



# *the Connection*

MEADOWLANDS BAPTIST CHURCH

18 DECEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER

## HOW GREAT OUR JOY

WRITTEN BY JERRY ASCHER

It was a time of rejoicing in the city of Jerusalem. Something had just happened that was cause for celebration. It had been so long in coming that it seemed almost too good to be true. The event I'm referring to actually happened hundreds of years before Christ was born in Bethlehem. This time of celebration was called by Nehemiah and Ezra after the wall of Jerusalem was completed. Nehemiah 8 records this event for us. The celebration began when Ezra the scribe took the Book of Moses and read it to all the gathered assembly. What a wonderful way to start a celebration of all God had done for the people! How did the people respond? Nehemiah writes in verse 9 that "all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law." It seems that this response was a little bit of a surprise for Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Levites who were given the task of teaching the Word of God to the people. They had to say to the people, "This day is

holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep" (v. 9). Why were they weeping? They were weeping because they only had heard the part of the message that pointed out their sin. For this, their response was certainly appropriate and an example to those of us who often take our sin way too lightly. But why did the people have to be admonished not to weep? It's because they missed the full message of what was read. They failed to see that God's Word not only shines a light on the sin of mankind but also points to a God who is ready to forgive the one who repents of his sin. So, Nehemiah proceeded to tell the people, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength" (v. 10). In commenting on this passage, T.J. Betts wrote, "It is God's cleansing that makes the sinner right before God, and it is this righteousness that

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## SUNDAY FAMILY WORSHIP SERVICES: 9:30 OR 11 AM

Two in-person services (with singing) take place in the gymnasium. Services will simultaneously be livestreamed in the auditorium (with singing) or available to you at home.

- "JOY TO THE WORLD"
- "THE FIRST NOEL"
- PRAYER
- "I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE"
- SCRIPTURE READING: PSALM 24
- "THE BIRTHDAY OF A KING"
- CHILDREN'S STORY
- "HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING"
- SERMON: "THE SHORTEST CHRISTMAS STORY"
- JOHN 1:14
- "O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL"
- PRAYER

### PLEASE NOTE:

Sunday evening services will resume January 10 and Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study will resume January 6.

### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE 6 PM

Join us in-person in the gymnasium (overflow in auditorium) for carols and Scripture reading, or view on livestream from your home.



**CONTACT US:** Church Office  
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### HOW GREAT OUR JOY CONTINUED

results in the joy of the Lord, and it is the joy of the Lord that strengthens the righteous and gives them hope." This is a great reminder of what should be the basis of our joy when we're tempted to allow the struggles all around us to get us down. A believer's joy is based in the person and work of Jesus Christ, our Saviour Who we celebrate at this time of year. Jesus came to earth to bring salvation to you and me, to cleanse us from our sin, and to justify us in the sight of God. Keep your eyes on Him this Christmas season, and may what we know to be true about our Saviour fill us with great joy!

### GIVING

E-transfer is available. From your bank's website, select the e-transfer feature. The email address to transfer to is [donations@meadowlandsbaptist.com](mailto:donations@meadowlandsbaptist.com). Your donation will be automatically accepted and you will receive a confirmation of the transfer.

In case you missed Pastor Kevin's update on our missionary partnerships, you can listen to it [here](#). You can also find the [proposal for congregational vote here](#).

