

December 17, 2023

# HALLELUJAH

*The Light has Come*

A BRIARWOOD CHRISTMAS

*Featuring*

THE BRIARWOOD CHOIRS,  
ORCHESTRA AND DRAMATISTS

*With Special Guest*

**SANDRA MCCRACKEN**

BRIARWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, December 17

6:00 P.M.



*Briarwood*  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# CHRISTMAS AT BRIARWOOD

## **Advent Preaching from Interim Senior Pastor, Dr. Dan Doriani**

God has graciously answered Our Season of Prayer and provided Dr. Dan Doriani to be our Interim Senior Pastor. Dr. Doriani previously preached sermons “Jesus Came for Us, to Seek the Lost” and “Jesus Came to Give His Life as a Ransom for Many” and he will conclude the three-part Advent series this Sunday with “The One We Worship.”

You can watch or listen to previous sermons on the Briarwood App. On the “Media” tab, go to “Sermons & Services” and chose from either “Latest Sermons & Messages” which is a chronological listing of Sunday Sermons, or “Current Sermon Series” which gives you lists of sermons based on the series that they are from.

## **Briarwood Ballet & Children’s Choirs Programs**

Praise the Lord for wonderful, Christ-exalting programs from our young members this Advent season. It was such a blessing to see them share their artistic and musical talents for the glory and honor of our Lord.

If you missed seeing these programs, you can easily access them on the Briarwood App. On the “Media” tab, go to “Special Media Archive” then “Christmas at Briarwood 2023.” Use the “Share” button to text these video links to a friend or share on social media.

## **Walk Through Nativity**

God blessed us this year with a wonderful Walk Through Nativity! It was such a joyful and worshipful three nights with great weather. God used over 600 church volunteers to make this event a success. Thank you to each and every one of you who volunteered.

This year, God brought a total of 11,180 people in attendance to our campus. That is amazing! Please be in prayer for all those who attended. May our Lord cause the seeds of the Gospel to bring salvation to those who do not know Christ as their Lord and Savior.

## **Briarwood Christmas Festival — “Hallelujah! The Light Has Come”**

This Sunday evening we have the opportunity to worship through a dramatic presentation of “Hallelujah! The Light Has Come” from the Briarwood Choirs, Orchestra and Dramatists with special guest Sandra McCracken.

Sandra McCracken is a GRAMMY nominated singer-songwriter and hymn writer from Nashville, Tennessee. A prolific recording artist, McCracken has produced 15 solo albums. Her best selling release, *Psalms* received critical acclaim, followed by *God’s Highway*. As a published writer, she contributes a regular column in Christianity Today and released her first book “*Send Out Your Light*” in September of 2021.

Dr. Doriani had the opportunity to interview Sandra McCracken on his podcast “Working with Dan Doriani” in May of this year. In this episode, Sandra and Dr. Doriani discussed the nature of songcraft. How does inspiration strike – or does it? And why the Psalms are such fertile ground to compose modern hymns. You can find a link to this episode at [briarwood.org/McCracken](http://briarwood.org/McCracken).

## **Christmas Eve Services — Worship and Candlelight Services**

Don’t forget! This Christmas Eve we will have one combined Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. with no Sunday School Communities meeting. We will have Candlelight Family Services at 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. and our Candlelight Communion Service at 11:00 p.m.

## FEATURED EVENTS

**“Hallelujah! The Light Has Come” — Briarwood Christmas Festival | December 17 \***  
Come experience Advent through musical and dramatic presentation from the Briarwood Choirs, Orchestra and Dramatists with special guest Sandra McCracken. This event is completely free and open to the public.

**Christmas Eve Services — Worship Services | December 24 \***

Reflect on the birth of Jesus with us this Christmas Eve. Sunday morning we will have one combined Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. with no Sunday School Communities meeting. Bring your family and friends back Sunday evening for Candlelight Family Services at 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. or our Candlelight Communion Service at 11:00 p.m.

**MidWeek at Briarwood — Church Wide | January 10–April 24 \***

Wednesday night dinners, classes and activities for the entire family. Join us for dinner in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesdays from 5:15–6:30 p.m. Classes and activities start at 6:30 p.m. Find information and register for dinners at [briarwood.org/midweek](http://briarwood.org/midweek).

