



*The staff at
First Baptist wishes
you and your family a
blessed Christmas.*

*First Things
Monthly Newsletter*

Christmas - Did you know ?

As recently as 1843, there were no Christmas cards, Christmas trees, turkey feasts, gift-giving, or Christmas parties. But by October 1843, Charles Dickens had become a desperate man. He had just experienced three disappointing publishing efforts in England after a string of 5 very successful literary enterprises. He was frantic to come up with another best-seller. Walking the streets of London night after night, Dickens began to formulate the ideal of *A Christmas Carol*. In a burst of inspiration, he completed the 30,000-word manuscript (the shortest book he ever wrote) in just six weeks. The book of fiction went into its 3rd printing by the end of the year and played a major role in transforming Christmas into the most celebrated time of the year.

Christmas was not observed as a holiday at all during the first few centuries of Christianity. Easter was much more celebrated in those days. By the 5th century, the church declared a feast for the birth of Jesus on December 25th, partially to compete with the pagan Saturnalia celebrations of the Winter Solstice, revered as the birth of the sun. Christmas carols began emerging as popular in the 13th century to keep alive the story of Jesus birth for those who could not read the Bible.

It was Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and Clement Clarke Moore's "The Night Before Christmas," written in 1822 by an American dentist, that completely changed Christmas into the joyous and jubilant celebration that it is today. 1. The individual benefits because of the joy of the season and the time spent with family and friends. Most importantly, the whole world benefits from the coming of the Savior for "He Himself is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world" (1 John 2.2). This truth gives rise to the thrilling declaration, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift" (2 Corinthians 9.15).

Your pastor and glad to be so,

Paul Gordon

DR. GORDON IS GOING TO BE ON THE RADIO!

950 WTLN will be broadcasting one of our Pastor's messages on Sunday, December 18th at 2:00 PM on the "Church of the Week" program. Dr. Gordon will also be participating in an interview discussing the service and our church during the same broadcast.



New to Our Church

Emily Cruz
Ella Hilson

How Can YOU Help?

The following is a list of monthly needs for Loaves & Fishes. We deliver to Loaves & Fishes once a week. If you would like to donate any of these items, please put them in the grocery basket marked Loaves & Fishes by the Welcome Center/Office double glass doors.

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Canned meat | Dry Pasta | Diapers (all sizes) |
| Canned fruit | Rice | Household items |
| Peanut Butter & Jelly | Boxed Potatoes | Shampoo |
| Mac & Cheese | Pine cleaner | Deodorant (Clothes after Jan. 15th) |
| Hamburger Helper | Disposable razors | Dish soap |



Lottie Moon Christmas Offering 2011

HIS HEART HIS HANDS HIS VOICE

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, you are part of the task to fulfill the Great Commission. Paul says, "All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it." (1 Cor. 12:27) Jesus has commissioned us to be HIS HEART, HIS HANDS, HIS VOICE through praying, giving, and going. Southern Baptists have fulfilled this legacy for over 160 years.



What can you do this year? Start by being an extension of His heart, hands and voice through your prayers and unprecedented giving. Nationwide Southern Baptist goal: \$175 million

Lottie Moon Christmas Card Post Office Will Be Open Sunday, December 11th "Mail" 5 cards for \$1.00



The "Post Office" is located across from the choir room. Your Christmas cards will be "sent" to other church members & friends for \$.20 per card. All proceeds benefit the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Sort your Christmas cards in the slots that are alphabetized and put your money or check for postage in the gold star covered box. Checks should be made out to First Baptist and designated for Lottie Moon.

AWANA Children's Club

Sunday nights from 5:30-7:00. Boys and girls ages 4 years-5th grade. Games, achievements, Bible stories & more! Call Commander Jason Stroub or Karina Stroub at 352-729-2640 or fbcaawana@gmail.com if you have any questions.



