

First Baptist Church of Eatonton Messenger

FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST SHARING GOD'S LOVE AND GRACE WITH ALL



FROM THE PASTOR

Someone said it so well, I simply adapted it. It is a sincere expression of my thoughts about, and my sincere thank you for, First Baptist Church of Eatonton –

Like an Epiphany, like a candle blazing in the deepest night,
First Baptist Church kindles the hope of the Gospel, burning and true.

In this season of illumination, Epiphany,
I take time to thank you for the generous gifts
you have given to First Baptist Church this past year,
so that we might brightly and boldly grow our ministry!

Your provision empowers First Baptist Church,
allowing us to reach and positively impact
more seekers and believers, and care for a multitude of people.
With your support, we bring the light of Christ to a darkened world.

You make a real difference.

**Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.**

Isaiah 60:1

May the Lord Jesus Christ kindle joy and light in your heart
during this Epiphany season and throughout the coming year.

Our friend Henri J. Nouwen says,

“People who have come to know the joy of God
claim that the light that shines in the darkness
can be trusted more than the darkness itself –
that a little bit of light can dispel a lot of darkness.

They point each other to flashes of light,
reminding one another that they reveal
the hidden but real presence of God.

They discover that there are people who heal
other’s wounds, forgive their offenses, share their possessions,
foster the spirit of community, celebrate the gifts they have received,
and live in constant anticipation of the
full manifestation of God’s glory.”

May we be people of such joy and light.

**Joy and Light,
Craig**

YOUTH AND CHILDREN NEWS

*So, if anyone is in Christ,
there is a new creation:
everything old has passed away;
see, everything has become new!
– 2 Corinthians 5:17*



Do you ever think about why we celebrate New Year's Day? It's just another day, so why is it so important for people to mark a date change on a calendar?

I suspect it's because a new year offers a new beginning, the chance to start fresh. There's a reason January is the most important month of the year for gyms and diet programs, because it seems like a fresh chance to start again, to improve yourself. It seems like a natural time for beginning something, which is why lots of people make New Year's resolutions (*whether they stick to them or not is another story!*).

The Christian life offers lots of opportunities for fresh starts, for changing what we've been doing or beginning to live differently. Each week in worship, we begin with a time of confession where we admit what we've done wrong. We admit to God and to each other that our lives are not perfect, that we're not living the way we ought to live, that we're doing things we ought not do and failing to do things we ought to do.

Then, immediately after confession, we hear God's response. We hear the good news that because of God's forgiveness, because God loves us, we all get a fresh start. Psalm 103:12 says God has taken our sins away from us "as far as the east is from the west." The slate is wiped clean. We don't need to carry the weight of our sins or guilt with us anymore. We are forgiven!

However, it doesn't take long for us to forget about what God has done for us. We take the burden Jesus has taken from us and we pick it back up and start trying to carry the weight of our own brokenness again. But we always have another opportunity to remember God's love. God never gets tired of forgiving us!

Martin Luther said we ought to begin each day in this way:

"In the morning, as soon as you get out of bed, you are to make the sign of the holy cross and say:

'God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit watch over me. Amen.'

Then, kneeling or standing, say the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer...

After singing a hymn, or whatever else may serve your devotion, you are to go to your work joyfully."

You don't have to wait for a new year to have a fresh start. Each day offers the opportunity to wake up and remember that you are a special child of God. You have been claimed, redeemed, and set free by Jesus Christ. Let us remember this as we begin this new year together.

In Christ,

Dylan

MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY

By the time you read this, our Music Ministry will already have kicked off the New Year. Though our new Children's Choir is yet to come, beginning January 18, 3:00-4:30, our Choir and *JuBELLation* handbell choir are already making progress on music with which to lead our worship in the coming weeks.

Every bit of music we use is solidly based on scripture, but we do not have one main theme passage. If we chose one for January 2024, it may well be what God tells us in Ephesians 5:15-17:

*Be very careful, then, how you live—
Not as unwise but as wise,
Making the most of every opportunity,
Because the days are evil.
Therefore do not be foolish,
But understand what the Lord's will is.*

Part of the will of the Lord is for us to make the most of every opportunity to worship, witness, fellowship, and minister, to be His salt and light in our dark, tasteless world. We always want our music to enable that!

