

LITTLETON BAPTIST NEWS

A Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Congregation

"Our mission is to make Christ known, by providing spiritual nourishment, ministering to physical needs, and sharing the Gospel."

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DECEMBER 2024

Vol. 48 No. 12

PASTOR'S PARAGRAPH

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. It's December, and that can only mean Christmas time is coming. As we begin this Advent season and journey towards Christmas, I want to ask a question. It might seem like a strange one. Why do you celebrate Christmas? What makes Christmas so important? Why do we have a whole season dedicated to preparing our hearts for the season of Christmas?

It's a whole build up to this special holiday. It's a holiday that is very important to us as Christians but has also taken a life of its own in the world. As we go through Advent and preparing our hearts for Christmas, it's important for us to understand the why of everything that we do.

To help with that, our Advent journey this year will be all about the anticipation of Christmas. It's all about why and how we anticipate this beautiful day. Some parts of that preparation are easy, while some are hard. So, let us prepare our hearts. Let us anticipate the coming of the celebration of our savior's birth.

We begin Advent by looking at the prophets of old as they foretold of a savior's birth. We look at what they had to say as we prepare our own hearts. The savior has come, now what? The savior has come, why should we prepare ourselves? Yet the anticipation is building. The second Sunday of Advent will look at Mary being told of the coming of the Savior. It's a beautiful moment as we continue our anticipation.

The third Sunday of Advent we continue to build the anticipation as we look at the Wise Men coming to visit Jesus and how the wonder of a child can change everything. We then end by looking at the difficulty of all this anticipation. Christmas can be hard for many reasons for many people. We, as the church, need to acknowledge that. So, for our fourth Sunday of Advent we will journey through a modified Blue Christmas service as we acknowledge that Christmas is not the same for everyone. We then conclude December with, Christmas has come, now what?

So let the anticipation begin. Whether you are looking towards Christmas or trying to avoid it, it's all around us. So, let us prepare our hearts with a genuine hope, peace, joy, and love.

Grace and Peace,

David



DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:30 Deacons Mtg 9:45 S. School 11:00 Worship	2 8:30 Exercise	3	4 8:30 Exercise 6:00 Young Family Bible Study 6:15 Adult Choir 7:00 Prayer & Bible Study	5	6 8:30 Exercise	7
8 9:45 S. School 11:00 Worship 12:00 Youth Lunch/Shopping/Christmas Party	9 8:30 Exercise	10	11 8:30 Exercise 6:15 Adult Choir No Prayer & Bible Study	12	13 8:30 Exercise	14
15 9:45 S. School 11:00 Worship 5:30 Christmas Cantata	16 8:30 Exercise	17	18 8:30 Exercise 5:15 Christmas Caroling No Choir or Prayer & Bible Study	19	20 8:30 Exercise 9:00 John 3:16 Christmas Party Setup at John 3:16 Center	21 10:00 John 3:16 Christmas Party
22 9:00 Christmas Breakfast 11:00 Worship	23 8:30 Exercise	24 5:00 Christmas Eve Service	25  No Choir or Prayer & Bible Study	26	27 8:30 Exercise	28
29 9:45 S. School 11:00 Worship	30 8:30 Exercise	31				



It's that wonderful time of the year again! There's a lot of shopping, cooking, cleaning, decorating, visiting, eating, singing, just to name a few of the things that make Christmas so WONDERFUL??? I can remember how tired Mama would be during the holidays, and now I totally understand!

The word Noel comes to us from the Latin verb nasci, meaning "to be born." In the book of Ecclesiastes, the birth of Jesus is called natalis. A variation of this word, nael, made its way into Old French as a reference to the Christmas season and later into Middle English as nowel. Now it is known as noel or nowell.

The Adult Choir, with a little help from our Junior Singers, will be presenting The First Noel on December 15th at 5:30 P.M. Come and join us, and I assure you that you will leave with the spirit of Christmas in your heart!

Merry Christmas!

