

# The Lamplighter

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LA PLATA

## OFFENDED BY CHRISTMAS\*

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- December facts
- Hannah's Shower
- Gill Anniversary

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Volunteer Schedule	2
Library News	3
Upcoming Events	4
Kids Corner	5
Deacon Highlight	6
Verses on Evangelism	7
How You Can Serve	8
Event Photos	9

Welcome to another Christmas season! As usual in our increasingly pagan culture, Christmas will continue to be under attack this year: not only the true meaning of Christmas but even the name "Christmas" itself! While I do not appreciate replacing the word "Christmas" with "Winter" or "Sparkle," I do not mind calling the Christmas season, "The holidays." There are two reasons why "the holidays" are acceptable to me: the first reason is that the word "holidays" comes from two English words: "holy" and "days." By calling the Christmas season, "holidays," people are acknowledging the spiritual nature of the days.

The second reason I don't mind using "holidays" is there are several holidays during the Christmas season: Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Years, and Pastor Gary's birthday (December 28th). Thanksgiving is an overtly Christian holiday, Jesus celebrated Hanukkah (John 10:22-23), Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus, and the Hebrews celebrated new years (Leviticus 23:23-28). Pastor Gary only thinks his birthday is a holiday—it isn't. While the politically correct think they are stripping Christmas of its significance by their use of "holidays," they are actually affirming its importance! (Continued on p.4)

## SMALL GROUPS FOR DECEMBER:

**MEN:** Brotherhood--1st Saturday of the month @ 9 AM  
Men of the Word-- Every Tuesday @ 10 AM

**WOMEN:** Women on Mission--1st Thursday of the month @ 9:45 AM  
Ladies of the Light Bible Study--Every Tuesday @ 10 AM  
Connect Bible Study--2nd & 4th Thursdays @ 6 PM  
Visitation Ministry--3rd Thursday of the month @ 9:45 AM  
Merry Widows--1st Friday of the month @ 12 PM (NEW DATE)

\*Article written by Debbie Schneider based on a Wednesday night teaching of Pastor Gary's

### SUNDAY MORNING NURSERY (INFANT & TODDLER):

Dec 3	Norma Stump, Donna Fleming Grant and Sara Walker, Kayla Hepner
Dec 10	Norma Stump, Erin Hancock Amy Jewell, Fran Wright, Eli Hancock
Dec 17	Norma Stump, Stephanie Walton Katie Lusk, Whitney Lump
Dec 24	Norma Stump, Cecelia Stauffer Ruth Dillon, Fran Wright, Gracelynn Nicklis
Dec 31	Norma Stump, Abby Pankhurst Patrick & Jill Hancock

### CHILDREN'S WORSHIP:

Dec 3	Stephanie Walton, Ruth Dillon, Kayla Hepner
Dec 10	Jennifer Cooke, Ashley Miller, Camden Cooke
Dec 17	Sharon Hile, Alison Bode
Dec 24	Kim Burgess, Katie Lusk, Abby Pankhurst
Dec 31	Debbie Schneider, Becky Bucher, Jonathan Miller

### SUNDAY MORNING SECURITY TEAM:

	8:30 AM	SS & 11 AM
Dec 3	Marion Simpson Jennifer Miller	Jerry Pruitt Robert Hicks
Dec 10	Norma Stump Kevin Guiffre	Jim Miller Melvin King
Dec 17	Courtney Harbin Marion Simpson	Patrick Hancock Robert Hicks
Dec 24	Dillon Edelen Norma Stump	Terry Mathews Al Law
Dec 31	Kevin Guiffre Courtney Harbin	Betty Lou Moore Bob Mathews



### UPCOMING SERMON TOPICS:

Dec 3	AM	<i>Four Appearances</i>	Matthew 1:23
	PM	<i>Unto Us</i>	Isaiah 9:6-7
Dec 10	AM	<i>Wonderful</i>	Isaiah 9:6-7
	PM	<i>Mighty God</i>	Isaiah 9:6-7
Dec 17	AM	<i>Everlasting Father</i>	Isaiah 9:6-7
	PM	<i>Prince of Peace</i>	Isaiah 9:6-7
Dec 24	AM	<i>Big Government</i>	Isaiah 9:6-7
	PM	<i>Darkness and Light</i>	Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
Dec 31	AM	<i>New Year's Resolution</i>	Lamentations 3:24
	PM	<i>Uninterrupted Service</i>	Galatians 4:13-20

