

2024 Holiday Guide

# Go Tell It ON THE Mountain

SHOW UP. LEAVE DIFFERENT.



## Songs of the Season

*How our songs can be a witness  
this Holiday season.*

PG. 6

## Do Tell

*5 Ways to "Go Tell It" This  
Christmas*

PG. 16





# 2024 Holiday Guide

Current - A Christian Church



## CONTENTS

**6**

**SONGS OF THE SEASON**

**9**

**PONCHE NAVIENDO**

Special Holiday Punch Recipe

**12**

**BEHIND THE MUSIC**

A candid conversation with Andrew Geist

**15**

**BRINGING GOOD NEWS**

**16**

**DO TELL**

5 Ways to "Go Tell It" this Christmas

**20**

**GROWING TOGETHER**

Inside the Launch of the New Discipleship Materials



# SONGS OF THE SEASON

**22**

## **ALL THINGS DEC 23**

Check out all you need to know about our Christmas Celebration, DEC23.

**24**

## **THE POWER OF A SIMPLE GIFT**

A story of how Operation Christmas Child brings light around the world.

**current**

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE



**Sunday, Dec 22**

9:30a & 11:00a

\*regular service times

**Christmas Eve Eve**

**Monday, Dec 23**

Three Services to Choose From

4:00pm 6:00pm 8:00pm

**Sunday, Dec 29**

9:30a & 11:00a

\*regular service times





In that day you will say:

“Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;  
make known among the nations what he has done,  
and proclaim that his name is exalted.

ISAIAH 12:4



26600 Westheimer Parkway - Katy TX 77494  
[www.currentchristian.org](http://www.currentchristian.org)



# KIDS' Baptism

C L A S S

CurrentKids' Baptism Class is designed specifically for children ages 7 through 11. This class provides a meaningful opportunity for children to understand what it means to follow Jesus, with the guidance of a parent alongside them.



**Sunday, March 30**  
**12:30pm - The Cove**





# SONGS OF THE SEASON

BY PASTOR DARREN

Does your car seem to turn into a recording studio as you belt out Christmas Carols while you brave holiday traffic? Or is that just me? Somehow in the moment it feels like I'm harmonizing perfectly with the Christmas crooners on the radio!

Do you catch yourself singing or humming along with the Christmas music playing in stores and restaurants?


Does worship with the church family impact you in a different way this time of year?

The songs of the season are woven deeply into the fabric of Christmas. We all have our favorites. We also have a few Christmas tunes that make us cringe (I'd like to nominate "The Chipmunks Song" for that distinction)!

Chipmunks aside, the music and lyrics of the holiday can easily take us to nostalgic moments and memories. Even though many of these classics were penned long ago they have endured the test of time and speak directly to the heart. Can you think of any other songs we sing regularly whose original versions were put to paper more than 500 years ago? There's something special about the songs intended to express the wonder and holiness of the birth of Jesus, our Savior.

As these songs fill our streets and stores and church services, their words become reminders of the hope and redemption that Christmas brings. They provide one more way we can reconnect to the true meaning of Christmas.





An  
Invitation  
To A Deeper  
Meaning...

In a season so dominated by commercialism, these carols remind us what Christmas is all about. Songs like "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World" bring the Christmas story alive through simple, sincere words. They quietly tell the story of a humble Savior's birth, of angels proclaiming peace, and of shepherds in awe of a newborn King. Carols gently proclaim the Good News to a world that often overlooks it.

Perhaps one of the most stirring lines can be found in O Holy Night:

"Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
'till He appeared and the soul felt its worth."

In this single line, we glimpse the very heart of the Christmas message. It tells of a world longing for redemption, weighed down by darkness and waiting for salvation. And then, at the arrival of Christ, a transformation occurs—the soul finally understands its worth. God thinks we are worth the sacrifice of His perfect Son, Jesus. Songs like this bring us back not only to the true meaning of Christmas, but to the core longing of the soul.

These songs of the season can even be a witness, gently reaching hearts that may not yet know the message of Christ. A simple song could plant the first seeds of faith, inviting a heavy heart into a story that is full of grace and redemption.



