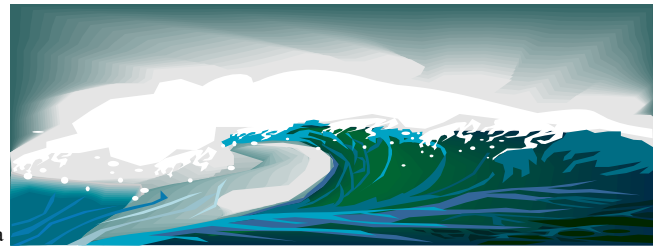




The *December 2023*
Anchor

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



The season of Advent is upon us. We are in the midst of anticipation of the Savior's birth. The prophet Isaiah wrote of a "*Wonderful Counselor*" coming to the world some 800 years before Jesus' birth. He wrote in Isaiah 9:6-7 "*For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this*" (NIV). As counselor, He hears us, He cares for us, and leads us in the paths in which we should go. He is our friend and confidant. We are so blessed that this Wonderful Counselor is accessible to all who calls upon His name.

This message of hope in that day given by Isaiah, meant that the Messiah would fulfill God's covenant with man about the coming of a Kingdom that would never end. We know that the Messiah he spoke of was Jesus. And when God gave the world Jesus, His only Son, the world had a way to receiving eternal life through the forgiveness of sins. This story begins with His birth and continues through His death, burial and resurrection. During this season of Advent, we should begin remembering God's love for mankind that He gave us a way out of the grips of sin. Each week, we focus on a different part of the Christmas story. It is God who gave us hope in a time, where there looked to be no hope. Salvation seemed to be exclusive to the Jews only. But, when God gave us Jesus, salvation became accessible for all who would call upon His name. The birth of Jesus is the promise fulfilled to mankind, that as a gift to all, we no longer needed to fear perishing, but could rejoice knowing that we have access to eternal life by faith. Jesus came to seek and save the lost, and was careful not to condemn the world (John 3:16-17). What a beautiful picture of God's love for all. Jesus who knew no sin, would take the world's sin upon Himself on the cross, and die in our place as a sacrifice for our sins. All of that started with His precious birth.

This season at First Baptist, there are numerous activities planned to celebrate this wonderful time of the year. There is a movie night on Friday, December 1 with the movie *Jingle Jangle*, followed by the Progressive Dinner and Ornament Exchange on Saturday December 2 beginning at 5. The children's Christmas program during the Sunday morning worship service will be on December 17. The Jr./Sr. High Youth will have their Christmas production on Wednesday, December 20 at 6:30. The church will have our worship service on Christmas Eve at 10:45 and include a performance by the bell choir, and then that same night have the annual Cantata at 7:00. Before and after the Cantata, you can enjoy the luminaria in memory of loved ones that will be display surrounding the outside of the church. You can see a full list of activities this season on the next to the last page in this newsletter.

Let us take this time of the year to focus our attention on the real reason for the season. That reason is the birth of our Savior Jesus – that Wonderful Counselor from heaven. Remember, this is a great time to share the love of Christ with someone and invite them to church. This is the time of year when many people are actually willing to give church a try. So, let's be diligent and not miss extending that opportunity to attend church this season with someone you know. May you be happy and healthy as this year comes to a close. Merry Christmas from our family to yours!

In His Service, *Pastor Toby*





The Youth have met regularly throughout the month of November. We have begun learning about the birth of Jesus using the books of Matthew, Mark and tying them in with scriptures in Isaiah. We are also working on handbells. Our presentation will be Wednesday, December 20 at 6:30 in the sanctuary. Refreshments will follow in the Fellowship Hall. I hope everyone will come.

We really enjoyed our surprise Thanksgiving meal that Hope Center supplied from Bob Evans on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. We had 25 kids show up for the evening.

Our bonfire was big and hot! Thanks Torren for helping out. We had 55 people all together with 20 from my youth group. The hayride was a real treat too.