### GREETER SCHEDULE:

Dec 3	Nick Papanicolas Paul Dillon
Dec 10	Kevin Guiffre Ken Doyle
Dec 17	Darrell Linville Andy Gibson
Dec 24	Glenn Miller Patrick Hancock
Dec 31	Nick Papanicolas Billy Moore

### DECEMBER TELLERS:

Sheri Bresnahan  
Cecelia Stauffer



OCC packing week is over but we still need your help. We need sponsors for \$10/box to cover shipping. There will be labels available outside of the sanctuary. And as always, boxes can be ordered online all year:



## CELEBRATING HANNAH PANKHURST



On Saturday, Nov. 4th, ladies from FBC gathered to celebrate Hannah Pankhurst's upcoming marriage to Shane Dobson. We had wonderful food, fellowship & fun -- especially watching Hannah get excited over various cooking & cleaning gifts she received! We look forward to what the Lord will continue to do in Hannah's life and how He will bless their new marriage.

\*photo courtesy of Becky Bucher

## WHAT'S NEW AND ON THE SHELF BY BOB MATHEWS

### Fiction

*The Amish Marketplace: The Coffee Corner* by Amy Clipston (F CLI)

*The Amish Marketplace: The Farm Stand* by Amy Clipston (F CLI)

### Non-Fiction

*Woke Jesus* by Lucas Miles (NF 261)

### Biography

*The Spiritual Lives of Great Composers* (B HAN)

### Juvenile Fiction

*Winnie the Horse Gentler: Happy Appy* by Dandi Mackall (JF MAC)

*Winnie the Horse Gentler: Gift Horse* by Dandi Mackall (JF MAC)

### DVD

*The Least of These*  
*The Essential Church*

### Audio

*Adventures in Odyssey: More Than Meets the Eye* (Audio Drama)

## OFFENDED BY CHRISTMAS CONTINUED

What about using "Xmas" for Christmas? Isn't that just another way to cancel the name of Christmas? Not exactly. You see, early believers abbreviated "Christ" as "X", since "X" is the first letter of "Christ" in Greek. For those who know that, "Xmas" is simple shorthand; however, for those who don't know that, "Xmas" is another way to keep Christ out of Christmas. Since most people don't know about early Christians and the Greek language, "Xmas" should be avoided.

The word "Christmas" comes from two English words: "Christ" and "mass." "Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word, "Messiah." "Mass" means "celebration"; so Christmas is a celebration of Christ. The Christmas season—and especially Christmas day—should be a celebration of Jesus: Who He is, why He came, what He did, where He is now, and that He is coming back.

Who is Jesus? Jesus is God incarnate, God in the flesh. Matthew 1:23 informs that Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. Why did Jesus come? Jesus came to save us from our sins as Matthew 1:21 declares. What did Jesus do? Jesus' ministry included teaching, performing miracles, dying for our sins, and rising from the dead. Where is Jesus now? Since His ascension into heaven, Jesus is now seated on the right hand of God, The Father (Mark 16:19). Jesus promised to return to His birthplace, Earth. When He will return is unknown to us but is now closer than it ever has been before! Jesus came once: this is history; Jesus will come again: when is a mystery. Jesus' first appearance changed history; His second appearance will conclude history. The main advice that Jesus left us concerning His return is to be ready. You may not be ready to celebrate Christmas yet, but you can be ready for Jesus to return. The only way to be ready for His return is to receive Him now as Savior and Lord by grace through faith.

Jesus is the reason for the season, and He always will be!

