



THE BAPTIST INFORMER

NEWS OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FOUR OAKS

December 2020

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:28-31 (NRSV)

Mission Statement

The family of First Baptist Four Oaks believes in God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. To fulfill the Great Commission, we will love, serve, learn, and fellowship together.

I recently participated in a Zoom meeting with two preacher/pastor/professor types from Duke Divinity School - Dr. Will Willimon and Dr. Richard Lischer. The meeting concerned the topic of preaching through Advent, definitely an interesting topic for 2020. During the meeting, Dr. Lischer said something which caught my attention. "Advent this year," he said, "is a very Isaiah Advent." Since hearing Dr. Lischer's comment I have done a little digging and come up with, what I think are, some reasons this is a "very Isaiah Advent."

To begin, many of the Old Testament readings for Sunday mornings through Advent come from the Book of Isaiah, especially from chapters forty on. This allows us to hear not only a prophetic voice, but a prophetic voice (and character) that many think of when they hear the word "prophet."

The other reason I think this will be a "very Isaiah Advent" has to do with the message of God proclaimed by the prophet. In the Book of Isaiah (especially chapters 40 on) the message of the prophet appears to shift from judgment to restoration. Restoration because Israel's exile will be coming to an end and God will restore them to their land and restore their relationship with God. As the prophet speaks of that reality the ideas of "waiting" and "hope" appear.

The idea of waiting (which is alluded to above in Isaiah 40) is more than just waiting on anything in general. The idea of waiting for the prophet is connected to waiting on God. And what an Advent theme waiting is, as we wait for the day to celebrate Christ's birth, and as we await Christ's return. But it is the theme of hope that seems to be so important for Isaiah. Again, not a hope in any generic thing, but a hope in God. And if there is a message we need to hear this season, it is the message of hope.

So as we celebrate the holidays for 2020 perhaps Dr. Lischer was right, this will be a very Isaiah Advent. Merry Christmas!

Grace and Peace,

John

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YOUTH NEWS

We are in an interesting time. Nothing is “normal,” but like everyone else, we are using this time to plan and do things a little differently for Youth to become more engaged in their faith. The committee and I met in October to discuss our “Youth” time in the future.

We are hoping to incorporate some music elements and other *student-led* activities. If you have any Christian songs/playlists that you are listening to, I would love to look at them to get some ideas.

We will start the process with the study, *Worshipping God*. We will learn what worship is, why it is necessary, etc. While learning, I will also have the opportunity to get feedback on their thoughts about worship. We will be working toward bringing their gifts and talents to honor and worship God.

We are also continuing to have committee members and the Deacon Board reach out to Youth. *Sticky Faith* studies suggest for a young person’s faith to “stick,” there are generally 5 adults within the church and community they are connected to. The Youth Committee and Deacon Board will be receiving prayer cards for Youth that they will be praying for.

Please be in prayer for our Youth, Youth Committee members, the Deacon Board, and myself as we journey through making disciples that make disciples!

If you have any questions or have something you would like to share, don’t hesitate to contact me.

Grace and Peace to all,

Jami Champagne

Youth Email: fofbcyouth@gmail.com

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Tuesdays @ 7 pm- Worshipping God Study

Thursdays @ 7 pm- Zoom

THANK YOU

I would like to thank the church for honoring me as the “2020 Woman of the Year”. With God’s help I will continue serving our church and the people with my whole heart. Thank you for this honor.

Marilyn Parker

Thank you to everyone that has participated in Operation Christmas Child. With your generous donations and contributions of building and filling the boxes, we have successfully met the goal of 200 boxes for this season. Please continue to be in prayer for volunteers processing the boxes and the recipients of the boxes.





Churchwide Missions for December 2020
WMU/Women's Ministry News

WMU Watchword: "... But we are not those who turn back and are lost. We are people who have faith and are saved." (Hebrews 10:39 NCV).

Scheduled Events for WMU Mission groups in December 2020:

Due to COVID-19 status, some of these groups may elect to not meet during December.

Agape Mission Group will meet on December 8 with Carol Moore depending on COVID-19.

Dorothy Parker Group will meet on December 10 depending on by e-mail.

Lib Canaday Group will meet on December 10 depending on COVID-19.

Missions for Christ Mission Group will meet on December 2 by e-mail depending on COVID-19.

*****The new 2020-2021 WMU directory is out. Ask your group facilitators for a copy.**

The Samaritan Purse boxes was assembled by the youth on October 27 and packed by them on November 3. The shoeboxes were delivered to the collection site on November 22. We were successful in reaching our goal of 200 shoeboxes!

WMU-NC Red Box Inmate Christmas Ministry was due on November 2 to the JBA office. This year the item for collection was chapstick and our church collected 194 chapsticks. The JBA-WMU goal was 600 this year and we were successful in reaching that goal. Thanks to everyone who supported this project.

The **2020 Freda Parks Creech Woman of the Year award** was announced on Sunday, November 1 during the Heritage Day morning worship service. This year the award went to **Marilyn Parker**. Marilyn has served in many capacities in the church. She is secretary of the New Century Sunday School Class and the Dorothy Parker Sunday School class. She serves as assistant to the church secretary as needed. She has been instrumental in collecting items for the Samaritan Purse "Operation Christmas Child" shoeboxes for numerous years. She works with the Food Pantry every Thursday. In 2009 she began working with "Relay for Life" and Life Team – "Party of Tables." This is the teams largest fundraiser each year. She raised over \$61,000 and this year alone helped in raising over \$5,000. She has great sewing skills and sews on the award patches for the RA's as well as sewing covers for the changing tables. Her hobbies are traveling, and she likes to grow flowers starting with seeds – In fact, she grows plants and then gives them for gifts. So, she has planted many seeds in many ways!

In December/January, we will begin making plans for the **WMU Focus Day on February 28, 2021**. This year will be the 100th celebration of WMU-FO. We need old photos to make a video that will be shown during the morning service. Also, if you are interested in participating on the program during the Focus Day let Laura Rogers or Brenda Barnes know.

The newly revised Funeral Food Committee sheets are available on the WMU bulletin board. We have tried to keep this updated to better serve everyone. As of December 1, 2020, members from Group 3 will be the next group to serve a meal. Brenda Barnes, Sandra Turner and Laura Rogers are Co-Directors from Group 3.

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Birthdays

- 01 *Abdias Mora*
- 03 *Lynda Rabon*
Kelli Vann
- 04 *Colton Tucker*
Andy McGuire
Judy Boyette
- 05 *Tim Grady*
Amelia Grace Boyd
- 09 *Tommy Heritage*
- 11 *Barbara Rice*
Reid Williams
- 12 *Elizabeth Boyd*
Jonah Toothman
- 13 *Valton Coats*
- 16 *Don Rogers*
Holly Price
- 17 *Rose Allen*
- 18 *Samantha Surlles*
- 21 *Amelia Vann*
- 22 *Casey Allen*
- 24 *Jordan Vanier*
- 25 *Julia Thomas*
- 26 *Thomas Vann*
- 27 *Evie Mae Strickland*
- 28 *Amanda Strickland*
- 29 *Hunter Olive*
Andrew. L. Stewart
Eric Strickland
- 30 *Jordan Norris*

Anniversaries

- 09 *Virgil and Julia Moore*
- 11 *Don & Laura Rogers*
- 18 *Kyle & Phyllis Toothman*

