



“Close to Home” for Advent & Christmas

When I was a kid, my family often took a two to three week summer vacation during the month of August. We would depart after the 4-H Fair week was over and travel many miles (always by camper) across the United States. We went in all directions and by the time I graduated high school I had been to forty-six of the lower forty-eight states. (I’ve since checked the other two off my list. Maybe someday I’ll get to Alaska and Hawaii.)

There are many memories from these trips, including quality time with family, gaining an appreciation of history, and experiencing the beauty of the United States. I am very grateful my parents gave me and my siblings these opportunities. But three weeks living out of a suitcase in the small confines of a truck camper can also make you weary. So, when the truck made the final turn toward home, I was ready to get there.

The questions then came at every stop along the way, “How much farther? Are we close? Are we close to home?” The closer we got, the more anxious we became to be home. Can you relate?

This year we have chosen the theme “close to home” for our Advent worship series. We are leaning on a resource from *A Sanctified Art*. I hope you will try the devotional booklet or family calendar as part of your Advent practices. “Close to home” can be understood in more ways than geographic proximity. A message or story can also hit close to home. In many ways the stories of the Scriptures most associated with Advent and Christmas are like this. They touch tender places in our memories and feelings, reminding us of God’s great love for us. Retelling the story of the season can surface memories of years’ past with friends and family who have gone on, or who live far away. In those moments a depth of emotion sometimes just sneaks up on us.

I suspect part of the reason this is true is because God has created us this way. We are designed to be in close relationship with others, and with our Creator and Savior. We are most at home when we are at peace with God. When we have drifted away, God has a way of calling us back, inviting us to come close once again.

This time of year, complete with a couple of special services, is a great time to invite others to join you in worship. Perhaps you know someone who would benefit from the “Blue Christmas” service planned for Dec. 12? Who might you invite to walk to Bethlehem with us on Christmas Eve? Could you share the link to our live stream service with a family member or friend who lives out of town?

I look forward to sharing this season with you once again this year as we all travel close to home once again.

Pastor Dan



SEASON OF THE CHURCH:

ADVENT



NOVEMBER 28TH - DECEMBER 24TH

Close to Home

I am so excited for what we're about to experience together! If you don't know, here at First Baptist, we celebrate what's known as Advent. This is the 4-week season in a Christian's calendar that anticipates Christmas. It begins the Monday following “Christ the King” Sunday (Nov. 21st) and ends on Christmas Eve.

Literally meaning “arrival,” Advent prepares us for both the second coming of Jesus and his birth. To symbolize this, Advent usually uses purple and pink to communicate somber hope. However, blue can also be used to communicate expectant joy, like that of Mary, and is the color we’ve chosen to fill our eyes with this year.

You can read more about Advent in our “[Statement of Liturgical Intent](#)” on our [Devotional Resource Archive](#). In that archive, you can find a library of resources to help you and your family embody an Advent Spirituality filled with hope, love, joy, and peace. Allow me to point out a few examples of what I mean on the next page.

(Keep Reading)



SEASON OF THE CHURCH:

ADVENT



NOVEMBER 28TH - DECEMBER 24TH

Below is a schedule of events which we've designed around [A Sanctified Art's](#) resource, "[Close to Home](#)." This resource is intended to help guide you through the Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons as we experience the joy of homecoming together.

SCHEDULE

- **November 28th** – Coffee Fellowship with Christmas Decorating!
- **December 12th** – FBC Blue Christmas Service (7:00 P.M.)
 - [Announcement Flyer](#)
 - [Social Media Post](#)
 - [At-Home Longest Night Liturgy](#) (If Unable to Attend)
 - **December 20th** – Franklin College Blue Christmas Service
- **December 24th** – Christmas Eve “Homecoming” Service

I want to draw your attention to the Blue Christmas services. In collaborating with Franklin College, we have the opportunity to provide a contemplative service for those in our community who have experienced loss and grief in the past year. This service will be an intimate gathering in our chapel, not live-streamed, for anyone who needs a space to process the conflicting emotions of this time of year. If you or someone you know might benefit from this kind of service, feel free to share the above Flyer and Post. Pastor Reilly, Chaplain Hannah, and I have all experienced Blue Christmas services before and are praying that this would be a spiritual blessing to our community. Would you join us? Peace.

- Pastor Daniel



Around The Church

Did you know?

Hopevale Commemoration Sunday is December 19, 2021

You may not be aware of this American Baptist day of remembrance; I know I wasn't. I invite you to read more about it [here](#) and watch A Testimony Given by the Rev. Dr. Elmo Familiaran [here](#). There is also a great graphic [here](#) and concise story and legacy [here](#).