Laura



Our Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion will be Tuesday, **December 24th**, at 5:00 P.M. Join us for this service as we light the Christ candle and celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This service will be available virtually on Facebook.



The Christmas Card Mailbox for you to "mail" your Christmas cards to church members "in house" begins Sunday, **December 1st**. You may bring your Christmas cards to the vestibule for distribution to members. We'll make sure our Homebound receive their cards as well.



Young Family Bible Study will meet Wednesday, **December 4th**, at 6:00 P.M.. They are also invited to join the church on **December 18th**, as we go Christmas caroling.



Our church family filled 26 backpacks for the Baptists on Mission Appalachian Coalfields Ministry. God will use these gifts to show children who live in poverty that they are loved. Thanks to all the hands that filled them.



Youth will continue collecting money for the John 3:16 Center Christmas on **December 1st** and **8th**. We will go shopping for John 3:16 Christmas on **December 8th**, immediately following worship. This will also serve as our Christmas Party as afterwards we will return and play some "reindeer games."



We look forward to having Sophie Taylor with us on Sunday, **December 8th**, to provide our special music during



Our Deacons will meet Sunday, **December 1st**, at 8:30 A.M. Please continue to pray for our deacons and their invaluable leadership to our church.



Everyone is invited to our church-wide Christmas Breakfast on Sunday, **December 22nd**, beginning at 9:00 A.M. This breakfast will extend into the Sunday School hour. After breakfast we will take some time for celebration and thanksgiving. We hope you will be present for this time of fellowship hosted by the Mission Committee.



We will receive the CBF Global Missions Offering in support of CBF Missions around the world. The offering will be received at a special ingathering on **December 22nd** as we place our offering in the manger near the conclusion of morning worship. All during December there will be highlights about Global Missions to better inform you how the message of Christ is being carried around the world by CBF Missionaries and Affiliates. Please use the prayer guides to pray diligently and give generously. Your support makes a world of difference!



"THE FIRST NOEL"

DECEMBER 15, 2024

5:30 PM

ADULT CHOIR CANTATA

DIRECTED BY LAURA KEARNEY

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE
SERVICE, JOIN THE HOSPITALITY
COMMITTEE FOR A TIME OF FOOD
AND FELLOWSHIP**



Our church will be sending cards to cheer up people who will be away from home at Christmas. If you know of anyone in the community who has family or friends that will be away from home, such as military personnel or missionaries, please give their name and address to Sid Shearin. The cards will be in the vestibule for you to sign on **December 1st & 8th**. Sid wants to remind everyone not to sign for your spouse or children. Everyone needs to sign individually!



The Flower Committee would like to thank the congregation for all their help in making our sanctuary beautiful with all the wonderful flowers and greenery! You are awesome!

Homecoming was wonderful! It was such a treat having Jordan as our guest speaker! I am sure you can picture him as he grew up here. Your influence helped make him into the man he is today! We hope everyone had a great time being together! The loving and caring nature of our congregation is what makes it so special.

We also want to thank the congregation for all your floral support throughout the year and especially for our special Christmas Celebration that is rapidly approaching! We are sure the sanctuary will be breathtakingly beautiful!

This is such a special time of the year. God sent his son to earth to save us from our sins! He loves us so deeply! Always trust him! He will prevail!



THIS MONTH IN WORSHIP

Join us for our Sunday Morning Worship.
If you can't be with us at church, then join us
online for our Virtual Worship Service on
Facebook Live at 11:00 A.M.

DECEMBER 1

Let The Anticipation Begin

Jeremiah 33:14-16

First Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER 8

Breath of Heaven

Luke 1:26-38

Second Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER 15

The Wonder of a Child

Matthew 2:1-12

Third Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER 22

Blue Christmas

Isaiah 40:1, 25 - 31

Fourth Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER 29

The Wait Is Over

Luke 2:22-38



On Wednesday, **December 18th**, you are invited to gather at the church, dressed warmly and prepared to leave at 5:15 P.M. to go Christmas Caroling in the community and visit our home-bound.



