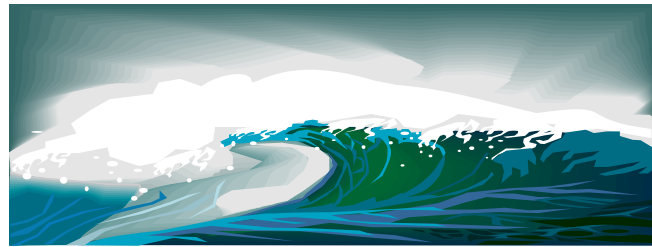




The *December 2019* Anchor

We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul...Heb.6:19a



First Baptist Church , 215 Ann Street, Ravenswood, WV 26164 ~
1-304-273-9910 ~ www.fbcraenswood.org

Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year. There is something almost magical as we gaze at decorated Christmas trees, neighborhood homes lit up with the many colors of the prism, and stores bustling with people looking for just the right gift, all in the anticipation of a memorable Christmas morning with family. But Christmas is far greater than presents. Isaiah 7:14 says ***“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel”*** (NIV). This is the beginning of mankind’s salvation.

In the wonderment of the season, First Baptist Church becomes fully immersed in the celebration of our Lord’s birth. There will be five special Advent worship services set in the sanctuary which has been donned with ever-green wreaths, and dotted with the blistering reds of over 20 poinsettias. Multiple wreaths and Christmas trees, and a large nativity say the beauty of the Lord is at hand. As each candle of Advent is lit before worship, there are special readings and prayer by family and friends while anticipating the Christmas Eve candlelight service. But all along this countdown, the church will have two Christmas plays, caroling and hot chocolate, a progressive dinner, and even an old fashioned Christmas-oriented movie about a family trying to get through the holidays by scraping together some coins for a gift. This movie centers around a large family similar to “The Waltons,” a quiet heart-warming story reminiscent to something one would see on the Hallmark channel. Your heart will melt and you’ll begin to feel the love of giving and the gift of family.

To that end, we are blessed that our church extols praise to the Most High with the singing of carols and hymns. Couple that, with a lighted sidewalk surrounding the church with 120 luminaries celebrating and memorializing those special loved ones who have touched our lives dearly. As we gaze at the names on the luminaries, we enter the Sanctuary one more time before Christmas Day. The Christmas Eve cantata itself is magical. Choir Director Abbi Woods and her team will have rehearsed hours-on-end and perfecting every note, to take congregates on an emotional journey through music and singing, celebrating and honoring the birth of Jesus. Then in the midst of a darkness, the final Advent candle is lit. It’s the candle representing Jesus. It’s from this candle, those in attendance will quietly and reverently light their candle. It’s in this stillness, the flame from the Lord’s candle is gently passed person-to-person, and family-by-family, until the congregation glows in radiant light. The congregation sings Silent Night. It was a magical night just over 2,000 years ago that changed the world forever. It changed my life. I know it changed yours. Church, let us join together and prepare our hearts for what is the greatest time of the year. It’s not because of the presents we might receive, but because of the Gift that has already been given.

Merry Christmas,

Pastor Toby



We have had a great month!

We finished up the End Zones in November. What a fantastic ministry! We reached out to over 100 community kids - giving them a safe place to have fun after each home game. Many thanks to all the adults who helped in any way and furnished drinks and snacks. Even the community businesses helped out with hotdogs and ice, discounted pizzas and balloons. Thanks to Food Fair, Ginos, and Affectionately Yours. Each Wednesday, Tudors gives the youth a discount for their meals. Thank you Tudors for your help!

The Youth are supportive of each other. We had a dinner and a movie to view Zach Graham's movie, *Zombie Club*. It may sound a little sci-fi but it had a great message for anti-bullying.

We have continued our card ministry to many of those who have been ill and just need a word of encouragement.

During the Thanksgiving break, I took the Senior High and Junior High to the Fun Barn for some terrific fun! We had 21 go for the senior high. Many thanks to Nancy McCoy, Helen Johnson and Toby Wagoner for transportation and chaperoning the group.

I'm so proud of our group. When things need moved, set up, cleaned up or just general needs, the youth who are available are always willing to help. They have moved tables, chairs, pews and helped in other ways too. Thanks guys for a job well done! I also feel very blessed to see how our group prays and cares for each other.

