

A BRIARWOOD CHRISTMAS

Your
LIGHT
HAS
COME

BRIARWOOD CHOIRS, ORCHESTRA AND BALLET

featuring Sandra McCracken



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025
6:00 P.M.



Briarwood
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Briarwood Weekly • info@briarwood.org • December 7, 2025

YOUR LIGHT HAS COME

Briarwood Christmas Festival | December 21 at 6:00 p.m.

A Joyous Festival

On Sunday, December 21 our church family will gather for a special Christmas Concert built around the radiant promise of Isaiah: “Your Light Has Come.” Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, will be showcased in all His love and splendor by the power of the Holy Spirit in an evening of worship featuring the Briarwood Sanctuary Choir, Youth Choir, and Orchestra, and special guest artist Sandra McCracken and the Briarwood Ballet.

Singing Christmas Classics

Sandra will be singing several carol arrangements of hers including “Mary’s Arms” and the American premier of her fully orchestrated, choreographed and foot-stomping rendition of “Go Tell it on the Mountain”. At the heart of the evening will be a centerpiece presentation of selections from Handel’s Messiah with full orchestra, choir, and Briarwood’s own soloists. This masterpiece, drawn entirely from the Words of Scripture, proclaims the gospel with clarity and power: the promised Savior, the suffering Servant, and the conquering King who reigns forever. Whether this is your first encounter with Messiah or a cherished annual tradition, you will hear the story of Jesus unfolded with majesty and reverence.

Centered on Real Hope

Our theme, “Your Light Has Come,” reminds us that the birth of Christ is not just a treasured story from long ago. It is God’s declaration that real hope has entered a dark world. Throughout the evening, our deepest prayer is that Jesus Christ will be center stage—His love displayed, His glory showcased, and His presence known through the power of the Holy Spirit. We long for all who attend not only to hear the gospel but to sense the Spirit’s gracious work: comforting, convicting, drawing, and filling hearts with the joy of Christ.

An Evangelical Opportunity

This concert is not simply a splendid performance; it is an evening of worship and witness. If you come, you will hear the Gospel—the Good News that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. And you will be invited to experience the transforming presence of the Holy Spirit, who opens our eyes to behold the Beauty of our Savior.

We warmly invite you, your family, friends, and neighbors to join us on December 21. Come early, find a seat, and prepare your heart. Whether you are a long-time believer or simply curious about the meaning of Christmas, you and your family are welcome.

John Haines,
Pastor of Worship

For more information, visit briarwood.org/events.

FEATURED EVENTS

“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, Youth Choirs, Orchestra, and Ballet featuring special guest, Sandra McCracken. This event is free and open to the public.

Christmas Eve Services — Evening Worship | December 24 *

Join us for Family Candlelight Services at 5:00 & 7:00 p.m. At 11:00 p.m. we will partake in the Lord's Supper with a Candlelight Communion Service.

* Nursery is available for select events upon reservation at briarwood.org/nursery.

IN THE BRIARWOOD BOOKSTORE

Glad and Golden Hours: A Companion for Advent and Christmastide

by Lanier Ivester | Adult Book

Filled with Ivester's golden prose and lavishly illustrated by Jennifer Trafton, this book is more than a cookbook or craft guide. It's a companion through Advent and Christmastide—an invitation to savor recipes, create traditions, and embrace the fullness of the season. This is not a manual or a how-to, or a glorified to-do list, but a companion, in the neighborliest sense of the word. The recipes and crafts in these pages, even the suggestions themselves, are merely that: suggestions to help you contemplate your own holiday with creativity and significance. It is, above all, an invitation to experience Christmas as a place of rest—not in spite of, but in the very midst of the merriment of these glad and golden hours. Price: \$25.00

The Gift of All Gifts: Celebrating God's Special Christmas Present for You

by Melissa B. Kruger | Children's Book

Whether it's toys, treats, building bricks, or board games, children look forward to unwrapping fun and exciting items from their Christmas wish list. *The Gift of All Gifts* helps children expand their understanding of a present, especially the greatest gift ever given—God's son, Jesus Christ. In rhyming stanzas, children will experience the Christmas story in a new and special way, as Melissa Kruger also clearly explains how kids can accept Jesus' offer of salvation. This beautifully illustrated book makes a welcome addition to a family's collection of classic Christmas reads. 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.

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.

Securities Stewardship — When giving gifts of securities, please notify our Church Administrator at the time of your gift so that your contribution may be processed accurately and efficiently. Call 205-776-5205 or email bscruggs@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, December 7 — Briarwood Prayer Focus

Give thanks for the many members volunteering to serve in the Walk Through Nativity this week. Pray the wonderful Good News of Jesus Christ will be heard clearly as viewers walk through the 12 scenes depicting the birth and life of our Lord.

Monday, December 8 — Birmingham Prayer Focus

Please pray for North Star Soccer Ministries as they serve urban youth in Birmingham. Their Christ-centered soccer programs mentor and empower young people through leagues, camps, tutoring, and Bible studies. To learn more or get involved, visit northstarsoccerministries.com.

Tuesday, December 9 — Missions Prayer Focus

Pray for Restoration Academy as they meet their students' individual needs through dynamic instruction, sports, and opportunities for growth. Pray that all students recognize God's call to be agents of change, peace, and reconciliation (Isaiah 58:12). Pray that each one graduates with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a commitment to follow Him. The flag of Birmingham will be featured this Sunday.

Wednesday, December 10 — Global Ministry Partners

Pray for Kisanna Budai with Cru in Hungary, Gary and Jackie Burnett with United World Mission in Colombia, Bob and Andrea Burnham with Mission to the World in Ukraine, and Dan and Catherine Burns with World Outreach in Kazakhstan.

Thursday, December 11 — National Ministry Partners

Pray for Adam and Lisa Venable with Mission to North America in Huntsville, Alabama, Jennifer and Wayne Waddell with Cru at the University of Alabama, Joel and Holly Wallace with Mission to North America in Alabama, and Ben and Leah Weber with Campus Outreach in Birmingham.

Friday, December 12 — Briarwood Officers and Staff

Pray for Briarwood Elders Frank Wright, Drew Ricketts, Bobby Welch; Deacons Matthew Bush, Chris Cain, Randy DeRieux; and Singles Pastor, Saeyoung Park and his wife Mikyung.

Saturday, December 13 — Church Family

Pray for our hospitalized members Sandy Bell, Christi Bono, Janice Bricker, Carolyn Campbell, Jerry Creager, Jim Leonard, Barbara Matthews, Elaine Willis.

Our love and sympathy to Theodore Woo and family on the death of his grandmother, Shun-Hai Moy, on November 29; to Janie Mosca, Christina Poff and family on the death of their husband and father, member Bob Mosca, on November 30.

*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*

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

Briarwood Presbyterian Church
2200 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, AL 35243-2923



THIS LORD'S DAY

Sunday Morning Worship Services:

Advent at Briarwood

“Jesus, the Son”

Exodus 4:21–23; Matthew 2:13–14

Dr. Scott Redd

Sunday Evening Worship:

Briarwood Ballet Presents “Light of Heaven”

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.

Watch our live-stream on ROKU, Apple TV, Facebook, YouTube or briarwood.org.

Catch up with previous sermons and series on the Briarwood App.