

Good News Letter

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There are two births of Christ, one into the world in Bethlehem; the other in the soul, when it is spiritually reborn. We think of the former much more than the latter and celebrate it every year, but the spiritual Bethlehem is equally momentous. It was this second birth that Paul, the Apostle, insisted on when he wrote from prison to the church in Ephesus, asking that Christ dwell in their hearts by faith and that they be rooted and grounded in love. This is the second Bethlehem, or the personal relationship of the individual heart to the Lord Christ.

—Fulton J. Sheen

When we understand Christmas properly, we see beyond the tinsel and sparkle of a festive holiday. We journey like Mary and Joseph to a quiet place where a second Bethlehem exists. It is a journey of our soul's desire to know personally the One sent among us. Through faith, we look up into the heavens and see with our own eyes the stars the Wise Men saw. We look for direction of a single light that penetrates our own darkness and leads us to a place where we are blessed to welcome the Savior of the world into our own individual soul.

Unless we can be as sensitive as Mary and Joseph to a heavenly visitation or as dedicated to seeking

Next Month's Newsletter

The January newsletter will be prepared one week later than our usual schedule (so we don't have to work on it during Christmas week).

Christ as the Wise men or as willing as the shepherds to go tell what God has done, then we are in danger of missing the true meaning of Christmas. Some people will mark Christmas as an annual celebration that is put away like the decorations with little thought until next year.



December

But, for Christians, the incarnation means that we are changed by the One who comes to bring new life and new beginnings.

The message of Christmas is that God waded into the darkness of the world with his presence known fully in Jesus Christ. To accept that gift into our hearts is to embrace a whole new beginning, a whole new way of looking at the world around us. The greatest part of Christmas is the realization that our Creator God loves us and he sent us a personal description of that love in the person of Jesus Christ.

Advent helps us to ponder the miraculous ways of God. We experience joy that comes out of nowhere into our hearts, the cosmic God of the ages speaking softly in the cry of a baby in a manger. This knowledge is greater than all gifts and gives us much to celebrate. During Christmas, we are the most joyous of all people as we gather to proclaim "Emmanuel... God with us!"

During this time of Advent, my prayer is that God will illumine your life as powerfully as those who made the trip to the manger. I pray that you will allow the love God has shared with us to be your guide and that you will, in turn, share it with others. Be bold in inviting someone to accompany you to one of our Advent worship services, the Christmas Program, Caroling in the Neighborhood, and the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Your invitation may be the beginning of a whole new journey of faith for someone else.

Whatever way you prepare your journey toward Christmas, the discipline of constantly opening yourself up to God's gift in Jesus makes this season not only fun, but holy. May our openness to receiving the hope, joy, peace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ, continually break into our darkness and surprise us with his light just when we need it most. Christ is born... God is revealed! Rejoice!

Pastor Ellen
Interim Pastor

Christmas Piano Music

Beginning Sunday, November 30 and every Sunday during Advent, Peter White will be playing piano Christmas music 10:30–10:40 a.m. in the sanctuary. Come enjoy this time of listening to well-loved Christmas carols.



Christmas Program

On Sunday, December 14, everyone is invited to an impromptu telling of the Christmas story. This “live nativity” requires no rehearsal — just your presence.

Come to the Fellowship Hall at 9:15 a.m. for coffee, juice and pastries. We will gather in the sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. to be part of this retelling of “the greatest story ever told,” which will include the Biblical narrative, costumes and carols. This includes all of our congregation.

There will be no separate Sunday School classes that day.



Favorite Hymns

During the month of January, we will be singing favorite hymns of the congregation. Please indicate your favorite hymn on the yellow Get Connected slip any Sunday during December. As many as possible will be included and sung during our worship services in January.



PRAYER LIST

This list is prepared by the Deacons. Prayer requests will be removed after 2 months unless “renewed”. Please send changes to Larry Faulk (Lfaulk01@aol.com).

