

A LETTER FROM DR. SEAN LUCAS

November 14, 2019

My dear Friends:

This cold snap we've had the last few days reminds me that winter is coming. (It has also brought down every leaf from the walnut tree in our backyard! Unbelievable!) And with winter comes our special services from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. I wanted to remind you about what we have coming up in our life together here at IPC.

On Thanksgiving Day, we'll have our annual service at 10:00 a.m. Parker Tenent will be preaching and it'll be a good time to remember to whom we are giving thanks. As the Psalmist tells us, "How good it is to thank the Lord!" (Psalm 92:1)—it is good for our souls to thank our God for all the grace shown to us in and through Jesus Christ.

And then, starting December 1 and running through Christmas Eve, our preaching will be focused on "Christmas in Ruth." Because the entire Bible is about Jesus (John 5:39), we would expect to be able to get to Christmas from any passage in the Bible. How much more so from a book about Jesus' ancestor Ruth (Matt 1:5)! I'm looking forward to showing you how Ruth's story is a Christmas story, a Jesus story, in the end.

On December 4 at 6:15 p.m., we are having our children's music program and trying an experiment this year. All of our choirs, from preschool through senior high, will be singing in this concert; that's a change from previous years, but here's why. I think it is important for all of us to participate in and enjoy what all of our children are doing in our music program. In the past, dividing the small children from the older children meant that we as a covenant people were not seeing how God was at work in all of our covenant children. By presenting a single concert, I hope we will appreciate the work God is doing and create a sense that we are together enjoying the gifts of God from all the children of God.

Our adult and student choirs will be presenting their annual program of Lessons and Carols on December 8—and I cannot wait to hear the range of praise connected to the familiar Christmas texts. Messiah Sing-Along will be December 15, and our second annual Family Christmas Carol Sing will be December 22. All of these will begin at 6:00 p.m.

Once again, we will have a family Christmas Eve service in the fellowship hall at 4:00 p.m. and our Christmas Eve communion service in the sanctuary at 5:30 p.m. Remember that there is no nursery for either service—because we want our nursery workers to be free to worship with their own families on Christmas Eve. And for the last Sunday of the year, December 29, we will only have one service and no Sunday school: we will close the year in worship at 10:00 a.m. that day.

So much is happening in our life together at IPC as he forms us as new people for a new Memphis. I trust you are staying warm and looking forward to the next several weeks. I know that I am!

In the grip of God's grace,