It's been 78 years since the martyrdom of 11 missionaries (and one couple's young son) of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS, now known as International Ministries) in the Philippines during World War II. We remember their sacrifice and celebrate the lasting impact of their faith on the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches.

Please note: there is no offering connected to this commemoration. It is meant to serve as a historical memorial event, and to inspire new generations of American Baptists to be faithful witnesses for Jesus Christ. The Hopevale story is inspiring, calling us all to a higher level of sacrificial devotion and service. (Pastor Reilly)

Second Hour Opportunities Continue

- The Adult Study Fellowship (ASF) Class meets in Fellowship Hall using The Journeys quarterly curriculum.
- Pastor Daniel will lead a Class in the Chapel on an Advent study.
- The Youth Class meets in the Youth Room (lower level)

Men of Faith study on the Minor Prophets Continues

The Men of Faith study of The Minor Prophets will continue this month with December 17 as our last session. This group meets on Fridays in the Fellowship Hall at 7 a.m.

We will resume on Friday, January 7 with a Five-Session study titled, "How the Bible Came to Be." All men of the church are invited to join.

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study will take a break through December and start up again on January 6, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

This Month's Leadership

Pastoral Care Team

Dec. 5 - Kerry & Alice Richmond
Dec. 12 - Ron & Peggy Lane
Dec. 19 - Daryl & Dot McMath
Dec. 26 - Bob & Jean Langdon

Serving in the Nursery:

First Sunday: Susan Hoffman
Second Sunday: Adams
Third Sunday: Fee
Fourth Sunday: *Open*
Fifth Sunday: *Open*

Children's Sunday School

2-4 Year Olds -

Teachers:

First Sunday: Larry Calfee
Second Sunday: Susan Carter/Charlotte Oestreicher
Third Sunday: Carol Poe
Fourth Sunday: Heidi Jones
Fifth Sunday: Carolyn Pool

Helpers:

First Sunday: Slatons
Second Sunday: Susan Carter/Charlotte Oestreicher
Third Sunday: Jennifer Kelley
Fourth Sunday: Open
Fifth Sunday: Carolyn Pool

Kids Connection:

First Sunday: Marcia Cheek
Second Sunday: Linda Reid
Third Sunday: Beth Caldwell
Fourth Sunday: Deanna Glick

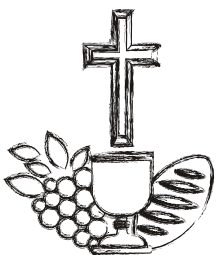
No Kids Connection on fifth Sundays.



December Coffee Fellowship (following worship) - December 26

Last names Q-Z are invited to bring treats to share.

Communion



We will celebrate Communion on Sunday, December 5

For those of you who join us for worship via live stream, we invite you to have something available to use for communion as we come to the Lord's Table together.

December Birthdays

1. ~ Jackie Martin
7. ~ Evan Babb
10. ~ Daniel Kane
12. ~ Jane Riley
20. ~ Charlotte Oestreicher
23. ~ Carla Williams



25. ~ Dortha Anderson, Larry Mayfield
26. ~ Larry Carter, Phillip Watkins
28. ~ Roger Glick
29. ~ Beth Caldwell, John Lipson, Joyce Sutton
30. ~ Pat Evans, Kelli Fitzgerald, Sam Snider
31. ~ Mike Compton

The Body of Christ Prays For...



- Ramona Harlow, Beth & Dick Miller, Tim Pickup, Jon Carlstrom, Peggy Lane & all those who are homebound or in nursing care centers.

Looking Ahead

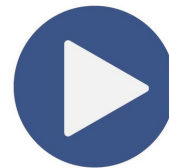
Dec. 7 - Hannah Circle (2:00 pm)
Dec. 11 - Pitch-in Dinner following Philharmonic Concert (5:30 pm)
Dec. 12 - Blue Christmas Service (Chapel) (7:00 pm)
Dec. 14 - Church Council (7:00 pm)
Dec. 15 - Newsletter Deadline
Dec. 20 - Franklin College Blue Christmas Service (12:00 noon)
Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Worship - "Homecoming" (7:00 pm)
Dec. 25 - Merry Christmas!
Dec. 26 - Coffee Fellowship following Worship (Last names Q-Z are invited to bring treats)
Dec. 27 - Church Office Closed for holiday

Service: Sunday Morning - Worship 9:30 am
(in-person worship & Live Stream)

2nd Hour Learning - following worship at 10:45 am

Live streaming available for Sunday Services

In addition to watching our streaming service on our website, the service is also streamed to Facebook, Roku and AppleTV. It is also sent internationally.



Just Press Play

Live Video Every Sunday at 9:30
firstbaptistcolumbus.org