**The Lampstand Birmingham Conference — Church Revitalization | January 18–21**

You are invited to attend The Lampstand Conference, a conference on Church Health and Revitalization, hosted here at Briarwood. Details at [briarwood.org/lampstand](http://briarwood.org/lampstand).

\* Nursery is available upon reservation at [briarwood.org/nursery](http://briarwood.org/nursery).  
Stay up-to-date with upcoming events on the Briarwood App.

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## IN THE BRIARWOOD BOOKSTORE

Come visit the Bookstore on Sunday, December 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon for your last-minute Christmas purchases. We will be closed for the Christmas holiday on Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26 and again on Sunday, December 31 and Monday, January 1 for the New Year holiday.

**Olive Wood Nativity from the country of Jordan**

**Holy Land Designs | Gifts**

Begin a family tradition with unique fair-trade olive wood nativity pieces. We still have a great selection of these hand-carved symbols that beautifully depict the celebration of Christ's coming. Many families start with a gift of the four-piece set of Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus in the manger, and then continue each year by adding a new piece. Prices vary.

**Church Leadership's Recommended 2024 Devotional**

***Take Heart: Daily Devotions to Deepen Your Faith***

**by David Powlison | Adult Devotional**

It's easy to lose heart in a world where many things can and do go wrong. Life is difficult, and there are struggles within and without, but we can take heart—the Lord is with us. He hears our cries for mercy. He knows our every need. He guides us, helps us, and strengthens us with his mighty right arm. Journey through a year with David Powlison, learning to “take heart” by meditating on his favorite Scripture passages, hymns, and biblical themes, exploring the ways God meets us with daily grace right where we live. Price: \$17 (includes tax)

# MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

**'For the Good' on the Life and Ministry of Harry Reeder** — Saturday, December 16 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, the Reeder family would like to invite you to join them to watch the Briarwood premiere of a documentary film about the life and ministry of Pastor Reeder. Popcorn and bottled water will be provided.

**Communion** — The sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated on Sunday, December 24 in the 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service. An alms offering for the Mercy Ministry will be received. Elements are gluten-free.

**Year-End Giving** — The Accounting Office will close for the year on Friday, December 29 at 5:00 p.m. Contributions received in the mail must be postmarked or canceled by Saturday, December 31 to qualify as a gift in the year 2023. Contributions with January 2024 postmarks will be considered 2024 contributions.

**Securities Stewardship** — When giving gifts of securities, please notify Matt Moore at the time of your gift so that your contribution may be processed accurately and efficiently. Contact Matt at 205-776-5205 or kbvice@briarwood.org.

**PCA Offering** — Special offering envelopes will be placed in the pews on Christmas Eve. Through the Ministerial Relief Fund, the Christmas Offering provides monthly, supplemental income to our retired and disabled pastors, missionaries, church lay workers, their widows and dependent children who have low income and meet the Relief Fund guidelines. More information at [briarwood.org/pcaoffering](http://briarwood.org/pcaoffering).

**Church and School Offices Closed** — Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26 for Christmas: then again Monday, January 2 for the New Year holiday

**Church Gate Holiday Schedule** — On Sunday, December 24, the gates will open at 8:00 a.m. and close following the 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service. The church will be closed till Wednesday, December 27 at 5:30 a.m. and closed again on Monday, January 1.

**Elders and Deacons Elected** — In accordance to the Book of Church Order the following men were elected by members of Briarwood Presbyterian Church on December 10, 2023:

*Elders: (Class of 2026) Jon Adcock, Bill Armistead, Lance Black, Jim Blackmon, Ken Blackmon, Jim Bradford, Billy Buck, Stephen Bunn, Todd Carlisle, Jim Carlson, Leon Chadwick, Jason Crowe, Sam Duffey, Ken Friday, Beau Green, Kevin Gush, Clay Hamblen, Louie Haynes, Gene Head, Don Hendry, Bruce Herrington, Jeff Olin, Kirk Petty, Drew Ricketts, Bob Sproul (Class of 2024) Don Murphy*