The Youth have started work on our Youth Christmas play that will be on December 22 at 6:30. I hope all the church will show up to hear their message of hope and love. And, of course, share in the refreshments after it's over.

We will be having our Christmas/New Year's Party on Sunday, December 29 at 6:00. I'll be showing a movie and have food and presents for everyone!

From Captivate and me, *We wish you the greatest and blessed Christmas ever!*

Blessings, Ann



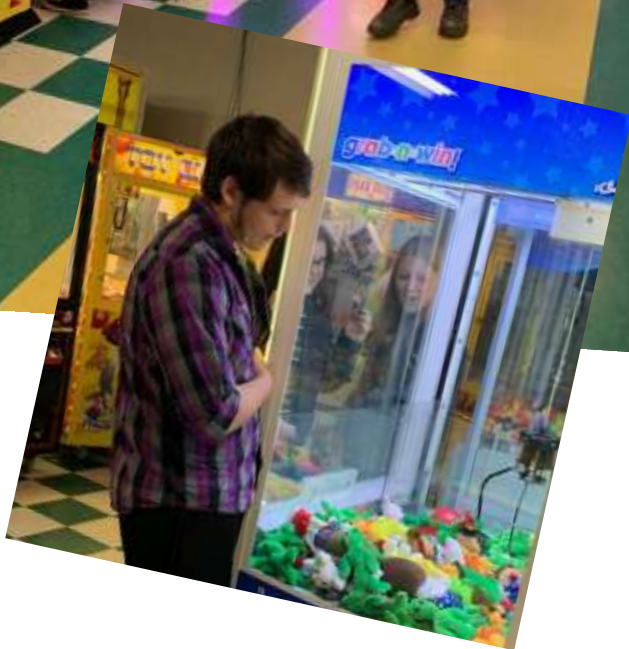
Food Fun and a Movie!!





Fun
Barn! Yes!!!

check out the Fun!



Monthly Meetings & Activities

- Dec 1 Advent Begins
Dec 2 Trustee Meeting @ 6:00
Deacons Meeting @ 7:00
Dec 3 Santa's Shop @ 6:30
Dec 6 Movie @ 7:00
Dec 7 Progressive Dinner @ 6:00
Dec 8 Second Advent
Dec 9 BOCE @ 6:30
Dec 11 Hand Bell Practice @ 5:30
Church Wide Caroling @ 6:30
Dec 13 Gaither Homecoming Concert
Dec 15 Third Advent
Hand bell Practice @ 5:30
Children's Christmas Play *Toooo Busy!*
Dec 18 Hand Bell Practice @ 5:30
Dec 19 Anchor Articles Due
Dec 22 Hand Bell Choir
Captivate Christmas Play @ 6:30
Dec 23 Choir Cantata Rehearsal Party
Dec 24 Christmas Eve Cantata & Candlelight
Service @ 7:00
Christmas Luminary Display
Office Closed
Dec 25 Jesus' Birthday - **Merry Christmas!**
Office Closed
Dec 29 Youth Christmas and New Year's Party
Dec 31 New Year's Eve Communion @ 6:00
Office Closed

Nursery Workers

- Dec 1 Lauren McGoskey
Dec 8 Destiny Thomas
Dec 15 Talia Martinez
Dec 22 Andrea Crow
Dec 29 Angela Graham

Children's Church

- Dec 1 Sandy Confer
Dec 8 Sami Wagoner
Dec 15 Richard Massey
Dec 22 Sandy Confer
Dec 29 Fred & Seth McGoskey

CommUnity Kitchen

- Dec 7 Burt Lyons
Dec 14 FUMC
Dec 21 Susan West
Dec 28 Open (Need volunteers)



Bell Ringers

- Dec 1 Riley Lathey Stewart
Dec 8 Mason Kerns
Dec 15 Izzy Boothe
Dec 22 Logan Kerns
Dec 29 Kolton Boothe

Deaconess for Communion

Helen Johnson

Junior Usher

Nikki Nicholson

Focus on Sunday School:

The Best Gift of All

Years ago, when I was in the fourth grade at Washington Elementary in Gallipolis, I was in the school Christmas play. I was in a group called *The Readers*. Actually, we didn't read anything - we memorized our lines and said them together. The words left a profound impact on me and I remember them to this day - 60 years later. I love to recite them all though the year: as I drive around, as I sit at my desk, anytime Christmas is mentioned. The words are powerful, sweet, amazing, gentle, exciting and kind. They tell of a **Gift** so miraculous that it made my young heart happy and still does.