## A Chance To Pause And Reflect

The busyness of the holiday season often leaves little room for contemplation, yet carols have a way of drawing us into a moment of quiet reflection. Hearing the opening words of "O Come, All Ye Faithful" or the innocent melody of "Away in a Manger" has a grounding effect, urging us to set aside distractions and hurry, and instead, enter into a place of peace. For the Jesus-follower, these truths put to music can jar us from our frenetic pace just long enough to pull us into a quiet moment of worship with the God who made us.

The 2008 song by Amy Grant, "I Need A Silent Night" highlights the need we all have to slow down and seek the peace that only Jesus can give.

*I've made the same mistake before  
Too many malls, too many stores  
December traffic, Christmas rush  
It breaks me till I push and shove*

*Children are crying while mothers are trying  
To photograph Santa and sleigh  
The shopping and buying and standing forever in line  
What can I say?*

*I need a silent night, a holy night  
To hear an angel voice through the chaos and the noise  
I need a midnight clear, a little peace right here  
To end this crazy day with a silent night*

*December comes then disappears  
Faster and faster every year*

*Did my own mother keep this pace  
Or was the world a different place?*

*Where people stayed home wishing for snow  
Watching three channels on their TV  
Look at us now rushing around  
Trying to buy Christmas peace*

*I need a silent night, a holy night  
To hear an angel voice through the chaos and the noise  
I need a midnight clear, a little peace right here  
To end this crazy day with a silent night*

## An Opportunity To Hear It All Again - For The First Time

As we hear the songs of the season this Christmas, I pray they are more than background noise. I pray that we hear the words again, for the first time. May they call us to experience Christmas in its fullness—to rediscover the awe of a Savior's birth and the beauty of selfless love.

The right Christmas carol can draw us closer to the heart of God. I hope you will join us for the December message series, "Songs Of The Season" and bring family and friends along with you. We'll take a look at a different Christmas carol each Sunday and connect with the scriptural truth that offers to change us from the inside out.

It's Christmas time y'all... God sent Jesus to prove His love for you.

*"... the weary world rejoices."*







# Special Holiday Recipe Ponche Navideño

## HOLIDAY PUNCH

Meet Art and Cristina Betancourt, a dynamic duo beloved at Current for their unwavering dedication and warmth. Art, a valued member of our facilities team, keeps everything running smoothly, while Christina lends her heart and hands to numerous ministries each week. Their deep roots in hospitality shine especially bright during the holiday season when they share their family's treasured Mexican holiday punch, *ponche navideño*. This flavorful, aromatic drink, brimming with fruits and spices, embodies the essence of festive gatherings—comforting, and steeped in tradition.




### Ingredients:

- 7 quarts of water
- 2 small cones of piloncillo (sugar cane)
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 1 pound of TejocoTe (small fruit - like apples)
- 8 guavas chopped
- 3/4 cup - chopped prunes
- 1 1/2 cup - chopped apples
- 3 pieces of sugar cane (cleaned)
- 1 cup dried hibiscus flower

### Directions:

- Add water to large pot
- Add the piloncillo, cinnamon sticks, prunes, hibiscus flower, and tejocotes to the pot of water
- Boil for 15 min
- Lower heat to simmer
- Simmer for 1 hour
- Add the chopped apples and guavas
- Simmer for 30 min
- Serve hot with a little fruit.





# An average of 3000 bags of food are given out each year through Current Cupboard.

We're committed to making a difference in the lives of those around us. Our food pantry ministry, Current Cupboard, provides essential food supplies to households in need, offering practical help and hope within our community.

**current**missions





Join us on the last Saturday of each month for Cars and Coffee. Partnered with West Houston Muscle, we're excited to continue this family friendly outreach event. All makes and models are welcome. We'll have the coffee and donuts ready!

