

# Contact



## Pastor's Notes

Happy New Year First Baptist Family!

A New Year always brings new commitments as we try to become “the best version of ourselves.” While this is not an entirely unbiblical idea, there are some ways that we can pursue personal growth that go against the grain of how God desires for us to grow and change. So, here are some things to consider as you enter a fresh new year in hopeful anticipation of what lies ahead.

First, we often think of the new year as a way of changing our outer selves. We commit to more exercise; healthier eating; better money management; better relationships; etc. But this year, don't just consider the outside. Consider the inside. Paul writes in 1 Timothy 4:8, “Physical exercise is of some value, but godliness is of value in every way, as it holds the promise for this present life and also for the life to come.” How can you grow as a more faithful prayer warrior? How can you become a more diligent student of the Word? What priorities do you need to shift around to give more attention to your soul? What relationships can you pursue to further the kingdom? How can you grow in joy and generosity while shrinking in pessimism and cynicism? Where can you find ways to serve in the church to benefit the growth of others? This inner growth nourishes your soul now and pays dividends for all eternity. Change on the inside produces change on the outside.

Second, as you strive toward growth and change, work from rest. In Genesis 1, when God is creating the world, the pattern of each day doesn't follow the traditional way we think about them. It doesn't go from morning to evening. It goes from evening to morning. God didn't design us to work for our rest. But to work from our rest. First, we rest in the goodness of God's character. We rest in the love and acceptance we have in Him. And then, after having rested in God's goodness, we begin to work. So as you strive to change and grow - to become more disciplined, more joyful, more humble, more loving - remember that you aren't striving for God's rest. You're not working so that you earn God's favor and blessing. You strive because you already have it through Christ.

Blessings, Pastor Matt

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### Special points of interest

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- Communion: January 8th
- Youth Hangout: January 14th
- Embrace Meeting: January 23rd



**JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

**Happy Anniversary**

January 7, 1978

Chris & Mildred Jones

January 23, 1999

Faron & Dawn Atwood

*“O Lord, let my New Year’s resolution be to follow you more closely and to trust in your loving guidance.”*

**Another Year for God**

Another year is dawning;  
dear Father, let it be,  
in working or in waiting,  
another year with thee....

Another year of progress,  
another year of praise,  
another year of proving  
thy presence all the days.

Another year of service,  
of witness for thy love;  
another year of training  
for holier work above.

Another year is dawning!  
Dear Father, let it be,  
on earth, or else in heaven,  
another year for thee.

—Frances Ridley Havergal

**Bible Quiz**

How old was Abram when he followed God’s call to leave Haran and travel to a new land?

A. 25  
B. 50  
C. 75  
D. 100

Answer: C (See Genesis 12:4.)

**Soup Kitchen Ministry**

The Church’s Soup Kitchen Ministry occurs every Monday between 12 and 1:00 pm for all church members.

If you are sick or unable to drive you may request a meal to be delivered. Please contact the church office know by the Thursday before if you wish to participate. Remember you **MUST** call if you wish to participate.

**January Menu:**

- 2nd: Holiday, No Meal Delivery
- 9th: Chicken & Rice Soup & Chicken Salad Sandwich
- 16th: Pinto Beans & Corn bread
- 23rd: Italian Soup & Bread Sticks
- 30th: Vegetable Soup & Grilled Cheese Sandwich



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

### Happy Birthday

- 1 Oscar Reeves
- 2 Brandon Atwood
- 3 Katlyn Miller
- 4 Karly Stoker
- 5 Kaye Royall
- 6 Santiago Reales,
- 7 Madeline Shepherd
- 11 Lorraine Sturgill  
Renaë Caldwell  
Terry Joines  
Matt Foster  
Malory Harris
- 12 Jacob Simpson,  
Kathy Trosino
- 13 Joe T. Irwin,  
Carolyn Caldwell,  
Ricky Royal,  
Kenneth Adams
- 14 Meghan Norris
- 16 Jessica Caudill
- 18 Louise Farmer  
Nathan Tucker  
Chad Simpson  
Cindy Lyon
- 21 Shelby Greer
- 22 Laura Epps,  
Amberlyn Joines  
Brad Bedsaul,  
John McCray
- 25 Charlie Harris
- 28 Chailen Hicks
- 29 Laura Bloodworth,  
Christina Shaw
- 31 Debbie Bare,  
Shannon Epps

### Information:

#### Transportation:

If anyone is in need of transportation to our church services please contact the drivers for the month of January. They are Jim Cox @ 336. 657. 8942 and Faron Atwood @ 336.372.1503.

#### Newsletter Information:

If your committee, or group has information, or opportunities that could be published in the newsletter, please have your information written out and ready to publish by the 20th day of the month. You can email the church office with your info at [fbcsparta@skybest.com](mailto:fbcsparta@skybest.com) or forms are located outside the church office. Fill them out and place them in the box beside the office door. Please consider placing your information in the newsletter.

