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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
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FIRST BAPTIST OAKBORO

The Communicator

VOL. XXXI No. 12

December 1, 2020

Our vision is
more attainable than ever.

2020 GOAL

\$175
million

imb

LOTTIE MOON
CHRISTMAS
OFFERING

imb.org/lmco

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is a national offering of IMB.

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For someone given to pessimism, 2020 has offered a lot of ammunition. Like, a lot of it. We made it about 90 days into the month—just long enough for the warranty to expire—and the tires came loose, the steering went out, the radio stopped working, the seats fell to tatters, the exhaust pipe broke off, and the engine dropped out. It’s like the hits have just kept coming. And at every sociological level. Socially, relationally, physically,

spiritually, financially, mentally, and any other “-ly’s” you feel like adding in there have pretty well hit rock bottom as we’ve continued drifting, rudderless, down this terrifying adventure ride.

And now we’re going to celebrate a holiday whose current expression includes massive amounts of people packing into stores just as cold and flu season begins kicking into high gear. What could go wrong? Online shopping here we come, right? Advent is a season of waiting, and we are sure in a place of waiting. Not for Jesus though, for 2021.

Have you been one of the many folks who have fallen into that particular trap this year? If we can just get to 2021, everything will be better. But will it? Possibly, but it could also be worse. We really don’t have any basis for counting on that beyond mere wishful thinking. COVID has been bad this year, sure, but its mortality rate is low in an absolute sense—something like 1%. What if next year a new mystery virus appears that has a mortality rate of even just 2%? What if one appears with a mortality rate of 50%? 75%? 100%??? This year has been challenging, but things could have easily been much, much worse than they were. If your hope is in nothing more than the idea that 2021 is going to be better because how could it not be, you need something with a bit more substance. Even more than that, we need a hope that is not connected to a particular set of circumstances.

Friends, this is exactly what we have in the Scriptures. What the various writers who contributed to the Scriptures over the hundreds of years of its composition process were all abundantly clear in commending to us is a hope that is not merely in some brighter tomorrow, but in the God who will bring it into reality.

As we talked about this past Sunday, we are putting our hope in God who promised for hundreds of years that He would send His Messiah to open the doors to redemption for all who would enter them. Then He did. He

did it just exactly as He said He would do it. Then He made another promise: He is one day going to come back and restore all things to their intended splendor. Not even COVID can stand in the way of that. And this is substance of our hope. We hope—we are confident enough in a future that will be better than our present reality that we are making adjustments to our lives and lifestyles now even though we can’t see it and don’t know exactly what it will be like—because we have faith in the amply demonstrated character of our God. He is a promise-keeping God. He’s kept His promises before without fail and, therefore, we trust He will do it again.

That is the beauty of the Advent season and the celebration of Christmas. We are taking intentional time each year to re-center our lives around this incredible fact: We are a people of hope. We are a people so committed to a future that will be infinitely better than our present that we are willing to live our lives in light of that—and encourage others to do the same—even though we can’t see it and don’t know when it will come. The character of the God who sent His Son as promised gives us this confidence.

As you prepare and celebrate with your family this month, then, may you have hope. Not the flimsy thing that so many around us cling to in hopes that it will provide something of which it is not capable, but the real, rich, deep hope that comes from understanding who God is and what He has promised. May you know the hope that fills your life with joy and peace and love even as the world around us is broken at so many points. May you know this hope and may you share it so that a world in need of hope can experience it with you. Blessings to you and your family!

Pastor Jonathan

OUR RECORD OF GIVING

Budget Goals – November	31,711.20
Budget Receipts – November	34,667.80
Budget Goals – YTD	82,449.12
Budget Receipts – YTD	79,219.80
Budget Variance	- 3,229.82
<i>Special Offerings</i>	
Building Fund	1,645.00
NC Baptist Children’s Homes	370.00
Trunk or Treat	100.00
Operation Christmas Child Shipping	148.00
Meals on a Mission	100.00
Thanksgiving Meal Donation	50.00
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering	150.00



The Child

Have you been watching the latest episodes of Disney's **Mandalorian**? If so, then this article will make perfect sense to you. If not, there's still a very high chance that you've heard of or seen a picture of "The Child." Yes, this creature that looks like Yoda from the Star Wars films but just in child form. It's all over social media, in memes, and a huge part of pop culture right now. If it still doesn't ring a bell, take a moment to Google "The Child," and it will instantly pop up. All throughout this series, which is on its second season, the plot has been surrounded by this child and a bounty hunter called a Mandalorian tasked with protecting it. But that's just it, that's all the audience has known about this creature. It has always just been referred to as "The Child." It uses superpowers and gets into mischief but, arguably, the story revolves around him. That is, until this past week. This past week we finally learned, 13 episodes in, that "The Child's" name is, Grogu. After a long waiting period, we learn his name and a little of his backstory. Now, there is anticipation for what Grogu will do in the next episodes now that we have learned his true identity.



