



# CHRISTMAS DROP & SHOP

**TODAY!**  
**4:30PM-7:30PM**

**\$10 per child**  
\*Pre-registration required  
Call Meghan Brearley  
@ 562.708.9261  
if you still need to sign up!

Need a couple hours to do some christmas shopping or wrap gifts without the kids?  
Drop them off at LBAC for dinner, crafts, and a movie!  
Kids birth through 5th grade welcome.

Women's Ministry invites you to  
*A Merry*  
*Little Christmas Gathering*

Join us for:

- Christmas Crafts
- Cookie Mason Jars
- Present Decorating
- Appetizers ♦ Soups ♦ Desserts

**Saturday**  
**12.21.19**  
**5PM-8PM**

\$12.00 per attendee  
Childcare is NOT provided

Questions? Laura Giannone 562.400.0506

# CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

PERFORMANCE - SATURDAY 12/14 7PM  
QUESTIONS??? JILL 562.305.8852 OR MARIKKA 562.972.8718

# MEN'S Breakfast

FREE CHILDCARE PROVIDED!

**Saturday, December 14**  
**8:00AM**  
**LBAC Gymnasium**

Got Questions?  
Greg Coles @ 310.293.9518

# LBAC Year-to-Date Financial Report

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Budget %</u>
Weekly:	\$12,715.40	\$10,070.00	79.2%
Month-to-Date:	\$12,715.40	\$10,070.00	79.2%
Year-to-Date:	\$178,015.60	\$170,506.31	95.8%
Disbursed YTD:	\$152,986.00	GF Balance: \$17,520.31	



# LBAC's Family Calendar & Events

## Sunday, December 8

- 9:00AM Morning Coffee
- 9:30AM Worship & Celebration
- 11:15AM Christmas Musical Practice
- 11:15AM Foundations Class: Session 2, Week 5
- 4:30PM Children's Ministry Drop & Shop

## Monday, December 9

- 6:00PM Compulsive Eaters Anonymous
- 7:00PM Pure Desire
- 7:00PM Survivors of Incest Anonymous

## Tuesday, December 10

- 6:30PM Women Connecting with Missions
- 7:00PM Governing Board Meeting
- 7:00PM The Process-High School

## Wednesday, December 11

- 6:30PM AWANA

## Thursday, December 12

- 7:00PM Junior High Live

## Friday, December 13

- 6:30AM Men's Bible Study on Campus
- 5:00PM Youth Yule Feast
- 8:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

## Saturday, December 14

- 8:00AM Men's Fellowship Breakfast
- 9:00AM Compulsive Eaters Anonymous
- 10:00AM Crafty Women
- 7:00PM Children's Christmas Musical

## Sunday, December 15

- 9:00AM Morning Coffee
- 9:30AM Worship & Celebration
- 11:15AM Foundations Class: Session 2, Week 6

### MISSIONS

<http://www.lbac.org/missions>

### GROWTH GROUPS

<http://www.lbac.org/gg>

Mid-week Adult Bible Studies

### CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/children>

Sunday Mornings: Gospel Project @ 9:30AM  
Christmas Musical Practice @ 11:15AM

### AWANA

<http://www.lbac.org/awana>

Wednesday Nights September through May

### YOUTH MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/youth>

The Process High School~ Tuesdays @ 7:00PM  
Junior High Live ~ Thursdays @ 7:00PM

### WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/women>

Women's Ministry Event Information

Contact: deya@charter.net

Lydia House Meals Ministry

Contact: mcoliver789@msn.com

Women Connecting with Missions  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month @ 7:00PM

Crafty Women

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month @ 10:00AM

### MEN'S MINISTRIES

<http://www.lbac.org/men>

Contact: mensministry@lbac.org

## long beach alliance church offices

3331 palo verde avenue • long beach, ca • 90808-4113

phone: 562.420.1478 • office@lbac.org • www.lbac.org

church office hours: tuesday-thursday, 10:00AM-5:00PM

[www.facebook.com/longbeachalliancechurch](http://www.facebook.com/longbeachalliancechurch)

## church staff team

meghan brearley, children's director  
562.708.9261 • meghan@lbac.org

jesse duckett, youth pastor  
562.454.7122 • jesse@lbac.org

tina rand, receptionist & treasurer  
562.420.1478 • tina@lbac.org

scott trickett, associate pastor  
562.972.5306 • scott@lbac.org

michelle crammer, office manager  
917.288.3424 • michelle@lbac.org

chris lankford, lead pastor  
562.685.4132 • chris@lbac.org

kyle rand, facility needs  
562.900.0921 • kyle@lbac.org

ben shaw, worship & celebration intern  
562.420.1478 • ben@lbac.org



THE  
ALLIANCE

Regular Ministry Schedule & Contacts



December 8, 2019



# Purposeful Purity

Long Beach Alliance Church • December 8, 2019 • Luke 3:4-6 • Pastor Chris Lankford