Kids on Mission - Wednesday Night @ 6:30 pm Grades K-5

Kids on Mission meets in the Children's Ministry (Awana) Room across from the Fellowship Hall. Exciting mission activities, games, stories. It's new and it's fun!!

Families United Spiritually Impacting Our Nation

Sunday Morning 9:15 Deaf Ministry Sunday School

Sunday Morning 10:30 Deaf Junior Church

Sunday Evening 6:00 to 7:00 Fusion Club (K4-6th)

Wednesday Evening 6:30 to 7:30 Fusion Club (K4-6th)

All Fusion activities are for deaf and hearing children of deaf families



Get Plugged In! Small Groups on Sunday Morning

Stop by Loren's Donut Hut (by the Welcome Center) on Sunday morning on your way to Sunday School! If you don't have a Sunday School small group class to go to, our Sunday School Director, Loren Sauers, can tell you what we have to offer and point you in the right direction. Get plugged in!

Find a class and make new friends!!



Deaf Ministry Chapel

Our Deaf Ministry led by Dr. A.C. & Wanda McCann meets in the Fellowship Hall for Chapel services from 9:00-10:15 on Sunday morning. Sunday School in the Fellowship Hall from 10:30-11:30. The only exception to this is on the first Sunday of each month when they will be in regular services in the Sanctuary at 10:30 and in Sunday School at the regular time of 9:00-10:15 am.

Senior Exercise Classes Meet Weekly

Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall from 11:00-12:00.

Each Wednesday is different so you may start with any class.

There is no charge for your first visit and then if you like it pay \$20.00 per month.





Two Services on Sunday Night!
Contemporary Worship Service @ 6:00
in the Fellowship Hall.
Traditional Sunday night Worship Service
in the Worship Center @ 6:00



First Family Breakfast is Sunday, December 4th @ 8:30 am
in the Fellowship Hall



Joani Tabor in Concert on Sunday, December 4th @ 10:30 am
 Joani celebrates life through her music, spreading her message of hope and encouragement.



Jewels for Jesus - Daytime Ladies' Bible Study
Tuesday, December 6th @ 10:00 am
& Tuesday, December 20th @ 10:00 am
In the Fellowship Hall

On Dec. 6th, Marie Spoon will finish teaching from Psalm 139. On Tues. Dec. 20th, we invite everyone (men, women & children accompanied by an adult) to join us. Monnie Shirley will make a presentation "Mary at the Birth of Christ."



Christmas Musical/Drama
Sunday Night, December 11th at 6:00 pm

Searching for the King is a one-of-a-kind dramatic Christmas musical. A dynamic contemporary story parallels the biblical story delivering a message as powerful as the prophets and as relevant as today's headlines. The script juxtaposes one of the Magi (Mordecai) as he follows the Star of Bethlehem, with Benjamin, a soldier stationed in the Middle East 2,000 years later who is looking up at the same stars. They are both searching for the truth, and they both find it at the foot of the manger.

Lamplighters Christmas Luncheon on December 13th at 11:30

Bring a covered dish. Fun, Food & Fellowship! We will exchange gifts in the \$5-\$10 range by drawing numbers. Mark your gift male or female. The HCA children will also sing for us. Bring a friend!



Juliet's Christmas Party with Romeo's "Happy Birthday Celebration Jesus"
Friday, December 16th @ 6:30

Meat & dessert provided.
 Please bring a covered dish to share.
 Ladies gift exchange - \$10.00 limit
 Entertainment and door prizes! Meet in the Fellowship Hall

Romeo's (Retired Ole Men Eating Out) Breakfast - Tuesday, December 20th
 8:30 AM at Bubbalou's by Publix on Rock Springs Road



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with The Lord's Supper
5:00 pm on Saturday, December 24th



ATTENTION: Christmas & New Year's Schedules for Services, Sunday School & Office Hours

We will have regular Sunday morning service on Sun. Dec. 25th at 10:30 am. We will NOT have Sunday School on Christmas morning & we will NOT have Sunday night service on Christmas evening. The church office and Highland Christian Academy will be closed on Friday, December 23 and Monday, December 26.