Our last End Zone was November 3. Our own Nat King and Johnathan Williams were part of the Ravenswood team. We thank the Lord that they had a safe year with no injuries. Our numbers were lower than years past but the attendance at the games was lower too. Those kids that came had a great time! Thanks to all who helped with the End Zone.

We were saddened by the passing of our Donut Man - Wayne Fridley. He was a familiar face to the kids and they knew how much he supported them. Our prayers go out to his family and friends.

Many thanks to everyone for your prayers and support for the youth. Isaiah 54:13 says, "***All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great will be the peace of your children.***" It's not an easy world out there. Our youth need to know the peace of God.

Blessings,

Ann

Merry Christmas!

Youth Odds and Ends



Bonfire!!!



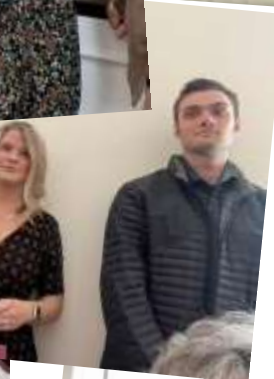


Great Job Talia Martinez and Young Adults on the Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes!!



- FBC collected 180 boxes!!
- We were the new drop off location and collected 697 boxes!!
- The Jackson/Roane Area Team had 1,936 boxes!!!
- The Huntington Area Team had 18,183 boxes!!!
- The West Virginia total was 143,179!!!!!!

**WAY TO GO EVERYONE!!
Thanks for a successful collection.**



Yum Yum Yum!!



Thanksgiving 2023



A for Missions



Thank you for your service!



Veterans Day



What is a soldier?

Rebecca Park gave an inspiring monologue on Col. Ruby Bradley, the most decorated woman in American military history when she retired in 1963.

Col. Bradley hailed from Spencer, WV and was a nurse in WWII in the Pacific arena where she was captured by the Japanese. She was named Chief Nurse for the 8th Army in 1951.



Baptist Women's World Day of Prayers



The women of FBC and Calvary Baptist joined forces in prayer November 6 as we gathered for the *Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer*.

All around the globe, women came together to send up prayers to strengthen, protect, and bless all women in need.

Our guest speaker was Celina Henry, who is a survivor of domestic abuse. She told her story of learning to reach out, of healing, and using her strengths to help others in situations like hers.

Following the prayers and presentation, FBC served soups, sandwiches and desserts to all the ladies there.

This and That at FBC

Welcome Bailey Matthew Mize



Bailey was born November 7 at 5:41 pm to Macie and Jesse Mize.

He is welcomed by grandparents Ben and Christie Mize as well as Aunt Cari and Uncle Grant Chapman and Uncle Josh Mize.

Congratulations Mize Family!

Movie Night!



The whole family is invited to a fun evening of pizza, popcorn, snacks and drinks as we watch Jingle, Jangle a Christmas Journey.

Forgiveness, Reconciliation, and Love are the themes for this fun movie.

Come out Friday, December 1 at 7:00. ALL FREE!!



How can you make the Bible come to life?

Use modeling clay!

God's Cadets learned about seraphims in Isaiah 6:1-8.

So they modeled the 6 wing seraphim. Great Job!!!



What are they into now!!!



Not only did the Young Adults do a great job with the shoeboxes, they have been busy elsewhere too. They passed out treats and tracts to the kiddos for Halloween. Free hot chocolate was a hit on this cold night! It was a treat for our group to reach out to 400+ kids. YA enjoy small group discussions and various activities. Indoor Pool volleyball one Friday each month is popular with some at FBC.



Congratulations



Mr. & Mrs. Gary Samples

On Friday November 24, Rhonda Ritchie and Gary Samples were united in marriage in a family ceremony at First Baptist Church.

May the Lord bless this union with joy and many years of happiness.