Here is what I memorized:

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David: to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!

Times have changed - no longer do children memorize biblical passages for any reason at public schools. To do so, would make a cause for the Supreme Court. But long ago, in a far away town of Gallipolis, a young girl heard the words and kept them in her heart.

May you have blessed Christmas!



Advent Season

Advent means the arrival of a notable person, thing or event.

On Sunday, December 1, members of First Baptist Church will begin the journey of Advent in anticipation of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Five different families or groups will lead us in pray and will light candles as we focus on Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and last - Light.

The candles will be lit and scripture read to help us understand the journey to the Light.

The final candle is lit on Christmas Eve during our *Cantata and Candle Light Service*. We will then share the Light of Christ with each other until the whole sanctuary is glowing with His love.

Don't miss this beautiful Advent!

Church Wide Caroling

Young and Old are welcome to participate in this beloved tradition as we travel around town and sing the Good News of Jesus birth to our shut-ins, friends and church members.

We will meet at the church on Wednesday, December 11 at 6:15 to gather our groups, have prayer and then depart at 6:30 to sing carols.

When we are done, we will return to the church for some heart warming hot chocolate and cookies.



Santa's Shopping



Santa has helpers at First Baptist Church and they have been actively preparing for the children's *Santa's Shopping* on December 4 at 6:30.

All children, 5th grade and under, are welcome to come pick out gifts for their loved one at home.

Someone will help them wrap the gift and have it ready to be put under the tree at their houses.

The kids love it and will have a great time! *(no money needed)*

Security - The Eyes Have It



In order to secure our church and properties, First Baptist Church now has security cameras placed in strategic areas.

FBC on Radio

If you have to miss church, you don't have to miss the sermon.

FBC can be heard on WTHM 92.5 radio each Sunday 11:30-Noon.

Enjoying an Evening with the Teens
Watching
Zombie Club
featuring Zach Graham



Too-oo-oo-oo Busy!!

This year's children's play will teach us what we need to do at Christmas to have time for the real meaning of Christmas.



Don't be Too-oo-oo-oo Busy to come out on December 15 at 6:30!!

Presenting

Captivate Youth Group

Christmas Program

December 22 at 6:30

Everyone is welcome!

Poinsettias for Christmas



Each year, FBC purchases poinsettias from the middle school eighth graders to decorate our church sanctuary. The purchase also goes to help with the 8th graders trips to Washington, DC. This year, we have 3 students - Beau Bennett, Benjamin Crow and Hadleigh McGoskey who will benefit.

The flowers display bursts of red and green and add to the already beautifully decorated sanctuary.

After the Christmas Eve Service, you may take your poinsettia home.

Lighting up the Night for Christ!



If you missed last year's Christmas Eve Service, you missed a beautiful sight! We took part in the town's luminary lighting and had enough to display around our church and fellowship hall.

Each luminary was specially designated with the names of our loved ones.

This year once again, we will be Lighting up the Night for Christ!

If you would to purchase a light for a loved one, please sign up or see Susan West. The cost of each luminary is \$2.00.



***VARNEY, Carl & Dorothy**

Happy Birthday Dorothy!

The last week of December, our own Dorothy Varney is joining a unique and very select group of people in our church. Dorothy will be 90 years old - a nonagenarian!

Dorothy has been a faithful member of our church for many decades. She was baptized by Pastor Mike Halley years ago.

She and her husband Carl together raised their four children with much love: Connie Reynolds, Gloria Black-

hurst, C.J. Varney and Venisa Flesher. Their family grew with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Dorothy and Carl were married for close to 63 years before Carl passed.

At FBC, Dorothy has served as deaconess and was on the Social/Fellowship Committee. She has good memories of great times being at FBC with so many friends and family. Let's take time to tell this wonderful lady Happy Birthday!

Remembering Our Veterans



Thank you Jessica Lynch for your message.



Adopt a Family 2020

Many thanks to Jane Moore for organizing the Adopt-a-Family for FBC this year.

You will find Angels with items listed on them on the door of the vestibule. Choose an item you are comfortable purchasing and place the angel on it when you bring it back. A table will be set up in the Fellowship Hall for the gifts.

Let's reach out and help the needy to have a very Merry Christmas!