**All Makes & Models Welcome**  
**8am - 11am - Front Parking Lot**  
**Last Saturday of each month**





# Behind THE MUSIC

A candid conversation with  
Andrew Geist, Lead Worship Minister

*Q: What role do you think Christmas music plays in the church and in worship during the holiday season?*

Christmas music is a reflection of our journey as believers, beginning with Jesus coming to earth. While it can feel cheesy or overly joyful at times—often due to commercialization (laughs)—I’ve grown to appreciate it more. For worship, what matters most is the heart posture. Sometimes, Christmas music connects deeply with our spirits, and sometimes it doesn’t quite reach us.

*Q: How do you choose the songs for the Christmas season at Current? Are there specific qualities or messages you look for?*

This year, our series made it easy, thanks to Darren’s focus on “Songs of the Season” (laughs). We’re using songs like “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” “Go Tell It on the Mountain,” and “O Holy Night.” Typically, I select songs that align with the sermon themes. However, Christmas is unique. Many carols are either traditional without much emphasis on Jesus or they hyper-focus on His birth,

missing other important theological points. I try to blend songs that celebrate joy and anticipation, along with mid-tempo pieces that have a festive feel. We also include contemporary songs like “King of Kings” that express the gospel message simply and clearly. After all, the Christmas story is just the beginning of the Good News.

*Q: Are there any new or less traditional Christmas songs you’re excited to incorporate this year?*

One I’m excited about is Phil Wickham’s “Manger Throne.” It’s a powerful reminder of the humility and significance of Jesus’ arrival. He could have come in any form—fire, storm, or glory that commanded immediate reverence. But instead, He came as a baby in a manger. It’s a profound contrast that challenges us to bow to such humble beginnings.

We’ll also re-imagine traditional carols in creative ways to engage the congregation and foster participation. It’s always exciting to see familiar songs renewed in a way that resonates deeply.





*Q: What are some of your personal favorite Christmas songs, and why do they resonate with you?*

A song that lives rent-free in my mind is “Feliz Navidad”—it pops into my head all year (laughs). I also love how we perform “Silent Night” during our December 23rd candlelight service. There’s something beautiful about seeing people focus on the light of the candles as they sing, embodying the moment when the Light of the world came down. On a fun note, I enjoy “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” “Carol of the bells”, “Santa Clause is Comin’ to Town,” but I’m not a fan of Mariah Carey’s “All I Want for Christmas Is You”—(sighs) it’s just overplayed!

*Q: Is there a particular song that has a powerful impact on the congregation? Could you share a memorable moment?*

A: My first year at Current, I sang “Little Drummer Boy” by For King & Country. I was nervous, unsure of how it would be received. It turned out to be incredibly impactful—not just for the congregation, but for me

personally. My son, Frederik, seeing me sing for the first time in my element, wouldn’t stop singing that song for a year. It was a moment that connected us. Another powerful song was “Hope Has a Name.” During one service, the lighting enhanced the moment when we sang “Hope has a name, Emmanuel, The light of the world, the glory of heaven” and the congregation’s reaction was unforgettable. It was a moment filled with hope and joy.

*Q: What do you hope the congregation takes away from the Christmas worship experience each year?*

My hope, like Darren’s, is that people walk away with a deeper appreciation for what they are singing and truly experience the hope and joy that only Jesus provides. This season is an opportunity for hearts to be refocused on the truth of Christ and to be filled with authentic, joy, hope and peace that overcomes bitterness, anxiety, and anger. That’s the true gift of Christmas worship.





# Dec 23

**MONDAY, DEC 23**

3 SERVICES TO CHOOSE FROM

**4:00P 6:00P 8:00P**

**DEC23.ORG**



**current**  
A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

26600 Westheimer Parkway, Katy, TX 77494



# How Beautiful ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS

WRITTEN BY TIFFANY WRIGHT



There's something profound about learning something noteworthy, especially when it impacts your community, society, or your life. When we hear news, there's often a moment of anticipation right before we actually receive it, particularly when it's shared by another person. Yet today, we rarely hear news directly from others. Instead, we rely on devices that provide updates from around the world with just a couple of taps. The news we receive today is rarely positive, and if it is, it's news about something that has little impact on our own lives.

Now, take a moment to consider: What if you could be the one to deliver news to someone else? Not just any news, but news that is life-changing. Imagine being the bearer of the best news someone has ever heard—news that brings peace in place of chaos, joy instead of anxiety, and freedom rather than bondage.