We will have regular Sunday morning service on Sun. Jan. 1st at 10:30 am. We WILL have Sunday School and we will NOT have Sunday night service on New Year's Day evening. The church office and Highland Christian Academy will be closed on Friday, December 29 and Monday, January 2nd.



From the Desk of Lyle Forsberg Church Administration/Education

I am tired of God and people telling me to be thankful. How can I be thankful in the midst of so much misery? I am unhappy with my place and station in life. I am unhappy with my current living conditions. I am unhappy with my current car. The only time I seem to be a little joyful is when I get or buy something new! Are you there?

I could feel real happy with a new flat screen TV or a new dress? How about a new kitchen or a new house? There is definitely a euphoric feeling when I am driving a brand new automobile. I am convinced people keep the price sticker on the car window to prolong that happy feeling as long as possible. It reminds them..."I have a new car and I am happy!"

How easy it is to get addicted to this habit. How quickly the habit turns to addiction. Buying FEELS good! Let's buy....feels good; buy again...feels good again....buy more...feels even better! And so it continues, until the credit card bill comes due or there is a job loss or a bounced check.

Isn't there a better way? Fortunately for us there is. But it must be discovered then practiced. We must cultivate a truly thankful attitude for *the free* things we have received. You might be saying, "I don't get free things!" Really? Let's start with the air we breathe. I'll help us with this one. Right now where you sit, take a deep slow breathe. Now do it again but FEEL the air enter your lungs and imagine all that vital oxygen entering your bloodstream and nourishing your body all the way to your fingertips. Do you FEEL better? If not, practice it until you do. If you do feel better then take a moment to appreciate what just happened. Our creator created that process. He has a million more for you to explore and enjoy. Can you come up with one?

How about this one? Go outside on the next clear night and look at the stars. Those tiny spots of light are indicators of a very large universe that was designed with us in mind. If you are feeling really adventurous, find out how big and how far away one of those stars is from you. Are you getting it yet? You breathed, you used eyesight, and you can move, think and process thoughts and concepts. All these things given...free....to you and for your enjoyment.



It takes a little practice but enjoying the good free things in life actually helps to push the other things out of the way. There is one more part to this exercise. Be thankful! Let's practice together.

Thank you Father for the multitude of free gifts you have given: for the air I breathe and the rainbows of colors I see. Thank you for that tiny bite of food that has such a wonderful and lasting taste. Thank you for these fingers that grasp, ears that absorb, a brain that can process and dwell on your many other wonderful gifts. All free. All for me.

All that other man made stuff seems a little less significant, doesn't it?
I feel less addicted, how about you?

Blessings, Lyle



From the Desk of Pastor Loren Sauers Christian Education/Outreach

One of the greatest aromas in life is the smell of fresh bread coming out of the oven. I love to go to Albertsons or Publix when the bread is just coming out; when I happen to get to the store just as they're putting it out is dangerous to my diet. I usually have to get two loaves, one for home and one to break into for the ride home. I know, I know not too good for the diet but sometimes you just have to give in. The only thing I love more is when this happens when I'm studying the Bible.

On Sunday nights, Pastor has been leading us through a study of the Book of Luke and it has inspired me to want to study deeper into Luke's writings. So I have been studying the Book of Acts along with studying the Book of Luke. Have you ever said or heard someone say, "I've studied the Bible for years and every time I read the Bible I see something I have not seen before?" I think we have all had that experience. Well, I had a new experience. Studying these two books together I have realized how close in time that many of these events took place. I believe that because of the way the Bible is laid out and the time span of the Old Testament we have an inclination to try to apply this same principle to the New Testament.