Does this story seem familiar in some way to you? Like it has some eerie connection to another story that you've heard, or maybe one that we focus on during this time of the year. A child, unknown but whose coming is covered in mystery; not knowing his name—but knowing he is destined for big things. Someone who needs protecting in infancy, but eventually might protect and save us all. Of course! Jesus! Not to get into the notion of how Disney ripped off the story of the Bible here (but if you pay attention to most movies, you'll see that very many of their plot lines are strikingly similar to the Gospel plot...), we see how we find the parallels in which The Mandalorian took its inspiration from. I mean, look at when we found out the name of Jesus in Luke 1:26-33. The angel comes to Mary and announces big things for her child, which she was to name Jesus.

Doesn't it make sense, though, to see pictures of Jesus in this Star Wars story and so many other Disney and non-Disney productions? Why? Because we as a human species are hungry for something big, something deep down we know we need, hungry for a hero to take the spotlight and save the day. It's something we crave. Just look at most action, romance, Hallmark, comedy, horror, and well any other genre of movies. Most of them have a savior-figure that hopes to save the day. Why are we so obsessed with this? Because just like in the show Mandalorian, we were destined to have a child be the center of attention. And 2,000 years ago,

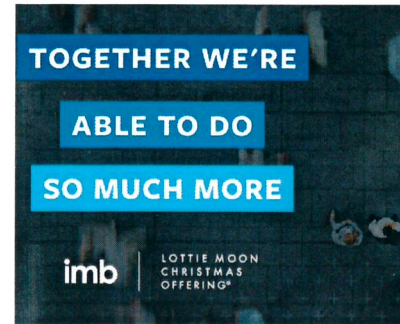
God gave us that child: One that would fulfill everything we every could need.

So, as we celebrate this season, of celebrating the birth of the child Jesus, how can you look at everyday stories and see the Gospel message in them? How can you center your family celebrations around that message? And how can you use everyday interactions to point out this message to those who need to hear it?

With Thankfulness and Love,

Merry Christmas!

Nate



Our offering focus for December will be the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. Envelopes and prayer guides are available on the entranceway tables. Prayerfully consider giving to the cause to benefit spreading the Gospel through the world.

Poinsettia Dedications

If you would like to dedicate a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please use one of the sign-up sheets on the bulletin boards. If you prefer, you may call or email the church office to place your order. They are \$20 each, with paper and bow, and the order will need to be in by Sunday, **December 13**. Your money may be turned in through the offering plate by marking "poinsettia" on the envelope, by online giving or by stopping by the church office.



Christmas Worship

The Bible is full of ways to worship:

Kneeling	Acts 20:36
Singing	Psalm 100:2
Praying	1 Thessalonians 5:17
Shouting	Psalm 98:8
Clapping	Psalm 47:1
Prostrating	Revelation 1:17
Raising Hands	1 Timothy 2:8
Dancing	Psalm 30:11
Playing Instruments	Chronicles 15:16
Meditating/Listening	Joshua 1:8
Giving	Isaiah 58:7
Serving	Psalm 100:2
Taking Communion	1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Fasting	Daniel 9:3

Every Advent, Christ comes again to you and me – inviting us into the greatest story ever told. I am making available a beautiful personal advent devotional guide. Please, take one per family. They are placed on the glass table in the fellowship hall breezeway. This is a gift to you from the Music Ministry.