Lake Gaston CHRISTMAS CANTATA City of Hope

Directed by Diane Colin

December 8 at 3:00 P.M.
At Lakeside Lutheran Church
(complimentary performance)

December 14 at 7:00 P.M.

At The Acorn Center

Performances are:

Songs For The Holidays

Featuring Steve Hyman and Acoustic Edge
and

Lake Gaston CHRISTMAS CANTATA

By the Lake Gaston Community Choir

For Tickets: TheAcornLive.com or
(252) 586-3124



Your Missions Committee wishes you a very joyful, peace filled Christmas and a wonderful 2025 that is God-led and Spirit-filled.

December is filled with many opportunities to help others. It is a busy and challenging time to get everything done. Favorite Christmas songs are heard daily. Packages are wrapped and placed under the tree. Delicious goodies are everywhere. Friends and family get together making new memories and sharing love and joy.

Don't forget to remember those in our community and away that need a merry hello or visit. We give money to many causes. Our church family is a giving/caring group. Our time is often the most valuable gift we can give. Reach out to someone that needs to hear your voice. Do it today. Don't put it off.

Merry Christmas!



JOHN 3:16 CENTER TOY DRIVE & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The John 3:16 Center Annual Toy Drive is November 1st - December 6th. They are hoping to serve over 400 children at the Littleton & Roanoke Rapids locations through their Christmas Outreach Program. There are 3 ways you can help this year. First, you can help them by sponsoring a child (ages newborn - 16) with a donation of \$100 or by participating in their Annual Toy Collection Drive by dropping off new unwrapped toys at the John 3:16 Center in Littleton.

Suggested items to donate for children up to age 16:

*Puzzles (Varying ages. Please do **NOT** go over 500 pieces), Books (for every age group), Games (board games or card games), Batteries (as we like to provide them if they are needed with toys and games), Toys but please **NO** toy weapons*

Some of the hardest items that we tend to receive less of is for toddler age and teenagers. Some ideas for teenagers are watches, wallets, purses, necklaces, accessories, make up, hats and sporting goods. For babies and toddlers: Learning toys.

Lastly, the John 3:16 Center is in need of volunteers in helping transport items from the Center to Littleton United Methodist Church (LUMC) and for setting up the "Christmas Shoppe" on **December 11th** from 10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M. Also, at LUMC, volunteers are needed to be personal shoppers/wrappers on **December 12th & 13th & December 16th thru 18th** in assisting parents in picking out gifts for their children from **10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.** on the days listed above.

The John 3:16 Center also needs volunteers to help set up for the Christmas Party for the families they serve on Friday, **December 20th**, from 9:00 A.M - 12:00 noon. Volunteers are also needed to assist with the Christmas Party on Saturday, **December 21st**, with parking, serving food, assisting Santa, and mingling with the families. For more information or to sign up, call The John 3:16 Center at (252) 586-1800 or talk to Sara Little.

Littleton Baptist Church
P. O. Box 216
Littleton, NC 27850



DECEMBER

<u>HAPPY BIRTHDAY</u>	<u>HAPPY ANNIVERSARY</u>	<u>NURSERY SCHEDULE</u>
7 Kay Beaver 9 Carol Meyer 10 Julian Parks 11 Sid Shearin 12 Sarah Iles 12 Samantha Hall 16 Claire Council (11 yrs) 17 Nicholas Pulliam 23 Debbie Keeter 24 Mike Blanton 24 Virginia Lee 26 Carly Campbell	21 Tom & Til Tremper (50 yrs)	1 Sara Little/Carol West 8 Melinda Harris/Sandra Lynch 15 Paula Burton/Mary Spivey 22 Nichole Pitchford/Amanda Coffman 29 Lynne Skilton/Jim Skilton
		<u>TRASH DETAIL</u>
		Jeff Burton