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FIRST BAPTIST
OAKBORO

The Communicator

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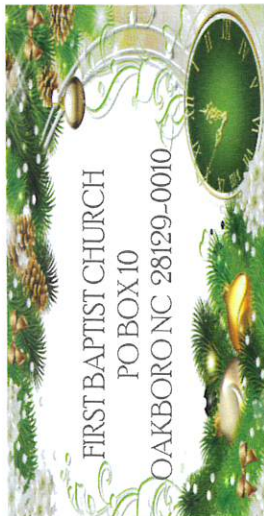
December 28, 2022



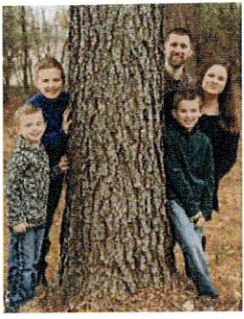
Happy New Year!

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Here we are at the cusp of something new once again. A new year as it so happens this time. The calendar has turned, and there is a sense of anticipation in the air. Anticipation for what exactly isn't ever terribly clear but standing at the cusp of new things always feels just a bit exciting. And scary. Sometimes more scary than exciting, but in most circumstances a healthy mixture of both.

As for the question of where we go from here, there are a number of different factors that all play a role in helping us arrive at an answer.

For starters, sometimes the things that determine our direction are factors not only completely outside of our control, but also entirely unknowable standing where we currently are. Easily the best example of this is Covid. As 2018 became 2019, the plans we had for the year ahead included several different things, all of which were completely turned on their heads as it became clear that Covid was going to be an entirely more disruptive thing to our lives than anyone anticipated on that New Year's Day.

Sometimes the deciding vote goes to something God does. We may start off in some direction, but God moves in some way that is clearly pushing us in another direction. These kinds of interactions are even harder to predict and are things we just have to roll with when they arrive.

There's one more pretty significant factor here worth mentioning. This is the question of the kind of church we want to be. What is the end toward which we are aiming? It is this element that, save a direct intervention from God Himself, has the most to do with where we are to go from here. Or, to put that in a way that sounds a bit pithier, the direction is determined by the destination.

Let me see if an example helps to clarify what I mean here, and then I want to ponder some questions together. If you are going on a trip, the direction you go is determined by the destination toward which you are aiming. For instance, if you are going to Disney World, heading north on I-85 is likely not what you are going to be doing. Your destination is to the south and so your direction will reflect that.

Given all of this, as a church, what is our destination? It's easy to answer that question by saying something about our heading toward God's kingdom. Many churches settle for something along those lines. And that's not necessarily a bad thing. It's certainly a true thing. But as we have talked about before, it's not all that helpful of a thing. The reason for this is that every church is technically headed in that direction. Something so generic as this doesn't give us enough details to differentiate our path from that of any other church.

So, what else is there?

Well, there's our mission statement as a church. First Baptist Oakboro is a people with whom anyone can connect to grow in Christ and reach out for His kingdom. That gives us a great deal more clarity on the direction we need to go from here. We need to be actively doing those things which help people connect here both with our community and with our mutual heavenly Father. We need to make sure we are creating opportunities for people to grow in their relationship with Jesus and then actively encouraging them to take those opportunities. We need to create pathways for our people to reach out for the sake of advancing Christ's kingdom which will take the form of a more active engagement in missions both local and non-local. All of these are going to be a part of our direction because otherwise we aren't being faithful to the identity

Allow me to offer one more observation of something which should arguably have somewhat of a determining role in our direction: our community. We live in a growing community. And, a great deal of that growth is coming in the form of young families. Some of these are coming in already committed to a church somewhere else. Some don't really have a church but are interested in one. Some have never really considered such a thing before. Some families are small. Some are larger. Some are multi-generational. There are all kinds of families making the decision to invest at least a season of their lives in our town because of all it has to offer them. We need to be part of what it has to offer them.

