



## Christmas 2011 – “On the Edge” Newsletter

***“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14***

**What** a beautiful reminder of our God’s faithfulness! Even when we don’t deserve a sign or salvation, the Lord makes the way for us to experience Him, “God with us.” This name of our Lord, “Immanuel,” reminds us that God is with us every day and in every part of our living. The prophet Isaiah was following the Lord’s commands as he spoke to King Ahaz in this Scripture passage. Isaiah told Ahaz to ask for a sign from God. But faithless Ahaz pretended to be humble and so refused God’s sign. In reality, I don’t believe Ahaz wanted to hear what the Lord had to say! **How many times have we made choices without truly wanting to know what God had to say?** The false piety of King Ahaz only put him in a bad place with the Lord. Instead of reassuring Ahaz with a sign of faithfulness, the Lord used Isaiah to speak of a future time when the remnant of God’s faithful people would gather again and be united to follow Immanuel, the Lord Jesus Christ. Poor Ahaz had his own plans, his own alliance with Assyria and he and the people would eventually fall into destruction and captivity. The same principles are true for our lives. When we seek our own plans and ways we will always suffer and receive far less than what God wants for us. When we seek the Lord’s signs and guidance, He is the God Who is with us every moment. He never leaves us and He desires to bless us! Let me encourage you throughout the Christmas season to be looking for where God is at work! Don’t become so sidetracked with presents, parties and possessions that you miss what God wants to tell you. He has a Sign for you! He has Salvation for you and your household! He has a Purpose for your life! Hear what the Lord wants to say to you this Christmas!

**We** have begun the celebration of Advent at River’s Edge! Last Sunday we began with the Candle of Prophecy and we will continue the joyful celebration of Christ’s coming through Christmas Day. We will have several activities throughout the month that will celebrate the birth of Christ. Please join us and invite others to be a part of the joy of worship and service!

**On Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>**, our **Praise Team** will rehearse from **9:00 am until 12 noon**. During that time, the building will be open and ready to be decorated for the Christmas season. **Wreaths and the big Christmas tree will be prepared for decoration. If you would like to help, just come by the church building on the morning of December 3<sup>rd</sup>.** Also, at **1:00 pm that day our Awana Trek group is sponsoring a service project at the home of Constance and Patricia Coggins.** We will clean up their yard and outside their home that afternoon. Everyone is invited. Bring some yard tools with you!

**The Week of Prayer for International Missions has begun!** We began viewing the mission videos for our Lottie Moon Christmas Offering emphasis two weeks ago. We are a mission church who believes in supporting missions through the Cooperative Program, Special Offerings and by going on International mission trips ourselves. I ask you to really pray about your financial commitment to missions during this season and to give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. No matter what our personal financial situation is, God makes the way for us to give to His work. Please pray for the missionary families you will hear about, and give with a cheerful heart towards the Lottie Moon offering!

**Awana Clubbers**, your big day is coming on **Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**! That night will be the **Awana Store** and you will have a chance to use those well earned Awana dollars to purchase gifts for your family, yourself, and for the first time, the opportunity to donate to missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Keep memorizing your verses and earning those dollars for the store! Remember that the Lord has blessed you and you need to bless others!

**Christmas Day Breakfast and Worship on Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**! There is no greater day to celebrate Christmas than on the Lord's Day! This year, we will gather for **breakfast at 9:30 am** and then celebrate our Savior in **worship at 10:45 am**. Everyone bring your favorite Christmas morning breakfast items and we will share them together. Also, in the worship service we will celebrate the Lord's Supper and light the Christ Candle in our Advent wreath. It's never better than worshiping the Lord together on Christmas Day!

**Don't forget:** our new neighborhood Bible Study is going on each **Thursday night at 7:00 pm in the home of Russ and Nancy Willard**. Please invite your friends and help us reach into the Sugar Hill and Suwanee communities. **The Willard's live at 4715 Diggers Way, Sugar Hill, GA 30518.**

**Please** keep praying for God's powerful work to be done among us. I believe 2012 can be the greatest year in the history of River's Edge as we trust the Lord and do what He asks!

**I love you all,**

Pastor Stephen