

Sunday, December 7 6:00 p.m.

During the evening service



LIGHT OF HEAVEN

Briarwood Ballet's Christmas Performance • Sunday, December 7 at 6:00 p.m.

Inspired by Light

Did you know that Martin Luther is traditionally credited as the first person to put candles on a Christmas tree? Legend says that while walking home one snowy evening, he was inspired by the splendor of the twinkling stars peeking through the evergreen branches. Desiring to recreate this beauty for his children, Luther brought a small tree into his home and attached flickering candles to its branches. These lights not only represented the stars but also pointed to Jesus as the Light of the World.

Whether or not this legend is entirely accurate, since the 16th century, lights have been an integral facet of Christmas festivities. How appropriate that Jesus, the Light of Heaven, be celebrated with such brilliant illuminations!

Rooted in Scripture

At Briarwood Ballet, our goal is two-fold: to use the discipline of dance to share the gospel with our students, and to use the beauty of dance to share Jesus with our audiences. To this end, we strive to ensure that every performance declares a biblical truth or portrays an aspect of God's character.

As we began to pray about the direction for this year's concert, "Light" seemed to be the sacred echo ringing through our hearts. We wondered, however, what specific feature of God's light we should proclaim. After all, Scripture begins with God creating light and dispelling the darkness, and the book of Revelation ends with the light of God's presence replacing the sun in a Heavenly City where there will be no darkness. Jesus Himself spoke of being the Light of the World and promised that those who followed Him would never walk in darkness.

As we studied these verses, the theme of our concert became clear: our Christmas ballet would celebrate the eternal nature of our God, the Source of Light.

Come and See

We invite you to join us for a special evening of celebration and worship! During our evening worship service on December 7, the Briarwood Ballet will present their Christmas performance titled "Light of Heaven." Admission is free and everyone is welcome to attend!

Come celebrate our Savior, whose birth was announced by the beautiful light of a heavenly star. We will have artful dances to inspire your awe of our Lord and Savior who came into this world to save us. We will celebrate that in a humble manger in Bethlehem, this Light was born to bring hope, truth, and life to all who believe. In a world darkened by sin and confusion, His light shines brighter and overcomes the darkness. Then it all concludes with an elegant depiction of a cross.

It will be a wonderful time of worship amidst the Advent season where we will reflect on the majesty of our God. Invite your friends, family, and neighbors and come see this beautiful celebration of Jesus as our Light.

FEATURED EVENTS

Children's Choirs Christmas Concert — Children's Music | November 30 *

During the Evening Worship Service enjoy a special Christmas Concert from the Briarwood Children's Choirs. For information, email sphillips@briarwood.org.

"Light of Heaven" — Briarwood Ballet | December 7 *

Celebrate the Advent season with the Briarwood Ballet as they lead us in worship with their presentation on Sunday at 6:00 p.m. in the Worship Center. Admission is free.

Walk Through Nativity — Church Wide | December 10-12 *

December 10, 11 and 12 from 6:45–8:45 p.m. Over 750 volunteer actors, costumers, parking attendants, scene-builders, and greeters are needed for this year's Walk Through. Sign up at briarwood.org/wtn or call 205-776-5282.

"Your Light Has Come" — Briarwood Christmas Festival | December 21 *

Come experience Advent through musical and artistic presentations from the Briarwood Sanctuary Choir, Orchestra, and Ballet featuring special guest, Sandra McCracken. This event is free and open to the public.

* Nursery is available for select events upon reservation at briarwood.org/nursery. Stay up-to-date with upcoming events on the Briarwood App.

IN THE BRIARWOOD BOOKSTORE

Refreshing Hospitality: The Art of Welcoming by Anna & Tyler Nash | Adult Book

This featured book is a wonderful gift to share during this Christmas season. In a culture where busy schedules and picture-perfect expectations often get in the way of genuine connection, *Refreshing Hospitality: The Art of Welcoming* offers an idea of hospitality reimagined. Written by Birmingham-based couple Anna and Tyler Nash, the book is a heartfelt and practical guide to meaningful gatherings, shared meals, and the kind of hospitality that makes people feel truly seen and at home. "Real hospitality isn't about impressing; it's about inviting," Anna and Tyler say. "We hope this book feels like a conversation around the table: relatable, doable, and inspiring." Price: \$32.95

Jotham's Journey: A Storybook for Advent by Arnold Ytreeide | Children's Advent Book

In this widely popular, exciting story for the Advent season, readers follow ten-year-old Jotham across Israel as he searches for his family. *Jotham's Journey* is divided into short chapters for each day of Advent, giving families the opportunity to create a seasonal tradition of storytelling in their home. This book is the first in the Storybooks for Advent series, which also includes *Bartholomew's Passage*, *Tabitha's Travels*, and *Ishtar's Odyssey*. Price: \$14.99

Featured books are available in the Bookstore or online at briarwood.org/bookstore.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Congregational Meetings — The Session has called Congregational Meetings for Sun., Dec. 7 for the purpose of selecting officers for the Class of 2028 and Sun., Dec.14 for the purposes of receiving the 2026 General Fund Budget and electing the slate of candidates receiving the highest number of votes on Dec. 7. Both meetings will be from 8:00 a.m. to the conclusion of the 11:00 a.m. service. On Dec 14 there will be a special order at 10:35 a.m. in the Worship Center to receive the 2026 budget.