How do we do this? For starters, by continuing to be the genuinely welcoming-to-new-people community we already are. People love that about us. They should. It's part of what makes us so special. But there's more. If younger families are moving to the area, we need to make sure we have an active kids and youth ministry ready to receive them when they arrive. Nate and a terrific team of volunteers are already hard at work on this, but they always need more people who love kids and want to see them become more fully who Jesus designed them to be. Families want to be in a place their kids are going to be embraced. That fact should determine our direction. One more: Our worship service has to be a point of connection. The worship service is a vital time in the life of our community. It should be. It is for us. It also has to be accessible to folks who aren't yet a part of our community. It must itself be invitational. What does this look like in practice? That's a conversation worth having together.

This coming year, I am excited about the potential to see more people connect with the Gospel and the kingdom of God because of what Jesus does through us, His body. I already know of another outdoor baptism service that will be coming up this spring. Kids camps are set. Folks are already looking forward to this year's Trunk or Treat. The community is growing. Let's be a part of God's action to advance His kingdom in this community and beyond together.

Pastor Jonathan



The Light of the World

Jesus says in John 8 that he is the light of the world. As we just finished the Christmas season celebrating the light of the world, we look now to the new year and what new and great things God can do through the life of our church. What gives me hope is the fact that not only does Jesus call himself the light of the

world, but he also calls us the light of the world as well in Matthew 5. So how can it be both? How are we the light of the world but Jesus is also? The answer is the two are connected inescapably. Without Jesus, there is no light. But when we come into his light through repentance and faith, his light now lives in us. We show light to others by the good we do and the message we share. In reality, it's really just Jesus' light; we're just the vessels.

We have shown a lot of light in 2022. Just in our student ministries, we've seen countless examples of light happen in the lives of our kids and youth. From relationships built, to salvations, to discipleship, to cultures of discipleship being built. I'm excited to keep our light shining in 2023 and be what Christ has for us here in Oakboro, around Stanly County, North Carolina, The United States, and the World.

Keep Shining, **Nate**

Follow our youth ministry on Instagram @fboyouth

**Mission Trip Interest Meeting via
Zoom with Church Planter January 18 at 6:30 p.m.**



Youth Merchandise Available

Sign-up sheets are located on the bulletin board for you to order merchandise with the Youth logo on them. Hats and short-sleeved shirts are \$16 (\$18 for 2XL & larger shirts). Hooded sweatshirts are \$21 and \$24 for 2XL and larger. Please sign up or call the church office to place your order; contact Pastor Nate with any questions.



OUR RECORD OF GIVING

Budget Goals – December	25,379.16
Budget Receipts – December	31,102.00
Budget Goals – YTD	107,861.43
Budget Receipts – YTD	113,228.00
Budget Variance	+5,366.57
<i>Special Offerings</i>	
Building Fund	9,690.00
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (Total \$3,610)	3,455.00
NC Baptist Children's Homes	100.00
Deacons	60.00
Gathering Place	315.00
Kids' T-Shirts	45.00
Youth	55.00
Poinsettia	280.00
Scholarship	2,000.00
West Stanly Christian Ministries (Total \$2,170)	1,450.00



*Donations were given by the Blessed Assurance Sunday School class in honor of **Mae Brooks**.*

*In honor of **Joyce Little** on her birthday, Jim & Cheryl Cameron made a donation to the Building Fund.*

*Jim & Cheryl Cameron made a donation to the Lottie Moon Offering in honor of **Meals on a Mission**.*

*In honor of **Mae Brooks**, donations were given to the Scholarship Fund and Lottie Moon Offering by John Brooks.*



*In memory of **Edna Bolin**, Ann Eudy's mom, donations were given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering by:*

*Ann Eudy
Louise Floyd
FBCO Visiting Team
First Baptist Church, Oakboro*

*In memory of her parents, **Wilson & Aline Tarlton**, and in gratitude for this church and what it means and brings to this community, donations were given to the church and Building Fund by Pam Wellons.*



While they have been active in our church family for a while now, it's official: Cindy & Cooper now are members. Please continue to make them feel right at home.

