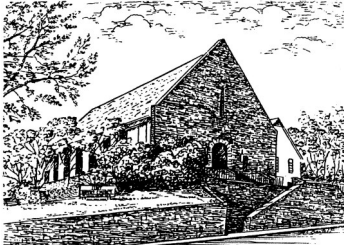


The Good News



December 2016



First Baptist Church of Tryon

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Jeffrey C. Harris, Pastor

Jim Hawkins, Interim Minister of Music

Jaime Fitzgerald, Youth Minister

The Season of Receiving

I am not a fan of sentimentalism.

And yet, when it comes to Christmas, I am rather sentimental.

I love this time of year.

I love listening to (and singing along with) “Winter Wonderland” and “The Christmas Song” (aka Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire) and “Jingle Bells.”

I love watching “It’s a Wonderful Life” and “A Christmas Story” and of course, the best Christmas movie ever: “National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation!”

I even enjoy rubbing shoulders with crowds in the mall a few days before Christmas.

(I can’t believe I just put that in writing.)

One of my favorite new Christmas traditions is sharing chips and salsa with our congregation after Christmas caroling.

While my all-time favorite tradition is eating a slice of my mother’s red velvet cake on Christmas Eve. Of course, red velvet for breakfast on Christmas morning is nice too.

As great as these traditions are they have little to do with the birth of Jesus.

Even the so-called season of giving—which started with the magi and their three gifts—ultimately misses the mark.

Many of us enjoy Christmas because our gift-giving and year-end charitable contributions allow us to believe that we are generous people. But shucks, even the stingiest, greediest Scrooge can be a little generous this time of year.

It is true that Jesus said: “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

But it is also easier to give than it is to receive.

The preacher, Will Willimon, explains: “We prefer to think of ourselves as givers—powerful, competent, capable people whose goodness motivates us to employ some of our power, competence and gifts to benefit the less fortunate. Which is a direct contradiction of the biblical account of the first Christmas. There we are portrayed not as the givers we wish we were but as the receivers we are.”

Advent and Christmas are really about receiving—receiving the love and mercy of a gracious God who “became flesh and dwelled among us” (John 1:14).

I’m not belittling our giving to those in need (to help those in need is important and holy work), or our tradition of exchanging gifts, or our overly sentimental traditions.

What I am saying is that we are receivers before we are givers.

It is a difficult lesson to learn.

As John Wesley wrote, “Nothing is more repugnant to capable, reasonable people than grace.”

Life is a gift—from our first breath till our last.

We are not self-made men and women. We do not possess the cure for what ails us. We are incapable of fixing ourselves.

I am grateful that Advent and Christmas are honest about our place in the world. Peace, *Jeff*



A NOTE FROM JIM

The Christmas Season is here and we are still basking in the warm Fall weather, enjoying the "more beautiful than usual" foliage. "Jingle Bells" and "Silent Night" seem slightly out of place right now, but regardless of the temperature, our minds are tuned to the Holy Birth and all the wonderful traditions that are a part of this blessed Season. Imagine Christmas without music: no carols on the radio; no singing or playing in the churches; and no cantatas or concerts. We celebrate Christ's birth with a myriad of traditions--not the least of which is music--that give rise to feelings of comfort, home, family and faith. Let me challenge you to relish the many musical moments that are available to you through our church this Christmas season! On December 11 the handbells and children's choir will play and sing in the morning worship, and on December 18 the Chancel Choir will present the cantata "Go Sing it on the Mountain". That afternoon we will go caroling in the community. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the church will worship singing many familiar carols. I am excited about celebrating Christmas with you this year and I am grateful for the opportunity of ministry through music!

Sincerely, Jim Hawkins

"SIMPLE CHRISTMAS"

Nov 27, Advent 1-Wake Up!: The Practice of Paying Attention

Dec 4, Advent 2-Be Patient: The Practice of Waiting

Dec 11, Advent 3-How Much is Enough? The Practice of Contentment

Dec 18, Advent 4-Christmas Cantata

Dec 24, Christmas Eve, 5pm

Dec 25, Christmas Day, 11am (Come as you are, lots of carols, kid-friendly with kids acting out the nativity.)

GIVE THE GIFT OF FOOD



Surprise someone this Christmas by giving the gift of food! You may give a food box to Thermal Belt Outreach Ministry in memory or in honor of someone. The cost of each box is \$20. Envelopes are provided for this, and may be found at the entrances to the sanctuary.

