



THE CORNERSTONE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH THOMSON

*Loving God, Loving People,
Making Disciples of Jesus*

PHONE: (706) 595-4252

FAX: (706) 597-0668

WEB: www.fbcthomson.org

Vol. 60

January 2024

No.1

Merry CHRISTMAS



Sign up for Summer Camp this month!



CentriKid Camp
Rising 2nd- Rising 6th
June 21-23



Look Up Lodge
Rising 7th- Completed 12th
July 9-14

A \$75 deposit is due by January 31

Dr. David Lambert, Lead Pastor

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

As we wrap up 2023, let's celebrate a wonderful year of worship, fellowship, ministry, and missions. We baptized 14 people and saw another 16 join our church, for 30 new members, adding several new families. We exceeded all our offering goals for this past year—praying we do the same for Lottie Moon—and took in more Operation Christmas Child boxes than we have in several years. We saw a record year of gifts to the Go and Tell Fund, had a great Drive-Thru Nativity, and celebrated Matt Ward's 10 years as our associate pastor. I'm so thankful for this church and to serve as your pastor!

Remember that we will have a normal Sunday morning on **Christmas Eve**, with Sunday School and worship. I hope you'll join us for the Candlelight Lord's Supper service that night at 5 PM. Also remember **Year End Gifts** need to be in the church office by Friday the 29th, given on Sunday the 31st, or at least postmarked by the 31st to count toward your 2023 giving record. We really appreciate all the extra year-end gifts that allow us to give extra to the Cooperative Program and our future emergency needs. And don't forget Lottie Moon and Capital Improvements!

Now, on to 2024: I'm excited for some new ministry opportunities this new year, such as a Wild Game Supper and a Marriage Retreat in the Spring, the West Virginia mission trip in July, and missions and ministry fair in the Fall. Be in prayer for these and all our regular events, projects, and trips.

Our focus for 2024 is "**Foundations**," especially foundations of our faith, foundations for healthy families, and foundations for a thriving church family. We will focus on some basic beliefs and truths that shape our lives, and the basic disciplines and practices we need to live those beliefs out in the day-to-day. You'll see these themes play out in events like the Marriage Retreat, in resources like the Faith@Home Center, in sermon series, and in some renewed efforts to help our church love one another better, serve the needy, and reach the lost.

To kick off this theme, I'll be preaching a sermon series on Genesis 1-3, called "**Origins**." Over the next couple of months, we'll discover what these foundational chapters of the Bible teach us about God, ourselves, our world, marriage and family, how things have gone so terribly wrong, and how God is working to put all things right again. I look forward to seeing you in your pew every Sunday!!!

Also, make sure to join us again on Wednesdays beginning January 10, especially as we pick back up on our "Route 66" Road Trip thru the Bible, with the book of Ezra.

Finally, I am thrilled that our **Campus Vision Team** (part of the strategic revitalization efforts we began in 2019) is ready to present their final report, a **campus master plan** for best stewardship and use of the amazing facilities God has blessed us with. They will make this report and reveal this master plan at the **Quarterly Church Conference** at 6 PM on January 21. You do not want to miss this reveal! Exciting days are ahead for our church, and we want YOU to be part of the discussion and decision-making for our future. Pray for God's leadership, wisdom, and blessings as we move forward together!

David

Dr. Matt Ward

Thank You for a Wonderful Nativity!

You've seen plenty of statistics from this year's nativity, so let me just speak of the boring logistics. Our setup team was outstanding — from the construction on November 18 to the setup on December 3 to the deconstruction on December 9. I've heard from multiple people not just that the Nativity looked as good as it has ever looked, but that the process of putting it all together seemed as effective and efficient as we have ever done it. Great work and thank you.

I've also heard from multiple people that the cast looked and acted as good as they can remember. That's a testament to the costumes, the casting, and to all of you who participated!

And let's not gloss over the work of our prayer team. I had doubts. They never had doubts. And the weather turned out to be the best weather we've had in years. Thank you so much for your faith.