Isaiah 52:7 breathes life into this idea:

*How beautiful on the mountains  
are the feet of those who bring good news,  
who proclaim peace,  
who bring good tidings,  
who proclaim salvation,  
who say to Zion,  
"Your God reigns!"*

Roughly 700 years before the birth of Jesus, the prophet Isaiah offered a vision of what it means to be a messenger carrying the best news of all—the news that would split

history in two. With this news, we learn that *"the power of God brings salvation to everyone who believes through Jesus Christ. For in this good news the righteousness of God is revealed."* (Romans 1:16)

In Isaiah 52:7, the image of someone bringing good news becomes vivid. Because Jerusalem was surrounded by mountains, a messenger would have to traverse these peaks before descending into the city, often carrying news of victory. Here, the good news is the message of salvation through the proclamation that Israel's God reigns supreme. Through Jesus, this message of sovereignty and victory over our sin and death echoes through the ages and holds true today.

As Romans 10:13-15 reminds us: *"There is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him. For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' But how can they call on Him if they have not believed? And how can they believe in Him if they have not heard? How can they hear without someone sharing the message? And how can anyone share unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"*

In a world that craves hope and peace, the role of a messenger has never been more significant. To be someone who carries the news that transforms lives is to fulfill a sacred calling—one that brings light into the shadows and proclaims that, indeed, our God reigns.



# Do TELL

BY PASTOR DARREN



## 5 ways to “Go Tell It” this Christmas

Ask anyone what season is the most hectic for them and the majority of the time you'll hear “December” or “Christmas” or “The Holidays”. Sure, if your sample includes an accountant, you'll probably hear “Tax season... remember to file early!” Otherwise, Christmas wins. We all know it's a busy time of year. The schedule is buckling under the weight of things to do and places to be. But if you're looking, you'll also find this time of year full of opportunities to connect others to Jesus, invite and invest in others and share your faith.

In Luke, chapter 2, we read that the angel shared the good news of Jesus' birth with the shepherds. After hearing the exciting announcement, they said to each other, “Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” (Luke 2:15) Once they found baby Jesus, they left to go and tell others. “When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,” (Luke 2:17).





If the same shepherds who heard from the angel and who saw Jesus face-to-face were here today, certainly they would tell us - to go tell it. **They would encourage us to share the good news with joy, boldness and excitement. "Go Tell It!"**

Here are a few ways to put your faith into action this Christmas and share the good news of great joy with those around you...



## GET SOCIAL

Look for posts from Current on social media. Like, comment and forward on to specific friends. In addition, transform your social media this Christmas into a billboard for showcasing the true meaning of the season; post scripture, weave your faith into your comments and captions and find ways of making Jesus the focus. Social media has power and reach. Let's use it for the Kingdom. Let's use it to "go tell it!"

## BRING A LITTLE YULE TO SCHOOL

This is where, as parents, you give some guidance to your student and then let them do the roof wrecking in their own way. It can be as simple as an invitation to DEC23 (on Monday, December 23rd at 4:00, 6:00 & 8:00 p.m.). There's a Christmas Carol Karaoke Hayride, Bethlehem Barnyard Petting zoo, great food and much more surrounding a meaningful Christ-centered service. Sit down with your elementary schooler and make some special invites they can give to friends, or buy some awesome Christmas candy for your Jr. or Sr. high student to give to their friends along with a verbal invite.

## RIGHT TO YOUR DOORSTEP

T'is the season for delivery drivers! Whether it's food deliveries, or boxes of soon-to-be-wrapped gifts arriving at your door, all those packages are delivered by - someone. Why not reach out and minister to those people who are coming right to your doorstep? Consider leaving a basket of snacks by the door. A large clear bag with a few pieces of candy, individually wrapped granola bars, and a water or soda can bring a big smile to your delivery person's face. Why not include a Christmas card with a special prayer of blessing or invitation to Current inside? Address your card, "To The Most Amazing Delivery Person On The Planet" or with an encouraging comment like "Who's Rockin' It This Christmas? - You Are!" A snack bag is an easy way to spread some cheer and the good news about Jesus!



