

# At First Glance

FIRST BAPTIST NORMAN



DECEMBER 2019 • VOLUME 16 • ISSUE 5

The *Signs of Christmas* are all around. As we celebrate Advent 2019 and prepare to receive the good news of great joy that a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord, let us be mindful of and sensitive to the many signs. *The Signs of Christmas* are found in the beautiful music of the season, in gift giving, sharing meals with family and friends and in the special events and worship services of Advent. We must remember that the signs are not the reason or focal point of Christmas. On the contrary, their purpose is to point us to the real and deeper meaning of Christmas, that Immanuel, God is with us, in Jesus whose birth we celebrate on Christmas Day.

The scriptures identify the signs of the coming Messiah. In the Old Testament, the Prophet Isaiah hears from the Lord who offers the following sign in Isaiah 7:14, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. In the New Testament, this sign is manifest in Mary, who conceives and bears a son through the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Months later, shepherds tending their sheep one night are

visited by angels who tell them to look for a baby wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger, for this is the sign that they have found the Christ-child. Later, Magi from the east arrive with gifts for Jesus, having followed their sign, a star, to worship and offer their gifts to the King of Kings.

Yes, *The Signs of Christmas* are all around us. I invite you to experience and allow *The Signs of Christmas* at First Baptist to point you to the Messiah. **The Hanging of the Green** points us to the Everlasting Life of Christ. **The Joy of Giving** reminds us that the meaning of Christmas is found in giving, just as our Heavenly Father gave His only Son. **The Sounds of Christmas** concert proclaims the Christmas story through music, while the **Christmas Eve Candle-lighting Service** celebrates the birth of the Light of the World. I look forward to



DR. WADE  
SMITH

sharing these special moments with you.

Please pick up your copy of *The Signs of Christmas* devotion guide. This devotion guide was written by our members and is one of the special ways we share Christmas with each other and with our neighbors. The devotions offer insight and vulnerability as we share our lives and stories of Christmas, pointing one another to the birth of Christ and His unique work of salvation in each of us.

As we celebrate Advent and reflect on *The Signs of Christmas*, I pray that each of you will experience the *hope, peace, joy and love* of Christ as we anticipate Christmas morning. The reality of life means that some of our families will experience this season in the midst of great blessing and joy. Others enter this season in the midst of sorrow and struggle. Many will experience the conflict and swings between these emotions. So let us be sensitive to one another and in the midst of it all, let us put our hope and faith in the One whose birth we celebrate on Christmas and whose resurrection we celebrate on Easter.



## JOIN US FOR ADVENT

HANGING OF THE GREEN  
10:30 A.M. • SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

ADVENT WORSHIP SERVICES

10:30 A.M. • DECEMBER 1 • DECEMBER 8 • DECEMBER 15 • DECEMBER 22

6:00 P.M. • DECEMBER 24

# Thank you for your support of Hands for Harvey

Over the past two years you've supported, encouraged, participated, prayed for and provided for six trips to the Texas Coast for Hands For Harvey — Called To Serve. This ministry has impacted our church in untold ways, and has changed the lives of families and communities where we were called to assist rebuilding homes, and lives.

When we started this ministry following the days of Hurricane Harvey landfall, who knew, besides God, how this would have changed who we are? From not knowing if anyone would go even on one work trip, to 77 different individuals making those trips a reality.

Countless more of you have provided financial support, food for the team and blue jeans to take to the community thrift store. Our children sent clean-up kits, many items for other children and made blankets.

Seventy-seven individuals have given more than 12,000 volunteer hours to make lives better for people they've heard of living in towns they never heard of, or even pronounce that community of REFUGIO or that unknown 5th Ward of Houston. Lives have been changed there, the

testimony of the gospel in action has been shared, hope has been restored and even lives here at FBC have been changed, and confidence obtained to do things that people never thought they could do.

Seventy-seven people who committed to go in spite of the promotion of these truly being work trips. Some made one trip while several made all six trips and all in between.