#### Newsletter Folding Party:

Would you like to assist in getting the newsletter assembled & ready to mail? We meet in the fellowship hall on Thursday, December 29th @ 9:30 am. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the church office at 336-372-8446 or let Gwen Hicks know of your interest.

## Fresh Starts

I suppose when we wake on January 1 the world will look the same. But there is a reminder of the Resurrection at the start of each new year, each new decade. That's why I also like sunrises, Mondays and new seasons. God seems to be saying, "With me you can always start afresh."

—Ada Lum

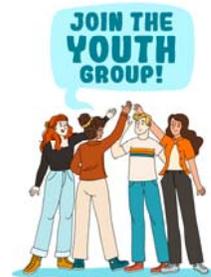
## Youth Notes

Throughout the month of December, the Youth Ministry continued our Sunday night small group Bible Study and monthly community-building event. We continue to have a consistent group of students attending our weekly Growth Group, and this month, we got together with the youth from Grace Community Church for a Christmas gathering at the Stampers.

The temperatures were frigid (as one should expect in December in Sparta), but we got in the Christmas spirit with hot chocolate and smores around the fire while we rotated through the wreath-making

machines and each youth took a turn making Christmas wreaths for them and their families. Inside (where it was much warmer), we also enjoyed some tasty tacos courtesy of Eva Rice's Sunday School class.

Our next event will be January 14th, from 5:30-8pm. We are still sorting out the details, but one thing is for sure....our youth won't want to miss it!! If you know any students who would like to join us, contact the church and we'd be happy to have them!



*Youth Hangout—  
Saturday, January 14 @  
5:30 pm*

## Thank You

The church staff would like to thank the church and it's members for the many acts of kindness shown to them this Christmas season and through out the year. Thank you as well as for our Christmas bonus. It is with pleasure and honor that we serve the Lord, our church and it's members.

Thank You,  
Rev. Matt Harris, pastor  
Cindi Greene, Music Director  
Tammy Marion, Pianist  
Lorraine Brooks, Finance Officer  
Tammy Killon, Admin. Secretary



## Embrace Newsletter – January 2023

About 22 ladies and 10 children gathered in the fellowship hall on December 10 and learned how our church grows by fulfilling the great commission through pursuing personal relationships with people. After enjoying a time of food & fellowship, we began with discussion on who and how other people have impacted our lives the most. Mallory then taught that we, who are pursued by God, are to likewise pursue relationships with others for the purpose of their highest spiritual good. In the Old Testament, God pursued His people as a husband pursues his wife/bride in Hosea and Revelation and as a shepherd in Ezekiel 34. In the New Testament, Jesus initiated relationships so that people might know Him. As women, Titus instructs us to teach the younger women how to be shaped by the Bible. When we are faithful to follow Jesus' example in initiating relationship for the spiritual good of another person, the whole church benefits. We should seek out people who can pour into us as well as people who we can pour into. We all need each other to grow spiritually deeper and stronger and more mature in our faith. (Prov.27: 17) In this new year, who is someone you can seek out to pour into you, and who is someone you can pour into?

Join us for our next Embrace planning meeting on Monday, January 23 at 6:30. Mark these dates on your calendar:

2023 Meeting Dates (Mondays @ 6:30)	Equip Gatherings (Saturdays 9:00-11:00)
January 23	March 11
April 24	June 3
July 24	September 9
October 23	December 9

Update on OCC boxes collected: 190

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*“Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year.”*

*—Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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## Baptist Men's Day

On January 22nd our men will come together to let the church know of the projects that the men have been doing in our church and community. The men have a special choir that day. Also following the worship service, the men will be feeding the congregation breakfast as a fundraiser to further provide financial opportunities to help others.

## Worship Nursery Schedule

### Toddlers

#### January

1 Brandon & Monica Keener, Mildred Jones  
8 Fran Lewis, LeAnn Gambill, Reagan Tompkins  
15 Grant & Kennedy Caudill, Brenda Stoker  
22 Kayla & Brady Carpenter, Margaret Royall  
29 Rita Wiles, Ellie Collins, Robin Bugielski

#### February

5 Mary Beth & Brad Gambill, Reagan Tompkins  
12 Katie & Cort Hudson, Peggy Blevins  
19 Mallory Harris, Linda Huffman, Penny Grover  
26 Lorraine Brooks, Brenda & Warren Taylor

### Infants and Crawlers

#### January

1 Karena and Brett Jarrett, Sue Church  
8 Dawn Mustin, Joan & Jim Cox  
15 Susan Murphy, Susan Nilo, Barbara Murphy  
22 Lance & Karrington Murphy, Paula Brooks  
29 Brian & Meghan Norris, Betty Guynn

#### February

5 Brenda Taylor, Faron & Dawn Atwood  
12 Kimberly & Jack Edwards, Barbara Patrick  
19 Michelle & Aaron Ray Tompkins,  
Carolyn Caldwell  
26 Celeste & Logan Oliver, Phyllis Smith

## Choir Notes

Psalm 40:5 “Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders You have done, and the plans You have for us—none can compare to You—if I would proclaim and declare of them, they are more than could be numbered.”