## A BIG IMPACT AT SCHMALZ ELEMENTARY

Last year Current teamed up with Schmalz Elementary right here in Katy. Our church family provided toys, food and other supplies to make sure it was a memorable season for 100 families in need. We look forward to jumping into the same important ministry this Christmas! But that's only part of the story. Not only can you help provide toys, food, etc, but you can also be one of the volunteers who welcome and serve these families as they show up at Current. On Saturday morning, December 7th, families from Schmalz will enjoy a special breakfast and experience an interactive re-telling of Jesus' birth! It's an amazing day of joyful ministry!

## SERVERS & STORE CLERKS

Working in retail or restaurants this time of year can be grueling. There's a frenetic pace to the holidays and not every customer is kind. By showing some grace and by genuinely caring about the person behind the counter you and your message can stand out. Generous tips are wonderful, and are a great witness, but if they aren't accompanied by an invitation to Current or a mention of the Lord, your generosity and kindness will never be connected to Jesus.

Consider writing out a Christmas card with scripture or an invitation to DEC23 and be sure to include a nice tip inside. This season, you'll likely find a server who you can tell needs extra encouragement... return later with flowers or a small gift and a word of encouragement... and don't forget to pray for that person while you're talking with them. Keep your prayer brief and encouraging and always Jesus centered.

Perhaps in elementary school (can you remember back that far?) you participated in "show and tell." Students would bring a special object to school; maybe a beloved toy or a special collection. When it was your turn, you would stand before your classmates, show the treasure in hand and then you'd share the details. It was easy to tell about the item that held great meaning to you. Is it any different with our faith? Aren't we commanded to show and tell? To live out our faith (Ephesians 4:1), to tell others about Jesus (Matthew 4:19), and to make the most of every opportunity to bring others closer to Jesus (Colossians 4:5).

Imagine the impact you might have if you used the opportunities presented to you this Christmas to **"Go Tell It."** To share the truth and love of Jesus with those you know well and those you might come across. For someone in your life, this could be the first Christmas where Jesus goes from a story they've heard to a Savior they know.





SHOW UP.  
LEAVE DIFFERENT.  
GOD WORKS.  
LIVE ROOTED.

currentstudents



**current**students



wilderness

**Junior High & High School**  
Mid-Week Worship Experience  
Kicks off Jan 15  
Wednesdays  
6:30-8:00PM | The Source



COMING TO CURRENT

*January 2025*

*The*  
**JOURNEY**

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COMING SOON



# Growing TOGETHER

## Inside the Launch of New Discipleship Materials Arriving in January. A conversation with Greg Rupley, Discipleship Minister

*Q: Can you give us an overview of The Journey materials and what inspired this new direction in our discipleship program?*

After 30 years in ministry, I noticed that many churches lacked basic discipleship material for beginners. This gap is concerning, especially considering the Great Commission's call to make disciples. The Journey was created to provide the fundamental building blocks of Christian faith—the "ABCs and 1-2-3s"—in an accessible format that any believer, not just pastors, can use. Each chapter is concise, taking less than 10 minutes to read, and designed to fit into a busy schedule, making it perfect for a lunch-hour discussion.

*Q: How do these materials support and equip people in their faith journey?*

Modern Evangelical churches often lack an intentional, systematic approach to teaching new believers the foundational truths of the faith. Without a strong base, even experienced members can falter, leading to broader issues in spiritual growth. The Journey aims to establish this critical foundation, setting believers on a path for lifelong learning and spiritual stability.

*Q: What are some key themes or topics that The Journey will focus on, and how do they differ from our past materials?*

While The Bridge—our membership pathway—helps newcomers understand who we are at Current, what we believe, and why we do what we do, The Journey is tailored for those just beginning their faith or who never received foundational teachings. It tackles questions like "Who is God?" "Who is Jesus?" "What is prayer and how do I do it?" and more, making it an essential guide for building a strong faith.