New Year's Eve Communion

One of the most solemn events during the season, is the Communion held on New Year's Eve.

Silently, we meet in the sanctuary between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. With lights turned down low, we have a chance to reflect on the Lord Jesus and pray for salvation, freedom from sins, whatever is on our hearts.

In the peace of the evening, we can then go forward to the altar and take part in a personal communion lead by Pastor Toby and the deacons.

Take time to come end the old year with prayer and begin the New Year with a clean heart.



FBC Movie Night



Friday night, December 6 at 7:00, FBC will be hosting the movie ***Strong of Heart*** (*Christmas for a Dollar*).

This is the story of a young lad who had dreams of riding a horse just like Hopalong Cassidy - even though he had polio. America is in the midst of the Great Depression and the Kamp family is overwhelmed by the dismal economy. Everything begins to change when they scrape together a dollar in coins to use for a family gift exchange.

Bring the family and enjoy the evening! Movie, popcorn, snacks and drinks are free!

Hand Bell Choir



During the season of Christmas, we hear the beautiful chimes of bells ringing out the Good News of Jesus' birth.

Once again, Ann Johnson will be directing the FBC Bell Choir in a performance with the bells.

Practices will be December 11, 15, and 18 at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. The performance will be on Sunday morning December 22.

Come out and enjoy the beautiful sounds of the season!

Thanksgiving Dinner Highlights!



Thanks to the Social Committee for all their hard work!!



Enjoying the friendship and food!!





One of the most beautiful services we have at First Baptist is our annual Christmas Eve Cantata and Candlelight Service.

*This year, the FBC Choir under the direction of Abbi Woods will be presenting the cantata, **One Noel**. The performance will begin promptly at 7:00.*

Following the cantata, we will prayerfully observe the final Advent Candle service and share the Christ Light with each other.

Bring your family and friends, neighbors and strangers to share in this wonderful celebration of Jesus' birth.

What better way to celebrate Christmas than to remember the Child in the manger so many years ago!



Looking Ahead to 2020

CommUnity Kitchen

We are working on the 2020 CommUnity Kitchen schedule. If you are able to help - even for one Saturday a year - please contact the office.

There are openings each month and cooks and helpers are needed. Families, friends, groups - all can bring a smile to someone's face.

Please consider reaching out to our community in this way.

Your help with this ministry is greatly appreciated.



Remembering FBC15

About 15 months ago, we began a new step with FBC15. This was 15 ways we could work on our ministry at First Baptist to grow in the Lord and reach out to others.

As the 2020 dawns, let's rethink our commitment to FBC15 - ways we can help our church grow.

Choir - Youth - Sunday School - Visitation - Outreach - Card Ministry - Greeting - Tithing - Church Garden Care - Wednesday Bible Study - Sunday Night Worship - Young Adult Ministry - Weekday Bible Study - Pray for Pastor - Youth

Let's not make a 2020 resolution but a commitment to our Lord, our church and our family. **FBC15**

Calendar 2020

The Church calendar for 2020 is being finalized this month. If you or your committee have any meetings or special activities planned, please let Susan know by December 15 so she can get it on the new calendar.

All officers and committees will receive the 2020 church calendar. If you are not an officer or on a committee and would like one, please contact the office.

2020

Children's Church & Nursery



With the New Year comes a new quarter for the Children's Church and Nursery.

If you are willing to help even one Sunday per quarter with either of these ministries, please contact Sandy Confer or Talia Martinez.

Growing the hearts of our children, will grow the hearts of our church.

THE WILL

What hinders men from seeing and hearing God is their own hearing, seeing, and willing; by their own wills they separate themselves from the will of God. They see and hear within their own desires which seems to obstruct them from seeing and hearing God. We as a whole, need to take time to smell the flowers. We need to be still and enter into a divine union with God. To give up the Will and become one with God.