*Deacons: (Class of 2026) Grant Alexander, Brandon Ball, Ken Barton, Gordon Bellamy, Stephen Boyd, Matthew Bush, Joseph Cawood, Paul Cizek, Tim Eller, Matt Frederiksen, John Gomillion, Marland Hayes, Jeff Hester, Nick Hill, Christian Holcomb, John Holcombe, Chris Hyche, Nathan Ivey, Philip Johnson, Marvin Keffer, Clay King, Phillip Landers, John Lattner, Josh Lee, Joseph Martin, Andrew Miller, Matthew Moore, Matt Moton, Frank Price, Duane Pritchett, Chase Roberson, Doug Robertson, David Roebuck, John Royal, Andrew Russell, John Scruggs, Barry Shirley, Paul Silvey, Seth Steelman, Charles Terry, Bill Whitworth, John Wiggins (Class of 2025) Ray Bronner, Roger Dobnikar, Jed Duke, Carson Haley, Gary Hudson, Mike Jefferson, Cale Kreger, Matthew Michel, Brad Reynolds, Mark Rose, David Stearns, Tyler Sullens, George Trummel*

# WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

**Briarwood Prayer Focus** — Pray the Christmas Eve services will draw many visitors. Pray for the many people who are hurting this holiday season to be surrounded by the Savior's love as He comforts and may His amazing grace fall upon them.

**Birmingham Prayer Focus** — Pray for all of our ministry partners and their families this Christmas season. Ask the Lord to give them rest, encouragement, and a new passion to serve Him in 2024.

**Missions Prayer Focus** — Pray for the continued work of Ben Cohen with Globe Works International Ministries in sensitive areas. Praise God for his report of increasing numbers of new believers who have repented, believed, and been baptized. Pray the Lord will protect these new believers and help them to grow in their faith.

**Global Ministry Partners** — Pray for Clay and Merrell Hubbard with Campus Outreach SERVE in Australia; John and Melody Hunt with Campus Outreach SERVE in Thailand; Lars and Kathryn Huttar with UFM Worldwide serving Internationals; and Keisuke and Bethany Idota with Presbyterian Mission International in Japan.

**National Ministry Partners** — Pray for Jack and Amy Baker with Alabama Fellowship of Christian Athletes; Amy Baxter with Birmingham Campus Outreach; Jerry and Joy Beverly with Leaders Unlimited in Miami, Florida; John and Taylor Blevins with Christ Church Presbyterian in Knoxville, Tennessee; and The Aspire Movement.

**Briarwood Officers and Staff** — Pray for elders Steve Adams, Frank Wright, Will Worrell; deacons Jonathan Kalehoff, John Salmon, Dave Schultz; and Special Connections Director Michael Johnson and wife Amanda.

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## CHURCH RESOURCES

**Mobilization Opportunity: Volunteers for New Direction Thrift Store** — Would you be able to help out at Briarwood's New Direction Thrift Store? New Direction Ministry exists to love and serve while sharing the Gospel to reach the Fairfield community for Christ. Volunteers are needed to sort, fold and assist staff at the store in Fairfield. Call Alan Russell at 205-915-7095 to find out more.

**Job Openings: Briarwood Receptionist** — Morning Receptionist (part-time, Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.); and Afternoon Receptionist (part-time, Monday–Friday, 12:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.). Briarwood membership required. For inquiries and application, email [kbvice@briarwood.org](mailto:kbvice@briarwood.org).

**Job Openings: Videographer** — Briarwood Presbyterian Church is seeking a full-time videographer who can shoot, edit and manage video projects. If interested, email your resume and video portfolio to Landon at [lmckee@briarwood.org](mailto:lmckee@briarwood.org).

**Job Openings: Full-time & Part-time Staff** — There are a number of ministry positions open. See all employment and job openings at [briarwood.org/employment](http://briarwood.org/employment)

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## THIS LORD'S DAY

**Sunday Morning Worship:**

**Third Sunday of Advent**

“The One We Worship”

Matthew 1:1-8; 18-25

Dr. Dan Doriani

**Sunday Evening Worship:**

“Hallelujah! The Light Has Come”

Briarwood Music

Come experience Advent through the dramatic presentation of “Hallelujah! The Light Has Come.” This gift of talents features the Briarwood Choirs, Orchestra and Dramatists with special guest Sandra McCracken.

This event is completely free and open to the public

Watch our live-stream on the Briarwood App, Facebook or [briarwood.org](http://briarwood.org).

Watch or listen to previous sermons on the Briarwood App.