“Count your blessings – name them one by one!” You might think that I have forgotten what time of the year this is and it is true that “Count Your Blessings” is a hymn frequently associated with Thanksgiving and sung most often in November, but it is also a wonderful reminder to give God our praise for the many ways He has blessed our music ministry in 2022!

God continues to bless our Children’s & Sanctuary choirs with more voices and currently we are teaching a class for “ding – a-lings” – uh new bell ringers.

In early December, our church hosted the Singing Christmas Tree as 33 melodic voices (23 from our own church) & musicians presented “Appalachian Winter.” “Soft Enough for a King?” was presented by our Children’s Ministry during our December 18th 10:00 a.m. morning worship service. I am so proud of all who participated – and a special thanks to all the parents who faithfully and diligently brought your children to practice week after week. Thanks to all those who gave of their time to make this play happen. A special shout out to Jesse Greene, Tammy Killon, Kelly Krans, Fran Lewis, Tammy Marion, & Brett and

Karena Jarrett.

Courtney Binder graduated from Appalachian State University December 16th and is a former recipient of The Marjorie Armentrout Education Scholarship Program. She wrote the following to our church: “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of the love, support, and prayers over the last four years. My college experience could not have been made possible without you!” We wish her much success in her career!

I am excited to discover how the Lord will continue to use this ministry to proclaim His Gospel in 2023. Perhaps God is leading you to serve Him through one or more of our music ministry opportunities this year.

Calling all men! January 22nd is Baptist Men’s Day and we are looking forward to having our men fill the choir. Details to come later in our weekly bulletins.

On a personal note – many thanks to the church for your continued support and the generous Christmas gift!

In His Service. . .

As We Give HIM All The Glory!

Cindi Greene



## Deacons Minutes: November

Chairman Warren Taylor greeted everyone and opened with a word of prayer. He then introduced the guests. Kay Royall with stewardship committee presented the deacons with the proposed budget for 2023. The proposal has a few changes with an overall increase of 14% with 9% of that being a budget for legal consultation.

Gerald Leftwich presented the deacons with devotion. (Six little stories with lots of meanings) Faith, Trust, Hope, Confidence, Love, and Attitude. Next month the devotion will be given by Jack Edwards

October 10th minutes were given time for review. A motion was made to accept as written made and seconded, all votes were in favor.

### Old Business

- New nursery is looking great just a few more things to complete the project. Nov 13th was first day in new nursery and everything went well.
- Long Range Planning Committee will meet after the holidays, first of the year.
- Building and Grounds presented completion of a new roof installed on the church. Installation went well, need a few things looked at and tidied up still.

### New Business

- New Budget Proposal for 2023; a motion was made to approve and with a 2nd and all approved the vote.
- Financial Report presented by JD Brooks, a motion to except report as written was made and seconded, with the vote approved by all.
- Deacon Families updated, prayer for the families and events by Chairman Taylor
- Pastoral Comments: Pastor Matt is enthusiastic about new members completing membership class and the upcoming classes being filled.

Closing prayer was given by pastor Matt Harris.

Respectfully submitted by Jack Edwards

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*Dear Jesus, help me live out your kingdom values: mercy, meekness, hunger and thirst for righteousness, peacemaking — and above all, love.*

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**In December, 2022**

Date	Attendance
4	76
11	81
18	95
25	N/A

**Sunday School Enrollment**

119

**Average Attendance 84**

# January Committees and Services

### Toddlers Nursery Schedule

- 1 Brandon & Monica Keener, Mildred Jones
- 8 Fran Lewis, LeAnn Gambill, Reagan Tompkins
- 15 Grant & Kennedy Caudill, Brenda Stoker
- 22 Kayla & Brady Carpenter, Margaret Royall
- 29 Rita Wiles, Ellie Collins, Robin Bugielski

### Infants & Crawlers Schedule

- 1 Karena and Brett Jarrett, Sue Church
- 8 Dawn Mustin, Joan & Jim Cox
- 15 Susan Murphy, Susan Nilo, Barbara Murphy
- 22 Lance & Karrington Murphy, Paula Brooks
- 29 Brian & Meghan Norris, Betty Guynn

### Wednesday Night Meals

- 4
- 11 LeAnn Gambill, Cindy Lyon, & Brenda Wall
- 18 Brenda Taylor, Barbara Patrick, Joan Cox
- 25 Elaine Osborne

### Van Drivers

- Jim Cox @ 336. 657. 8942
- Faron Atwood @ 336.372.1503.

### Ushers

- Bradford Gambill
- Chris Jones

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
**SPARTA**

**GLORIFY, GROW, GO**