Church Contact	Name	Reason for Prayer
The Deacons	Phil Mercer & Family	Death of Phil’s father
	Don Elliott	Health issues
	Ken Frische	Surgery recovery
	Christina Kilhefner	Transplant recovery
	Bertha Van Brimmer	Health issues
	Penny Hagaman	Health issues
	Steve Baker	Health issues
	Bora Porter (Janet’s daughter)	A patient at Childrens’ Hospital
	Betty Porter	Health issues

Remember daily all the men and women in the military — those stationed in the USA and those deployed throughout the world. GOD BLESS AMERICA!

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Genevieve Peterson recently made her 49th prayer shawl, which was given to Ken Frische as a gift from the church. A card signed by church members accompanied the shawl. You can see a picture of it on our church Facebook page (First Baptist Church, Delaware, OH).

Making prayer shawls has been an ongoing ministry of our church. Four other shawls have been given to members of our congregation including Jimmie Moore, Don Williams, Christine Kilhefner and Betty Porter. As a prayer shawl is being created, the maker prays for the one who will receive, which sometimes is known and other times is not.

If you crochet or knit and would be interested in learning about making prayer shawls and being part of this important care ministry, please contact Genevieve.

Search Committee Update

If you were unable to attend the “Core Values” event on Nov. 9, we still need your input. Please see me for a copy of the questions to enter your thoughts on our core values.

Today, we are passing out the “What We Need Our Pastor To Do” survey. Please choose your top 8 responses and return it to me or place it in the “Pastoral Search” box in the Welcome Center.

– Larry Faulk
Search Committee Chair



World Mission Offering — Final Update!

When Randy Turner challenged our congregation to strive to go beyond our goal of \$600, we were “up” for it! With the goal raised to \$750, contributions continued to come in. We thought we had ‘iced’ it by the end of October, but then, on November 2 the children’s special boxes were added to the new total. Final figure stands at \$771.03! Praise the Lord for the kindness and generosity of our caring family.

– Jane Moore, Mission Coordinator

Advent Services and Events

Sunday, November 30

First Sunday of Advent: **HOPE**
Piano Christmas Music 10:30 a.m.
Worship 10:45 am
"You Better Watch Out"
Luke 19:1-8

Friday, December 5

Delaware First Friday Outreach 6:00–8:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 7

Second Sunday of Advent: **PEACE**
Piano Christmas Music 10:30 a.m.
Worship 10:45 a.m.
"All I Want for Christmas"
Matthew 2:1,2, 7-11
Communion
Fellowship Time following worship
Caroling in the Neighborhood 3:30–5:30 pm

Sunday, December 14

Christmas Program 9:15 a.m.
Third Sunday of Advent: **JOY**
Piano Christmas Music 10:30 a.m.
Worship 10:45 a.m.
"Do You See What I See?"
Luke 2:22-33

Sunday, December 21

Fourth Sunday of Advent: **LOVE**
Piano Christmas Music 10:30 a.m.
Worship 10:45 a.m.
"Will You Miss Christmas?"
John 1:1-5, 10-14

Wednesday, December 24

Music Preludes 6:45 p.m.
Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 28

"The Cost of Faithfulness" Luke 9:23

Sunday, January 4

"Looking Back, Looking Ahead"
Colossians 3:12-17
Communion
Fellowship Time following worship

Retired Ministers And Missionaries Offering

Each year in December, we — as a part of ABC-USA — promote a special offering. It is a way of saying "Thank You" to the faithful servants who have served our denomination through the years. Retired ministers and missionaries each receive a check, a token to let them know we haven't forgotten them and their years of devotion to spreading God's word.

Last year there were 3,370 retired ministers, missionaries, and widowed spouses — and the purse was \$660,077 to be divided among them. The average check was for \$198.54.

Our own Sophia Stephenson is one of the recipients, and now that Tim has retired, he, too, will receive a modest check.

The Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering will be received during the month of December. Our goal is, once again, \$600. We ask that you give generously to these faithful servants of the Lord.