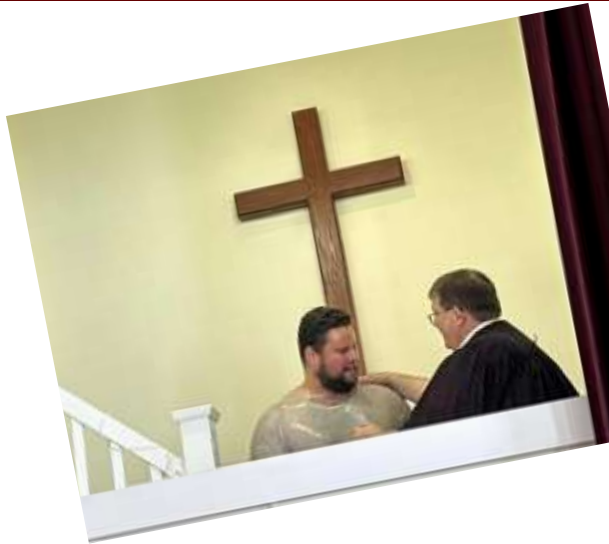
Baptisms at FBC



Emrie Johnson



Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Matthew 28:19



Zack Graham



Phillip Walker



The Handbell Choir under the direction of Ann Johnson will be performed on December 24.

Practices will be Wednesday, December 13 at 5:30, Wednesday December 17 at 5:30 and Sunday December 24 at 10:15.

Be prepared for a beautiful sound!



Give the gift of life!

The Red Cross will be having a blood drive on Monday, December 4 from noon to 5:00. You can sign up online or contact Susan to register.



If you can help with registration, please contact Susan.

Enjoy the Cantata on Christmas Eve, then gaze in wonder at the lights around the church yard as we, once again, display the memorial luminaries to the glory of the Lord.

If you are able to help set the lights up on Christmas Eve about 5:00, please let Susan or Pastor Toby know. Thank you.



(If you haven't ordered a luminary for a loved one yet, see Susan.)



Each year for decades we have been enjoying a traditional Christmas activity at FBC. The ladies of CIRCLE organize the annual *Progressive Dinner*. This year we will kick off the season on December 2 at 5:00.

The group will begin at Kathy and Jim Frazier's home at 2655 Pleasant View Ridge Road, Millwood. There, we will chow down on some delicious appetizers - tasty enough to be a whole meal! We can ooh and aah over the beautiful decorations and have a great time - laughing, eating and just enjoy being with each other.

After the appetizers, it will be time to travel to the other side of our area to Sherman to Deb and Doug Bashaw's home at 196 Watkins Lane. The Bashaw's have been a great place to end our travels each year. It will take a lot of time to see all the decorations they have put up. Then after filling up with out of this world desserts, the fun begins again. This time for the annual Ornament Exchange. See the battle begin as each ornament is up for grabs as soon as the package is opened. The laughter will fill the rafters!

All adults, men, women, wives, husbands, are invited. Bring you favorite beverage and join in the fun.



Lights Aglow For Christmas!



Carols, hot chocolate, reindeer, Lights! Lights! Lights! as we traveled to see the lighting of the park in Gallipolis. Everyone had a fun, cold evening as we watched the explosion of fireworks to top off the evening.



Christmas Season Activities

- Dec. 1 Movie Night – Jingle Jangle, *A Christmas Journey*
- Dec. 2 Progressive Dinner @ 5 pm (Frazier's then Bashaw's)
- Dec. 3 First Advent
- Dec. 10 Second Advent
- Dec. 13 Bell Choir Practice at 5:30 pm
- Dec. 17 Third Advent; Children's Program Sunday morning; Bell Choir Practice at 5:30 pm
- Dec. 20 Youth Christmas Program at 6:30 pm
- Dec. 24 Fourth Advent; Bell Choir Practice at 10:15; Bell Choir performance
- Dec. 24 Fifth Advent: Luminaries, Cantata and Candlelight Service 7 pm
- Dec. 25 Happy Birthday Jesus!

We have lots of fun things to do. Everyone is invited to the activities. Keep a picture of this on your phone and don't miss anything!

At the center of all our fun is Jesus!

Jesus - Our Savior Is Born

Christmas Memorials

Once again, FBC will be displaying memorials for our family and friends.

