

January 2017

The Messenger

A publication of Malvern Hill Baptist Church

From the Pastor's Desk

By Craig Thompson

I can still barely believe that we are worshiping in our newly renovated and expanded sanctuary. But, as excited as I am, I believe our kids may be even more excited about their new facilities, and our teenagers are making up for lost time enjoying our gym. 2016 was an intense year as we worked together to see so much accomplished and I hope that 2017 can be a year of enjoying those accomplishments and seeing our new facilities used for the glory of God and the expansion of His kingdom.

For the month of January, however, it is my hope that we as a church family can focus on a little bit of rest and re-focusing for the task at hand as a church. 2016 was busy and December may have been the busiest month of them all. As a result, I am making a concerted effort to de-clutter January. It is my goal to limit church activities this month to the bare bones so that we can be prepared for all of the tasks that await us in 2017.

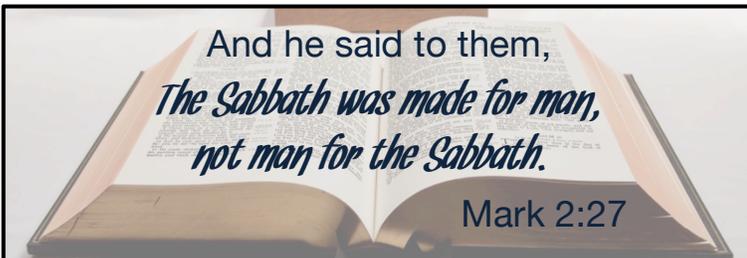
I know that taking time to rest and rejuvenate can seem sometimes wasteful, but Jesus reminded us that Sabbath was created for us. We are tired. As God's creatures, we are programmed to need rest. We don't need rest only because we feel like it, we need rest be-

cause God said so. God built times of mandated rest into the ancient Jewish calendar. In addition to weekly Sabbaths, the feasts provided regular times of rest for people to re-focus their attention on God and his works of salvation. Making time to rest and re-focus takes work and commitment, but if it was important to God, it must be important to us too.

It is ironic that resting would be so difficult. Resting is not prized in our society or in our churches. I have had to work hard to carve out time for our church to rest. But if the church is to be a counter-cultural refuge then it must eschew the constant connectedness of culture and occasionally disconnect from busyness to reconnect with the God who created us. Join with me this January as you consider your New Year's resolutions to resolve to do a little less for a little while so that you can be prepared to do all that God would have you to do in the future.

What's Inside this Issue:

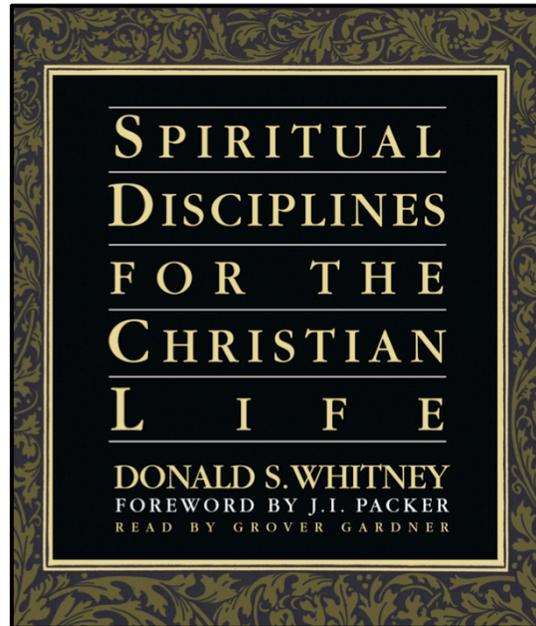
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In January and February of 2017 we will focus on Spiritual Disciplines during our Sunday evening services. Consider the following forward by J.I. Packer for the book *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* by Donald W. Whitney:

The doctrine of the disciplines is really a restatement and extension of classical Protestant teaching on the means of grace (the Word of God, prayer, fellowship, the Lord's Supper). Don Whitney's spiritual feet are blessedly cemented in the wisdom of the Bible...the foundations he lays are evangelical, not legalistic. In other words, he calls us to pursue Godliness through practicing the disciplines out of gratitude for the grace that has saved us, not as self-justifying or self-advancing effort. What he builds on these foundations is as beneficial as it is solid. He is in truth showing us the path of life.

