

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I have seen many things come across "my desk" over the past 8 1/2 years. Some of it has been very hard and some of it has been a joy. I would count our Thanksgiving table as one of my favorites. The food, family and fellowship was delightful. Yes, we all ate too much turkey and dressing, but as the old saying goes "let's eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we diet." I'm looking forward to Sharon's rendition of turkey sandwiches. I'm looking forward to leftovers. In the middle of it all, we shared this scripture before we ate. It comes from Psalm 111!

Praise the Lord!

I give **Thanks** to the **Lord** with my **Whole Heart**, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

Pastor Phil

Cameronian has always had a program on Christmas Eve as far back as I can remember. (The early 1940's). My Daddy would take the children while our Mother stayed home and cooked. She worked in the mill and this was the only time she had to cook our Christmas dinner. Several people have questioned why we didn't change this tradition. That is not an option as far as most are concerned.

A very fond memory of mine is of a lady in my Sunday School class who shared with me that she had to be out of town on Christmas Eve and she was so disappointed because she would miss getting her fruit bag. I told her I would be glad to put a bag in the refrigerator for her to get upon her return home. She was so happy and grateful. This was one of our senior ladies and she could have bought all the fruit she wanted but being with her church family on Christmas Eve for the retelling of our Savior's birth and getting that fruit bag was a special tradition she always looked forward to as do so many other church members. We always have visitors that night who also enjoy the program and fruit bags.

Thanks to all who have given their time and efforts to keep this tradition alive at Cameronian.

ELDER ON CALL

Elder on call for December is Kenneth Lynch. His phone number is 910-997-3273.

MEN OF THE CHURCH:

The Men of the Church will have their annual Christmas dinner on Saturday night, December 13th at 6:00 p.m. If you plan to attend, please sign up in the foyer at the handicap entrance.

FELLOWSHIP MEAL:

We will not have a fellowship meal in December. We will have the Men's Christmas dinner.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH:

The Women of the Church will meet on Tuesday December 9th at 6:30 pm. at the church for their Christmas Party. Instead of exchanging ornaments we will be bringing animal toys, treats, or towels for the animal shelter.

We collected food for the food bank for November. Thanks to all that contributed.

We want to encourage you to attend and support the women.

Also for the Christmas Party, please bring your favorite finger foods to enjoy.

CHOIR:

The Choir will be presenting their Christmas Cantata, **Hope in a Manger**, on Sunday, December 14th at 6:00 p.m. We will have a "Hot Chocolate Social" following the Cantata. The choir has worked hard so please come and enjoy their work.

We will not have choir practice on Monday night, December 15th. We will also not have choir practice on December 22nd and December 29th.

The Worship Committee and Cameronian EPC invites you to join us for a Christmas experience that celebrates the heart of the season. Written and directed by the Chandler family. The Tiny Manger explores how the Nativity story continues to shape and steady us, even in a world that seems busier and louder each year. Through gentle humor, heartfelt moments, and music that lifts the spirit, the play invites us to slow down and rediscover the simple beauty of Christ's birth.

At the center of the story is a family learning to reconnect during their Christmas Eve together. As they share time, conversation, and faith, they begin to see one another with fresh appreciation. Their evening becomes a reminder that the joy of Christmas grows stronger when it is shared, and that the message of the manager still has the power to bring people closer.

We would love for you to be part of this warm and meaningful night. The Tiny Manger offers an opportunity to reflect, rejoice, and remember why the Nativity has endured through generations. Come join us as we celebrate the hope that Christ brings to every home and every heart.

The show begins on Christmas Eve at 6:30 PM.

Please pray for our session.

If you have a concern or need to talk to an elder, feel free to call our pastor or one of the elders.

Pastor Phil Joines	910-528-1958	Adam Chandler	336-706-3576
Velma Alford	910-206-0916	Jim Barbee	910-997-1091
Kenneth Lynch	910-997-3273	Matthew Parker	910-334-1710
Brooke White	910-995-2243	David Singleton	910-206-5319

Worship Committee – Brooke White

Maintenance Committee – Matthew Parker, chairman and Kenneth Lynch, assistant.

Finance Committee – Jim Barbee

Congregational Care – David Singleton

Mission and Evangelism – Velma Alford

Publicity and Technology – Adam Chandler

If you need anything from these committees, please ask them. If you would like to use your talent on one of these, talk to the committee chairman.

BIRTHDAYS

December 20 th	Lisa Austin
December 21 st	Kaylynne Chandler
December 28 th	Phil Joines

ANNIVERSARIES

No anniversaries

If I made any mistakes on the birthdays or anniversaries, please let me know.

CAMERONIAN BOYS:

The Cameronian Boys have had a busy schedule, but we are proud of them but it is good having them back at Cameronian.

They do have a singing at Manly Presbyterian Church in Southern Pines on December 7th At 3:00 P.M.

Please keep these men in your prayers as they go out and witness for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

CHURCH MOUSE

I heard someone singing “the goose is getting fat!” Well, your Church Mouse isn’t!!!! I may have to visit one of your kitchens to find a wee crumb. Of course, my family will be with me. That means a full house! I will try to text you before I come...no need getting the cat involved!!



What happened to all of our good cooks? We need a Holiday Dinner! You can do it. After all, an apron is really a cape on backwards. You are super heroes! There now, don’t you feel better?

Some of the women of the church came by for a meeting. Boy, it was wonderful to hear their voices again! I overheard one of them saying, “I came, I saw, I forgot what I came for!” Now there is the story of my life! Hold on a minute and let me **over think** this. There must be a good word somewhere in that!

Christmas is really coming and if we are not together in spirit, singing His praises, giving thanks for all His blessings and sharing His love we have missed the reality of it! The Throne of God is a small, wooden manager full of hope, joy and love. Come and share in the celebration!

Your pastor stopped by to see me the other day. Said he'd been to one of those 'antique' sales. It was terrible. Seven people bid on him!

Just be glad 2025 is almost over. The new Year will have to be better. I may be wrong---but it's highly unlikely. After all, I'm the Cameronian Church Mouse. Assume I am right. It will save time.

God bless us everyone! (And may we remember to bless Him!)

BACKSTAGE ON CHRISTMAS EVE

All over our world, churches large and small are presenting Christmas plays and pageants. What amaze me is how much goes on backstage before the curtain ever rises. There are props to be made, costumes to be sewn, music to be rehearsed, lines to be memorized, and so much more.

On this Christmas, with all the attention on Bethlehem and the manger, think for a minute about what was transpiring backstage...in heaven, that is Our Lord was saying a farewell to His father. Laying aside His glory, He stepped over the portals of heaven into a smelly Eastern stable.

And what would He say to the Father as He departed, when the curtain rose on the greatest event in human history? I go "to do Your will."

That for which we had been waiting and to which the prophets had been pointing was coming...and for the express purpose of doing the Father's will.

All of heaven was looking over those portals that starlit night in Bethlehem. The "fulness of the time" (Galatians 4:4 KJV) had come. Although most on earth were oblivious, those in heaven were watching and worshipping. Remember: what is onstage is not always the whole story.

Lord, to think of what You left to come to give me life moves me to want "to do Your will." In Jesus' name, amen.

HOPE YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS

**DECEMBER 2025
PHIL JOINES – PASTOR**

CAMERONIAN EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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