

“SEARS STORE CLOSING GADSDEN MALL EVERYTHING MUST GO!”

There it was. Right in the newspaper. Sears closing. How could that be?

When I was in college, my mother took a job in Nashville at Sears. With mother's job came an employee discount. Combined with a mother's love. And even more a grandmother's love. Helped make lots of gifts possible. Remember Members Only jackets? Sony Walkmans? Care Bears?

Gloria's first big gift to me as a married couple was a Craftsman's tool kit from Sears. Big metal box chock full of tools. My Daddy provided her advice on buying tools. And Sears came into our home in a very real way every fall. *The Wish Book*. Sears' Christmas catalog. Our boys would grab it and begin to dream. Turning pages and wondering. Circle anything they might want. Write their name next to the picture. Dog ear the page. They understood that most things they marked were not going to appear. They would not get the several hundred dollar computer system. But they did get a couple of Nintendos. No new cars. But maybe a bicycle or skates. Gloria and I looked at their wishes and made a list. Checked it twice. And when Christmas came there were the gifts. Wishes, dreams realized.

We hoped they would also see and learn the joy of giving. After all, we had learned that from our parents. Sacrifice to give to those you love. Our parents worked so hard. Sacrificed so much. They denied themselves to raise us and give to us. (Even a stay-at-home mom taking a job to pay for my college expenses.) Clothes, activities, whatever we needed.

The giving came to a crescendo on Christmas morning. My 3 sisters and I would wake up and come down the stairs into the living room. All we saw was the tree and the presents that had appeared overnight as if by magic. Our parents would stand and watch us. Mother in front of the heater. Daddy just standing and watching. Wondering if we were pleased. Wondering if there would be a “*oohh*” gift. My sisters and I still talk about the year my sister Heart got the coat she had wanted. Knowing it was too expensive for our parents to buy. She opened the present slowly, eyes beginning to look in disbelief. Then in hope. Then she grabbed the coat, hugged it to herself and cried. The only thing coming from her mouth? *Oohh! Oohh!* The whole family smiling. I know my parents must have felt like all their sacrifices were worth it.

Our parents moved while I was in college. But they still always had a big tree with lots of presents. As grandchildren came along the crowd got larger on Christmas. Everybody crammed into the living room with the tree. Everybody's presents under that tree. We would sing some carols played on the old pump organ. Read the Christmas story. And open presents. It took a while. Drink some coffee and tell yet again the old family tales. And watching an occasional *oohh!* gift appear. I don't remember many of the gifts. But I remember vividly all of us being in that room. Loving. Christmas peace.

Gloria and I have tried to recreate a little of that at our house around the big tree. Presents for our children and grandchildren. Carols on the piano. The same wonderful Christmas story. Family stories. Open presents. Hopefully we occasionally hear an *oohh!* We have watched our little boys grow into men. Changes come to Christmas, don't they?

And sometimes those changes bring tears. No Sears. No *Wish Book*. Who would have believed it? And for Gloria and I no parents to buy gifts for. Or grandparents. No Nashville Christmas trees to gather around. Maybe a few tears for you, too? You are at your family gathering. A little thing happens. And you remember someone not there. And you fight back tears. Why do things have to change?

I wish I could have another Christmas with them in Nashville with the huge tree in the living room surrounded by presents. I would settle for just being able to stand in the hall door at night and look at the tree lights. Even for just one minute. Knowing they were asleep down the hall. And my sisters and family were in other rooms. And that my boys were sleeping with Gloria in the basement. The smell of Tennessee cedar. Waiting for Christmas morning. Oh the joy. Oh the peace of those gentle lights on the tree. Never again.

But we move forward and celebrate, don't we? The joy of Christmas now. I am comforted knowing that our parents would love how our boys have grown into men who know how to sacrifice and give. They would smile at our celebrating. At our singing and loving. I hold tight to every Christmas. Always thankful. If you were to come to our house, I hope you would find peace and love around our Alabama cedar. I hope you would feel the same when our church family remembers the Christ child each year.

We cannot stop changes at Christmas. But we can remember. And continue to celebrate. We have a different *Wish Book* now. It says the best gift to mark and dog ear is -- *For God so loved ... he gave His only son*. Do you think heaven was a little lonely for God the Father on that first Christmas? His Son was away for the first time. Because He gave his Son to us. God still celebrated that first Christmas. He sent a pretty Christmas light for that stable (I think there might have been a Bethlehem cedar just outside the stable lit by that star). And He sure woke up some shepherds to celebrate. Everybody there must have been saying *oohh!* The greatest gift ever. Jesus. *Oohh!* And He is the part of Christmas that never changes.

Our gifts pale in comparison to God's, don't they? He taught us about giving from love. And because He did I have the joy of knowing that my parents just might be decorating a tree in heaven right now. (Are there cedars in heaven?) And I know that I will be there someday with them and others who have gone on. The pain behind us the joy before us. Forever. Amen.

...because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! II Cor. 8:14-15 Oohh!

