

DECEMBER 2021



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

For our Advent Season, our focus once again turns to Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Each represented by one candle in the Advent Wreath. Of course, for Christmas Eve it all culminates with the lighting of the 5th Candle, the Christ Candle. Throughout the month I am encouraging all who will hear the call to return to Hope, return to Peace, Return to Joy, Return to Love. Ultimately returning to these means returning to Jesus.

Throughout the year there are those tempted to stray from a close communion with Jesus and his people. They begin to wonder why their worries increase and why their joy is gone. The answer is simple. A good measure of hope, peace, joy, and love is found only in a close walk with Jesus. Do you remember His words? *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” (John 14:27)*

Have you lost your hope? Has your joy diminished? Is peace within in your heart and home difficult to find? Has your love for Jesus, the church and others grown cold? If so, I call you to *Return to Jesus!* He is the only one who can restore you. Make this holiday season one which you will never forget by turning to the Lord!

For those of you who do possess these four qualities in good measure- let me challenge you to share Christ with others! Tell others why you have found such wonderful hope, joy, peace, and love in an age of great challenge and unrest. It is our responsibility to share Jesus with a world that is so desperate! We are to be like the shepherds on the night Jesus was born. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. *...The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. (Luke 4:13-20)*

-Pastor Paul

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

CHURCH FAMILY: Bill Sexton, Sandy Stotesberry, B.J. Lyle, Tracie Wildman, Hulan Williams, Robert and Phyllis Dickerson, Marguerite Sexton Hart, Kristie Nicholson, Faye McCombs, Oliver and Frances Lucas, Barbara Peyton.

OTHER CONCERNS: The family of Nyal Watson, Debbie Comstock (Sister of Brenda Bullock), Gavin Blount (friends of Jim & Susan Sawyer), Christi Rogerson, Vicki Livingston, Waylon Rogers (Son of Wade Rogers), Mae Oliver, Keith Sawyer, Jonni Kephart, Don May, Sue Owens.

NURSING HOME RESIDENTS: Three Rivers- Christine McMurtrie #209, River Trace Nursing & Rehab Center, Washington- Pauline Humphreys #418; Carrolton- Tim Elks; Chowan River Nursing Home- Rae Owens.

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

2021 LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING

We begin this offering Sunday, December 5.

100% of your gifts help send and sustain IMB Missionaries. Many missionaries with North Carolina ties express appreciation for the individuals, families and churches who offer prayers on their behalf and give sacrificially. Our goal is \$1,200.00

FOOD PANTRY

We continually collect items for our local food pantry. With the holidays coming up, the food need increases greatly. Please take a moment next time you shop and pick up one extra item. The drop box is right inside the glass door leading to the fellowship hall/church office.

BENEVOLENCE

People come to the church office this time of year and need help with Christmas. Giving to the benevolence fund helps us to meet some of the many needs we see throughout the holiday season.

BLESSING BOX

The box is located in the church parking lot. Non-perishable food, paper goods and hygiene items can be placed directly in the box.

MILE OF PENNIES

Change is collected until a "Mile of Pennies" is reached and then it is sent to the Baptist Children's Homes. It takes 844.22 to reach a mile. We have just sent in our 39th mile!! Collection jars are in the sanctuary and in the church office.

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Beginning January 3, we will begin the women's winter Bible study. If you would like to join us, contact Mary Kay at 252-799-7072. We will be studying Max Lucado's newest book *You Were Made for this Moment*.

Queen Esther concealed her Jewish identity. As far as anyone knew, she was pure Persian. But then came the royal decree that would annihilate her people. She had to make some tough choices. Would she remain silent, or would she speak up? Would she blend in, or would she stand out? Esther could have refused. She could have cowered in fear. But she spoke up. She stood out. And God used her to save the nation. It's not hyperbole to say that her courage changed the course of history. Nor is it an overstatement to say that God can do the same with you. You don't need to become undone by tough times, you can become unleashed by our triumphant God. You, friend, were made for this moment.

**Thank you for giving so generously to the Baptist Children's Homes Offering. Our goal was \$1,500 and you gave \$2,640.00!!!**

### MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The men's winter Bible study will begin Monday, January 3, at 10:00 am. We will be studying the Book of Daniel. If you would like to join us, contact Jim Sawyer at 321-289-5883.

**\*\*Mission Action will meet Monday, December 6 at 12:30 pm at the Hitchin Post in Williamston.**

**\*\* Helen Peele will meet Tuesday, December 7 at 7:00 pm in the fellowship hall.**

**There will be called conference Sunday, December 5 after worship to vote on the 2022 church budget.**

**Deacons are asked to please meet at 9:30 am in the fellowship hall that morning for a brief budget meeting.**

### **YOU'RE INVITED**

*Please join us for a Celebration  
of  
CHRISTINE WARD'S  
100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
Saturday, December 11, 2021  
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm*

*First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall  
Given by her family*

*No Gifts Please*

### **THANK YOU NOTE**

To First Baptist Church:

We wanted to thank you for any act of kindness that you showed us during the time that Robert was so sick and in the hospital. We want you to know that we appreciate it so much. If it was cards, calls, visits, food, or a prayer that was sent up for us, we do thank you for all of it. Now during this time there was a group of ladies that wish to remain anonymous, but to make sure that they know just how much we did appreciate it, I have to put them in my "Thank You" card. Thank you for such a thoughtful and generous gift. Being able to focus on what's important and not whether the house is clean or not during this difficult time meant so much to me. Your tremendous gift took a lot off my already overflowing plate. Thank you for the gift of getting my house professionally cleaned. There are truly no words to express our gratitude. We do not know if this was friends, neighbors, or our wonderful church family, but just wanted to say thank you again and we love you for it. I believe that every act of kindness is a source of strength to the one that is in need.