Cindy Thompson
Cooper Haymond
207 W Ninth Street
Oakboro, NC 28129
(704) 984-0110



HOPE Fellowship Happenings

Lunch at Rosebriar is set for Tuesday, *January 17, 2023*, at 11:30 a.m. Meet at the church at 11:15 if you wish to ride the van as a group or meet at Rosebriar. Everyone that is available is welcome to

join us. Please sign up on the bulletin board, so we can reserve the appropriate number of seats.



Offering Envelopes

Most of the envelope boxes have been distributed.

If you didn't receive an assigned box and would like to, please contact the church office at firstbaptistoakboro@gmail.com or call (704) 485-4313. Those of you who give online will not be given a set UNLESS you request one. Also, contribution statements will be ready mid-January.

Christmas Mailbox
Please pick up your Christmas cards from the fellowship building entrance.



Weekend to Remember

Great Marriages Don't Just Happen

USE OUR GROUP NAME TO SAVE \$100 PER COUPLE

UPCOMING NC/SC EVENTS & DATES

- Charleston, SC - 12/16/2022 - 12/18/2022
- Hilton Head, SC - 2/10/2023 - 2/12/2023
- Myrtle Beach, SC - 2/24/2023 - 2/26/2023
- Charlotte, NC - 3/10/2023 - 3/12/2023
- Asheville, NC - 3/17/2023 - 3/19/2023

REGISTER AT WEEKENDTOREMEMBER.COM OR CALL 1-800-358-6329

American Red Cross

Shake Up Your Holiday Tradition
Give Blood

Friday, December 30
2:00 to 6:00 p.m.



RAPIDPASS[®]

Complete your pre-donation and health history questionnaire from your mobile device using RapidPass[®]



Expedite your donation!

Use your mobile device or a donor tablet to scan the QR code and complete your RapidPass[®]. Be sure to screenshot or email your RapidPass[®] to yourself and have it ready to present to staff before exiting health history.

IT'S PEANUT BUTTER JELLY TIME!

WHAT? Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is collecting plastic jars of peanut butter and jelly for its annual Peanut Butter and Jelly Campaign for local food banks

WHEN? Now through MLK Day

WHERE? Drop off here at FBO

WHY? Help GAL reach their goal of 10,000 jars to feed hungry North Carolinians!

volunteercorgal.org



JANUARY

FIRST BAPTIST
OAKBORO
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- January 2 Julie Poplin
Ann Burgess
4 Jean Little
5 Jessica Colquitt
7 Taryn Barringer
9 Carol Kiker
Jordan Hunt
10 Jane Barnhardt
11 James Hudson
Ben Sisson
12 Hollyn Andersen
14 Carolyn Hinson
15 Janet Jackson
18 Lana Lambert
19 Dana Jenkins
20 Mason Jones
23 Ashley Morton
Chris Johnson
24 Josiah Waits
26 Vivian Williams
28 Scott Nightingale

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	2 6:30 p.m. Deacons' Meeting	3 6:30 p.m. Missions Night for ALL (Brotherhood, WMU, Kids) 7:30 Adult Choir	4	5	6	7
Happy New Year	8 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	9	10	11 6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages 7:30 Adult Choir	12	13	14 EAL S I S S I O N
15 10:00 a.m. Celebrate Sunday	16 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer Martin Luther King Day	17 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer 11:30 a.m. HOPE Fellowship Lunch at Rosebriar (Please sign up)	18 6:30 p.m. Youth Mission Trip Interest Meeting with Church Planter 6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages 7:30 Adult Choir	19	20	21 7:30 a.m. Gideons' Prayer Breakfast	
22 10:00 a.m. BAPTIST MEN'S DAY with Standing Side by Side Speaker	23 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	24	25 6:30 p.m. Bible Study for All Ages 7:30 Adult Choir	26 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Stanly County Schools Job Fair at Stanly Academy Learning Center	27	28	
29	30 8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	31	Weekly Sunday Schedule 9:00 a.m. Sunday School (Live & Zoom) 10:00 a.m. Worship				

February 3 Eddie Henry

Please email or call the church office with additions to or deletions from the calendar.