



Ladies volunteering at our White Christmas celebration on Saturday, December 5.



FIRST
BAPTIST
CHURCH
STATESVILLE

Volume 77 Issue 26

December 20, 2020

From the Pastor...

The song "Where Are You, Christmas" has been running through my mind lately. Little Cindy Lou Who sings it in the 2000 version of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Most of us know the Faith Hill version that's playing on the radio. The song resonates with many this year, because it feels like COVID has stolen Christmas.

So many things are different. We have to limit the number of people at our Christmas Eve services and Christmas musical. Families can't gather all at the same time. We aren't able to shop without fear of catching a deadly disease. No wonder some of us are having a difficult time finding Christmas this year.

Of course some would be having a difficult time with Christmas even without COVID. Many in our church family are grieving the loss of loved ones. Several are fighting serious health issues. Some have experienced broken relationships. Others are struggling financially. And an untold number are carrying issues of which we are unaware.

**Merry Christmas
from your ministers
& their families**

*Nelson & Valerie
James & Debi
Melissa & family
Elizabeth & Andrew*



If you are having trouble finding Christmas this year, I hope you will be gentle with yourself. **Remember, we don't always find Christmas, but Christmas often finds us.** It is something that can't be forced, but can be experienced despite our circumstances. In fact, one of the messages of Christmas is that God's light can come at the darkest of times.

Mary and Joseph probably weren't that thrilled before Jesus' birth. They took a long tedious journey, only to find no room. Yes, they had the promise of God, but they also had to face a difficult situation. It wouldn't surprise me if they had some tension along the way. Despite it all, they experienced God's grace and gave a blessing to the world.

My advice is for us is to accept however we feel this crazy Christmas; but to leave room for God's grace. Observe the traditions you can and make new ones where you can't. Be honest in your disappointment, but open to a fresh sense of God's presence. Try your best to look past all of the trappings and focus on the Christ-child. Who knows, this might be one of the best Christmases ever – at least it will be one of the most memorable.

Nelson

Schedule

Sunday, December 20

7:00 a.m. Sunday School Lesson
Uploaded to YouTube

9:00 a.m. Sunday School - FLC & Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship

6:00 p.m. Music Program

Monday, December 21

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

7:00 p.m. Pickle Ball

Wednesday, December 23

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

Thursday, December 24

Church Office Closed

12:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

4:00 p.m. Traditional Christmas Eve Service

Friday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Church Office Closed

Sunday, December 27

7:00 a.m. Sunday School Lesson
Uploaded to YouTube

9:00 a.m. Sunday School - FLC & Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship

Monday, December 28

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

7:00 p.m. Pickle Ball

Wednesday, December 30

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

Thursday, December 31

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

Friday, January 1

Happy New Year!

Church Office Closed

Church Staff Directory

Dr. Nelson Granade.....Senior Minister
Mr. James Martin.....Minister of Music & Worship
Rev. Melissa Wilson.....Minister of Children & Youth
Mrs. Elizabeth Kilby.....Minister of Young Families & Missions
Mr. Eddie Wiseman.....Accompanist / Music Assistant

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Mon - Thur, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Fri
Tel: 704-873-7231

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Ugly Christmas Sweaters

The students decorated ugly Christmas sweater cookies at their Christmas party. Which one is your favorite?



Spiritual Statistics

Weeks of December 6 & 13, 2020

	12/6	12/13
In-Person	.79	.80
Live Stream Views	60	58

Financial Statistics

	December	Year-to-Date
Giving Goal	155,469.00	291,937.00
Budget Receipts	32,005.00	197,247.00
Goals Not Yet Met	123,464.00	94,690.00
Alms	435.00	1,475.00
Designated	4,200.00	16,038.00

Mary, Did You Know?

Mary, did you know when you awoke that day
Your life would change forever?
Did you know that your dreams and plans
Would now be shaped by heaven?
Did you know that an angel's words
Would set your life's direction?
And did you know that God Himself
Would now own all your affection?

Mary, did you know? (How *could* you know?)
When you sang your song of joy,
That all of heaven's angels came
To praise your precious boy?
Did you know you altered history
By your one obedient choice?
That kings and beggars, wise men and fools
Would now all have one voice?

Mary, did you know that a girl of fourteen
Would become a woman of the ages?
Did you know you would carry the **word**
That astounded priests and sages?
Did you know that time's clock was set
By your baby's birth and death?
And could you know the dead would live
By His eternal breath!?

Mary, did you know the price you'd pay
For saying "YES" that day?
Did you know the shame you'd feel
When others turned away?
Did you know the tears you'd cry
When cruel men laughed and scorned?
Did you know the pain you'd feel
As his flesh was being torn?

Mary, did you know the prayers you'd raise
For God to spare your son?
Knowing all the while that his will --
And His will only -- must be done?
Did you fully understand
With every crushing loss,
That the eternal weight of glory
Would far outweigh your earthly cross?

Mary, did you know your love for God
Would beyond all measure?
And how could you know the joy derived
From seeking only His pleasure?
Did you know your darkest days
Would all outshine the sun?
That glorious day, when by pure grace,
You said "YES" to the **Holy One**?

**Mary, did you know?
How could you know!**

Ginny Stikeleather
December 10, 2005

White Christmas Saturday, December 5, 2020





Announcements

New Arrival!

Congratulations to Brad and Jamie Deal on the arrival of a daughter. Eleanor Gray was born Thursday, December 3. The proud great grandparents are David and Beth McDaniel.



2021 Deacon Chair & Co-Chair

The Deacon Ministry Team elected Shannon Ashley as chair; Mike McLain as co-chair; and Crystal Beale as secretary of the 2021 Deacon Ministry Team. Jason Allen, Jerry Campbell, Nancy Deal, Bill Henderson, Carol Hunter, & Alan Williams also serve on this team.

A Note from Minister of Young Families & Missions Elizabeth Kilby

Thank you so much for all those who came, prayed, and gave for White Christmas. It could not have been accomplished without the legacy of Carol and Luther Hunter and the leadership of Janet McLain, Sherry Ashley, Clarence Poole, and Jody Parlier! Thank you, thank you. We also were able to provide Christmas gifts and holiday pizza party for three Children's Homes with a total combined of 16 children. It has been an amazing few weeks and you keep me inspired! Thanks for being the hands and feet of Christ!

Merry Christmas!
Elizabeth Kilby



Christmas Music Program

Sunday, December 20

6:00 p.m.

Seating is limited to 75. Please make a reservation at www.statesvillefbc.org or call the church office at 704-873-7231. This program will be streamed on our YouTube page.

Christmas Eve Services

12 Noon & 4:00 p.m.

The 4:00 p.m. traditional service is full, but there is room at the noon service. You can also be placed on a waiting list.

If you have a reservation for any of our Christmas Services and find you cannot make it; please let us know ASAP so folks on the waiting list can be included.

A Note of Appreciation from the Church Staff

Your Church Staff wishes to thank you for all the many well wishes and gifts you have given us this time of year – especially our Christmas bonuses. Your kindness is an encouragement and inspiration in our shared ministry.