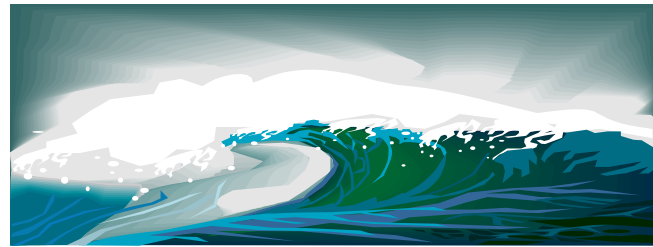




The *January 2021*
Anchor

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



Whether it is eating cabbage on New Year's Day or praying the old year out, there are varying means by which we can celebrate the holiday. I always find it interesting how excited we get about the coming of the New Year. Traditionally, there are usually around a 200,000 or so people who gather at Times Square to watch the ball drop at midnight. This may be the first year that event is virtual. For our family, we usually have finger foods, eat cabbage, play some cards or board games, and watch the ball drop on television, and then head off to bed to sleep.

This year, the church sanctuary was open on New Year's Eve as we have done in the past for two hours to allow those in the church time to stow away from the world for a couple of hours in prayer. No doubt the prayers offered to the Lord were probably similar to ones offered in the past, with the additions of the plea for health for our friends and family and for an end to the pandemic that has isolated and separated so many. I know that was part of the Wagoner family prayer heading for 2021 – for our family and for our church family. I always seek wisdom in leading the church which I feel is a great responsibility.

The New Year often brings a time of reflection for all of us. I want to first thank all of you who had a part in ensuring our Christmas celebrations were amazing. I would like to say a special thank you to all of the families in our church who took part in Advent and the lighting of the candle ceremonies. Even when the service was virtual, you were here to help. I also would like to thank those of you who sponsored gifts for families this year as part of our involvement in the "Adopt a Family" program. This year, three families were helped. Special thanks goes out to Talia Martinez and her Advent Countdown Videos for the kids, as well as to Susan West who spearheaded, wrote, and produced our Christmas Eve program. These efforts were magnificent. Our luminaria the church sponsored were beautiful even while we spent a couple of hours battling heavy winds. As your pastor, I can never thank you enough for all that you did. The decorations by the Jon Moore family were stunning as always and we've received tons of feedback on our broadcasts for how beautiful the church was during Christmas. In closing, I want to thank the Deacons, Jo Hendricks, Monique Nunley (who etched the pie and made the ornaments), and the young adult group and the many volunteers who helped deliver over 100 pies and ornaments to our church families as a special Christmas gift from the church. A lot of folks were surprised by the generosity and thoughtfulness of the church. It was a small token of love to tell people we have missed being with them in person at the sanctuary.

To be honest, I have been so proud of our church family and church leadership over the past nine months. Living and working during a worldwide pandemic and being in uncharted waters caused a lot of uneasiness and frustration, aggravation, and even some dissention in all of us.

Yes, mask frustration was the gasoline on the fire, but isolation and separation fueled more concerns as families worried about their loved one's health and how to best keep them safe. These emotions have made church leadership tough, especially when we all have different opinions, and knowing that so many families in our church have lost loved ones to COVID-19. I can tell you that the deacons supporting the streaming effort at the church has been the single biggest accomplishment last year. Funds were quickly pulled together to purchase basic equipment needed for live streaming of the service which allowed the church to not miss one service in 2020 as a result of COVID-19. Having our church located in the city of Ravenswood where Internet was readily available and accessible, afforded the church the ability to use both Facebook Live and Zoom audio where many other churches did not have that outreach capability. We provided both indoor and outdoor services to try and accommodate the needs and wishes of everyone. Regular calls with local health authorities and frequent monitoring of public health guidance has become commonplace for the church. We hope to improve our streaming in 2021 and even upgrade our Internet service and WIFI at the church which should be noticeable.