If, then, as a Christian you want to be really real with your God, moving beyond the stage of playing games with yourself and Him, this book provides practical help.



Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney would make an excellent supplement to our Sunday evening services and is available at Lifeway, Amazon, Christian Book, and other bookstores that sell Christian literature.

Spiritual Disciplines

Sunday Nights at 6:00 PM

January 1 – No Evening Services

January 8 – Spiritual Disciplines: Bible Study

January 15 – No Evening Services

January 22 – Spiritual Disciplines: Prayer

January 29 – Spiritual Disciplines: Stewardship

February 5 – Spiritual Disciplines: Journaling

February 12 – Spiritual Disciplines: Journaling

February 19–21 Bridging the Gap:

Evangelism Through Apologetics

February 26 – LifeGroup Fellowship

Mission Emphasis: Sanctity of Life

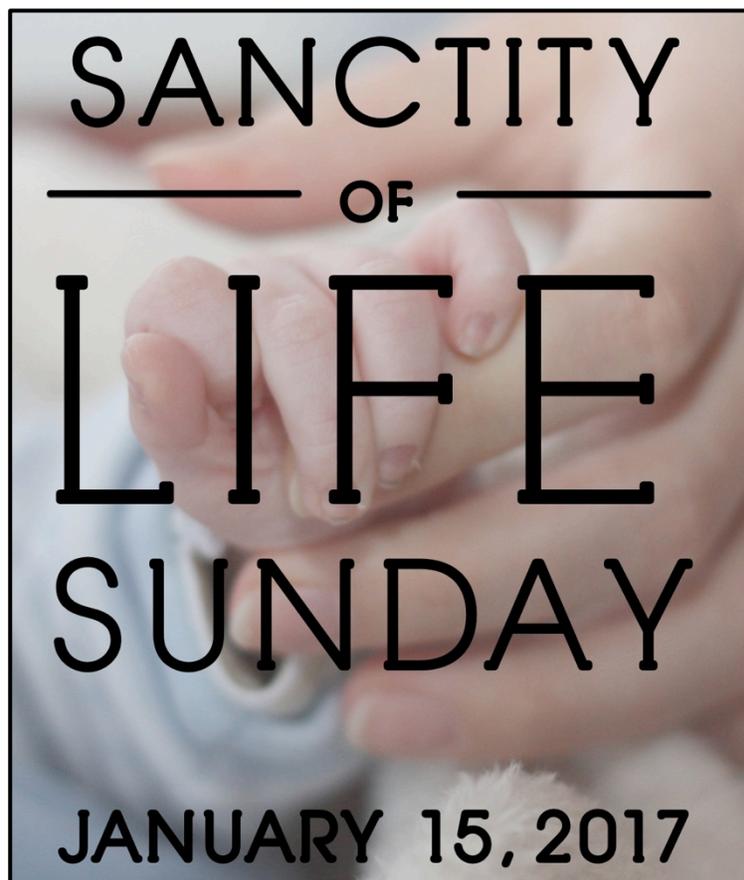
By Craig Thompson

On January 13, 1984, President Ronald Reagan issued a proclamation designating January 22 as the first National Sanctity of Human Life Day. (January 22, 1973, was the day the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion-on-demand in all 50 states.) Churches around the United States use the day to celebrate God's gift of life, commemorate the many lives lost to abortion, and commit themselves to protecting human life at every stage.

Churches continue to recognize the third Sunday in January as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. In 2016, the date will be January 17.

(source: <https://www.lifemattersww.org>)

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. Psalm 139:13-16 (ESV)



Music Ministry & Prime Timers' Ministry

By Buster Morris

Malvern Hill Music Ministry

Thanks to all that made our Christmas season so special once again. God has truly blessed in allowing us to be back in our beautiful sanctuary this Christmas. Our music ministry teams were a blessing. Your commitments to our Lord and his church are so appreciated. It is good to have some new faces in these ministries. Please continue to pray as we look to make some transitions in the future. Pray that God would lead and direct our paths and that He would be glorified. I am truly blessed to be a part of this body of believers.