“For unto us a child is born.” Isaiah 9:6

Dana B. Jenkins



*A donation was given by Pamela Wellons “in honor of all those who faithfully and tirelessly serve in the church and make all the programs continue to run successfully – even during a pandemic.
Thank you!”*

*A contribution was given by Harold & Louise Floyd in honor of our church family who has been wonderful. Thank you for everything.
Please continue the prayers!*



*“So thankful for all the prayers, and beautiful cards meant so much. We have a wonderful church family.
Hope to be back soon. Love,”*

Marlene Barbee

*“To all our friends and fellow church members:
Thank you will never be a strong enough word to say to all of you who have shown your love, kindness and generosity to Mark and to us during this ongoing health crisis. It has touched our hearts so deeply! Your cards, prayers, donations, calls and even transportation help are things we cherish and will always remember. There will be months—maybe even years that we plan to give our love and support to Mark. We ask only that you continue to pray for his improvements. We can already see how prayers have helped thus far. Our church family is extremely important to us and we love you all!”*

Carolyn & Felix Hinson



*In memory of **Darrell Burgess**, donations were given to the Building Fund by Eddie & Linda Arrowood and Ted & Jewell Parker.*

*In memory of **David Turner**, a donation was given to the Building Fund by Mae Brooks.*

*A contribution was made by Ben Mynatt Chevrolet in memory of **David Turner**.*

*Ted & Jewell Parker made a donation to the Building Fund in memory of **Jesse Baldwin**.*

*In memory of **Janice Hinson**, Doris Hatley gave a contribution to the Building Fund.*

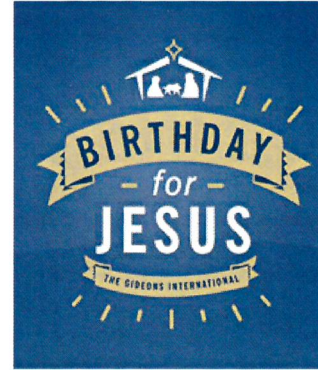


PANCAKE BREAKFAST,
CRAFTS, GAMES, & MORE

FBO KIDS CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 5
9:30 - 11:00 AM
FBCO FELLOWSHIP HALL

Questions? Contact Pastor Nate 228-860-6397



Through Gideons International, we will be wishing “Happy Birthday to Jesus” through December. A display with a “Birthday for Jesus” tree will be set up in the fellowship hall. Please help give as many Bibles as possible by placing an offering of any amount in one of the donation envelopes or taking one of the gift ornaments and placing it on the tree itself. Then, take one of the ornaments home to put on your Christmas tree as a reminder to pray for whomever receives the Bibles you have donated. *“And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth.”* John 1:16



COME ONE, COME ALL!

FBC Oakboro Student Christmas Party

Come Join for Food, Fun, and a Gift Exchange!

December 20th, 2020
5-7 PM
FBC Oakboro Fellowship Hall

Food and Drink will be provided. Bring a wrapped \$5 gift for the gift exchange game.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- December**
- 1 Butch Poplin
 - 2 Harry Foster
 - 3 Kristen Beatty
 - 5 Jeff Chance
 - Presley Poplin
 - 10 Ted Parker
 - 15 Heather Copple
 - 18 Georgia Harvey
 - Barry Beatty
 - 25 Joyce Little
 - Rebekah Crisco
 - 27 Mike McClellan
 - 28 Iris Mooney
 - 29 Betty Huneycutt
 - 30 Case Smith
 - 31 Teresa Smith

- January**
- 2 Julie Poplin
 - Ann Burgess
 - 4 Jean Little

Please call or email the office with any changes to the birthday calendar.



HELLO December



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri		
Weekly Sunday Schedule 9:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Worship				6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages	5:45 p.m. Oakboro Tree Lighting 6:00 p.m. Christmas Parade	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	9:30-11:00 a.m. Kids' Christmas Party Pancake Breakfast, Games & More
10:00 a.m. Sunday School for ALL Students, College/Career, & Mixed Adults Sunday School via Zoom (Joy, Life, Genesis, Blessed Assurance)	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer		6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages		7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use		
2nd Sunday of Advent	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer		6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages		7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use		
10:00 a.m. Live Sunday School (see above) Sunday School via Zoom (see above)	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer 6:30 Gideons Meeting in Fellowship Building		6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages		7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use		
3rd Sunday of Advent	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer		12:00 p.m. Seven Oaks Hardware Christmas Party NO Bible Studies				
10:00 a.m. Live Sunday School (see above) Sunday School via Zoom (see above) 5:00-7:00 p.m. Youth Christmas Party Food, Fun, \$5 Gift Exchange	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer		NO Bible Studies	Office Closed	Office Closed		
4th Sunday of Advent	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use NO Bible Studies	7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	DECEMBER'S FOCUS: LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING	Monday-Thursday 8:15-10:30 a.m. 1:00-3:00 p.m. Fellowship Building Open for Students--Internet Access	