



## Cross & Spire

Newsletter of First Baptist Church

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*"Not a perfect church, not a perfect people, just a simple desire to follow Jesus."*

### ***Upcoming Events:***

*Men's Breakfast:  
Saturday, December  
10 at 7:30am*

*Women 2 Women:  
Saturday, December  
3 at 2:00pm*

*Christmas Eve  
Service: Saturday,  
December 24 at  
6:00pm*

*Christmas Sunday  
Service: Sunday,  
December 25 at  
10:00am*

### **A Word from Pastor Rick**

It is hard to miss the note of joy that accompanies the birth of the Messiah Jesus in the Gospel accounts. In the eighth century before Christ, the prophet Isaiah predicted that the gloom that was coming on the people of God because of the judgment of God for their unfaithfulness would be shattered by the coming of the divine human child:

*The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.  
<sup>3</sup> You have enlarged the nation  
and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice  
when dividing the plunder....  
<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
<sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and peace  
there will be no end.  
He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the Lord Almighty  
will accomplish this.*

When Isaiah said that they had more than 700 years to wait. There were seasons of blessing and joy for the people of God, but it was a hard life for most of them. They held onto faith and hope while ruled by foreign tyrants and longed for God's gift of deliverance. They returned from exile to their homeland and reestablished the worship of God in the temple. They rebuilt Jerusalem, the city of God; but the intervention they expected and longed for did not come. The last prophet, Malachi, reminded them of God's promises and called them to maintain faithfulness; but they still had 400 years to wait.

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They experienced the help of God when Antiochus Epiphanes attempted to stamp out the worship of God. He helped them establish a Jewish state with Jewish kings; but the bitterness of the disappointment would be hard to imagine. They were actually worse than most of their foreign oppressors. Herod and the Romans relieved them of these homegrown tyrants, but they cruelly oppressed them and treated their faith in God and hope in his promises with contempt.

Then he came. The birth of his forerunner and his own birth was announced to their parents and the joy began:

He (the forerunner, John the Baptist) will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth – Luke 1:14

Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord

<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup> for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me—

holy is his name – Luke 1:46-49

When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy – Luke 1:57-58

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord...The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told... – Luke 2:9-11, 20

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh – Matthew 2:10-11

I could include the response of Simeon and Anna when they met the infant in the temple, but you see the pattern.

The sad thing about the story, is that most of the nation missed the event. The whole of Jerusalem heard about it when the Magi paid a visit looking for the newborn king; but they ignored the news while the king tried to kill the child.

Those who experienced the joy all had a single characteristic in common. They were focused on Christ himself. Those who missed it were too focused on their own affairs and the business of life to receive the gift God had given.

I know this is the busiest time of the year. Family and friends are coming. There are office parties and sales, trees to buy and decorate, gifts to get and send and that stupid Christmas letter (who invented it anyway?)....Don't miss the opportunity afforded by this season to, like the Magi and the shepherds, come, sit and adore. It will put everything else in perspective and breathe life in all we do to celebrate.

#### **ADVENT IS HERE**

Advent began Sunday, November 27. Advent is the season in the church year leading up to Christmas and our celebration of the birth of Christ. We have special Advent devotional materials available for adults on tables near the church entryways. Please be sure to take one home.

#### **LOOKING AHEAD:**

December 24 – Christmas Eve Service

December 25 – Christmas Sunday Service

#### **GIVING TREE**

Gifts need to be at the church by Sunday, December 4 so that they can be brought to The Listen Center on the 5th of December. Please make sure gift is unwrapped and in a plastic bag with the gift receipt attached to the bag. Thank you to everyone who bought a gift for someone in need in our community.

#### **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

On behalf of the Christian Education Board, I would like to thank everyone who filled a Shoebox for Operation Christmas Child. Thanks to your generosity, we sent 26 Shoeboxes to Samaritan's Purse. These boxes will be such a blessing to children in need in other countries. I hope you enjoyed shopping for and filling a shoe box!

**ANNUAL REPORTS DUE JANUARY 10!**

Attention all church board chairs and/or secretaries – please get your Annual Reports in to the church office by Tuesday, January 10 for inclusion in this year’s Annual Report.

**ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

The Annual Business Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29 this year. We are looking forward to seeing you all there.

**CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL POINESETTIAS**

If you would like to have a poinsettia placed on the altar in memory or honor of a loved one on Christmas Sunday, December 25, please fill out a green order slip from the Sunday worship bulletin and return it with payment to the offering plate or the church office no later than December 11. Cost is \$7.00 per plant.

**MEN’S BREAKFAST**

The next Men’s Breakfast will be on Saturday, December 10 at 7:30am. Please see Jim Newcomb or Chris Scholtz for more information.

**WOMEN 2 WOMEN**

Our next W2W meeting will be on Saturday, December 3 at 2:00PM. Please see Ruth Newcomb or Karen Scholtz for more information.