And for the first time in my memory, I had people go out of their way to tell me how well organized everything was. By that, I realized they were talking about everything that happened *before* they got to the Nativity (which makes sense — it takes about 20 minutes to go through the Nativity, and people can be waiting for an hour or more). So, that's our greeters, our parking lot team, and our hot chocolate giver-outers. Great job, y'all!

Normal Sunday Morning on 12/24 and 12/31

I'm not sure how else to say this. We are having our normal Sunday School and morning worship service schedule on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. We expect to have church members out visiting elsewhere, and we expect to have out-of-town family members visiting here. It'll be a great morning to worship Jesus wherever you are. If you're here, make plans to come to Sunday School as well.

Longing for Peace

There have been so many upsetting headlines. I read about a small Baptist church in Missouri that got utterly trashed by vandals (with no known motive). The week before, we heard about the churches in Tennessee that were damaged by the tornadoes. There has been a steady increase in violence against Christians in many parts of the world (such as Africa and East Asia). (And don't forget about the recent experiences of Jews in our country.) We long for peace, and yet peace seems further and further away every year.

But here's an amazing thing about all of those Christians I just mentioned — they gathered for worship the following Sunday. The damaged churches cleaned up what they could and postponed what they had to. But they gathered. Our persecuted brothers and sisters may have to take extraordinary measures to keep their church members safe, but they gather.

They understand that Christmas is about peace — peace with God through Jesus Christ. And nothing will prevent them from enjoying and sharing that peace. I find that to be healthy perspective for us. We may be busy, and tired, and worried, and out-of-sorts. But don't let that distract you from the peace you have with God. And don't let that prevent you from sharing that peace with your church family and your community. Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Wednesday Night Meal Prices Are Increasing

We postponed this as long as we could, but we finally have to increase our supper prices. We are going up \$1 per meal (and \$2 on the max), so it's still a great deal on great food. Please thank the Bentleys for all they have done to keep our costs down all these years.



Rev. Ben Tarver

The Youth Winter Retreat is coming up on President's Day Weekend (Feb 16-19). We will be staying at the Smoky Mountain Resort Ministry house and enjoying the beautiful winter season in Gatlinburg. Snowtubing, ice-skating, riding the giant skylift, and exploring Gatlinburg are all lined up for the retreat. We will also have time for shopping, eating out in Gatlinburg, and time as a group back at the SMRM house with games and devotionals. The total cost of the trip is \$120 including a meal in Gatlinburg, ice-skating, tubing, and a ticket on the skylift. A \$50 deposit is due ASAP to the church office - reserve a spot today!

The youth are returning to Look Up Lodge in Travelers Rest, SC, for summer camp this year. This is our third year returning to this beautiful private Christian camp. This camp is an amazing experience for youth as they grow closer to God, get to explore, and have a blast with other youth from churches around the United States. The total cost of the trip is \$320 for 5 nights with all meals, recreation activities, and lodging included. Rising 7th graders are invited to attend this camp with us! Please have a non-refundable deposit of \$75 turned into the office by the end of January to secure a spot.

The kids will be returning to CentriKid camp this year, but at a different location. This year we are going to Boiling Springs, NC (Gardner Webb University). The kids (and chaperones) all had a wonderful time together last summer. We are looking forward to another wonderful experience at camp! This camp is for rising 2nd graders– rising 6th graders. The deposit for this camp is also \$75 and is due by the end of January.

Upward Basketball practices start the first week of the New Year! We have 20 teams this year and 158 kids registered - Praise God! We are still looking for basketball referees for games. Even if you are not experienced in this role, you can easily learn and help with the younger kids' game. Contact the church office if you can serve in this capacity. Games will be on Saturdays from January 20-March 9. Please be in prayer for this important ministry of our church.