We love you,  
Robert and Phyllis Dickerson

**Baptist Men's Breakfast will be Sunday,  
December 5 at 7:30 am.**

### **Christmas Family Night- Dessert Auction**

Wednesday, December 15- 2021  
6 PM- 7:30 PM

**We are going to have a wonderful evening as a church family!**

**6 PM Dinner**

Barbeque Chicken with all the Fixins.

\$5.00 per person

**Silent Dessert Auction**

Starts at 6 PM- Bidding Ends at 7:15

This auction usually benefits the youth group.

This year, the youth council has voted that all revenue be used for any repairs or upgrades to the Fellowship Hall or Kitchen.

**6:45 PM Christmas Devotional by  
Pastor Paul.**

**7:00 PM Christmas Caroling and an "open  
mic" for special music, short story telling  
and testimonies.**

**Important:**

**Dinner Reservation must be made by noon  
on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.** Call the church  
office to make your reservations. Please let  
the office know if you want dark or white  
meat.

**Those donating Desserts for the silent  
auction, please call Jolie Barnes (809-  
2425) or Robyn Lloyd (217-7327) to let  
them know what you are bringing. Please  
do so by noon on Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.**

All desserts are to be brought to family night  
on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Those who have the winning bid  
will take them home at the end of the evening.

**Special Music, stories, or testimonies.**

Please let Pastor Paul know at the church  
office by noon on December 13<sup>th</sup> if you want  
to share your talent or story. Please keep  
anything you would like to do or share to  
around 3-5 minutes each.

**Wear your Christmas colors!!!**

### **POWER in the BLOOD!**

**There will be a Blood Drive here on  
Monday, December 20 from 12:00 –  
4:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please  
call Paul Lilly (217-8089) if you can help.  
Please come out and donate!**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Shirley Barfield 12/4  
Rita Rhodes 12/5  
Hank Edmondson 12/5  
David Noell 12/6  
Robert Dickerson 12/8  
Christine Ward 12/8  
Dylan Pollard 12/9  
Debbie Holcomb 12/13  
Tim Griffin 12/14  
Nancy Rogers 12/16  
Lennon Wall 12/17  
Mike Holcomb 12/18  
Holley Brabble 12/18  
Pauline Humphreys 12/20  
Paul Harrington 12/21  
Becky Brown 12/24  
Barbara Peyton 12/24  
Brenda Tetterton 12/31  
Kristi Nicholson 12/31

**David Roach in Concert at  
First Baptist Church**

**Celebrate Christmas with  
an evening of  
Instrumental Music**

**December 10, 2021 7PM**

## Angel Tree

All gifts should be in  
by Wednesday,  
December 15.

## CHRISTMAS EVE

The Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Communion  
Service will be at  
**5:00 pm.**

**The church office will  
be closed December  
23, 24, 30 and 31.**

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Benjie & Nancy Rogers  
12/2  
George & Melinda Galtress  
12/10  
Jimmy & Shelley Brown  
12/17  
Harry & Mittie Ward  
12/25  
Ken & Carolyn Watlington  
12/28

## THANK YOU!!!!

A huge thank you to everyone  
who packed a backpack for the  
Appalachian Coalfield Ministry.  
We delivered 121 packs to  
Colerain Baptist Church and  
now they are headed to West  
Virginia to bless the children  
there!!

## THANK YOU NOTE

First Baptist Church Family:

It was Forty-Two years ago on November 25<sup>th</sup> that we said our marriage vows right here in this church in front of friends and family. The church family has been an important part in the raising of our three girls and now most importantly praying for the healing of Bill. I use the word healing because we truly believe that if it wasn't for all the prayers Bill would not be with us today. God heard every prayer lifted in Bill's name and for that we are thankful and blessed. Words cannot be said or written down that can adequately express our feeling of thankfulness. We would like to say thank you for all the cards that were sent, for all the meals that had been prepared and thank you for all the other acts of love and kindness shown to our family during this difficult journey. As we thank our lord for allowing us to celebrate forty-two years of marriage and thank him for a church family of believers, we ask for continued prayers for healing and strength as Bill continues to recover. Thank you again and we love all of you.

Mark 11:24

"Therefore, I tell, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

We Believe,  
Bill and Renee Sexton

## POINSETTIAS

Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor or Memory  
of: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost: \$17.00 Each**

Please return no later than Sunday, December 12.