The reality is everyone did what they could because they felt called to be a part of a necessary ministry. I am blessed to have been a part of all of this from the beginning, and my life has been changed as well. Always remember there are doors surrounding us that God opens and continuously calls for us to be a part of. And as Hands for Harvey has been a perfect example, God calls the willing, not necessarily the trained, prepared or the professional.

So, as this ministry draws to an end,



**ROY JOE  
HAM**

what is God calling this church to do? It can't be only to come to worship, it can't be only to share with each other here in this place, it may be something else completely out of our comfort zone. But, when God calls, He will provide. Thank you again for your support of what has become a real ministry of being the hands and feet of Jesus!

**Finishing well!** I am reminded each year as we approach this special holiday season of Thanksgiving and Christmas that we are faced with the opportunity to finish well so we can begin well. That includes all areas of our life but becomes a big reality in the church.

How do we evaluate all that God has done in our midst as a whole and in our personal lives? How have we responded in His call to serve, give and support? How have we been made different this year because of what God is doing in our church and in our own private lives? My prayer for all of us is we take time to consider the past months even as we anticipate the year ahead.

Be blessed through this season of Thanksgiving and Christmas and finish well!

*Christmas Eve*  
CANDLE LIGHTING SERVICE

6:00 P.M.  
SANCTUARY



BRING DIAPERS AND WIPES  
TO PUT UNDER OUR TREE

**END  
OF YEAR  
GIVING  
DEADLINE**

**TUESDAY, DEC. 31  
5:00 P.M.**

**POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE DEC. 31**

FIRST BAPTIST MUSIC MINISTRY PRESENTS

# Sounds OF CHRISTMAS

FEATURING KERON JACKSON  
*And The First Baptist Choir and Orchestra*

**DEC. 15  
6:00 P.M.**

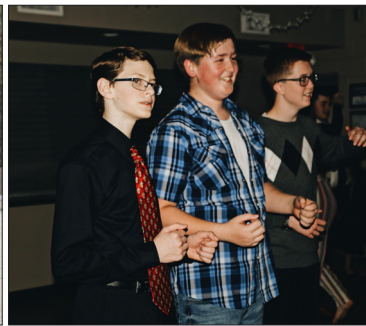


**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH SANCTUARY**



# UNDIVIDED

## FALL FALLOUT 2019



## Global Missions offering goal \$66,000

The FBC World Missions Offering supports both the Lottie Moon Christmas offering through the Southern Baptist Convention and the Global Missions Offering through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Gifts may be designated for either offering. Undesignated gifts are divided equally between the two organizations. Our church goal for 2019 is \$66,000.

The Lottie Moon offering supports nearly 3,700 full-time missionaries, who are sharing the gospel in towns, villages and cities around the world. This year's offering accounts for nearly three-fourths of the International Mission Board's overseas budget. The overseas budget provides both ministry funds and missionary support, including missionary salaries, housing, medical care, children's education, field transportation and other expenses. The remainder of the overseas

### EXAMPLES OF AREAS IMPACTED THROUGH GLOBAL MISSIONS OFFERINGS

- Urban neighborhoods in New York City
- Nairobi
- Macau and Marseille
- Bosnian refugees in St. Louis
- Human trafficking victims in Malaysia and Indonesia
- New churches in Chengdu, China

budget is funded through regular giving by churches to the Cooperative Program.

The Global Missions Offering supports long-term field personnel serving in 25 countries, 50 Student.Go interns and hundreds of short-term mission teams annually.

## DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

THE JOY OF *Giving*  
A GIFT MAKING WORKSHOP FOR KIDS  
**07 DEC** | **9:00 A.M. TO NOON**

*Deacon Christmas Banquet*  
TO CELEBRATE DEACON MINISTRY  
**DECEMBER 8**  
DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 P.M.  
DINNER SERVED AT 6:00 P.M.  
HALLOCK HALL

**NORMAN CHRISTMAS PARADE**  
DECEMBER 14 • 6:00 P.M.  
JOIN US AT 5:00 P.M.  
AT COMMON GROUND,  
324 W. MAIN ST.

RHEMA BIBLE COLLEGE  
*Holiday Lights*  
EXTRAVAGANZA  
DECEMBER 17  
11:00 A.M. – 10:00 P.M.

**YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY**  
DECEMBER 18  
6:00-7:30 P.M.  
YOUTH HALL

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**December 1:** Allison Hawkins, Joy Sullivan  
**December 2:** Jean Callahan, Christy Ellis, Phyllis Gage, Dovie Huebert  
**December 3:** Stephen Burris, Lindsay Crider, Samuel Harp, Jequita Uhles  
**December 4:** Fred Ferris  
**December 6:** Bill Geyer, Alan Johnson, Bob Stone  
**December 7:** Mike Bradford, Danny Heatly, Allison Taylor  
**December 8:** Cathy Gilmore, Darline Hobbs, Jenny Smiley-Nava  
**December 9:** Ruthee Danner, Ron Mercer  
**December 10:** Vondell Wheeler  
**December 11:** Cowan Chen, Caleb Lee  
**December 13:** Barbara James, Chris Price  
**December 14:** Danny Foster, Pat Getto, Marie Porter, Leon Price, Dedra Redwine  
**December 15:** Linda Heinlein, Oliva McCourry  
**December 16:** Margaret Brown  
**December 17:** Kaitlin Bray, Dorothy Harp  
**December 18:** Aubrey Chapin, Roy Joe Ham, Scott

Hawkins, Kiersten Stewart  
**December 20:** Lou King, Betty Klima, Joe Theige  
**December 21:** Dimple Bond, Ed Copelin, Glenda Crider, Jamie Jinkerson, Sam Singleterry  
**December 22:** Steve Carter, Allen Lack, Dakelin Stewart  
**December 24:** Holly Lassetter  
**December 25:** Mary Ann Spaulding  
**December 26:** Marilyn Woods  
**December 27:** Dana Morris, Marge Morton, Brad Singleterry, Avery Taylor, Eloise UpChurch, Douglas Vaughn  
**December 28:** Lisa Driskill, Elaine Harrison, Sandra Lee  
**December 29:** Susan Hawkins, Donna Holt, Bennett Sullivan  
**December 30:** Dr. Lavonn Brown, Michael Heron, Charles Holt, Matt Hunt, Jennifer McMillen, Mary Robinson  
**December 31:** LD Doss, Jay Harp, Mark Huebert, Paul Strunk

## SYMPATHIES

The First Baptist Church family wishes to extend sympathies to:

Pat and Kathy Smith at the passing of her mother, JoRita Dixon

Roy Brown; Larry & Annetta Brown and Bob & Susan Weaver at the passing of their wife,

mother and sister-in-law, Sue Brown.

Danny, Michelle, Nick, Jacob, Alex, Teagen, Kelsey & Gavin Foster at the passing of their grandmother, Thelma Foster.

Roy Brown at the passing of his son-in-law, Kelly Rogers  
 Kevin Sharp at the passing

of his grandfather, Brady Price  
 Debbie and Melanie Burchfield at the passing of their mother and grandmother, LaFerne Bond.

John and Barbara Cole at the passing of their son, Jim Cole.

## GIVING TREE



RETURN  
UNWRAPPED  
GIFTS BY DEC. 15

## COMMUNITY MINISTRY NEEDS

SPAGHETTI	TOILET PAPER
DRIED PASTA	TRAVEL SIZED ANTIPERSPIRANT,
MAC & CHEESE	SHAMPOO, CONDITIONER, LOTION, SOAP
SPAGHETTI SAUCE	TOOTHPASTE
CANNED FRUIT	TOOTHBRUSHES
TUNA IN POUCH	DENTAL FLOSS
JIF TO GO PEANUT BUTTER PACKS	LIP BALM
FRUIT CUPS	FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

## DEAR FBC...

Dear First Baptist Church,  
 We would like to thank you and tell you how much we appreciate your generosity in helping us with the deposit and application fee for our apartment.

Thank you for the bicycle that was also given, food and clothes and the wonderful dinners that you provide.

Ross Gladson  
 and Christian Simons

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