No doubt, we can all look back and complain about how tough things were on us emotionally, or we can simply look back and say "thank you, God, for allowing us to have been able to do what we did." Unlike several Jackson County churches who experienced outbreaks within their church due to no mask requirements, FBC has so far been able to avoid those outbreaks. We have been blessed beyond measure to have not missed one service thanks to streaming, which served as an example to other churches in the association as far as implementing guidance and still yet having church. FBC has demonstrated that you can still honor God in the midst of a pandemic. I want to emphasize that even during the pandemic, we had a soul saved which shows the Holy Spirit is still working. This person is scheduled to be baptized the first Sunday in January. This is a fantastic way start 2021!

To that end, church has been different over the last nine months for all of us. But the God we serve changes not. Even in the darkest days, He shines bright. Let us look optimistically toward 2021 with hope and belief that there are better days ahead. Let us all keep our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith. FBC is a strong church and getting through this pandemic together will only make us stronger. Let us not for look for differences in opinions on issues of public health and safety, but rather reach for unity that is found in Christ. Pray for your church leaders as they head into the New Year. Pray for their wisdom and guidance to lead the church as God would want them to do.

Friends, we are all *more than conquerors* because of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. We can really...*do all things through Christ who gives us strength* and wisdom and dare I say the courage to do so. May you have a wonderful, healthy, and Happy New Year. I am looking for great things from First Baptist Church this year, and as I mentioned in a recent sermon, we need to be ready to go full steam ahead, when this pandemic is over. May the Lord richly bless you with good health and happiness in 2021. I love our church family.

Love and Prayers,

Pastor Toby

Baptism Coming



We will be having a baptism Sunday soon.

If you have been saved and would like to follow Jesus in the Ordinance of Baptism, please contact Pastor Toby.

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ. Galatians 3:27

January CIRCLE

The next CIRCLE meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, January 21 at 7:00.

Each lady is asked to bring a dish to share with everyone.

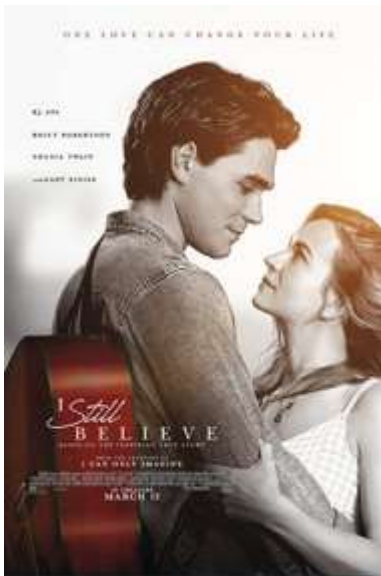
Bring your ideas! We have a whole year to plan for; so be prepared to laugh, eat and plan.



Movie Night

I Still Believe

We will be having Movie Night on January 15 at 7:00 (pending approval from the map). Starring KJ Apa, Britt Robertson, Shania Twain and Gary Sinise.



I Still Believe is a movie based on the true-life story of Christian music star Jeremy Camp and his journey of love and loss that looks to prove there is always hope.

This family friendly movie is touching and will leave you with a hope of tomorrow.

Bring your family and enjoy free popcorn, snacks and drinks as we watch this movie together.

FBC - This and That During the Season



Celebrating Jesus

Trying times make for creative times. FBC members worked hard to stay in touch and let everyone feel the love of the Lord during this Christmas season.

Talia Martinez made **Advent boxes** and delivered or mailed them to our kiddos to use. Some daily things they did were make hot chocolate, use cookie cutters, send Christmas cards, and more. She made daily videos on Facebook to read to them and to teach them about the birth of Jesus.

The Deacons with the help of Jo Hendricks and her 18-35 class delivered **special ornaments and pies** to all our people. This was a special treat and everyone enjoyed being a part of First Baptist again.

About 20 people were involved in the making of *The Promised Light* program for Christmas Eve. Pastor Toby ended the program with a special message. This was posted on Facebook and Youtube for all to view.

Many thanks to Jane and Jon Moore, Andrea Crow and Connor and Beckett for the beautifully decorated sanctuary. It was open for a time of **silent prayer** on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve for any who wished to stop by.

Jane Moore, Andrea Crow and Talia Martinez organized the kids for their **Christmas Plays**. They had 2 small plays - one for the littlest kids and one for the older ones. All the kids did a great job! Thanks also to all the parents for their help getting the videos to the church.

