



# The Harvest Times

A Quarterly Publication of The Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church

ISSUE 25.2 | 12/31/2025

## Fall Happenings

- **Lower Paxton Twp. Fall Fest** - We participated in this wonderful event and connected with many from our community.
- **15th Anniversary** - On October 26, we celebrated our church's 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We had a mortgage burning ceremony, special music, and a church-wide lunch and afternoon service.
- **Preaching Conference** - This year marked our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Preaching Conference. We were blessed to have Evangelist Dan DeLong and Pastor Chad Bailey join us for this special week.
- **Thanksgiving Service** - The Tuesday prior to Thanksgiving, we gathered and heard marvelous testimonies of praise to the Lord for His marvelous goodness in our lives.
- **Sunday School Christmas Fellowship** - Our young people gathered on a Friday night in December to celebrate Christ's birth.
- **Junior Church Christmas Program** - This year's program was entitled "Around the World It's Christmas." Check out the video on our YouTube page so that you too can enjoy it.
- **Christmas Ladies Fellowship** - The Ladies gathered for a night of crazy sweaters, crazy socks, and encouragement around God's Word.

## A Time of Great Joy

by W. Brandon Starnes, Pastor

***"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."* (John 1:29)**

The birth of Jesus was a time of great joy because He would be the Lamb of God, and His coming brought about salvation to all. You know, man's sin is really the greatest problem facing humanity.

Our greatest problem is not failed health. Mr. Ben Sasse, a former U.S. Senator, recently announced that he had been diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer. In his announcement, he said, "I've got less time than I'd prefer." I thought that was a remarkable way to put it. There are some that have less years on this earth than they would prefer, and there are others who do not have the health that they would prefer. But great health is not humanity's greatest need.

Wealth is not humanity's greatest need. Even the Lord said to his disciples, "For ye have the poor with you always." (Mark 14:7) Good people, yea, even great people experience lean years financially in their life. I would take your mind back to Genesis 39 where the Pharaoh of Egypt ruled the most powerful country on the planet. Yet, even he would be subjected to seven lean years that would have brought about grand famine and extermination of so many of his friends and families had it not been for the promises and presence of the Almighty God that directed Joseph.

Leanness and hardship would be the entire existence of Christ. For surely the Lord would say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20) You'll find that the sons of Zebedee had boats, and they had a dad, Zebedee, that cared for them. No doubt they had a home, a house, a business, and sustenance of life. Matthew, another disciple of Christ and the namesake of the first of the New Testament gospels, was a tax collector which no doubt supplied the needs of his life. Peter had a home and a wife. And such could be traced to almost all of the disciples. Yet, the Lord Jesus Christ, the diadem of all glory, had no wealth on this earth to readily speak of. In fact, if we study the life and times of Jesus Christ, I think the greatest wealth that you could attribute to Christ was his outer garment that he wore. The one of great value that they cast lots for at the cross because they would not rip it asunder. Yet, Jesus lived a life patiently waiting on His Father's will.

Wealth and health are not the greatest needs of humanity. ***Man's sin debt is the greatest need facing all mankind.*** All humanity is separated from God because of this debt. If I can make an analogy here, just as this world was in darkness politically and theologically at the time of Christ's birth, so the heart of men today is in darkness. It is why we can speak of the glorious light of Christ. He is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. He is light, and His light is the life of man. These are the promises we find over and over again. And that is why the comparison is made in the New Testament between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of Christ's marvelous light.

The Lord Jesus, in His incarnation, was born to become sin for us that knew no sin. He himself did no sin, but rather, He paid our sin debt. His sacrifice allowed us to be redeemed. Jesus purchased us out of the darkness of this world and promoted us into the glorious presence of the Almighty God. Truly, we can say, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." (1 John 3:1)

You see the hope that Christ brought. The glorious joy that Christ brought wasn't just a fleeting fancy of happiness. It was a great joy for it promised a way to free people from the bondage and eternal consequence of their sin.

## Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church Media



SVBC Music



The Rejoicing in the Word Podcast



The Gospel



The SVBC Pulpit



The Rejoicing in the Word Ladies Blog



SVBC Facebook

## True Faith

By Valerie K. Starnes

### Upcoming Events

January 4 - Bible Sunday  
January 18 - Sanctity of Life Sunday  
February 15 - Stewardship Sunday  
March 15 - Baptist Heritage Sunday  
March 19-22 - Missions Conference

### Monthly Memory Verse

(Each month as a church we put aside a passage from Scripture to memorize; this passage is our memory passage for December)

1 Corinthians 16:13-16

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity. I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.”

### Joy to the World

(written by Isaac Watts)

Joy to the World! The Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Have you ever bitten into what you thought was a soft, gooey, chocolate chip cookie, but instead you sunk your teeth into a disappointing raisin?! That troubling turn of events may have caused you to leave the rest of the cookie on your plate! Unexpected changes and disappointed expectations are part of life. What a blessing to serve the God Who is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

God's Word says, “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.” (Psa. 102:25-27)

The book of Jude was written to those who are preserved in Christ Jesus. Jude wrote to exhort them that they should “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” This is the true faith which has been the bulwark of saints throughout the ages... the bold faith of Old Testament prophets, the “unfeigned faith” of young Timothy, a “Hebrews 11” kind of impossible faith.

1) True faith is unchanging in the face of false doctrine. “For there are certain men crept in unawares...ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance...” Jude v. 4-5.

2) True faith is unchanging in changing times. “Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage” Jude v. 11&16.

3) True faith is unchanging because it rests in the person of Jesus Christ and the eternal grace of God. “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” Jude v. 24. I am reminded of a line from the Swedish hymnist, “More secure is no one ever than the loved ones of the Savior.”

Praise the Lord for true faith in the God Who never changes!

### Scenes from our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service



Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church  
3840 N. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110

Service Times:

Sunday School (10 AM), Sunday Morning (11 AM), Sunday Evening (6 PM),  
Thursday Night Prayer Service (7 PM)