

Falls Fellowship

The Nativity Scene

As I write these words, Mike Harris is in the sanctuary assembling the large nativity scene we use each Christmas. It is a time-consuming process and Mike treats it with the respect it deserves. This is the first step in our decorating the church for Christmas. It is a most appropriate step to take — putting up the nativity scene first —

because without it the other decorations are meaningless. The nativity scene started the revolution we call Christmas.

I say it was a revolution because it represents realities which had never occurred in all of history. Never before had God shown such a personal and intimate revelation

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Missions Corner

Falls Baptist Church will be taking up the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering during the month of December.

Every Church. Every Nation. It's more than a catch phrase. It's at the core of what we do. We believe

every church — and every church member — has a critical role to play in bringing the gospel to the world. Our church's participation in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is

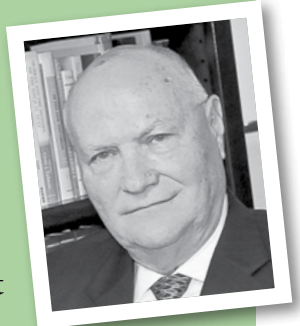
See Missions on page 3

Reflection on the First Year

I have come to the end of my first year as your pastor. We celebrated the passage in the way that Baptists love to celebrate—we had a covered dish luncheon. I have felt your support in many different ways during the year. We are learning to accept each other, pastor and people, with tolerance for our differences. I have often been inspired by your words of encouragement. I have tried to be a good listener when you came to me with your concerns. I have remembered you in my prayers and asked for God's grace and mercy to bless your lives.

We lost a few of our members to death and we gained a few members. The normal ebb and flow of life. Life is filled with seasons. Some of us are in the fall and

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Adopt-a-Family for Christmas

This year we are helping out two needy families for Christmas. There is a total of seven children we can help have a better Christmas.

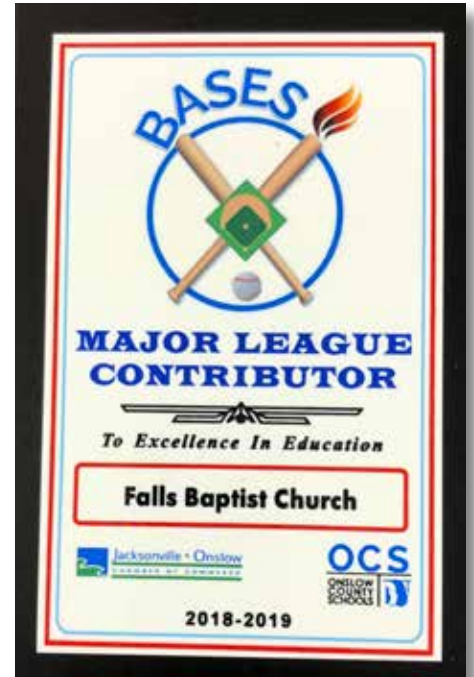
Look for a selection of items needed as gifts you can choose from in the vestibule. Some of the larger items can be shared by two or more of our members to make it happen.

Our missions committee is also collecting household cleaning supplies for these two families. Please bring your donations and place them in the vestibule. Contact Angie Harris with any questions.

Thanks!

Thanks from Onslow

It is with great sincerity that Onslow County Schools thanks you for your support and generosity during the 2018-2019 school year. We missed you at our recent BASES awards reception, but we are delighted to present you with a token of our gratitude for your support.



BASES — Businesses Assisting Schools in Education Students — is a project designed to join businesses, organizations and schools together as a cohesive network in the education of children. You have made a meaningful impact on the education of students in Onslow County, and for that OCS is abundantly grateful.

Enclosed is a plaque for you to keep and display proudly as supporter of Onslow County Schools.

Sincerely,
Brent Anderson, OCS Chief Communications Officer

Nursery Workers Needed!

We need volunteers to help work in the nursery during Sunday services. If we have more volunteers the burden will not fall on just a few.

Please sign up on the sheet in the vestibule. If you have any questions or need more information please contact Angie Harris.