And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Isaiah 51:11 (ESV)

Malvern Hill "Prime Timer's" Ministry

December was a really busy time for our ministry, but what a blessing. God blessed and we were finally able to move into our expanded and remodeled sanctuary. Praise Him! Yes, there were those moments when God's people had to reach out and lean on each other as some of our folks experienced loss. Let me say I've never been more proud to be a part of God's family, especially Malvern Hill's family, and to see how every-

one gave of themselves to minister to those folks that were hurting.

As I reflect on this past year I want to say thanks to all that participated in our nursing home and flower ministries. I know I've said this before, but it is because it's true, these ministries are some of the most important ministries here at Malvern Hill. They fill such a needed area of ministry to a special group of special folks.

As we come to the end of another blessed year here at Malvern Hill. We give thanks to our Lord and Savior. He continues to bless us each in so many ways. I am looking forward to a new year as we seek His direction for Malvern Hill's Senior Adult Ministry. Please be in prayer for our Ministry Team.

They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing, to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. Psalm 92:14-15 (NKJV)

January Prime Timer Events

Thursday, Jan. 12, 2:30 PM - Karesh Wing Ministry
Thursday, Jan. 19, 6:00 PM - Senior Supper
Thursday, Jan. 26, 2:30 PM - Springdale Ministry

As usual during the month of December, I have struggled with busyness just like many of you have. The problem with my busyness is it tends to take away from what is most important. I find running from task to task does that. It seems to become a habit very quickly for me. Now that the new year is fast approaching, I am forcing myself to slow down to think.

I find that the new year is a natural time for me to think about what has been done, what needs to be done, and what we hope to accomplish in the coming year with the children's ministry. It is always my desire that nothing that we do, or something that we don't do, gets in the way of a child's relationship with Christ. In thinking about this, I divide the children into three groups. For some of the children, this coming year is the time for them to come to Christ beginning that discipleship road. For others, it means now is the time for them to continue growing in Christ, and for the last group, it means that, though they are not yet ready to come to Christ, a strong foundation that will last them a lifetime can still be built.

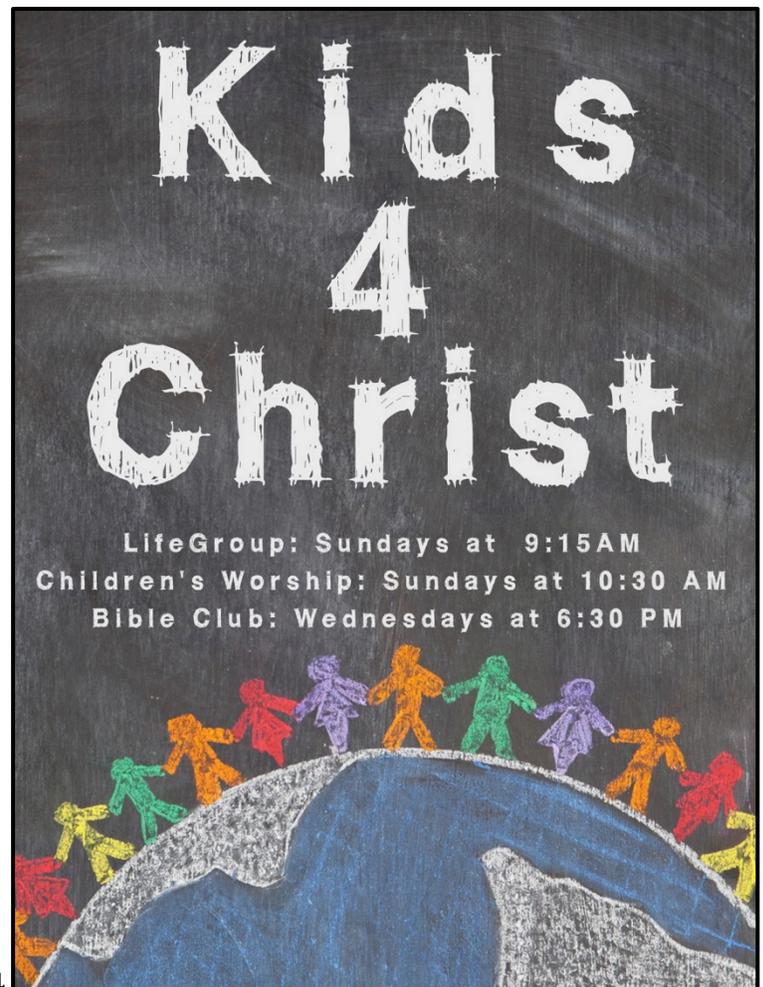
In knowing that we want to help all three groups of children accomplish these goals, I know that the children's ministry must be evaluated and reevaluated throughout the year. How easy it is to begin going through the motions, losing sight of the goal. Please join me in praying that we never allow this to happen.