You can help us, musician or not. Pray for us, that we may be strong and faithful, for our numbers to grow, for our priorities to always be right. If you can carry a tune, you can come sing in our Choir, but even if you can't, you can make a joyful noise unselfconsciously in the congregation.

In 1874, Frances Ridley Havergal wrote some greeting card verses for the New Year. They may be 150 years old, but they are a perfect prayer for us as we begin 2024:

*Another year is dawning: Dear Father, let it be,
In working or in waiting, another year with Thee;
Another year of progress, another year of praise,
Another year of proving Thy presence all the days!*

John Cotten

MUSIC MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

A background image for the handbell choir advertisement showing a close-up of a handbell and a sheet of music with notes.

HANDBELL CHOIR

**Sundays at 1:30pm
in the Handbell Room**
Contact John for more information

A background image for the choir advertisement showing a row of red choir robes hanging on hangers.

CHOIR

Rehearsals
Wednesdays
at 7:15pm

Contact
John Cotten for
more information.

JANUARY 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 New Year's Day Church Office Closed	2	3 6:30pm Choir Resumes	4 8:00am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary	5	6 Epiphany
7 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	8	9	10 5:30pm Supper 6pm Children and Youth 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir	11 8:00am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary	12	13
14 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	16 3pm Children's Choir	17 5:30pm Supper 6pm Children and Youth 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir	18 8:00am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary	19	20
21 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	22	23 3pm Children's Choir	24 5:30pm Supper 6pm Children and Youth 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir	25 8:00am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary	26	27
28 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	29	30 3pm Children's Choir	31 5:30pm Supper 6pm Children and Youth 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir			

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR JANUARY

Kay Stevens

USHERS FOR JANUARY

Cary Walton, Head Usher

David Giddens

Scott Joris

Ben Leverette

Jesse McMillen

Charles Patten

DEACON FOR JANUARY 7

Robin Benton

DEACON FOR JANUARY 14

Steve Benton

JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

5:30pm - Supper, reservations due Tuesday at noon

6:00pm - Children and Youth Groups

6:15pm - Adult Bible Study led by Pastor

7:15pm - Adult Choir Rehearsals

JOIN US FOR

Wednesday Night Supper



5:30 PM

In the Fellowship Hall

RSVP TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY TUESDAY AT NOON

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

BIBLE Study



6:15 PM

IN THE SANCTUARY

BIRTHDAYS

01/04 - Jean Rich, Betty Sills

01/07 - Robin Benton, Harris McCollum

01/08 - Mac Rainey

01/09 - Mike Faulk, Steve Tubbs

01/10 - Jarred Camp, Pam Lancaster

01/13 - Wyatt Wojtas

01/14 - Brooke McMillen

01/15 - Nancy Chambers, Ed Self

01/18 - Pam Douglas

ANNIVERSARIES

01/08 - Mike and Linda Reagin

01/16 - James and Sylvia Cheney

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, December 24 87

Sunday, December 31 89

FINANCIAL REPORT

DECEMBER 17, 2023

Budget Needs \$10,392.26

Budget Receipts \$8,936.00

Budget Needs YTD \$530,005.26

Budget Receipts YTD \$514,244.79

DECEMBER 24, 2023

Budget Needs \$10,392.26

Budget Receipts \$4,647.00

Budget Needs YTD \$540,397.52

Budget Receipts YTD \$518,891.79

First Baptist Church
P.O. Box 3400
Eatonton, GA 31024
Return Service Requested

CHILDREN'S CHOIR BEGINNING JANUARY 16

We are starting a Children's Choir
on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 3PM
for children K4 through 5th Grade!

A snack will be provided and we will
offer a time for a Bible Story.

Register Today online or come by
the church office today.

Contact Dylan or the church office
for more information.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Children's Choir

AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Begins January 16, 2024

TUESDAYS
3PM - 4:30PM

Come and be a part of our
new Children's Choir for
children in K4-5th Grade.
A snack will be provided and we
will offer a time for a Bible Story.

Register Today at
www.firstbaptisteatonton.org

For More Information,
Contact Dylan
at 706-485-3331