Even with inclement weather, we were

able to light the **luminaries** on December 25. Many thanks to Dena Williams and Susan West for their help getting the bags ready and to Gary Balser, John, Aaron and Pastor Toby for lighting them. Talia was on hand to walk around and video the lights for those who were unable to make it out on a wintery night. Because of the blustery winds, the guys hung around to relight the luminaries and try to keep them from catching on fire. Thank you for your efforts to lighten our hearts.

Messages continued to come from the pulpit as Pastor Toby and the worship team (Abbi Woods, Ann Johnson, Kevin Woods and Jon Moore) brought **weekly messages and songs of praise**.

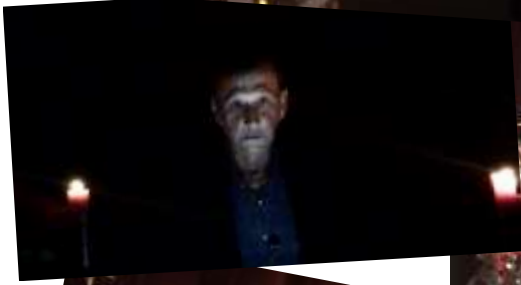
Thanks to the families - Lyons, Moore, Dzierzanski, and Pursley - who came each Sunday to light the **Advent Candles**. Simeon (Richard Massey) lit the Christ Candle during our Christmas Eve video.

The **Wednesday Bible studies** during December focused on the birth of Christ and the history, prophecies, and wonder of it all.

We look forward to the time we can come together to worship and celebrate our Lord. But even in hard times, we can join our hearts and continue to serve, to worship and to love as Jesus would want us to do.

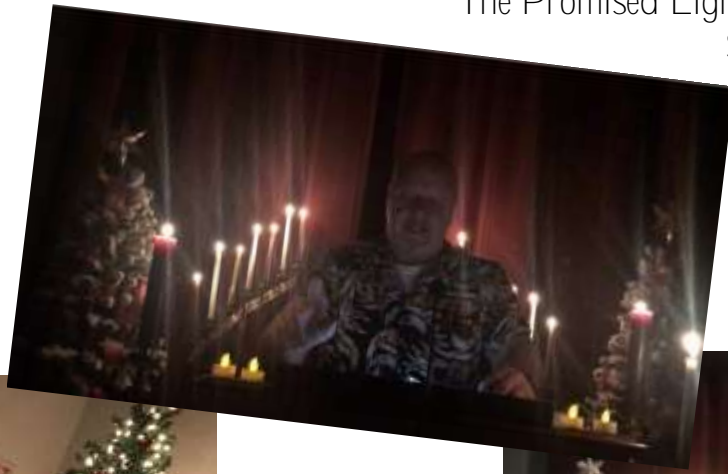
Let us lift up our hearts in the New Year and continue to do good work for the Lord. May your New Year be filled with lots of love for the Jesus!

The Promised Light
Starring:

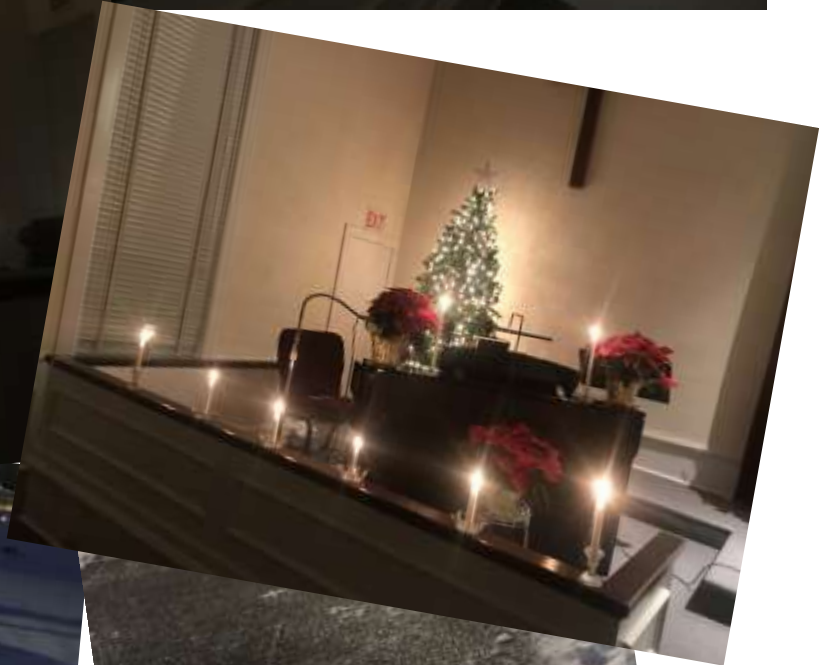


The Promised Light
Starring:

Thanks to all those who gave time to help with the Christmas Eve program: The Promised Light



Beautifully Decorated!



TIMBER!!!!

Some of us watched as the pecan tree in front of the parsonage yard was felled. Repairs on the sidewalk and removal of the stump will resume in the spring.



Children's Play!

SWEET!



BECKET WYANT



LIVIA FRAZIER



CONNOR WYANT



MCKENZIE TAYLOR



BEAU BENNETT



JAKOBY SCOTT



IZZY BOOTHE



BENJAMIN CROW



GREAT!!!



LANDON KING



LINCOLN RITCHIE

SUPER



MASON KERNS



KOLTON BOOTHE



HANNAH WAGGONER



CASS BENNETT



JAZALYN MORGAN



EMRIE JOHNSON

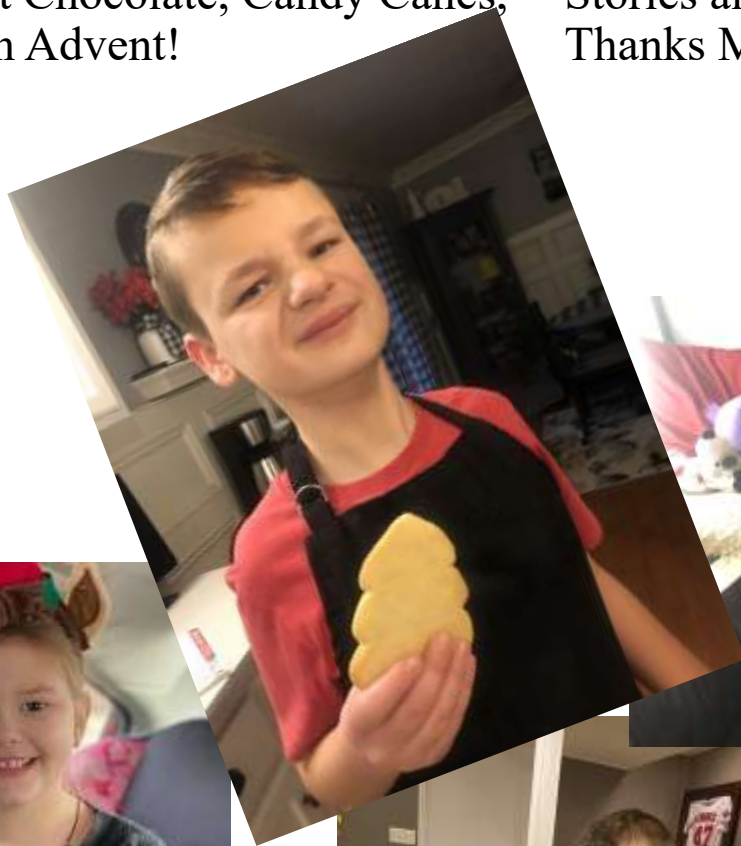


ALLIE GRAHAM

Advent for the Kids

Cookies, Hot Chocolate, Candy Canes,
learn through Advent!

Stories and more! What fun to
Thanks Miss Talia!



Congrats Nathanael!



On December 12, Nathanael earned his Associate Degree of Applied Science in Advanced Manufacturing Technology from WVU-P. He is continuing to work toward his bachelors degree.

Great Job Nathanael!

Annual Reports Due

All offices and departments should submit their annual reports to the office by January 6.