## 1) *What Does Christmas Look Like To You?*

- A) I believe that by looking at some of the circumstances surrounding the first arrival of Jesus Christ, it can help us in looking forward to Jesus' second coming. This is actually how the Bible is supposed to "work" in our lives. By understanding the story of God (the Bible), we get to see how God's people have responded to Jesus Christ in every kind of circumstance from the beginning to ending (Hebrews 11:4-38).
- B) Why do we want to see how God's people have responded? Because it teaches us how God works in every circumstance. The point is not to copy the responses of others, but to see how God is at work. Our circumstances are different, but God is still at work in the same kinds of ways. If we can see God's story in the Bible, we can begin to see God's story at Starbucks, or work, or with friends, or (fill in the blank).
- C) When you think of the birth of Jesus, what does your mind's eye see? Angels and shepherds? A barn of sheep & cattle, ox & ass? Mary & Joseph huddled around a straw-stuffed cradle with a tearless newborn wrapped in a white baby blanket (I'm guessing those might be "swaddling cloths")? Three wise men and gifts, maybe with some well-behaved camels? A little drummer boy?

## 2) *What Has Been Added In The First Arrival of Jesus?*

- A) When we think about Jesus' arrival, what is in our picture that doesn't belong? Perhaps most obvious is there is a very clear absence of any drummers at Christ's birth. Like most families with newborns, kids playing drums are not welcome. It's a cute story with a nice theme of generosity, but just for clarity, it was written around the early 1940's, which means some of you are older than the song. Wow!
- B) As well, there's no mention of animals being present at Christ's birth, and even though Joseph and Mary were unwed and probably teenagers, they still would have known that having barnyard animals present during a birth was not welcome, and allowing farm animals to hover around your newborn baby was a very bad idea. And just in case you remember something about animals talking to each other, that's also an embellished story birthed from the legend of Mary traveling to Bethlehem on a donkey (which is another embellished story). Barnyard animals? Nada. Wow!
- C) Three wise men? Well, there were three gifts (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), but there is no mention of the exact number of wise men. There were at least two, but there could have been more. But even so, by the time the wise men arrive in Bethlehem, Jesus is a child, probably around two years old, and is now living in the family home of Joseph & Mary in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1-12).

### **3) What Was Missing In The First Arrival of Jesus?**

- A) When we think about Jesus' arrival, what's missing? Did you notice any "important" people? Can you imagine? Why were there no Jewish leaders! None of the religious 'supreme court' (Sanhedrin), no Pharisees, no Scribes (lawyers), no Sadducees, no nationalistic Zealots, and none of the religious purists, the Essenes? Just as Malachi had written, the coming of the Lord was completely unexpected (Malachi 3:2).
- B) The New Testament tells us that the religious leaders were far more interested in impressing people than in listening to God (Matthew 6:5-6; Luke 18:9-14). They were more concerned with how they looked, than the condition of their souls (Matthew 23:27-28). The leaders of Christ's day loved a high social status that came from judging others with sophisticated religious rules that they didn't even follow (Matthew 23:2-12). Worst of all, the religious leaders were making disciples of themselves instead of God, leading people straight to Hell (Matthew 23:13-15).

### **4) How Could Someone Still Miss Christmas?**

- A) About 430 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Malachi wrote that God would send a messenger to "prepare the way" for the coming of the Lord (Malachi 3:1). This was a re-statement of God's promise from about 250 years earlier through the prophet Isaiah of a "voice crying out in the desert" that would prepare the way for the coming of the Lord (Isaiah 40:3-5). All four Gospel writers identify John the Baptist as the "voice crying out in the wilderness" with the message of "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand..." (Matthew 3:1-6; Luke 3:2-6).
- B) In other words, if you wanted to see the "glory of the Lord" which God promised, it could only come through embracing the prophetic message of God's messenger, John the Baptist. This is at the heart of a seemingly strange interaction between Jesus and some friends of John the Baptist which climaxes with an interesting note about that first Christmas arrival of Jesus (Luke 7:18-30).
- C) Missing Christmas is easy when the culture or our traditions become more important than Christ. Do you find yourself so busy with the traditions and popular culture of Christmas, that you are actually missing Christ?! Could you be guilty of missing Christmas? The voice in the wilderness is still crying out for us to respond in repentance (turning away from sin) and belief (turning to Christ)!

### **5) Anticipating Christmas in Purity & Generosity**

- A) Anticipating a 'second coming' (advent) of Christ encourages alert and pure living in the midst of lives filled with distractions (Matthew 24:38, 42, 44). Readiness is not defensive, but intentionally prepares in vigilant purity! Vigilance is also not passive, but actively moves us to faith-filled action in pure living – by protecting others in love and justice, defending the weak, opposing the oppressive, serving the defenseless, and helping the broken (Malachi 3:3-5). This is authentic advent living!