*Q: Can you share a few ways these materials encourage people to disciple others?*

One of the best features of The Journey is its simplicity. After completing the seven chapters, participants are equipped to guide someone else through it. You don't need to know everything; you just need to share what you have learned.

*Q: What role will small groups play in The Journey, and how can people get involved in leading or joining one?*

We're embarking on an ambitious plan where all 300+ adults in our Life Groups will start The Journey the week of January 26. Each week, we'll align our Sunday sermons with the lessons, diving deeper into each topic together. This will create a church-wide effort to strengthen our foundations.

*Q: As we start the new year, what is your vision for the impact The Journey will have on our church family?*

Imagine more than 300 people equipped to disciple others before Easter 2025. If each person reaches just one, and if every new believer receives immediate discipleship, we could transform our church culture. What if members were eager to take on the privilege of discipling new believers? Dreaming big for Jesus, we could see retired members find new purpose and our community grow in strength and unity.

*Q: Can you elaborate on how individuals can get connected to The Journey materials?*

Starting January 26, accessing The Journey materials will be straightforward. We're working diligently to ensure everyone who wishes to participate will have easy access and support. Stay tuned for more details on how to get started!



# »»» Dec23

Monday, December 23, 2024

3 SERVICES TO CHOOSE FROM: 4:00P - 6:00P - 8:00P

Experience a joyful, festive celebration at DEC 23, our special Christmas Eve-Eve event at Current! Bring friends and family for a memorable evening filled with fun, food, and a meaningful Christmas service that honors the birth of Christ.

## Here's what's in store:

**Food and Treats** – This year, we'll have complimentary Kettle Corn & S'mores, Food Trucks and more.

**Candlelight Worship** – Join our candlelight tradition, where we'll lift our voices together in worship as we celebrate the true meaning of Christmas.

**Family Fun** – There's something for everyone! Kids will love the Bethlehem Barnyard Petting Zoo and Christmas Carol Hayrides.



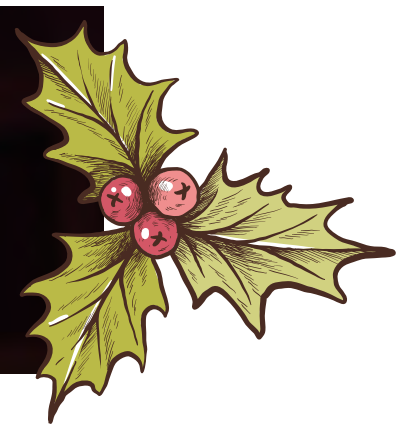


**Pray with Us:** We invite you to pray with us for this event! Let's ask God to move in the hearts of our community, to guide our leaders and volunteers, and to bless this celebration as a powerful time of sharing His love.



**Invite with Us:**

Spread the word! Pick up invite cards and yard signs to welcome friends, neighbors, and coworkers to DEC 23. Let's share the joy of the season with those around us.



**Celebrate with Us:**

Together, let's honor Jesus, the greatest gift. Create lasting memories with your church family as we worship and celebrate our Savior's birth!





Elena Geist and her mom, Adriana-Carmen Stroia

# The Power of a *SIMPLE GIFT:*

## Elena Geist, a member here at Current, shares Her Journey with Operation Christmas Child Boxes

Elena Geist, wife of Worship Director Andrew Geist and a member of our community here at Current, shares a powerful story from her childhood in Romania. Growing up in a time of scarcity and hope after the fall of communism, Elena experienced firsthand the joy and impact of receiving an Operation Christmas Child (OCC) box. Now, as someone who has been on both the receiving and giving end of these gifts, Elena reflects on how these simple boxes bring the love of Jesus and hope to children around the world.



**Elena's story.** I grew up in Romania during a time when the country was still finding its footing after the recent fall of communism. One of the greatest joys of my childhood Christmases was receiving an Operation Christmas Child (OCC) box. These boxes brought excitement and hope, creating opportunities for children like me to experience the joy of the season and, more importantly, to hear the truth of the gospel. The items in the boxes were treasures—things we couldn't find in our local stores and couldn't afford to buy. I remember eagerly searching through my box, hoping to find a fuzzy notebook with a lock, markers, wax crayons, or a colorful hat and mittens.