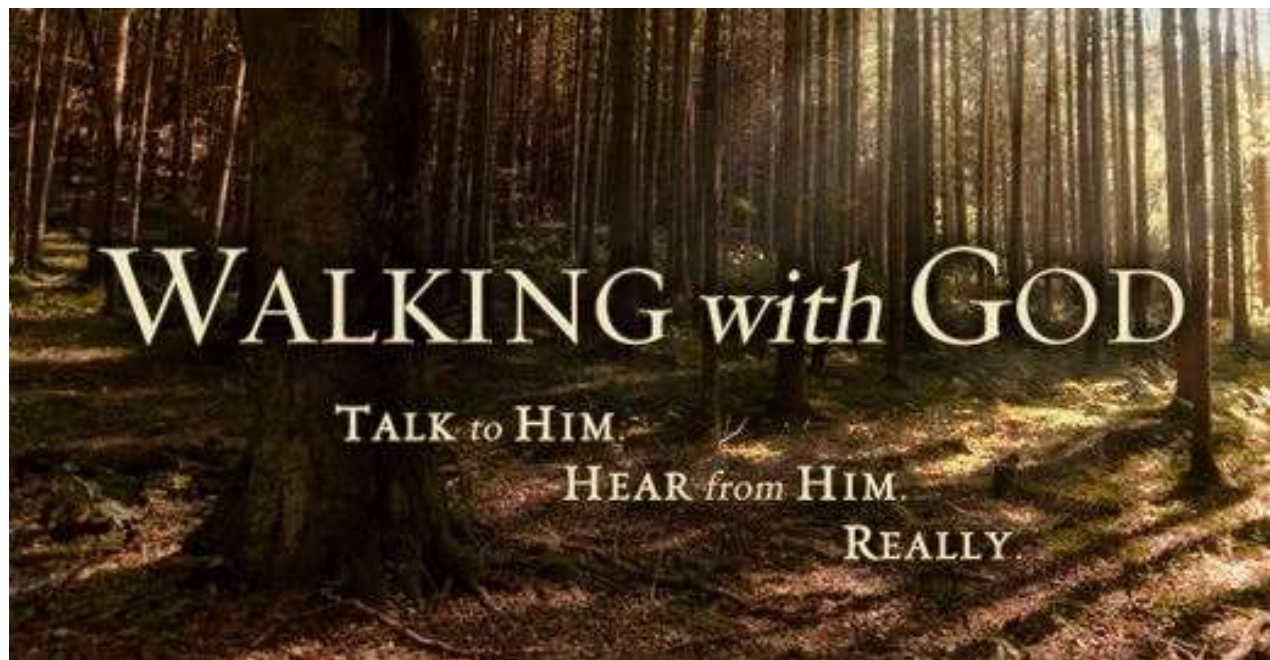
I wonder why is it people are slow to yield themselves to the control and guidance of the Spirit of God? Why is there not a divine passion in our hearts to such a blessed control? We just seem to walk according to our own light.

In Free Will, God has allowed us a way to make the proper choices in life and see if we would choose Him. He loved us so much but didn't want us to be forced to seek Him. I remember after I was Baptized, I use to ask for specific things now I ask for God's presence. What kind of good is that which only makes you worse? Instead of asking for material things, I seem to ask for spiritual things. Ask for God and then life and the things needed for life will be added unto you.

God is tired of having long distance relationships with His people. He really wants intimate encounters with you and me. He just wants us to look at Him. He is waiting to receive our most intimate worship and adoration. He has set before you an open door. You can't back your way into the door of eternity; you have to walk into it.

Say yes to God and let God take your being, inhabit your being, and let Him live His life in you, and then He will manifest His life through you. I know if you forget about yourself and seek Him, you will find both yourself and Him. You will have only a Will for Him.

Burt Lyons





Adults Progressive Dinner!

It's that time of year again! When the adults of First Baptist Church gather to have a great time! Strange things may happen - like missing Christmas decorations; stealing ornaments; laughter and a lot of goodies devoured.

This year's activities will begin at the home of Kathy and Jim Frazier. There we will whet our appetites with a variety of h'ordeuvres.

Next we will travel to Rhonda Ritchie's home. Our main course will be served there - Christmas lasagna and hot rolls. Yum! Be careful, you may be laughing too much to finish your meal!

The last home on our travels will be to Debby and Doug Bashaw's. You'll step into a wonderland of unique decorations and lights! Debby displays the new and old and it's takes a while to see everything she decorates each year.

Here is where the true personalities come out as we begin the ornament exchange. Watch yourself! Someone just might grab that special ornament you have your eyes on!

Such fun and food! Fellowship and love! Sign up today for the Adult Progressive Dinner on December 7 at 6:00.

American Baptists Remember the Hopevale Martyrs

In December, 1941, less than 12 hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan attacked the Philippine Islands. Very soon after, troops from the Japanese Imperial Army landed in the Philippines.