This includes Pastor, Youth Director, Deacons, Trustees, Women's Ministry, Men's Fellowship, Financial Treasurer and Secretary, Board of Christian Education, Church Clerk, CommUnity Kitchen, and Nominating Committee.

Our Fourth Quarter—Annual Business meeting will be on January 13 at 6:30.

CommUnity Kitchen

*We need workers for
CommUnity Kitchen.*

At this time, we continue to supply bag lunches to 15-20 people each Saturday.

If you or your group are willing to help with this ministry, please contact Susan West in the office or sign up on the side office door.



Background Checks

We are required by our insurance coverage to provide current criminal background checks for individuals who work with our youth (anyone under 18).

In order to comply with this, the Board of Christian Education is asking anyone who works with or anticipates working with our children - nursery, Children's Church, VBS, God's Cadets, God's Warriors, Junior or Senior High Youth, Sunday School Teacher, Camps, etc - to furnish his/her full name and date of birth to Susan in the office. Your information will be kept confidential, used for this search **only** and then destroyed.

We will be sending a form by mail to those who have worked with the children over the past 2 years and ask that you complete the form and return in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

Thank you.

Focus on Sunday School:



Happy New Year!

Our new year begins on January 1 but in the Old Testament, the Jewish New Year was actually 163 days after the first day of Passover (in the spring) close to the autumnal equinox. So it was in September. This is called Rosh Hashanah.

How did they celebrate? God's people would begin the month before Rosh Hashanah to examine themselves and pray for repentance of their sins. Each morning the shofar (a special horn) was blown to remind people to focus on the coming judgement.

The Israelites' custom was to celebrate for two days with feasting or a "seder". At our New Year's dinner, we may have cabbage or some other special food. But the Jewish custom was to have gourds, leeks, spinach, beets and dates. Each food was a symbol for them from the Talmud, a text of their laws and customs.

We can celebrate our New Year with some of the same customs. We should always look inside ourselves and see what we can change for the good.

Let's all ask God to help us with this new year to become the kind of person He would want us to be.

January Birthdays



Ryley Thompson 1/6
Blake Bennett 1/7
Jennifer Wagoner 1/14
Deb Lyons 1/14
Belinda Rader 1/16
Pam Balsler 1/17
Lisa Hoke 1/19
Jazalyn Morgan 1/21
Jacob Graham 1/23
Destiny Thomas 1/24

Is your birthday name missing? Tell Susan

Bible Book of the Month January 2021

Matthew



January Calendar

January 1 - New Year's Day - Office will be closed.
January 4 - Trustee Meeting at 6:00
January 6 - Annual Reports are due to the office
January 7 - Deaconess Meeting at 6:30
January 11 - BOCE meeting at 6:30
January 12 - Men's Fellowship at 6:30
January 13 - Annual Business meeting (no Bible Study) at 6:30
January 15 - Movie Night (if not orange or red)
January 17 - Installation of New Officers
January 19 - Financial Committee Meeting at 6:00
January 21 - CIRCLE at 7:00 at church Fellowship Hall

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.



January 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Ralph & Jennifer Taylor, Kelly, Logan, McKenzie	2 Destiny Thomas
3 Stephen & Leanne Thompson, Ryley	4 Randy & Carolyn Torris	5 Jared Torris	6 Kindsey Torris	7 Jody Tolbert	8 Dale & Anna Vanderlaan	9 Dorothy Varney
10 Quinter Vought	11 Toby & Jen Wagoner, John, Aaron, Hannah	12 Pauline Walker	13 Janyce Watkins	14 Megan Watkins	15 Susan West, Grace Shirley	16 Danny & Kim Westmoreland
17 Dan & Amy Williams, Cody Kenley	18 Nick Williams	19 Dave & Dena Williams	20 Jordan Williams	21 Mike & Cara Williams, Marcus, Deshone	22 Kerry Wines	23 Jennie Wise
24 Janet Wood	25 Kevin & Abbi Woods	26 Taylor Woods	27 Geraldine Wright	28 Brandon & Ashlee Wyant, Connor, Beckett	29 Sharon Adkins	30 Alan & Gusta Arrington
31 Micah & Polly Arrington						

Happy New Year!

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.”