DECEMBER MISSION: KATHY'S KIDS

There are children in the Tryon area who are sometimes do not have gifts for Christmas. Kathy Ashley will be available to give you a name of a needy child at Tryon Elementary School this year. Contact her directly. If you are not able to shop for a child, you can give a donation through the church marked "Kathy's Kids" and Kathy or members of Sisterhood will do the shopping.

SISTERHOOD'S DECEMBER MEETING

Sisterhood will meet at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13 at the home of Judy Lair. Kay Greene will provide the program and each Sister is asked to bring cookies for the "Cookie Swap."

REFUGE CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Refuge Christmas party will be at the Harris' on December 11, at 5pm.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

Come one, come all! Our Annual Christmas Dinner is on Sunday, December 4, at 5pm in the Activity Building. This will be a wonderful time of fellowship, and we'll have a great meal, as our church family is full of good cooks! The Social Committee will provide prime rib, bread, and beverages, and we're asking that you bring a dish to share, such as salads, side dishes, and desserts.

CHOIR PRESENTS CHRISTMAS CANTATA, DECEMBER 18

The Chancel Choir will present Pepper Choplin's cantata "Go Sing It on the Mountain" in worship on December 18. Directed by Jim Hawkins, the cantata includes some familiar Early American folk tunes. The choir will be accompanied by Bob Buckingham on the banjo. Please join us in celebrating Christ's birth in song!



COMMUNITY CHORUS CONCERT, DECEMBER 11

Community Chorus presents “An English Christmas” at Polk County High School, at 3pm on the 11th. Tickets for the concert are \$10, and proceeds go to fund scholarships from the Rotary Club Foundation of Tryon. You may purchase tickets from any Rotarian, and they are available at the door the day of the concert.



CHRISTMAS CAROLING DEC 18

We'll go Christmas Caroling on December 18, at 3pm (we'll meet at the church). After spreading joy throughout the area, we'll head to El Sureno for our traditional holiday chips and salsa.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes will be available to you right after Christmas Day. They will be on the table in the parlor for the first few weeks of the year. Please be sure to stop by and get yours.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Come and celebrate the birth of Christ with us on December 24, at 5pm. This is our traditional service and will feature music by Donis Schweizer on violin.



CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

We're celebrating Christmas at 11am on Christmas day! This will be a 'come-as-you-are' service that is kid-friendly, includes a lot of carols, and kids acting out the Nativity. We invite you to come—even in your pajamas! There will be no Sunday School that day.

MINISTRY TEAMS

Thanks to all of you who have volunteered to serve on a ministry team. There is a place of service of everyone, and we hope that you will find your place. Teams differ from committees, in that you may stay with a team for as little or as long as you choose. There are sign-up sheets in the education hallway for each of these teams: Bereavement, Nursery, Children's Worship, Social, Greeter, Visitation, Mission, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, Helping Hands, and Safety.

HELPING HANDS MINISTRY



The Mission Team would like to announce the formation of HELPING HANDS ministry. The purpose of Helping Hands is to provide support and assistance to church members in the following areas:

Small to medium-size interior and exterior home repairs, constructing/installing safety equipment for baths/showers, building wheelchair ramps, assisting with large/heavy items, providing lawn/shrubbery maintenance, performing small electrical repairs, as well as general advice on questions relating to any of the above. Other areas of service will be considered on an as-needed basis. Those wishing to use this ministry or to participate in its support should contact the church office for scheduling a time to discuss your needs or how you can support this ministry with your time and talents.

THANKSGIVING IN THE SANCTUARY



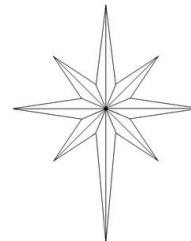
We're grateful for the worship committee, who decorated the communion table beautifully for Thanksgiving.

DECKING THE HALLS AT FIRST BAPTIST

November 27 was the First Sunday in Advent, so volunteers stayed after worship on the 20th to erect the Christmas tree. The children helped to decorate the tree with Chrismons for worship on November 27th.



Dan Fox, Phil Feagan, and Philip Edwards are shown 'wrestling' the tree.



YEAR END CONTRIBUTIONS

All year-end contributions and financials are due in the office by Thursday, December 29. Contribution statements will be mailed out by January 31.