### Upcoming December events:

Dec 3rd: Happy Birthday Jesus Party  
& Christmas Dinner

Dec 9th: White Elephant Gift Party & Brunch

Dec 9th: Youth Christmas Party

Dec 13th Glory Way Quartet

### 2024 events:

Feb 9-11 Weekend to Remember

March 8-9 Women's BCM/D Conference



14 – Chuck & Lauren Bonn  
19 – Scott & Ellen Nupson  
22 -- Carol & Bob Gill



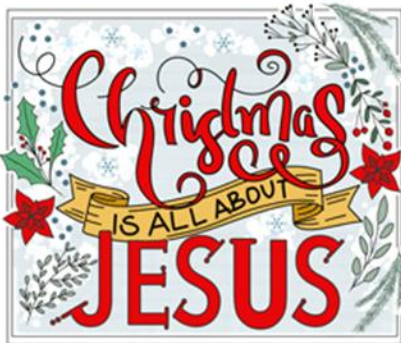
Woman on Mission will meet on  
Thursday, December 7th @ 12 PM.  
Sandy Janke will do the mission  
presentation and we will enjoy lunch  
at a restaurant (TBD) afterwards.





# KIDS CORNER

Thank you to everyone that helped pack boxes for OCC!!



## Christmas jokes

1. What is green, covered in Christmas lights and Christmas bulbs, and goes ribbit?  
*A mistle-toad.*
2. Elves use what kind of money?  
*Jingle bills.*
3. What do snowmen eat for dessert?  
*Ice crispies.*
4. What did the gingerbread man put on his bed?  
*A cookie sheet!*
5. What did Luke Skywalker say after he planted a Christmas tree farm?  
*May the forest be with you!*

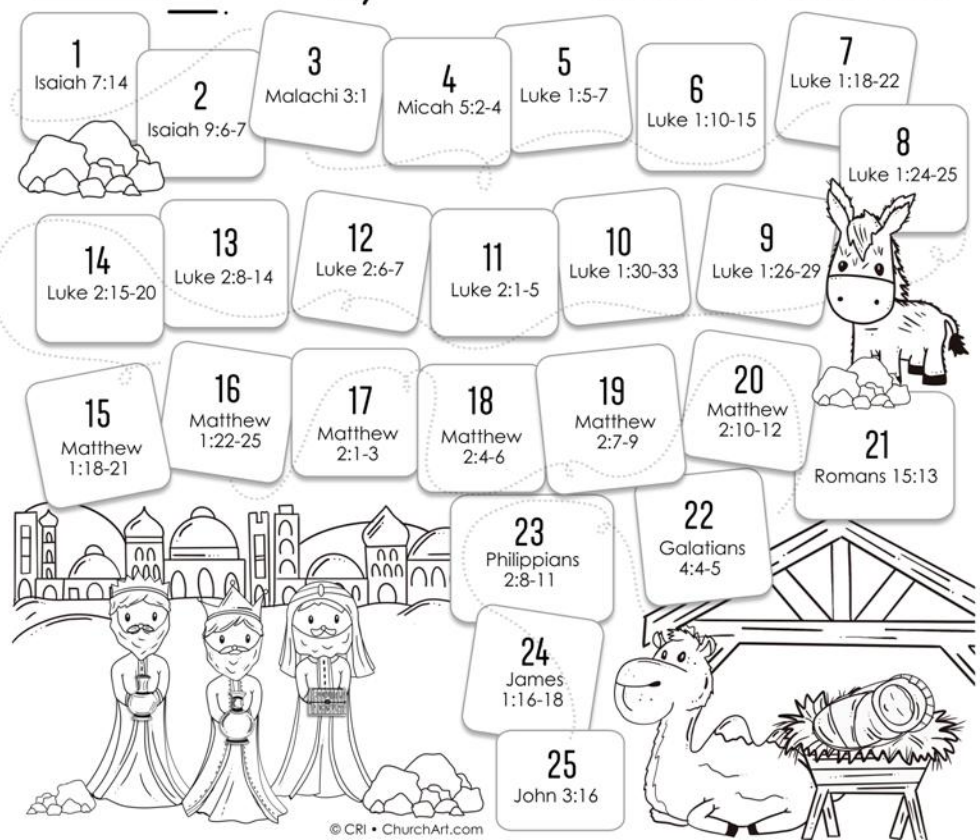
AWANA:  
No meetings on  
12/3, 12/24 or 12/31.

