



FIRST BAPTIST
COLUMBUS
JOIN OUR *Family* OF FAITH

Evan Guse, Senior Pastor
Daniel Kane, Worship Pastor

From The Pastor's Pen

Dear First Baptist Family,
Thank you so much for the warm "Welcome Home" to Columbus and First Baptist Church you have extended to our family in recent weeks! It's hard to articulate how thankful we are to be joining this church family and our expectancy for the days, weeks, months, and years to come. As we're reminded in Ecclesiastes 3:1, there's a "time for everything," and Emma, Madeline, Clayton, and I are grateful to God for bringing us to First Baptist in this season of our lives. We look forward to celebrating Advent and Christmas with our new church family as we continue to introduce ourselves and get to know each of you.

December is a unique time of year and it's very easy to get caught up in the busyness of the season, from long shopping lists to full calendars. In the midst of the many distractions, I encourage you to find time to slow down and reflect on the beauty of Christ's love this season. Advent is a true gift to the church as set aside time for contemplation and anticipation as we long for the continued arrival of Jesus Christ into a weary world. Will you take the time to slow down, stop, and fully embrace the gift of Christ's love this season?

In his book *Whistling in the Dark*, theologian Frederick Buechner writes: "The house lights go off and the footlights come on. Even the chattiest stop chattering as they wait in darkness for the curtain to rise. In the orchestra pit, the violin bows are poised. The conductor has raised the baton. The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment."

As we enter this season, may we all sit together with great expectation as the conductor prepares to set his baton in motion. Happy Advent!

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Evan





SEASON OF THE CHURCH:

ADVENT

NOVEMBER 26TH - DECEMBER 24TH

The First Christmas

Advent always seems to sneak up on us. There's something ironic about that. For the season that remembers how God's people waited for the Messiah, it usually gets here faster than we know it. God tends to work that way. When we're in the middle of asking "Are we there yet?" the journey seems to have no end in sight. Then, once we arrive, we laugh at ourselves, saying, "What were we worried about? That didn't take so long!"

I wonder if the first Christmas felt like that. After generations of looking to their kings and prophets, did God's people laugh at themselves once Jesus had finally arrived? Granted, Jesus' birth as the Messiah was anything but expected. Like our first message this Advent season, the annunciation of Jesus, or the announcement of his birth, brought "Hope for the Unsuspecting." The time, the place, and the people of this glorious event was a complete surprise. It didn't make any sense! And Jesus' life seemed to follow that trend. Nothing was as it seemed.

That's important to remember. Nothing is always as it seems. Rarely do things go the way we expect them, too. And that's ok! Because usually (always?) God's way is so much better than what we could have asked for or imagined. We're the ones, then, who have to adjust.

"The First Christmas" is the title for this year's Advent and Christmas season for that exact reason. It might seem cheesy or obvious, but that's kind of the point. We are in a new season of life as a church with a new minister. It's Pastor Evan's first Christmas with us. It's our first Christmas with Pastor Evan. That's a beautiful time to remind ourselves of the foundation of Christmas, and maybe remember the details that often get overlooked, forgotten, or confused. So it's always helpful to go back to the beginning.

I know for me growing up, when we watched the Charlie Brown Christmas special, there was always something so simple and refreshing about Linus stepping into the middle of the stage and saying "Lights, please?" just so he could monologue about the real meaning of Christmas. It's real. It's innocent. It carries no level of expectation. Just a story - about a child who was born and placed in a manger, and all of the unexpected guests who arrived to worship this unexpected King.

My prayer is that this would be an unexpected Christmas just like that one: filled with **hope, faith, love, and joy** just like our weeks are going to be themed. This means that the fourth candle is going to be the pink one this year, symbolizing how Light was dawning on the world. So the closer we get to Christmas, the brighter the candles will be. **Meanwhile, our building will be progressively more Christmasy each week as we decorate on Wednesdays at 3:30 PM (all are welcome to participate)!** That way, during our Christmas Eve Evening Service on December 24th at 7:00 PM, it will feel like Christmas has finally, actually, arrived.

Lastly, "The First Christmas" may weigh a bit heavier for some of us this time of year. It's always important to remember those of us who are observing Christmas for the first time without a loved one. So if you, or anyone you know, feel that same weight, the **Love Chapel Blue Christmas Service** is for you. Come as you are to **the Commons at 7:00 PM on December 1st** and receive tidings of comfort in this season of joy.


Peace,
Pastor Daniel



Around The Church ...

Thank You!

- Thank you so much for all the cards, calls, prayers and visits during my recent surgery recovery. I know I can always count on my Church family when I have a need. It is nice to be back in church and see you all in person.
Myrna Shane
- THANKS to all who helped with the Love Chapel Garden this year, especially Sue and Bob Hoffman. A total of 402 pounds of produce was donated to Love Chapel to help people with needed nutrition.
- THANKS to all who helped us exceed our goal of 600 by donating 673 boxes of cereal for Love Chapel.
- THANKS to all who donated shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child. A total of 74 boxes went to children in need.