The kids gave \$354 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering collection from the banks! Thank you so much for your generosity! Parents, please share with them this good news and that their money goes to help share Jesus with people around the world!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Ben

Last Month

We Came	Morning Worship (in person)	Morning Worship (online)	Sunday School	We Gave
November 19	282	191	203	\$17,708.00
November 26	249	278	216	\$12,304.00
December 3	247	318	230	\$17,939.00
December 10	237	251	229	\$12,308.00
December 17	219	254	216	\$15,288.00
BUDGET		NON-BUDGET RECEIPTS		
Required	\$844,485.62	Cap. Improvements	\$19,292.62	
Received	\$799,879.17	Ferguson Property	\$5,175.00	
Disbursed	\$783,906.13	Go & Tell Mission Fund	\$43,572.21	

*End-of-
November
Final
Finances*



Church Office Closed

December 26

January 1

Ladies Paint Night

(Age 16 and up)

Join us for a canvas painting night with Mrs. Sharon Dye!

Sunday, January 7

5:00 PM

RSVP by January 2.

Cost is \$40



Wednesday night programs will resume on January 10.



Young @ Heart

Tuesday, January 9
11:00 AM

Speaker: Mr. David Moore

RSVP By January 4 at Noon

Cost is \$9.50



January 1: Practices Start
January 20: Games Start
March 9: Awards Ceremony

Sunday, January 21

10:45 AM:

Worship with Lord's Supper

5:00 PM:

Committee Workshop

6:00 PM:

Quarterly Church Conference

\$6.50 ADULTS - \$4.00 UNDER AGE 12
PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS BY NOON ON MONDAYS

FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER

*Wednesdays, 5:00 PM
Fellowship Hall*

January 10
Chicken Salad and Pimento Cheese

January 17
Loaded Baked Potato

January 24
Pork Chops and Rice

January 31
Hot Dogs

JANUARY MINISTRY DONATION

HAIR CARE PRODUCTS



PLEASE PLACE ITEMS IN THE BLUE BIN IN THE ATRIUM



HELLO January

SUN	9:00	Cornerstone Cafe
	9:30	Sunday School
	10:45	Morning Worship
MON	9:00	Walking Track open (until 5:00 PM)
	9:00	Nautilus Room open (until 1:00 PM)
	10:00	Stretch & Flex, Gym
TUE	9:00	Walking Track open (until 5:00 PM)
	9:00	Nautilus Room open (until 1:00 PM)
	2:00	Church Staff Meeting, 402
	5:15	Firm Believers, Gym
WED	9:00	Walking Track open (until 5:00 PM)
	9:00	Nautilus Room open (until 1:00 PM)
	10:00	Stretch & Flex, Gym
	5:00	Family Night Supper, FH
	6:00	<i>Disciples Pathway</i> (Adults, Fellowship Hall)
	6:00	TinyKID (Ages 3-K), Chapel
	6:00	TeamKID (Grades 1-6), Gym
	6:00	Elevate (Grades 7-12), WH
	7:15	Adult Choir Rehearsal, S
THU	6:30	<i>Stand in the Gap</i> Prayer Group, Parlor
	9:00	Walking Track open (until 5:00 PM)
	9:00	Nautilus Room open (until 1:00 PM)
	5:15	Firm Believers, Gym
FRI	9:00	Walking Track open (until 5:00 PM)
	9:00	Nautilus Room open (until 1:00 PM)
	10:00	Stretch & Flex, Gym

January 1, 2024

Church Office Closed

January 3, 2024

No Evening Activities

January 7, 2024

Name Tag Sunday

5:00 PM Ladies Paint Night

January 9, 2024

11:00 AM Young at Heart

6:00 PM Stewardship Committee Meeting

7:00 PM Deacons Meeting

January 10, 2024

Wednesday Night Kick-Off

January 15, 2024

Church Office Closed

January 20, 2024

Upward Games Begin

January 21, 2024

10:45 AM Worship with Lord's Supper

5:00 PM Committee Workshop

6:00 PM Quarterly Church Conference

January 31, 2023

Deadline to sign up for Youth and
Children's Camps