## Alphabet Bible Verses

**B**eloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. John 4:7 NKJV



Join us (children up to grade 5) for a *Happy Birthday Jesus Party* on 12/3 at 4PM.





## DEACON HIGHLIGHT: PATRICK HANCOCK

I have been at FBC my whole life. My parents were attending here when I was born. While here I have served as deacon, Sunday School teacher, Sunday School director, Trustee, Facilities Use Committee, Upward soccer referee and coach, Personnel Committee, Youth Council, VBS teacher and I help Jill do her ministries.

Jill and I celebrated 30 years on November 26th and we met here at the church. Her parents taught me in Sunday School, and they sat in the pew in front of us. We have 11 children (Nathan, Courtney, Jordan, Noah, Callie, Caitlyn, Erin, Eli, Ethan, Caleb & Joshua). We have 2 grandchildren (Zoelle, with Nathan and his wife, Sarah, and Alex, with Courtney and her husband Jakob), with 2 more on the way.

My employment has been with NASA for the last 24 years. I am the Associate Chief of the Safety Division for Occupational Safety (which means I try to keep our people from hurting themselves while doing their jobs).

For hobbies, I love to read, almost anything. I like golf, I enjoy kayaking. Between work, family and church, I don't have much free time.

I love serving in our church. It is my family. God gives me the most joy in my life when I am doing the little things here, like refereeing a soccer game or helping at VBS.



Speaking of 30 years, here's a look at Jill & Patrick when they started out, compared to now!



HAPPY  
Anniversary



OCC in December:

- Take advantage of after holiday sales as these are some of the best times to buy.
- The various dollar stores have a great selection of items year round.
- Buying a small amount each month will help you reach more people by the year's end.

**A**ndy Gibson must be awfully brave to bring a bunch of teenagers together to sit in front of a big fire! The teens seemed to have fun despite the anxiety of some of the parents (ha ha). A devotion, hot dogs, s'mores and other treats were enjoyed by all. We truly are thankful for these opportunities for the youth to gather & fellowship together!

\*photo courtesy of Karen Law



## 10 KEY VERSES ON EVANGELISM

We will start 2024 with a new series so here are the last 4 verses from the article from: <https://www.crossway.org/articles/10-key-bible-verses-on-evangelism/>

### 7. Romans 1:16–17

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."*

### 8. Proverbs 11:30

*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise.*

### 9. 2 Timothy 4:1–5

*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

### 10. 2 Corinthians 5:20

*Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*





## BOB &amp; CAROL GILL CELEBRATE 60 YEARS



On December 22, 1963 Bob & Carol Gill were married at Pacy United Methodist Church in West Virginia. They recently re-visited the church and stood on the same steps! They have 3 children, 7 grandchildren and have lived in the same home in La Plata since 1967!



Please bring in mittens, gloves, hats & scarves for Women on Mission's mitten tree.



## DECEMBER FUN FACTS

- December got its name from the Latin word *Decem*, meaning ten.
  - birthstones are blue zircon, blue topaz & tanzanite
  - holly, poinsettia and narcissus (daffodils) are the flowers
  - The month of December originally consisted of 30 days
    - it is National Pear Month
- approximately 35 million living Christmas trees are sold each year in the U.S.; more than 45 million are planted
- all the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas would equal 364 gifts
- Christmas Day and Christmas Eve are two of the rarest birthdays





## THANKING VETERANS FOR THEIR SERVICE

**On** Sunday, Nov. 5th, veterans and their families (and anyone else who wanted to join) were treated to a wonderful luncheon that included cake & cupcakes made by Jodi Miller. A huge thanks, as always, to Courtney Harbin for her tireless work to put on these events for us. Also, we extend our gratefulness to all who have served our country.



Scott wishing he could have the 1st piece of cake

## CANDY &amp; COSTUMES

There was a steady flow of princesses, superheroes, animals and movie characters during FBC's annual Trunk or Treat event. Everyone who came not only received candy but also a Bible & information about our church. We appreciate everyone who was able to help out!

\*photos courtesy of Debbie Schneider