– Jane Moore, Missions Coordinator

Mission Update: Andrews House

Here are a couple of opportunities at Andrews House:



1. We've been invited to participate in their *Lights of Love* remembrance project by 'purchasing' a light to be placed on their *Lights of Love* tree. The tree will be displayed throughout the holidays as a way of expressing your appreciation for those you love and cherish, while also providing hope and help to those less fortunate in our community.

Brochures for this project are available on the table in the Narthex (Welcome Center)

2. The Christmas Cupboard will be held once again. All proceeds benefit Andrews House and their programs. The date is Saturday, December 6 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. There will be a Preview on Friday evening, December 5, from 6 – 9 p.m.

We are asked to bake cookies and other baked goods. They may be dropped off at Andrews House on Friday, December 5 — anytime between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

There are flyers on the table in the Narthex, as well as a poster on the board in the Gathering Room.

– Jane Moore, Mission Coordinator

Holiday Wish Program

First Baptist is again sponsoring gifts for four foster children through the Holiday Wish Program through Jobs and Family Services. Please consider fulfilling a wish or two. The lists are on a poster at church. The gifts do not need to be wrapped, just labeled. Gift certificates to Walmart can be included.

We will need to deliver the gifts to J&FS on Dec. 3, so please have your contributions in on November 30 if possible.

– Larry Faulk

Birthdays and Anniversaries



We're including part of January since the next newsletter will be a week later than usual.

- Dec. 4 Erin Faulk
 5 Nathan McKendrick
 8 Phyllis Beasley
 11 Holly Kauf
 13 Geneva Evans
 15 Bud Sykes
 17 Pat Gosser
 23 Dominique DeBiasio
 24 Frances Cook
 25 Carol Grubbs
 26 Richard & Barbara Payne
 27 Cory Lawrence
 28 Sharon Baker
 29 Harold & Deborah Van Broekhoven
- Jan. 4 Fred DeBiasio
 6 Ken & Pam Shears
 10 Kip Smith
 12 Larry Faulk
 Matthew Cooper

Please report any errors or omissions to Jim Stephenson.

Join Us for Caroling

Everyone is invited to join us for our annual caroling of our shut-ins.

The time is still being finalized, but it will probably be Sunday, Dec. 21. We'll meet at the church at 2:00, and when we're done (usually 60-90 minutes later) we'll go to the Faulk's home for refreshments.

We'll be singing familiar hymns that everyone knows, and all are welcome to join us regardless of singing ability.

– Jim Stephenson, Choir Director



Two Outreach Events

I'm sure you have noticed that lots of exciting things are going on at First Baptist Church these days, and two more very special events are now being added to the excitement — both of which, you won't want to miss!

What are these new events?

On October 26th, about ten volunteers met after church to discuss possible community outreach projects, and two special events were decided upon. These promise to be not only beneficial to our church, but fun for us as well. The first event is a unique way for First Baptist to participate in Delaware's First Friday, and the second is a caroling party!

What is the purpose of these events?

The purpose is actually two-fold: (1) to "put a face on" First Baptist so we may be better recognized by the community as to who we are and where we are located. (2) to provide an opportunity to invite others in the community to attend our beautiful Advent services.

So what are the particulars? I'm glad you asked!

1. The FIRST FRIDAY Event: Our participation is scheduled for December 5th from 6:00 to 8:30 pm. A table will be set up down town (at a location to be announced as soon as we have that information) and will be "manned" by FBC volunteers. Goodie bags will be prepared which



Caroling

We will be caroling
TWICE in December.

Dec. 7: *Caroling in the neighborhood. This is new.*

Dec 21 (tentative): *Our traditional caroling of shut-ins.*

will include mini candy canes, a story of the history of candy canes, chocolates, a church calling card and an invitation to attend our Advent services. These will be given to passers-by and may prompt conversations about FBC.