We will have poinsettias decorating the sanctuary with their beautiful bright red blooms. We have purchased 10 plants from the Ravenswood Middle School. If you would like to honor a loved one, the cost is \$10 each. They can be taken home after the Cantata on Christmas Eve.

We have memory bulbs that have been purchased with your loved ones name on it to decoration our memory tree.

The luminaries will be on display around the church sidewalks on Christmas Eve. Each bag will show your loved ones name lit by the light of the luminary. The cost of each is \$2.00.

Contact the office for questions.



Focus on Sunday School:



For Me?

Can you imagine? A shepherd just sitting outside in the cold watching his precious sheep and their lambs lowing in the night, ready to sleep. He's watching to make sure nothing will hurt them. Are there wolves? Are any of them missing? He counts again— just to make sure. Yes, they are safe and all accounted for.

Suddenly! What's that noise! What's that light! Is he dreaming? Is that — singing? He doesn't know what's going on and he is scared! Other shepherds see and hear the same thing. So he's not dreaming. All the shepherds gather together out there on the hillside. As they tremble in fear and look at the heavens, thousands upon thousands of—what's that? Angels!!! O my Jehovah! What is happening??

But, listen! An angel is speaking. The angel is so far away yet so close. We all hear him saying, "Don't be afraid. I have great news for you." (For us? Who would want to talk to a shepherd?) "I bring you good news. A Baby is born— Christ the Lord. Lying in a manger. Go and see Him!" Then thousands of angels were singing again!

The shepherd just had to go see Him. He was there. Just a Baby. He came. For him.....For Me!

*It's amazing what you can learn in
Sunday School!
9:30 a.m.*

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
Kevin Woods 12/14
Brent Confer 12/16
Shawn Cole 12/17
Landon King 12/19
Jo Hendricks 12/22
Jesus 12/25
Bob Martin 12/27
Dorothy Varney 12/28
Sherry Walker 12/30

If your birthday is missing,

December Calendar

Dec 1 Movie Night
Dec 2 Progressive Dinner
Dec 3 First Advent
Dec 4 Blood Drive; Trustee Meeting
Dec 7 Deaconess Meeting
Dec 10 Second Advent
Dec 11 BOCE
Dec 12 Deacons Meeting
Dec 13 Handbell Practice
Dec 14 Anchor Articles Due
Dec 17 Third Advent; God's Cadets Christmas Program;
Handbell Practice
Dec 19 Financial Committee Meeting
Dec 20 Youth Christmas Program
Dec 22 Office Closed
Dec 24 Fourth Advent
Christmas Eve Cantata and Lighting of Christ Candle
Dec 25 Merry Christmas! Office Closed
Dec 27 Youth Party
Dec 31 Officer Installation; New Year's Eve Silent Prayer

* Game Day every Thursday 1:00-3:00 (not on holidays)

Bible Book of the Month

Isaiah



CommUnity Kitchen

Dec 2 Burt Lyons
Dec 9 Susan West
Dec 16 Tom Stephenson
Dec 23 No CommUnity Kitchen
Dec 30 Calvary Baptist

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 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Bryan & Andrea Donahue, Xavier, Violet, Finley	2 Danny & Sherry Dzierzanski
3 Rodney & Sheila Eskins	4 Heidi Farrell	5 Annabelle Flesher	6 Jeff & Venisa Flesher	7 Nathanael Flesher	8 Helen Frank	9 Jim & Kathy Frazier
10 Mark & Susan Gerstell	11 Mike & Angela Graham, Alli, Caralyn	12 Jacob Graham	13 Zack Graham	14 Terry Greenwood	15 Nathan & Lilly Hall	16 Mike Hall
17 Libby Hall	18 Bill & Tammy Harpold, Shane	19 Jo Hendricks	20 Kenley & Skyler Hickman	21 Crystal Hicks	22 Destinijane Hicks	23 June Hicks
24 Lisa Hoke	25 Kathy Hudson	26 Robert & Charolette Jeter	27 Christian Jeter	28 Margaret Johns	29 Bob & Helen Johnson	30 Ann Johnson
31 Torren & Shealyn Johnson, Emrie, Kacie						

