

Christmas Production 2017

Attendance:

Friday	1,814
Saturday	3,294
Sunday	2,741
<u>Kids & Volunteers</u>	<u>388</u>
Total	8237 (20.1% growth from 2016)

Online Viewers (Sunday Only): 1002

Decisions:

Friday	104 hands	(73 connected with)
Saturday	135 hands	(81 connected with)
<u>Sunday</u>	<u>185 hands</u>	<u>(100 connected with)</u>
Total	424 (72.3 %)	254 (45.1 % growth from 2016)

Matthew 1:18-23 (NLT) The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement[a] quietly. As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet: "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"

Romans 5:6-11 (NLT) When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. 7 Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

"Self Love is the central theme of Christianity then forgiveness is the central action." - Stovall Weems

Forgiveness is a choice we make, not because we are so great, but because he forgave us we now follow his lead.

How do we forgive?

1. Focus on how God's has forgiven you.

Colossians 3:13 (NIV) Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

3 Accounts of Bible Forgiveness:

- How Job forgave his friends and prayed for his friends. - Job 42:10

- How Jesus forgave those on the cross- Jesus said forgive them for they know not what they are doing. - Luke 23:34
- How Stephen forgave those who were stoning him. Stephen said: **Acts 7:60 (AMP)**
Then falling on his knees [in worship], he cried out loudly, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them [do not charge them]!" When he had said this, he fell asleep [in death].

2. Choose to bless.

Romans 12:19 -21 (NIV)

"Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord." "On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Luke 6:27-28 (NIV)

"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

3. Release them and let them go.

"Resentment is an early warning signal of needed change." - Dr. Henry Cloud

Greek Lexicon Dictionary: to treat the guilty party as though they never sinned

Action Plan: This weekend let's forgive the ones we've held things against. Let's love like Jesus taught us to!