As I grew older, I was blessed to be on the giving side of these moments. As a young adult, I served in our church's ministry with Turkish Gypsies alongside my mother, who led the ministry. Each Christmas, we would visit their impoverished neighborhoods to share the gospel, sing Christmas carols, and spend time in their homes. These visits defied cultural and societal norms; the Turkish Gypsy community had long been marginalized, seen as people without hope for a better future. Yet, watching the children's faces light up as they opened their boxes was a gift in itself. Even in a place where many children did not have birth certificates or formal records, there was always a box with their name on it, reminding them that they were known and loved.

One Christmas stands out vividly in my memory. We visited a neighborhood known as "the gang," a narrow alley lined with small, crowded rooms. In one home, a family shared their living space with their horse—a sight and smell that was unforgettable. Yet, despite their harsh conditions, they greeted us with tears of joy. No one ever visited them, least of all teachers from the school their daughter Mine attended. As we sat with them, we noticed that Mine had no toys and that their home, like many others in the area, had no electricity or running water. That day, as Mine opened her OCC box, she found fluffy socks, a warm hat and mittens, toys, candy, and small hygiene items—each item perfectly suited to her needs. It was as though Jesus Himself had handpicked each piece, even down to the right sizes.

As you prepare your OCC box this year with your children, remember that these gifts reach children like Mine. Pray over each item you choose. Ask Jesus, "Will this bring joy to the child who receives it? Will it meet their needs?" These boxes are more than just gifts; they are a testament that while society may not know the names of these children, Jesus knows each and every one of them intimately.







»» **current**marriages

Current's Marriage Ministry provides a Christ-centered listening ear from the church for married or pre-marital couples through a structured mentoring program.





# The Bridge

3-Week Experience



**Discover who we are,  
what we believe,  
and why we do what we do.**

The Bridge is a three-week experience for anyone 14 and older who wants to connect on a deeper level. Whether you're exploring faith, considering membership, or simply want to get more involved, The Bridge is for you. At the end of this journey, those who have been baptized by immersion may choose to become members, but all are welcome—even if you're already a part of the family!



**Registration is open for our next class!  
Sundays | 10:45a in the Cove  
February 16 - March 23  
The Cove**





# THE SOUND *Shattered* MAKES

BY PASTOR DARREN

Last night I was hanging ornaments on one of the Christmas trees in my home (yes, there is more than one - and yes, I'm addicted to Christmas! I have a problem and I need help!). Things were going well until I bumped the tree slightly and an ornament - I thought - was securely in place - wasn't. It fell from its branch and shattered into a thousand pieces. You can probably imagine the sound of the ornament hitting the tile floor, the shatter of finality. It wasn't a "priceless family keepsake" kind of ornament, but it was an ornament I really loved. It was beautifully shaped and made of thick, clear glass. The glass had tiny air bubbles that made the ornament sparkle in the light. Now it was shattered.

From time to time our experience at Christmastime can feel a lot like that shattered ornament. Christmas can feel different for lots of reasons; perhaps we just aren't in the best frame of mind, or maybe a serious diagnosis, a death, or a strained family relationship has altered Christmas in a significant way. Maybe financial or job stress has been taking up real estate in your heart and mind and there's not a lot of room left for glad tidings or glittering tinsel. Life's challenges and difficulties seem to be magnified at Christmas because it's the time of year when everyone is supposed to be happy.



*If reality isn't matching up to our expectations of the perfect Christmas...*

*If this Christmas isn't unfolding the way you had hoped...*

*If stresses are casting a shadow on your Christmas this year...*

*If the season feels different this time around...*

*Here are a few reminders:*

### **Don't Ignore What You're Going Through**

Sometimes we're tempted to ignore our challenges or feelings and just "sweep them under the rug." However, if I had decided to sweep those shards of broken ornament under the tree skirt, that would have been a mistake. It's a mistake to ignore the stresses and losses in life.