A number of American Baptist missionaries had continued their ministry, despite warnings through the summer and fall of the likelihood of war.

They were joined by missionaries to Japan who had left that country, as instructed by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society.

A group made up primarily of educators and health-care workers on the island of Panay fled into the mountains of Tapaz, in the province of Capiz, in April, 1942. There, they established a refuge that they called

"Hopevale," building several thatched structures for housing, and creating an outdoor chapel.

(There is a replica of the "Cathedral in the Glen" at Green Lake Conference Center.) Local pastors and church members provided the missionaries with food and other supplies.



International Ministries' collections include two copies of a memory book kept by the martyrs during their time at Hopevale. It includes diary entries, hymns, a map of their compound, recipes, and drawings, and documents their attempt to live as normally as possible while in hiding.

Hopevale memory book. International Ministries collection. Country Files, Box 101, ABHS, Atlanta, GA.



Drawing of the Cathedral in the Glen. International Ministries collection. Country Files, Box 101, ABHS, Atlanta, GA.



A memorial was dedicated in 1993 at Central Philippine University, upon the 50th anniversary of their deaths. Photo from Winifred Stanford Papers, MP-122, ABHS, Atlanta, Georgia.



Missionaries martyred at Hopevale, at right from top to bottom: Jamie Clare Adams, Dorothy Antonette Dowell, Signa Amelia Erickson, Frederick W. Meyer, Ruth Meyer, Francis Rose, Gertrude Rose, bottom row, from left: James Howard Covell, Chama Covell (missionaries to Japan), Louise and Erle Rounds with son, Erle Douglas.



After twenty months their hiding place was disclosed. The residents of Hopevale were beheaded by Japanese military on December 20, 1943.

This cross marks the site where the remains of the Hopevale martyrs were buried. The inscription reads, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2:10" Photo from International Ministries collection. Country Files, Box 99 ABHS, Atlanta, GA.

Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer 2019



**Bible Book of the
Month
December 2019
Luke**



announcements

December Meetings

12/2

Trustees—6:00

Deacons—7:00

12/9

BOCE—6:30

December Birthdays



Megan Watkins 12/2

Ben Mize 12/4

Melissa Bennett 12/7

Tom Stephenson 12/8

Carolyn Mellinger 12/10

Mark Gerstell 12/14

Brent Confer 12/16

Jo Hendricks 12/22

Jesus 12/25

Linda Conley 12/29

**Is your birthday name
missing?
Tell Susan**



December 11 @ 6:30

Movie Night at FBC

December 5

@ 7:00

Merry Christmas



Progressive Dinner!

December 7 @ 6:00



*Santa's Shop
December 4
6:30*

Youth Plays

"Too-oo-oo Busy!"

December 15 @ 6:30

**Captivate Youth
Christmas Program**

December 22 @ 6:30

*New Year's Eve
Silent Communion Service
6:00-7:00 pm*

*Christmas Eve
Cantata
and
Candle Light Service
7:00 pm*

Have you checked out the prayer calendar today?

CHURCH PRAYER CALENDAR

Prayer for our fellow members is an important part of our relationship with the Lord and helps us to grow closer as a church family. Each day during this month there is a different individual or family that you are asked to include in your prayers.



December 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Kevin & Abbi Woods	2 Taylor Woods	3 Geraldine Wright	4 Brandon & Ashlee Wyant, Connor, Beckett	5 Anne Adkins	6 Sharon Adkins	7 Tanya Asleson
8 Alan & Gusta Arrington	9 Micah Arrington	10 Anna Bailes	11 Gary & Pam Balser	12 Doug & Debby Bashaw	13 Josh Bashaw, Sara, Luke	14 Aaron & Melissa Bennett, Beau, Cass
15 Blake Bennett	16 Gloria Blackhurst	17 Peggy Boothe, Kolton, Izzy	18 Carolyn Brown	19 Jason Brown	20 Justin Brown	21 Mary Caldwell, Carl, Josie
22 Tom & Patti Calvert	23 Shaun Cole	24 Brent & Sandy Confer	25 Jamison Cooper, Dalilah	26 Linda Conley	27 Dave & Carol Crow	28 Bryan & Andrea Crow, Benjamin
29 Brandon & Anna Davis, Liam	30 Tara Davis	31 Marie DeLong				



And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.
I saiah 40:5