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**

This year, there will be one Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. It will be on Christmas Eve (December 24) at 6:00pm. Please join us as we celebrate Christ’s birth.

**NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY**

Rachel is going to try to have a new Church Directory in January. Please let her know if your information has changed, and if you would like to remain in the Directory.

**Pastoral Search Committee Update**

Praise God, we have finally established our Pastoral Search Committee. The members consist of: Bill Newhall, Rich Olson, Jim Rostron, Ruth Newcomb, Karen Scholtz, and Dan Nash. We recently had an initial kick-off meeting to help the committee understand their responsibilities in this role. The first step is for the committee to develop an overall strategy on how they will begin the

information gathering needed to build the candidate and church profile. This is the portion that will take the most time.

On a Sunday in late Jan or early Feb, we will prayerfully commission the committee with a congregation prayer time. The committee can also give a quick high-level update on their strategy.

In the meantime, please pray for this team. They are starting a long journey and will need our support, especially in prayer but also in other ways, throughout the entire process.

May God guide them in all things until He reveals to them whom He has chosen.

**Adult Sunday School: December 4, 11, and 18**

In December, Adult Sunday School will take a break from our current study on the “Fruit of the Spirit” (we’ll finish that course in January), to do some different Christmas-related activities! Please join us! On Sunday, December 4 we’ll be looking at the tradition and meaning of the Advent wreath and making them to bring home. Please note there will be no Adult Sunday School on Christmas, December 25.

**November Update**

Board of Deacons

Hello Fellow Congregants,

It is hard to believe that Thanksgiving is soon to be upon us where we will once again sit down with family and friends to celebrate all for which we are thankful. Our Lord and Savior has blessed our congregation greatly so let us all give a special thanks to Him next Thursday for all he has done through the sacrifice of His son Jesus Christ and all that he continues to do for us on a daily basis.

The board of deacons met November 8th to work through our regularly scheduled business; much of which focused on how to go about finding a new worship team leader. Steve Girdwood upon request, met with us to give us his thoughts and ideas on how best to go about this task.

The latter part of our meeting was spent discussing the Principles of Biblical Church Governance. This discussion was based on an outline provided by Pastor Rick which I have included below for all of you to see.

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## Principles of Biblical Church Governance

### I. Jesus Christ is Lord and Head of his Church

- Mt. 28:18-20
- Col. 1:15-20
- Eph. 1:19-23

### II. He leads his Church and directs his ministry through the Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

#### A. Scripture

- 2Tim. 3:16f
- Eph. 2:20f
- Eph. 3:1-10
- 1Cor 2:6-16

#### B. Holy Spirit

- John 14:26f, 16:12f
- Acts 13:1-4, 15:28, 20:22
- Gal. 5:18

### III. He leads his Church through shepherds/leaders (Acts 14:23, 1Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:5-12; Hebrews 13:17; 1Peter 5:1-4). They serve by:

- A. Teaching (Acts 20:20; 1Tim. 4:11-13, 5:17, 6:2; Col. 1:28-29)
- B. Preaching (Col. 2:28f; 2Tim. 4:1-5; 1Tim. 4:11-13)
- C. Encouraging (1Thess. 2:8-12)
- D. Admonishing (1Thess. 5:12; Acts 20:31)
- E. Equipping (Eph. 4:1ff)
- F. Leading (1Thess. 5:12; 1Tim. 5:17; Hebrews 13:17)

### IV. He leads his church through an interactive process between leaders and the led (1Timothy and Titus salutations and greeting)

- A. The leaders serve centered in God's word (Mark 10:42-45; 1Pet 5:1-4; III above)
- B. The congregation submits to their ministry and examines the Scripture (The salutation and greetings of Titus and 1Timothy; Hebrews 13:17; 1Thess 5:12).

C. They seek Christ will together by examining the Scripture, prayer and discussion (Acts 13:1-4, Acts 15:1-22, 28)

V. He leads his Church through the interdependent ministry of his people using his gifts in response to his call (1Pet. 4:10-11; Romans 12:3-8; Eph. 4:11-16; 1Cor. 12:4-26).

VI. Christ's aim is to lead a Church united in the ministry of making disciples of all nations (Eph 4:1-6; Phil 2:1-16; Matthew 28:18-20)

As you can see, the topic was covered in great depth. Pastor Rick explained through the use of scripture, that all we do as a church and as individuals should and must be Biblically based. As stated above in line VI, Christ's aim is to lead a church united in the ministry of making disciples of all nations. This is only possible through studying, understanding and applying His precious gift of the Holy Scriptures. Please keep our church leadership and congregation in prayer as we do our best to apply these scriptures at FBC in moving forward in our Church Governance.

Respectfully Submitted in Christ's Love,  
Marjorie Olson