KID'S NIGHT OUT, NOVEMBER 18

Kid's Night Out was a traditional theme with "Be Thankful". However, the portrayal of "be thankful" was shown in some not-so-traditional ways! After our pumpkin "be thankful" name tags were made, and our book explaining how pumpkins get their water, it was on to Mr. Don, our science officer, to conduct our celery experiment with food coloring. The celery was checked numerous times by the kids to show the food coloring heading up the celery, and they loved it! Next was the beloved "balloon game" with Miss Susan, complete with jokes from Miss Di—everyone must work as a team for a successful game. During group time, we studied Psalm 107:1, with everyone getting "talk time" to share what they are thankful for. I am thankful for your kids and what they teach me—it's priceless! We also wrote on a banana with a marker for something we were thankful for and had book time. Next, they made a turkey from apple and pear slices. I think it was consumed in less than a minute, YUM! Everyone received Play-Doh to make something they are thankful for, and then took their Play-Doh home. Our DVD (while eating popcorn, of course) was about a pig farm who uses wasted food to feed the pigs. We learned that while we would not want this "dirty job" that the pig farmer was very thankful for his. The kids were thankful that it was not their job!! Our next snack was making "pink pig cookies", which were readily consumed (oink oink!). We ended with Slinky time, and it's amazing how that tried and true toy can bring such smiles. Everyone took their own Slinky home. It was an amazing night with the kids being thankful for "life", "grandparents", "family", and "food", among others. The kids did not mention material things, so maybe they have grasped what life is really all about! May we as adults grasp that also. Never underestimate what our kids can teach us!

-Submitted by Carol Batts



2016 Schedule for First Baptist Church, Tryon, NC

Regularly Scheduled Weekly Activities (unless otherwise noted) include:

Sundays	Sunday School, 10am Worship, 11am Children's Choir (grades 1-5), 5pm Refuge (grades 6-12), 5pm
Wednesdays	Bible Study, 10am Handbell Rehearsal, 6pm Women's Bible Study in Rock House, 6pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7pm

Regularly Scheduled Monthly Activities (unless otherwise noted) include:

1 st Monday of each month	Mission Team, 5:30pm
1 st Tuesday of each month:	WMU, 10am
2 nd Tuesday of each month:	Sisterhood, 7pm
3 rd Monday of each month:	Brotherhood, 6:30pm
3 rd Tuesday of each month:	Deacons, 6pm

This is the current schedule for the year. Please note some things may be re-scheduled, added, or changed as needed. If changes occur, you will be notified by email, worship bulletin, newsletter, or announcement in worship. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

Thank you.



“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is pleased!” -Luke 2:14

DECEMBER MISSION EMPHASIS—Angel Tree (Thermal Belt Outreach); Kathy's Kids

Sun, Dec 4	Annual Christmas Dinner
Sun, Dec 18	Christmas Cantata in worship 11am, Caroling, 3pm
Sat, Dec 24	Christmas Eve Worship, 5pm
Sun, Dec 25	Christmas Day Worship, 11am

December Sunday Schedules

Deacons for December

*Ellis Fincher

Phil Scoggins

Pat Feagan

Elizabeth Burrell

Shelvie Foust

**denotes Lead Deacon*

Ushers for December

Mary Goodwin, Joyce Scoggins (front)

Walt Gee (hall)

Cathy Gee (side)

Acolytes for December

12/4 Jack Fox and McClain Koistinen

12/11 Luke Walker and Laney Littlefield

12/18 Ellie Baughman and Lawson Carter

12/25 Harper Harris and Simms Harris

Children's Church Workers for December

12/4 Anthony & Emily Pereira

12/11 Susan Smith

12/18 Debbie & Keith Collins

12/25 Linda & Ellis Fincher

Our Christian love and sympathy are extended to the family of Dorothy Durham, who died November 29.

December Milestones

Wedding Anniversaries

- 4 Don & Jan Ponder
- 6 Darnell & Kathy Ashley
- 17 Dan & Mona Kimble
- 22 Mike & Di Greene
- 22 Ray & Becky Hudson
- 22 Tim & Christie Morrow

Birthdays

- 1 Shirley Edwards
- 5 T.J. Fincher
- 7 Pam McFalls
- 11 Hadley Mae Pereira ('12)
- 12 Ella Sap ('12)
- 13 Linda Fincher, Mike Greene,
Beth McCallister, Andrew McKaig
- 11 Dee Huneycutt
- 12 Katie Cothran ('04))
- 13 Scott Harding, Georgie Hawkins
- 14 Brad Crawford, Becky Hudson, Jennifer
Jones, Louis Rossi Jr.
- 15 Julie Miller, Denise Britton,
Nancy Hayes
- 11 Joey Whiteside
- 22 David Graham, Ella Waldman ('04)
- 24 Luke Lair ('04)
- 25 Renae Waldman
- 30 Jacob Covil
- 31 Haley Dusenbury