



Update



December 2018

Vernon & Martha Hedge

Christmas at the Base

Christmas season at Calvary Commission in Lindale, Texas is a little like at your house except there are ministry opportunities mixed in with activities for the students. The lights are up around the doors leading to the Chapel. In a corner of the chapel, chairs have been removed and a large Christmas tree has been put in place. That area has couches, arm chairs, and a coffee table like a large living room. It's where students and staff can catch a moment between classes or their job assignments and sit and visit, making it a home away from home.

It varies from year to year, but on the average about three-fourths of our students have been to prison. The other fourth come for the Bible School and mission training. We are a discipleship training, but at the same time a great effort is made to have a "home atmosphere" for the students as much as possible.

At the back of the Chapel auditorium is the cafeteria. As a part of the Christmas season, a special meal was prepared for the students. Eight-foot tables were placed end to end and covered with red tablecloths, with colorful center pieces. It looked festive.

About November 27 the students had a choice to go to Santa Land or to stay on campus and watch the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*. This time of year, anyone driving on I-20 can see the reflection of lights coming from the 24 acres of lights of Santa Land. As you enter the park, you are surrounded by more than two

million lights everywhere you drive. As a drive-thru Christmas light display, it's the first of its kind. There is a 250-foot tunnel of 25,000 flashing and dancing lights and at the exit, 12-foot toy soldiers. Various Christmas music is coordinated with the light displays to give a super holiday experience. (If interested, Google "Santa Land Tyler.")

Several activities are planned throughout December. From the 10-12th a group of the students will help construct a building for a local Tyler ministry. The 13-17th is an outreach to Reynosa, Mexico to the orphanage, the church and street ministry. About 20 students will go on this trip. On the 18th another family night is planned with a special meal and activities.

"Hope at Christmas" is on the 19th. The students prepare a special night for the children who have a parent in the local Smith Country Jail. The night is planned to bring cheer and Christmas gifts

to the children. There will also be a meal for them at the Church of Living Hope in Tyler.

In fact, throughout the year, each Wednesday night the students at Calvary Commission use about four vans and pick up underprivileged children, bring them to Church of the Living Hope, provide a meal, and offer classes for each age group.

The two or three days around Christmas day, most of the students will go to be with their families. There are usually 10 or 12 former inmates who are restricted to the base because of parole requirements. There is always something special planned for them at Christmas.

To us at Calvary Commission the slogan "Jesus is the reason for the season" has maybe a deeper meaning than for some. Jesus was born, died, arose, and lives that He may transform lives. After their transformation, it is not uncommon for students to say, "That man or that woman doesn't live anymore."

It makes little difference to us Christians whether or not December 25th is the correct birth date; the fact is Jesus was born and is busy transferring many sons and daughters from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God. Christmas is a perfect time to celebrate our living Jesus in us. ✨



This has been a really busy year for our family. We often get questions about how what each member is doing, especially from those of you who have known us for a long time. We are blessed to live within 30 minutes of three of our four daughters and families.

Christy lives in Tyler, a couple of hours away. She's a mechanical engineer and still works for drilling rigs as a mud technician. She's always loved the outdoors and is good at whatever she does.

Her son James lives in Raleigh NC. He and Amber have busy three-year-old Liah who keeps them on their toes. Tristen is 10 and is a great big brother. James is an auto mechanic and loves his work.

Debbie and Michael Gamble lead a growing church, Radiant Life, where he is Senior Pastor. Both are extremely busy with ministry and community projects. He's a First Responder and a serious cyclist (rode the 100-mile Hotter than Hell event).

In addition to a full load in ministry leadership, Debbie continues in her design business. Her creativity is amazing. www.radiantlife-church.com

Carissa is engaged to Rene Rabelo and is busy planning their wedding in September. Both are on staff at the church, are working on their college degrees, and gifted in music.

Josiah is in the 11th grade, loves gaming, and is a cyclist with his dad. He's pushed through with discipline and hard work and loves

riding.

Caleb is in the 8th grade and has an ear for music. He will add piano at the beginning of the year. He loves working with the children in children's ministry.

Corrie and Chris Harris bought a townhouse this year and are enjoying making it home. Corrie is Assistant Director of the Hunt Institute at SMU and has been accepted into SMU's prestigious Cox School of Business's Professional MBA program.

Chris is number one in the world with his company that sells high-end 3D printers.

Stanton is in his sophomore year at A&M as an Army Core Cadet and loves it.

Erica is a senior, loves antiques, works part-time, got to vote this year, and is a gifted artist.

Jamie and David Busby live closest. Jamie earned her BA this year in Complimentary and

End of Year Gifts

A reminder that if you want your tax-deductible gift to count for 2018, it must be postmarked by the 31st.

All receipts will be mailed by January 31, 2019.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Alternative Health and is a wellness specialist at a long-term care and rehab facility. She recently completed her Master Clinical Aromatherapy Certification. She has a passion for helping people be well.

David has been with Sysco for 10 years, is an account executive in sales leadership, and is Top Gun of the 20 top sales people in the nation.

Alyssa is a freshman in college, pursuing clinical laboratory science, and works two part-time jobs.

Elijah is in the 8th grade, plays the violin and is in the advanced orchestra at school. He also sings, loves gaming, and builds complex Lego projects.

One of the joys we have is seeing how these seven grandchildren love to get together with each other, even though that's more difficult now that several are in college. They call themselves "the cousins."

Vernon continues to write curriculum for Calvary Commission, where he teaches, counsels people there and locally, and is into deep research of Thomas Jefferson and our Founding Fathers.

Martha takes care of the business of our part of Calvary Commission, produces the newsletters, and is a Professional Life and Business Coach part-time. This year she has had a few physical challenges but is doing well.

Thank you for your personal concern for us and your prayers and financial support. We are among all people, most blessed!

Merry Christmas! ✨