To volunteer to help and to indicate times convenient for you to work, please use the Nov. 16th or Nov. 23rd

"Get Connected" forms found in the bulletins. These slips will then be compiled, and on November 30th there will be an assignment sheet posted on the easel at the front of the sanctuary to confirm time schedules for all who volunteer.

2. AND NEXT...THE CAROLING PARTY

is an event for all our adults, youth and children who like to sing the joyful songs of Christmas. We will meet at the church at 3:30 pm. on Sunday, Dec. 7. Caroling will be in the immediate neighborhood of FBC. As with First Friday, goodie bags will be provided to those who come out to welcome us. It is planned that we will be back at the church by 5:00 to enjoy hot chocolate and warm-up time until 5:30.



Let's all get on board, have some fun and ultimately make these events a resounding success!

–Lana Palmer

Hot Chocolate Makers Needed

Those who go Caroling in the Neighborhood on December 7 will

continued on back of calendar

continued from page 4

be returning to the Fellowship Hall to warm up with hot chocolate. We are looking for volunteers to come prepare the hot chocolate and have it ready for the return of the chilly carolers around 5:00 p.m. Perhaps you have a favorite family hot chocolate recipe or the “best hot chocolate you’ve ever tasted” or just the store bought kind. No matter what – if you’re willing to help in this way, please contact Ellen Brown no later than November 30.

More Mission News

On Wednesday evening, November 12, our congregation was blessed by a visit by Matt Mann. He and his wife Lori work as development workers through International Ministries in the country of Laos. Their main focus is rescuing street children, slum children, and children of impoverished families who are targets of organized sex trafficking syndicates. Matt told of the drop-in center they have established for these children, and of the residential care for both girls and boys.

There were 17 present for the potluck dinner and the slide presentation. We were also blessed to meet Ellen’s husband, David.

– Jane Moore,
Mission Coordinator

Community Chorus

The Delaware Community Chorus will present their holiday concert, *The Very Best Time of the Year*, on Sunday, Dec. 21 at 3:00 and 5:00 in St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, 45 West Winter Street. Tickets may be purchased for \$10 each from a chorus member, at the door, or at delawarechorus.org.

Volunteers

Sunday School Opening

Nov. 30 Palmers
Dec. 7 Randy Turner
Dec. 14 Board of Christian Education
Dec. 21 Erin Faulk
Dec. 28 Melissa Mercer
Jan. 4 Lovells

Kid Connection

Nov. 30 Jennifer Turner
Dec. 7 Pam Faulk
Dec. 14 Pat Gosser
Dec. 21 Erin Faulk
Dec. 28 Carol Grubbs
Jan. 4 open

A big thank you to all who volunteer!

– Pam Faulk

Thank You For Your Change

On November 2, we celebrated CHANGE -YOUR -CLOCK- BRING -YOUR -CHANGE -TO-CHURCH -DAY. We were able to send \$95.54 to International Ministries to help feed hungry children in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Be saving up your change because on March 8, we will be doing this again when we change our clocks forward.

– Pam Faulk

Personals

- Please offer condolences to the Mercer family. Phil’s father Jerry died this past month.
- Ken Frische was admitted to Grady Hospital but is back home now.
- Pam Shears broke her foot.
- Larry Faulk gave the invocation at the annual PIN luncheon and then also at the city council meeting on October 7.
- Claire Turner was inducted into the National Honor Society at Hayes.
- Ken and Genevieve Peterson were pictured in a Delaware Gazette supplement honoring couples who had been married 50 years or more.

- Pastor Ellen has been asked to teach the missions course at the ABC Ohio Leadership Academy.

- Jim and Sophia Stephenson visited the Smoky Mountains and Savannah Georgia.

– Pam Faulk
Personals Editor

Fellowship Time in December and January

Instead of our normal fellowship time after worship on December 7, we invite everyone to join our Christmas Caroling in the neighborhood from 3:30 – 5:30 with a time of refreshments and fellowship afterward in the Fellowship Hall.

For fellowship time on January 4, we invite everyone to bring their leftover New Year’s celebration snacks to share. Beverages will be provided.