The problem is that the New Testament contains a closer tight knit course of events. Yes, the synoptic gospels are an account of the thirty-three years of Jesus life but they mostly focus on the 3 years of ministry and life course of Jesus ministry, with the culmination being His death, burial and resurrection. Then we are faced with the first four chapters of the Book of Acts. For the most part we have a tendency to look at the book as events that occurred over a long span of time, but this is just not the fact. If you look at the first four chapters of the Book of Acts in a time-line fashion here are a few things you find. For the first thirty-seven days after the resurrection Jesus appeared and taught not only His disciples but numerous others people.

The last ten days before the day of Pentecost and Jesus' ascension He spent a great deal of time directly with His closest friends, which are estimated to be around 120 people. So for the first 47 days after His crucifixion Jesus spent a lot of time directly with His followers. Then at the ascension, 50 days after His crucifixion it is estimated that about 120 people witnessed Him ascending into heaven. Within the next few weeks, the book of Acts tell us that at least 3,000 people came to the knowledge of Salvation through Jesus Christ and that the gospel began to be spread throughout Jerusalem. At the time of the Passover it is said by some scholars that the population of Jerusalem may have reached into the hundreds of thousands, but for most popular scholars' view, this to be a great stretch of the figures, considering economy of the day and the control of the Roman government over the movement of the people. The accepted population of the area at the time was around 60,000.

If the accepted 60,000 people is the accurate then that means that within 60 days of Christ crucifixion that 5% of the population would have become Christian. While it doesn't sound like a lot, figure it out. If 5% of Apopka's and the surrounding small town's populations were to come to Christ in the next 60 days, what would that come to? Around 2100 people, if a quarter of those came to our church that would be 525 baptisms in 60 days. Now does it sound like a lot? It does to me. Next thought is that this all happened within 2 months, not many years. Yes, it is believed that the book of Acts was written in about 67 AD, but still in the premise of historical account, the account of the event does not affect the event itself. My point is that someone, most likely Luke himself, kept a journal of the events and then at the end of his life or his later years he or one of his counterparts penned it for posterity. Much like us writing the experiences of our lives in a journal or telling someone our experiences or talking to an older relative or friend about past events that they experienced in their lives. I love to talk to people about the history of their lives. They have seen it, experienced it and lived it. What better source of history could there be?

Whether it is the gospels, the epistles or our lives' history comes alive when we look at it with their eyes. While the writing may have been many years later the events were still in real time. The congregation (church) of the Lord was birthed within 2 months of Christ special gift to all of mankind. God made it all, Christ gave it all and the Holy Spirit moves it all.



Operation Christmas Child Update

Just letting the church family know, our 138 shoeboxes have been turned in at a Relay Center, College Park Presbyterian Church. Ours were the very first boxes turned in in our area this year! Yea! There they will be placed in cartons and sent to Northland where they will be loaded on a huge semi truck and taken to Atlanta to a Processing Center (warehouse). There volunteers will check each box removing the checks and money in the top of the box and turning that into Samaritan's Purse to use for shipping our boxes. Other volunteers will check each box to make sure there is nothing in there that should not be (liquids, chocolates, glass items and so forth.) Each box will be secured with a wide tape with Samaritan's Purse written on it and will be placed in cartons once again. If you gave online and placed a barcode on your box, that barcode will be scanned and you should receive an email telling when and where your box is sent.

The cartons will be loaded on trucks and sent to various ports and such and taken to their destination country where they will have to go through customs and then into the hands of the Christian team in that country responsible for getting them to the children. A booklet "The Greatest Gift" in the child's language will be given along with the gift. Every effort will be made to share Jesus with these children.

Each year more and more countries are able to offer a study course follow up after the distribution entitled "The Greatest Journey." This course goes deeper into the Christian faith and also teaches the children how to share their faith. They will have a graduation and receive a New Testament in their language as well as a certificate of completion. Samaritan's Purse sends in teams to teach the teachers how to teach these lessons in advance of the box distribution. It is a simple, yet complicated, mission effort. Pray that God will use the boxes from our church to bring many to Him.

Thank you so much for doing such a good job.