Acknowledge what you're going through in a tangible way; write a letter to a relative you're at odds with (even if you don't mail it); hang a favorite ornament or light a candle in memory of a loved one who's passed; be honest with family and explain there may be fewer gifts under the tree this year. Recognizing your situation is half the battle.

### **Find Joy In The Simple Things This Christmas**

We sing through Christmas carols without allowing the powerful words to reach our heart. We rip into Christmas gifts without taking a moment to appreciate the beautiful wrapping. We ignore the peace that a quiet morning or the flicker of candlelight can bring. This Christmas it would do all of us well to notice and find joy in the simple things. Jesus is the greatest gift, and we worship and celebrate Him this Christmas. But why not also show our gratitude for the 1,000 little gifts God places in our path each day? Studies have shown it is impossible for our brains to process anxiety and gratitude at the same time. The next time you're feeling anxious, decide to focus on 10 things you're grateful for this season.

### **Become A Blessing To Someone Else**

I remember as a teenager going Christmas caroling with about 30 other folks from my church. One of our stops was the local nursing home. Rather than going room to room, we thought singing in the hallway would allow us to encourage several residents at once. We were only a few measures into our first Christmas carol when the first hallway door slammed shut. Then another and another. As we continued to sing, more and more doors closed! We couldn't keep it together and burst into laughter as we tried to finish our first song. Sometimes when we try to encourage others the door gets slammed in our face, but a vast majority of the time the door opens wide. If this Christmas isn't going the way you had hoped, maybe it's time to consider how you might become a blessing to someone else. You'll be amazed at what serving or blessing others will do for you. The simple act of taking someone cookies, helping with a home project, running a shopping errand for someone, or dropping off a meal could easily be the most thoughtful gift a neighbor or friend receives this Christmas. There are additional ideas listed in this Holiday Guide.

### **Give Yourself The Gift Of "Whatever"**

Like the tasks on our "To Do" list continue to stack up this time of year, it's too easy to pile expectations on ourselves, one on top of another. If this Christmas is different for whatever reason, give yourself permission for it to be... "different." Instead of being your own worst critic, take your thoughts captive for Christ and focus on the good. Blessings not blaming. Christ not criticism. Gratitude not grumbling. God's Word encourages us to shift our thinking and focus on "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, ..." Carefully read Philippians 4:8-9 and decide to think differently this Christmas...



“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”

When the beautiful glass ornament fell from my tree and hit the tile floor, I winced. The shattering sound was not a good one. I grabbed a broom and dustpan so I could clean up the broken pieces. As I slowly swept the glass pieces over the tile toward the dustpan, the sound I heard next was surprising. Instead of the sound of scraping glass you might expect, the glass made a tinkling sound as it bounced over the tiles. I can't fully describe how that sound struck me, but it was actually beautiful. It was the last thing I expected to hear or notice at that moment. I know it sounds crazy, but the shattered symphony bouncing across my floor made me smile.

I have to wonder if God smiles when He sees us take the messes of life and use them for our growth and His glory. It must be music to God's ears when we turn disappointment into serving others, stress into trust, loss into dependence, and worry into worship.

Maybe the challenges of this life aren't all bad. Maybe we can make music out of them.







## currentcare&prayer

Prayer grounds us in faith and connects us to one another and to God. As 1 Thessalonians 5:17 encourages, we are called to "pray continuously."

**Join our Prayer and Care Ministry and become part of our team that lifts others in prayer, provides care, and shares in acts of kindness.**

Whether through praying with others, supporting those in need, participating in the meal ministry, or joining our nursing home ministry to bring comfort and companionship to residents, there are many ways to be a vessel of hope and encouragement.

*To sign up for our meal ministry email [info@currentchristian.org](mailto:info@currentchristian.org)*



*To see more of our serving opportunities including the prayer team, scan this QR code.*



# current

## HOLIDAY SCHEDULE



**Sunday, Dec 22**

9:30a & 11:00a

\*regular service times

»» **Dec 23**

**Christmas Eve Eve**

**Monday, Dec 23**

Three Services to Choose From

4:00pm 6:00pm 8:00pm

**Sunday, Dec 29**

9:30a & 11:00a

\*regular service times

**Current - A Christian Church**

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