every young man, the father. The Jewish people longed for the Messiah to come and set them free. No doubt, they also prayed as do contemporary Jewish people for the coming of the Messiah.

The glorious truth of the Gospel, however, states that the Messiah or Christ, has already come. Paul writes in Galatians 4:4-5 these words: “But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.” And as the angel announced in Luke chapter two, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ [or “he is Messiah”] the Lord.”

The Good News of Great Joy is for us! Christmas arrived nearly 2,000 years ago when Jesus was born in the little town of Bethlehem. No more waiting! No more anticipation! Jesus has come! The Messiah is here. And you and I can discover that great joy of receiving the best gift ever given to man – Jesus the Messiah, Christ for us! No need to wait any longer.

May the Good News of Messiah’s arrival brighten your Christmas season this year!

Dr. James L. Fleming

**COLLEGE PARK  
CHURCH OF GOD**

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**OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Senior Pastor**

Dr. James L. Fleming

**Children's Director**

Vanessa Small

**OUR SUNDAY SERVICES**

10:00 a.m. - Worship Team  
Rehearsal

11:00 a.m. - Worship Service

**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

**Tuesdays**

No Small Group  
until further notice

**Wednesdays**

No Evening Bible Study  
until further notice

**MONTHLY ACTIVITIES**

**Last Sunday - December 27**  
Food Drive Collection for  
Interfaith Emergency Services

**OFFICE HOURS**

Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00/4:00 p.m.



**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY**

The Women's Christmas Party will be Saturday, Dec. 12, at 12:30 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. It will be catered by Olive Garden. A donation basket will be available to help defray the cost. Bring a Christmas dessert to share. Add your name to the sign-up sheet in the narthex if you plan to attend.

**KIDS CHRISTMAS GIFTS**

The Women's Ministry is surprising the children of our church with Christmas gifts. If you would like to make a donation to help purchase these gift cards, please label your envelope "Kids Christmas" and place in the offering. Checks can be made to the "Women's Ministry."

**CHRIST'S BIRTHDAY OFFERING**

Christ's Birthday Offering will be collected on Sunday, December 20. This special offering helps to support the world missions of the Church of God.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

Join us for a service of carols and candles on Thursday, Dec. 24, at 6:00 p.m.

**CHRISTMAS POST OFFICE**

The Christmas Post Office is set up in the narthex. This is a place where you can leave Christmas cards for others in the congregation. Be sure to check for cards addressed to you!

**SOUP LABELS**

The Women's Ministry is requesting everyone to save Campbell Soup labels for a neighbor of our church. A collection box is in the narthex. Thank you.

**CHURCH FACEBOOK PAGE**

Pastor Fleming's sermons and Sunday School lessons for the last several weeks are on our Facebook page. [Facebook.com/CollegeParkChurchOfGod](https://www.facebook.com/CollegeParkChurchOfGod)

**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

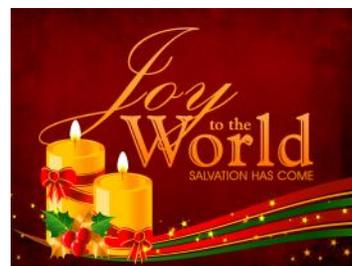
There is NO Sunday School or mid-week service until further notice.

**Happy Birthday!**

- 01 - Harvey Radford
- 02 - Ryan Lee
- 04 - Amanda Pfeffer
- 05 - Peggy Damsma
- 07 - Irene Rogers
- 07 - Denise Skinner
- 12 - Gail Fleming
- 25 - Jackie Cook
- 25 - Fred Skinner
- 28 - Matthew Mitchell
- 30 - Donna Smith

**Happy Anniversary!**

- 03 - Ted & Susan Owenby
- 15 - Basil & Althea Clemmings
- 29 - Werner & Grace Edwards



*If you would like your birthday or anniversary added to this list, please contact the church office.*

# OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

**Thank you to all who donated  
toys and money for the Operation  
Christmas Child shoebox gifts.**

**We had a total of 83 boxes.**

The boxes will be delivered by Samaritan's  
Purse to boys and girls around the world.  
Please pray as these children experience the  
good news of God's great love through Jesus!