Blessings,
Monnie Shirley



Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Praise Him all His angels: Praise Him, all His hosts! Psalm 148:2

Like all Moravians, John Montgomery had a burden for world evangelism. He was the only Moravian pastor in Scotland, but he and his wife felt God's call to be missionaries to the island of Barbados. They left their six-year-old son, James, in a Moravian settlement in Ireland and sailed to Barbados where they perished. Left with nothing, James was enrolled in a school in England. When he didn't do well, he was apprenticed by school authorities to a baker. Baking wasn't for James. He ran away and spent his teenage years drifting from pillar to post, writing poetry and trying his hand at one thing then another. He eventually settled down in Sheffield, England.

In his early twenties, James began working for the local newspaper, the *Sheffield Register*, and there he found his niche. He loved writing. It was a politically active newspaper, and when its owner had to suddenly flee the country to avoid persecution and imprisonment, James purchased the paper and renamed it the *Sheffield Iris*. His editorials, too, proved unpopular with local officials. On two separate occasions he was thrown into jail. But he emerged from prison a celebrity, and he used his newly acquired fame to promote *his* favorite issues. James remained devoted to Christ and to the Scriptures, and he championed the cause of foreign missions and the British Bible Society.

As the years passed, he became the most respected leader in Sheffield, and his writings were eagerly read by its citizens. Early on Christmas Eve, 1816, James, 45, opened his Bible to Luke 2, and was deeply impressed by verse 13. Pondering the story of the heralding angels, he took his pen and started writing. By the end of the day, his new Christmas poem was being read in the pages of his newspaper. It was later set to music and was first sung on Christmas Day, 1821, in a Moravian Church in England: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory."

Taken from the book "Then Sings My Soul"

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE LIBRARY TEAM:

Pat Malcolm, Carolyn Dorman, Lou Dail, Janet Resch and Millie Mahan

First Baptist Weekly/Monthly Activities

Sunday:

- 9:00 am -Sunday School - A Bible Study program for all ages.
- 9:00 am-Devoted: Youth Small Groups
- 9:00 am - Deaf Ministry Chapel
- 10:30 am - Worship Service*
- 11:00-11:30 am - Kid's Worship
- 10:30 am - Deaf Ministry "Bible Round Table" Sunday School
- 3:45 pm - Handbell Rehearsals
- 4:30-5:45 pm-ASL Sign Language Class
- 5:30-7:00-AWANA Children's Bible Club (Sept.-May)
- 5:00-7:00 pm - Youth Fuel Activities (6th-12th grade)
- 6:00 pm - Praise, Worship & Bible Study *
- 6:00 pm - Contemporary Praise & Worship Service*

Wednesday:

- 6:30-7:30 pm - Kid's Activities
 - 6:30-7:30-Deaf Ministry Bible Study in room 108*
 - 6:30-7:30 - Women's Ministry Fellowship & Prayer Time*
 - 6:30 pm - Student Fuel Ministry (6th-12th grade)*
 - 6:30 pm - Praise, Prayer and Bible Study *
 - 7:30 pm - Choir & Praise Team rehearsal
- *Nursery provided for infants through 3 years old during service.

Additional Weekly and Monthly Activities

- 1st Sunday of each month - First Family Breakfast 8:30 am
- Each Tuesday of the month - Visitation, Outreach 6 pm
- Each Tuesday of the month-Deaf Ministry Bible Study at 1st & 3rd Tuesday -Jewels for Jesus Ladies' Bible Study @ 10:00 am NDA in Mt. Dora 7:00-8:00 pm
- 2nd Tuesday of each month - Lamplighters' Luncheon 11:30 am (for the "50 and over crowd") (Sept.-May)
- 3rd Tuesday of each month - Mission In Action 9:00 am (quilting ministry) (Sept.-May)
- Each Thursday of the month - Jabez Prayer Group 7:00 am

Staff at FBC Apopka: E-mail addresses:

- Pastor- Dr. Paul F. Gordon- pfgordon@fbcapopka.net
- Youth Pastor- Kevin Kozial- kevin@fbcapopka.net
- Deaf Ministry Pastor- Dr. A.C. McCann- acinsight66@bellsouth.net
- Administration/Education- Lyle Forsberg- lylef@fbcapopka.net
- Music Director -Steve Hooks- steve@fbcapopka.net
- Christian Education/Outreach-Rev. Loren Sauers- occministries@aol.com
- Awana Commander- Jason Stroub- fbcaawana@gmail.com
- Children's Church Director- Lori Ahern
- Finance Secretary- Sherry Marsden- sherry@fbcapopka.net
- Church Secretary- Judy Brown- judy@fbcapopka.net
- HCA Director-Michelle Brown- michelle@fbcapopka.net
- Maintenance- Billy Seigler
- Church Email- fbc@fbcapopka.net

First Baptist Church of Apopka

441 S. Highland Avenue

Apopka, FL 32703

office-407-886-2628

fax-407-886-3332

E-mail - fbc@fbcapopka.net

Website - www.fbcapopka.net

Highland Christian Academy

Infant through Pre-kindergarten

407-886-0015

Library Hours

Sunday-8:30-9:15 and 5:30-6:00

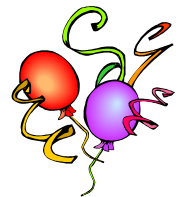
Wednesday - 5:45-6:30



The deadline for newsletter articles is the third Monday of every month. Email to: Judy@fbcapopka.net or turn them in at the office.

First Family Breakfast
Sunday, December 4
Fellowship Hall
@ 8:30 AM

| <u>December Birthdays</u> | | <u>January Birthdays</u> | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Winona Genton | 22 | Kenny Anderson |
| | Ron Acree | 23 | Ron Stum |
| | Glen Norman | 24 | Michael St. Hilaire |
| 2 | Bo Ollice | 26 | Raissa Ollice |
| 3 | Dee Allums | 27 | Griffin Bruehl |
| 6 | Danielle Wilson | 28 | Richard Allums |
| 9 | Arlina Faircloth | 29 | Rob Taylor |
| | Karen Anderson | | Mary Luz Rolon |
| 11 | David Jordan | 30 | Janet Resch |
| | Virginia Catanese | | Linda Davoll |
| | Julio Cuadrado | 31 | Wilda Holman |
| 15 | Carolee Conner | | Janise Ellixson |
| 16 | Kate Conway | | Kristin Martin |
| | Robbie Manley | | |
| | Kelly Kinsey | 1 | Jennifer Raulerson |
| 17 | Jason Stroub | 4 | Myrtle Blackwelder |
| 18 | Virgil Hataway | | Jay Davoll |
| | Ann Lyle | 5 | Brandon Page |
| 22 | Lou Dail | 6 | Allyn Griffin |
| | | 10 | Lajuai Granger |
| | | 11 | Sarah Rich |
| | | | Ivenia Augustus |
| | | 12 | Kim Malcolm |
| | | 14 | Gloria Hewitt |
| | | 15 | John Bowers |
| | | | Jenni Freed |
| | | 16 | John David |
| | | | Haygood |
| | | | Douglas Raulerson |
| | | 18 | David Ahern |
| | | | Elizabeth Diaz |
| | | 19 | Bera Buck |
| | | | Carla Kinsey |
| | | 21 | Halle Martinez |
| | | 22 | Carolyn Dorman |
| | | 24 | Louise Yancey |
| | | | Mary Robinson |
| | | 28 | Allen Holman |
| | | | Blessing Alcuis |
| | | 30 | Marie Bowers |
| | | | Dania Collins |
| | | | Sylvia Smith |
| | | | Wayne Spoon |



If your birthday has not appeared on the monthly list in the newsletter, that means it is not in our computer system. Please call the church office at 407-886-2628 and let us know that you need to be added to our list for your special day!