One of the things I look at in accomplishing the goal is the resources we have available to us. I have worked in children's ministry continuously for the past thirty-two years and have worked with many people during that time. Malvern Hill, you are blessed to have a group of people who truly care about your children. They are not simply going through the motions. As I interact with other people in children's ministry in various countries, I know this is not often the case. To have a number of people who have chosen to commit their lives to helping children build a strong spiritual foundation is unusual. I thank God for them.

The second thing I look at is the children's ministry budget for the new year. When I look at this number, it is more than just the number of dollars allocated to the work of the children's ministry. The old saying is that you can always tell what is important to people by how they spend their money. We are blessed in that Malvern Hill sees the importance of providing valuable resources for the children's ministry. It shows this is something you care about.

The third thing I am looking at is the space resource. While I know that those working in children's ministry usually find a way to "make do", my concern is more toward what first time guests see and think when they come into our building. Do they see that this is a church that values its youngest, or do they go away thinking the opposite? Our new building has been a blessing to us in the short time we have been in it. (The excitement that came from finally being able to use it made me wonder about the wisdom of adding to the already heightened emotions of Christmas. The timing was what it was, so.....) Hopefully in the new year we will have some funds to begin some work on the old children's building.

I have spoken with pastors who say that their churches have very little if any interest in the generations to come. Their interest is that their churches be there for them in their lifetimes. After that, there is no concern. Thank you, Church, that you have not chosen to adopt that attitude.





"My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." Proverbs 2:1-5

NEXT STEPS

January 8, 15, 22

during LifeGroup



you are here

If you would like to know more about becoming an active member of Malvern Hill, contact the church office to register for the Next Steps Class.

go AND make disciples of all nations



June 5-9
Vacation Bible School
Camden, SC

June 19-23
Family Mission trip
Clarkston, Ga

August 14-21
Foreign Mission trip
Edinburgh, Scotland

Serving the hungry and homeless of Kershaw County

Love
Serve
Give

January 8

See Erin Taylor for more information or sign up on the ministry board in the hallway.

Generation180 Ministry (Student Ministry)

By Luke Tolbert

The end of the year is always a good time for reflection. Of course, this year is a little harder for me as I begin to reflect on not just this past year, but six and a half years of ministry here at Malvern Hill. Here are three things I am grateful for as we enter 2017:

1. *I am thankful for a church family who supports our students* – Whether through financial giving in our budget or in fundraisers to opening their homes for dinners, retreats, or fellowships, our church family loves our students. I am grateful for a church family who doesn't just see our teenagers as the future of the church, but sees them as part of the church today.
2. *I am thankful for adult leaders who lead our students* – One of the greatest blessings in my life over the past two years has been to see the growth of our adult leaders in number, maturity, and dedication. These adult leaders truly care for our students and make many sacrifices of their time, talents, and gifts to invest in the lives of our teenagers.
3. *I am thankful for a church staff who supports our students* – Our church staff members sup-

ports our students in ways that are unheard of in some churches. I am thankful for a church staff that prays for and helps lead our students in a multitude of different ways.