Collinsville

Christmas Parade

Awaiting news about alternate date.

Community

Christmas Service

December 9

6:00

Harvest Center Church of God of Prophecy

Advent Continues

through December 24

Christmas Caroling

Join us on Wednesday, December 12

5:45 – 7:00

We will be going to sing carols around town and especially in Frog Pond where many of our children live.

No CBC Kids or

Adult Choir

Rehearsals December 13 – January 6

Remember – no

School, no CBC kids

meeting unless you

receive special notice

Christmas Break from School

December 22 - January

6 Fort Payne

December 19- January

6 DeKalb

Lighting of Christ Candle and Communion

Sunday, December 23

5:00 (not 6:00)

In the sanctuary

We will sing carols,

share communion, read

the Christmas story

This service will last

only 30-40 minutes, so

come and celebrate

with us

Tuesday, December 25

Merry Christmas

Epiphany Sunday, January 6

Join us as we conclude

our Christmas season

with special worship

Covered Dish Dinner and Quarterly

Ministry Meeting

Sunday, January 13

Noon

Men's Day

Watch for plans

For more news check:

Collinsvillebaptistchurch.com

Facebook –

Collinsville Baptist

CBC Youth

CBC Kids

March 10 First

Sunday in Lent

April 21 Easter

Christian Ladies of Collinsville next

meeting date is

Tuesday, December 11

at the home of Elaine

Hufstetler. Ladies of

all ages are welcome!

God Is Bigger

Women's Retreat

CLC (Christian

Ladies of Collinsville)

Saturday, February 23,

2019

Please pray and be

collecting things to

contribute to the

Upscale Yard Sale!

Adult Bible Study

1. Wednesday 6:00

Christian Apologetics

2. Sunday 6:00

Bible study – *Not a*

Fan

Wednesday Schedule

5:50 Supper for

everyone

6:00 CBC Kids, Youth

Group, Adult Bible

study

7:00 Adult Choir,

Youth Praise Team

New Hearts of Joy – a class for women who are struggling and need relief from past mistakes in their lives. Fort Payne Women's Care Center 256-845-0838

Thank Yous

1. To Angie Bishop for providing a chicken and dressing dinner for the church.

2. For all those who gave to Operation Christmas Child Thanks to Symphony, JoAnn and Gloria W. for their leadership.

3. Community Thanksgiving Service – extra ushers, elevator workers, and a special choir. And for your attendance. A wonderful, uplifting service.

4. Thanksgiving food boxes. Lots of donations of food. 32 boxes were given to families around town. And special thanks to those who came Tuesday to put the boxes together and deliver them. Debra, Symphony, Donnie, Jerrie and all the rest.

5. Community Christmas Tree lighting. Thank you for your attendance and helping with the hot chocolate and other things at the service.

6. To Sandra Killian for decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas.

An thank you for your faithful giving to the Fall Offerings. And to your faithful giving toward our regular budget. Thank you for responding to the challenge from the Budget Committee.

Sympathy

To LueDean Perkins on the passing of her sister LaVern.

To the family of Eddie Street Remembrance Service was held at the church on Saturday, December 8.

To Jan Newsome and her family on the loss of Susan Butler, Jan's sister.



Fall in the Park





Trunk or Treat



Tree Lighting





Church Goal – \$1800
Given As Of December 1-- \$627
Remaining -- \$1173
Now – January 6

Southern Baptists have always been about missions – Telling people about Jesus. China was the first country where we sent missionaries. Lottie Moon was one of first sent. She wanted all Chinese to know about Jesus.

Southern Baptists have always given sacrificially to support missions and missionaries. In the late 1800s, Lottie suggested a special offering be taken on Christmas for missions. In 1918, the offering was named for Lottie. Since then, millions of dollars have been given to missions – in the name of Lottie Moon. But much more importantly, in the name of Jesus Christ. In a season of giving, please consider making an offering to allow people to know Jesus. Just like Lottie did. And just like Collinsville Baptist has been doing for all of our years.

The Servant Mission Thrift Store – giving all profits to local missions.

A couple of things you can give that will cost you almost nothing

1. Plastic bags. Got a bunch of empty plastic bags from the store? Save them and carry them to the store. The expense of buying their own bags is high. They can use yours and have more money to give to local missions.
2. Old clothes and rags. Got some old clothes that you think have no value? Every week a truck comes by the store and picks up clothes or rags, even if they could never be worn. 25 cents a pound. The money from your throw away cloths can add a lot to the profit. Last month the store was able to make donations to a home for children in Fyffe and to a women's shelter in fort Payne. You can help by giving plastic bags and rags. And volunteering some of your time. all Michael Evett 256-996-4496

Thank you for your faithful giving to the Fall Offerings.

And to your faithful giving toward our regular budget. Thank you for responding to the challenge from the Stewardship Committee.



Merry Christmas

From

John and Gloria

(Picture made at Shocco on
New Year's Day. It was
really cold.)



December 2018

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Church
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35961

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