Trailblazers Christmas Sing-A-Long — December 5 at 1:00 p.m. Meet us at Cahaba Ridge Retirement Community to sing familiar Christmas songs with Hunter Goff. Sign up online at briarwood.org/trailblazers or email sjohnston@briarwood.org.

Christmas Poinsettias — Available through December 7. Dedicate a poinsettia in memory or honor of someone this Advent season. You can pick up your poinsettia after the Christmas Eve candlelight service. Purchase for \$18 at briarwood.org/poinsettia.

Campus Outreach Celebration Luncheon — December 7 in FH-F. Alumni, Supporters, and Prayer Partners, join us for a luncheon where we will hear from local staff and celebrate the Lord's impact with Campus Outreach! RSVP to jef.fluevog@campusoutreach.org.

Camp Briarwood Registration Opens — December 8. Day Camp for rising 1st thru 3rd graders is June 8–12. Four Overnight Camp session options are available for rising 4th thru 10th graders during June 22–July 18. Register at campbriarwood.org.

Camp Briarwood — December 15 at 5:30 p.m. in G-101. Come hear about what it's like to be a camp counselor and get the chance to talk to current counselors about their testimony with Camp. Pizza will be provided! RSVP to quest@briarwood.org.

BYG Laguna Beach Retreat — December 27–30. All 9th–12th graders, don't miss this incredible trip as we close out the year with seaside activities, teaching from Wright Draper, and worship with Ezra Worship Initiative. Register at briarwood.org/laguna.

Lampstand Conference Volunteers Needed — We need volunteers for housing and assembling notebooks for those attending our conference on January 22–24, 2026. If you would like to serve in these areas, contact Christi Bono at cbono@briarwood.org.

Submit Your EMC Pledge — You can still turn in your pledge for EMC. Go online to briarwood.org/emc or bring your Pledge Card to the Church Accounting Office.

Sunday Greeters Needed — We would love for your smiling face to be a welcoming presence for each person who walks through our doors. All ages can participate! You can serve individually or as a family. Email abarton@briarwood.org to volunteer.

Job Opening: Women's & Children's Counselor — Qualifications include a master's degree in biblical counseling and five years of counseling experience. A candidate should inquire with resume to Patti Claud at pclaud@briarwood.org.

Job Openings: Families, Youth, & College Administrative Assistant — Candidate will support the Youth, College and Family Ministries through day-to-day administrative tasks. This is a full-time position with benefits. Send resumes to jshaw@briarwood.org.

Part-time Receptionist Substitute - If interested, email bscruggs@briarwood.org.

WEEKLY PRAYER GUIDE

Sunday, November 30 — Briarwood Prayer Focus

Thankful for the International Christmas Party this Friday. Pray that we can form new relationships with the internationals and that they will know the true meaning of Christmas.

Monday, December 1 — Birmingham Prayer Focus

Pray for the Aspire Movement as they connect students with mentors committed to Life-on-Life influence. Ask for wisdom for mentors as they guide students to grow in leadership and faith in Jesus. To learn more visit aspiremovement.org.

Tuesday, December 2 — Missions Prayer Focus

Please pray that many internationals involved with Briarwood International Outreach via ESL, Friendship Partners, and One on One Bible reading will take part in upcoming Christmas events, including Briarwood's Annual International Christmas party December 5 and the Walk Through Nativity. Pray God would use the Christmas season and the Christmas story to draw many to Himself. The flag of Venezuela will be featured this Sunday.

Wednesday, December 3 — Global Ministry Partners

Pray for Daniel and Katy Brink with Mission to the World in Belgium, James and Kelly Broadaway with Campus Outreach SERVE, South Africa, Christopher and Donnette Brock with Mission to the World, France, and Sano Buasorn with Campus Outreach SERVE, Thailand.

Thursday, December 4 — National Ministry Partners

Pray for Seth and Bethany Terrell with Campus Outreach at University of Alabama, Matthew and Megan Terrell with Reformed University Fellowship in New York, Mark and Darby Travers with Turning Hearts Ministry in Birmingham, Alabama, and Erik and Amy Veerman with Mission to North America in Georgia.

Friday, December 5 — Briarwood Officers and Staff

Pray for Briarwood Elders Will Worrell, Kirk Petty, Tom Smitherman; Deacons Matt Davis, Stephen Boyd, Jamie Burns; and Senior Adults Pastor, Wright Draper.

Saturday, December 6 — Church Family

Pray for our hospitalized members Sandy Bell, Carolyn Campbell, Jerry Creager, Charlotte Donald, Barbara Matthews, Steve Renfroe, Reed Risner

Our love and sympathy to Tim Scott and family on the death of his brother, Bob Scott, on November 19.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

Receive each day's prayer as a notification through the Briarwood App. In your Briarwood App settings, enable "Weekly Prayer Guide" notifications.



THIS LORD'S DAY

Sunday Morning Worship Services:

Advent at Briarwood "Jesus, the Seed" Genesis 3:8–15 Dr. Scott Redd

Sunday Evening Worship:

Children's Choirs Christmas Concert

During the Evening Worship Service enjoy a special Christmas Concert from the Briarwood Children's Choirs.

Watch our live-stream on ROKU, Apple TV, Facebook, YouTube or briarwood.org. Catch up with previous sermons and series on the Briarwood App.