PACKING PARTY AT LOVE CHAPEL


Twelve volunteers are needed to help pack food for the Love Chapel Christmas Pantry Distribution on Thursday, December 7, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Love Chapel Food Pantry. From a former volunteer: "It is always a fun event and builds team spirit." A sign up sheet is available in the Gathering Place.



Philharmonic Holiday concert

Join us for the 3 pm Philharmonic Holiday concert on Saturday December 9, 2023 at 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$10 each and the concert will be held at the East High School Auditorium.

A pitch-in dinner will be held in our Fellowship Hall at 5:30 pm. There are sign-up sheets in the Gathering Place. Meat & drinks will be furnished. You are welcome to attend the pitch-in dinner whether you attend the concert or not. Just let us know. Hope to see you on that special day.



Other News....

Christmas Eve Service

Join us at 7:00 pm
for a special service celebrating
the birth of our Savior.



Blue Christmas Service



Friday, December 1st
at 7 pm
Columbus Commons
Hosted by Love Chapel for
the entire community!

Bethlehem Lights

Join us at
Southeastern
Baptist Youth Camp
Bethlehem Lights,
held on Friday and
Saturday, December
15-16, 2023 from
5:00-8:00 PM. This is
a drive through
display and nativity.

Bethlehem Lights

DRIVE THROUGH LIGHT DISPLAY & LIVE NATIVITY



SBYCAMP.COM/BETHLEHEM



Leadership

Pastoral Care Team

Dec 3rd : Jim & Linda Reid
Dec 10th: Kerry & Alice Richmond
Dec 17th: Carolyn Baker & Sue Hoffman
Dec 24th: Dortha Anderson & Mandy Reed
Dec 31st: Bob & Jean Langdon

Serving in the Nursery:

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

Emergency Responder Schedule

Dec 3rd : Jean Williams
Dec 10th: Lindsay McIntosh
Dec 17th: Joyce Briggs
Dec 24th: Mike Compton
Dec 31st: Judy Rhude

Children's Sunday School

2-4 Year Olds -

Teachers:

First Sunday: *Open*
Second Sunday: Susan Carter
Third Sunday: Carol Poe
Fourth Sunday: Heidi Jones
Fifth Sunday: Carolyn Pool

Helpers:

First Sunday: *Open*
Second Sunday: *Open*
Third Sunday: Jennifer Kelley
Fourth Sunday: *Open*
Fifth Sunday: Carolyn Pool

Kids Connection:

First Sunday: Marcia Cheek
Second Sunday: Linda Reid
Third Sunday: *Open*
Fourth Sunday: Deanna Glick

No Kids Connection on fifth Sundays.

Coffee Fellowship



There will be a Coffee Fellowship on Sunday, December 31st. Last names R-Z are invited to bring treats to share.

Communion



We will celebrate Communion on Sunday, December 3rd. 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.

Around The Church

December Birthdays

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|-----------------------------|--|
| 3. ~ Robert Roney | 23. ~ Carla Williams |
| 7. ~ Evan Babb | 25. ~ Dortha Anderson, Larry Mayfield |
| 10. ~ Daniel Kane | 26. ~ Larry Carter |
| 12. ~ Jane Rile | 28. ~ Roger Glick |
| 16. ~ Aubree Adams | 29. ~ Beth Caldwell, John Lipson, Joyce Sutton |
| 17. ~ John Richardson | 30. ~ Pat Evans, Sam Snider |
| 20. ~ Charlotte Oestreicher | 31. ~ Mike Compton |
| 22. ~ Iris Huysentruyt | |

The Body of Christ Prays For...

Janet Bailey, Alice Richmond, Myrna Shane, Anita Burton, Marcia Battle, Dick & Beth Miller, Ramona Harlow, Dan Greene, Claude Wright, Jr "Bub", and Anita Yancey, Joyce Sutton, Roger & Ben Glick & all persons who are homebound & in nursing care centers.

Looking Ahead to December

- 3- Communion (9:30 am)
- 9- Pitch-in after concert (5:30 pm)
- 15- Newsletter Deadline
- 19- Church Council (7:00 pm)
- 24. Christmas Eve Service (7:00 pm)
- 31- Coffee Fellowship (10:45 am)

Weekly:

- Prayer Shawl Group*: Tuesdays at 11:00 am
- Prayer Group: Tuesdays at 12:30 pm in Prayer Room
- LIGHT Ladies Bible Study at 9:00 am (beginning 9/7)
- Men of Faith Bible Study at 7:00 am (Beginning 9/8)

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