Ski Trip (January 7-10) – Don't forget to read over the Ski Trip packet so that you pack everything you need to bring. We will meet at the church building on Saturday, January 7 at 10:00AM to load the bus and depart for West Virginia. Please do not be late!

M-Fuge Deposits (Sunday, January 29) – We will be returning to North Greenville University July 10-15, 2017. The cost for camp will be \$140 for one student or \$250 for two students from the same family. This cost will cover everything (transportation, meals, activities, etc.) from the time we leave Monday morning until we return Saturday afternoon. A \$50 deposit per student is due by Sunday, January 29 to reserve your spot. Each year this camp is one of the highlights of our student ministry – will you make plans to join us this year? Scholarships are also available for those with financial need. Scholarship applications can be picked up from my office or from our website under the student resources section. The deadline for scholarship applications is Sunday, January 22.

Discipleship and LifeGroup Ministry

By Luke Tolbert

How convicting and challenging are the Psalmists' words from Psalm 119:1-8:

- 1 *Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord!*
- 2 *Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart,*
- 3 *who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!*
- 4 *You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently.*
- 5 *Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!*
- 6 *Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.*
- 7 *I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules.*
- 8 *I will keep your statutes; do not utterly forsake me!*

Beginning this month, we will be studying Psalm 119 as a church family on Sunday mornings during our times of worship. I cannot think of a better way to reflect on our study of God's Word than by committing to a Bible reading plan for 2017. One of the blessings that the Lord has given us as believers today is that

there are dozens of reading plans that make it easier for you to treasure His Word in your life.

One of my favorite bloggers and online resources is Tim Challies at www.challies.com. He has posted a blog post with links to his favorite reading plan as well as several others. I agree that one of my favorite reading plans is the 5-day reading plan, which allows you to read through the Bible in an entire year.

I would also encourage you to check out his links to the ESV Bible Plans and Ligonier Reading Plans. I also find the "How to Change Your Mind" plan to be very interesting and might interest those of you who have been reading consistently for a while. You can find his blog post and reading plan links at www.challies.com/resources/my-favorite-bible-reading-plan-for-2017.

We also have printed Bible reading plans available in the foyer of the new sanctuary for those of you who are looking for paper copies. May the Lord bless our reading and study of His Word this year!

Monthly Calendar

January 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Sacks of Love	4	5	6	7 Gen180 Ski Trip →
8 Next Steps Class Love, Serve, Give ← Gen180 Ski Trip	9 Budget and Finance Mtg. Deacons Mtg.	10 Mission Bible Study Mission Prayer Group	11	12 Karesh Wing	13	14
15 Next Steps Class Sanctity of Life Sunday	16	17 Sacks of Love	18	19 Senior Supper	20	21
22 Next Steps Class	23	24	25	26 Springdale	27	28
29	30	31 Sacks of Love				

- 1/2 Aubrey Thompson
- 1/3 Anne Dixon
Derek Ray
Isabella Knopp
- 1/4 Frankie Taylor
- 1/6 Emma Williamson
- 1/8 Kelley Davis
Aiden Taylor
Kenneth Barfield
- 1/9 Ryan Morris
Brooklyn Thompson
Wendy Roberts
Beata Hance
- 1/10 Donna Watts
- 1/11 Elaine Hyatt
Beth Jeffers
- 1/13 Blake Glock
- 1/15 Mercy Hair
- 1/16 Lanny Gunter
- 1/17 Abigail Avery
Anastin Avery
- 1/18 Shelia Arledge
Tabatha Knopp
- 1/19 Rylee Fisher
- 1/21 Gary Fisher
- 1/23 Jerri Stanley
Macy Lantz
- 1/24 Vickie Patton
John Allen
- 1/29 Max Johnson
- 1/30 Eleanor Tolbert
- 1/31 Dale Roberts



