

MT. OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH, 3500 Edwards Mill Road, Raleigh, NC 27612

NEWS & EVENTS – December 2025

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One of my earliest Christmas memories was about seeing something I wasn't supposed to see. At the time I wasn't on some truth-seeking quest about one of our most popular cultural traditions. I wasn't out to prove that the story of Santa Claus was somewhat embellished. I hadn't examined the possibility of whether a perpetually elderly man could pilot a sleigh from an obscure and remote location located way up north somewhere, hitched to a team of flying reindeer, and deliver gifts to children all over the earth. Among the details we learned about this one special night every year was that the sleigh was not that big...for Santa and the gifts. When you started to think critically about such things, you became one of those people who were branded as unbelievers in the Santa Claus scenario. Sometimes you stumble onto the truth without deliberately looking for it. It's a revelation. And when truth is revealed, things are never quite the same. Some things you just can't unsee. Some things we believe or not. Truth is often revealed as we ponder...and we wonder.

This particular Christmas, I think I was probably being prepared to experience this revelation. I recall being a young lad around 8 or 9 years of age. Earlier in the evening, just after sunset, as the long night of Christmas Eve was just setting in, Santa Claus appeared at our door. I think he knocked. The knock was unexpected. His message, primarily to me and my younger brother, was to persuade us to go to sleep early, because Santa had a lot of traveling to do before he would return with our gifts. He was in a red suit, complete with hat, and trimmed in white. He had a white beard and black boots. But his voice sounded a lot like a deputy sheriff my daddy worked with from time to time. I saw no reindeer. Just Santa Claus. I thought all that was odd. It was certainly what I was supposed to see. My younger brother was traumatized. Even in later years we would talk about the night Santa knocked on our door. I don't think he ever quite recovered. We didn't have a chimney. I wondered if Mama would leave the door unlocked that night. Telling children to go to bed early on Christmas Eve is the easiest part of parental duties. But for a child to obey is the hardest part for the child. I remember being one of those children who resisted sleep in fear that something was being missed. But I did sleep. Then I woke up.

As I poked my head out of the doorway and looked into the hall, I saw folding stairs that led upward into the attic. I rubbed my eyes and heard a sound and saw mama coming down the ladder with a bag of presents. They were unwrapped because Santa didn't have time to wrap presents. Mama told me to go back to sleep or Santa Claus would not come if I was awake. I had seen Santa at the door earlier. As I processed the evidence later, it seemed clear to me that Santa was on the ladder. I was never the same. Truth does that. Consider God's Word the way I first heard it...and believe...you'll never be the same.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:8-14 KJV

Merry Christmas Blessings,
Pastor Sam

**MT. OLIVET CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
5:30 PM ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24th**