



Volume 78 Issue 1

January 3, 2021

From the Pastor...

Happy New Year! Most of us are glad to get 2020 behind us. It was certainly a challenging year filled with COVID fears and restrictions, racial unrest, and a stressful election. On top of these, our world experienced fires, hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and even volcano eruptions. Certainly 2021 will have to be an improvement.

As difficult as 2020 was, however, it also offered us opportunities to live out our faith. We discovered new ways to worship that expanded our witness far beyond our building. We learned how to use new technologies (like Zoom) and old faithful ones (like our phones) to reach out and care for one another. We kept our giving strong and increased our community aid enabling First Baptist Church to continue to be a leader in showing God's love.

We also learned to listen to those who are hurting. Not just people affected by COVID, but those who feel the pain of prejudices every day. The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and other persons of color are horrific tragedies; but they also serve as a wakeup call to those of us who live in privilege without even recognizing it. Hopefully we Christians, who are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, will continue to hear the voices of oppressed people long after these tragedies have passed.

Likewise, our democracy survived a hotly contested election which threatened to further polarize an already divided nation. I am proud that First Baptist Church was and continues to be one of a few places where people of all political persuasions can gather and worship the true King of kings. Together we reaffirm every week that our allegiance is to our Lord and our ultimate citizenship is in heaven. The best way to strengthen our country is to come together in Christ and continue to show a path of love and unity amidst the challenges of diversity.

I do pray that 2021 will be a better year for all. I hope the combination of vaccines and continued public health precautions (masks and social distancing) will soon bring an end to COVID. I pray that our nation will come together and live out our pledge of liberty and justice for all. I hope even more, however, that 2020 will serve to make us stronger. A friend once said to me, "never waste an ounce of pain – it's too costly." Many have said they long for things to get back to the way they were. I believe they can be better. It can happen, if we allow Christ to make us better.

Schedule

Sunday, January 3

7:00 a.m. Sunday School Lesson

Uploaded to YouTube

9:00 a.m. Sunday School - FLC & Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship

Monday, January 4

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

7:00 p.m. Pickle Ball

Wednesday, January 6

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

12:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study

5:30 p.m. To-Go Meals

Menu: chicken parm, spaghetti, green beans & chocolate chip cookies

Thursday, January 7

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

Sunday, January 10

7:00 a.m. Sunday School Lesson

Uploaded to YouTube

9:00 a.m. Sunday School - FLC & Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship

Monday, January 11

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

7:00 p.m. Pickle Ball

Wednesday, January 13

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

12:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study

5:30 p.m. To-Go Meals

Menu: meatloaf, mashed potatoes, Gravy, mixed vegetables, & brownies

Thursday, January 14

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

Church Staff Directory

Dr. Nelson Granade.....Senior Minister
Mr. James Martin.....Minister of Music & Worship
Rev. Melissa Wilson.....Minister of Children & Youth
Mrs. Elizabeth Kilby.....Minister of Young Families & Missions
Mr. Eddie Wiseman.....Accompanist / Music Assistant

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Mon - Thur, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Fri
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Happy Birthday

January 1

Bill Yeckley

January 2

Don Koepnick

Lisa Shankle

January 3

Dennis Deal

Dean Roberts

January 4

Lois Poston

January 5

Katherine Webb

January 8

Ken Conger

Jones Faulkenberry

Mayme Hacker

Mike McLain

January 9

Carol Heckel

Ike Wuertz

January 10

Cassidy Barker

Carol Boroughs

January 11

Jean Elledge

January 12

Kaye Daniel

Edwin Hunter

January 13

Bill Henderson

Nicole Osborne

January 15

Kinley Crain

Andy Hall

January 16

Trevor Devine

January 18

David Lewis

January 21

Ken White

January 23

Bill Sills

Ginny Stikeleather

January 24

Becky Beasley

Matthew Johnson

Ryan Johnson

Nicholas Opdahl

January 25

Audrey Tompkins-Horne

January 27

Luke Kilby

Matilda Kilby

January 28

Pat Abell

January 30

Jan Hunter

January 31

Amy Moore

Spiritual Statistics

Weeks of December 20 & 27, 2020

	12/20	12/27
In-Person	63	70
Live Stream Views	48	59

Financial Statistics

	December	Year-to-Date
Giving Goal	155,469.00	291,937.00
Budget Receipts	59,410.00	224,652.00
Goals Not Yet Met	96,059.00	67,285.00
Alms	435.00	1,475.00
Designated	5,438.00	17,276.00

Noon Christmas Eve Service

Our noon Christmas Eve service featured an instant Christmas pageant. The children (and some adults) wore masks as Melissa read the Christmas story. This service was geared to families with young children but was enjoyed by people of all ages. You can still view this delightful service and the traditional candlelight service on our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/StatesvilleFBC/videos>.

photos courtesy of Holly Hinceman



The Inner Chamber

Today's devotion took me to 1 Cor. 2:7: "But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom from God..." John MacArthur explains that this is revelation from God for mature believers—those who have spent much time in PRAYER and the WORD of GOD. That is the way God reveals Himself and that is the (only) way we become mature believers. I believe part of being a "good and faithful servant" is being one who spends much time in prayer and God's Word.

A poem by Annie Johnson Flint says it perfectly:

But those who have heeded His invitation
To come up higher and enter in
To the UPPER ROOM of the Master's dwelling,
To stores of treasures their way shall win.
What eye hath seen them? What mind conceived them?
What heart hath dreamed of the things concealed,
The joys prepared for the Lord's beloved,
To those who seek them alone revealed?

Clothed with glory they leave His presence,
Girt with His power they walk abroad
Who find the door to the INNER CHAMBER,
The secret place of the Most High God.

O that we would all make it our goal each day to seek that Inner Chamber.

His servant and your friend,
Ginny Stikeleather



Announcements

CBF Mission Bite

Mission Bite 205: Unexpected Joys Amid the Pandemic

For the last ten years, we have worked with university students and young adults. We love walking with them through the difficult decisions of life that arise in these formative years: what to major in, who to marry, what to believe. It is our great joy to bring Jesus into these conversations and relationships if only for a time. Sometimes we may only have a student for a semester before they graduate. If we're lucky, they'll find us early in their college days and we'll have a few years with them. But, eventually, they leave, returning to their home islands and villages and, sometimes, countries far away. Saying these goodbyes is one of the hardest things we do in ministry.

When students leave, they sign our guestbook, many leaving notes of the impact that God has had on their lives through our ministry. Occasionally, we'll get an email, a Facebook message, or a call on Skype. These come less frequently as the months and years go by.

On any given normal week prior to the pandemic, we'd have dozens of students in our homes for various ministry activities. As we transitioned online, we weren't sure what would become of our ministry or our church. Interestingly enough, our church has more people attending online than we averaged weekly. Our ministry continues also, online. While we miss the large group meetings in our home, our Zoom Bible studies have been an unexpected joy amid this pandemic. Meeting online has allowed former students from across our country and around the globe to join with us to read scripture, pray, and worship together once again. This is one thing we will miss when life returns to normal.

- Brooke and Mike, CBF field personnel serving in Southeast Asia

A Message from Minister of Young Families & Missions Elizabeth Kilby

It is a new year and expectations are higher than maybe ever before but so are our doubts. As we look to missions for the new year, there are thousands of different directions we could take, yet the one thing that remains consistent is God's grace and love. As we open our minds to all the possibilities ahead, may we stay faithful and listen to what God is calling us to do and who He is calling us to impact. Together we can make a difference. Together we are better and stronger. Together we rise to a new year.

Many thoughts & prayers,
Elizabeth Kilby