- 1/4 Max & Diane Johnson
- 1/9 Eddie & Zinda Hayes
- 1/17 Jack & Linda Branham

Malvern Hill Baptist Church

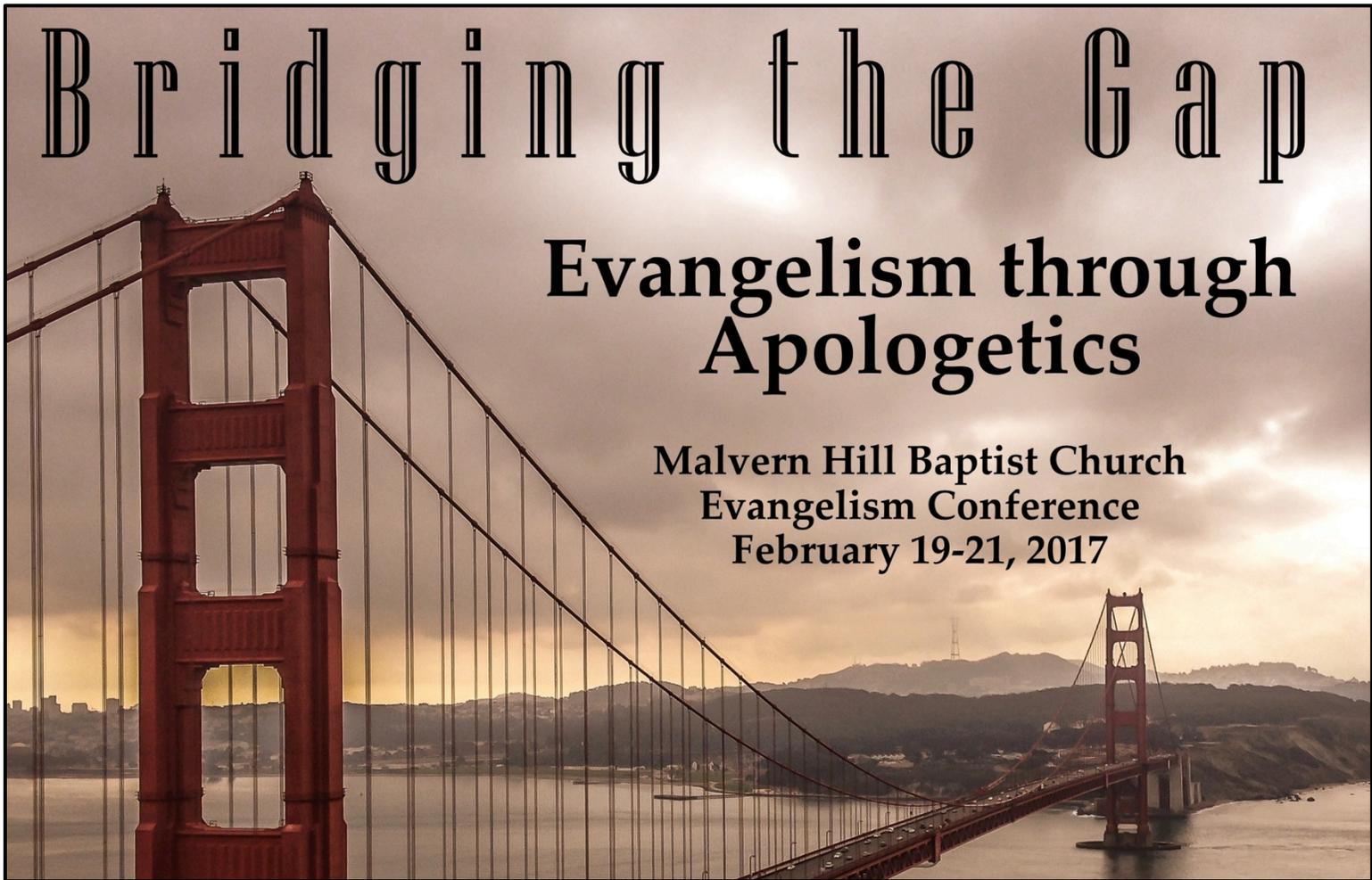
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Bridging the Gap

Evangelism through Apologetics

Malvern Hill Baptist Church
Evangelism Conference
February 19-21, 2017