Event Calendar

- December 1 — Deacons Meeting 4 PM
- December 1 — Hanging of the Green 6 PM
- December 7 — Church Christmas Dinner Party 6 PM – Sign up in vestibule
- December 14 — Men’s Breakfast 9 AM
- December 15 — Moravian Love Feast 4 PM followed by caroling in the community
- December 18 — Caroling at Hillside TBA
- December 22 — Sanctuary Choir Program 11 AM
- December 24 — Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion 5 PM
- January 1 — New Year’s Covered Dish Luncheon 12 Noon

December Birthdays

- 4 Cheryl Jenkins
- 9 Parker Jenks
- 15 Mark Young
- 15 Taylar Bub
- 20 Barbara Barham
- 20 Phil Jackson
- 21 Rebecca Davenport
- 24 Sarah Tart
- 28 Nikki Creech





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Nativity continued ...

of his love for us. Long ago he sent prophets like Moses and Isaiah and Jeremiah, but none of them represented the final self-revelation of God. That occurred 2,000 years ago when Mary brought forth her first born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7). This was revolutionary: God became flesh. This event was so significant that it divided time. We speak of time as BC, “Before Christ,” and AD, *Anno Domini*, after Christ or more specifically “in the year of our Lord.” Angels sang, shepherds left their flocks and went to see the wonder which occurred in Bethlehem, and Wisemen traveled from the East following a bright star that led them to the New King, Jesus Christ. Appropriately, therefore, our Christmas celebration at Falls begins with the Nativity Scene. I am so persuaded that this is the greatest event of history that I put a small nativity scene on my desk in my office at the church so I can see it and be reminded of the marvelous revelation it represents — the day God took on human flesh and became one of us.

As I look at the Nativity Scene on my desk, I look beyond it and see your faces. I see those who have faithfully and lovingly supported Falls this year. They have gathered with us on Sundays; they have brought their tithes and offerings; they have ministered to our people; brought hope to those in despair; lifted up the down-trodden; set food on empty tables and in countless ways represented the love God revealed to us in Jesus Christ.

In addition, I am looking beyond the Nativity Scene and seeing people whose names appear on our rolls but do not attend. Why don't they come? Some are not able to come anymore. Age and the infirmities of life have caught up with them. Some don't come because a long time ago someone in the church offended them and they can't forgive and move on, so they make the church and the Kingdom of God suffer. Others are complacent. The fire that once burned deeply in their souls as the love of God has been dimmed. God appears to them only in their dreams and, even then, he is far away.

To all of you who may fall into the category of “inactive church members”, why don't you come

back during Christmas? It would be the most natural thing to do, come back to the place where you have been loved and nurtured by Christ Jesus and by other sinners saved by grace, like me. Sing the carols of the season with us; witness the lighting of the candles on the advent wreath; read Holy Scriptures with us and wait, expectantly, for Christ to come to you once again and open your eyes to what he has done for us and then we shall all say:

“Glory to God in the Highest.
And on earth peace,
Good will toward men”
(Luke 2:14 NKJV)
— Tom Jenkins

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Missions continued ...

a key part of that.

Your Gifts Transform Lives. Because you and your church give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, IMB missionaries can take the gospel to unreached peoples around the world. Every dollar you give makes a difference, because 100 percent of the money collected goes to the work of reaching every nation.

The Story of Lottie Moon. In the 1800s, a missionary named Lottie Moon wrote letters from China urging American churches to fund more overseas workers. After Lottie's death on the mission field, an offering was started in her name. The offering was established to empower international missions efforts for Southern Baptists.

Deacons

Linwood Barham, Chairman	919-418-1162
Hubert Jenks, Vice Chairman	919-270-8765
Alan Watkins, Secretary	919-793-5548
Kevin Barham	919-618-4214
Brandon Long	252-903-4662
Mike Harris	919-746-5697

Reflection continued ...

others are in the winter and only God knows the full length of our days and that's the way it should be.

Some of our people have grappled with life-changing illnesses and others are becoming accustomed to new patterns of life, including aging and learning how to cope with less energy. When I asked someone how she was her response was, "I'm just tired." Many of us could say that.

We went through a "face-lift" project for portions of our building. The remodeling of restrooms was a significant accomplishment and much needed. Renovating the sanctuary helps us put our best foot forward in welcoming those who visit with us. We are blessed with a good facility to use for praising and worshipping God and we want to keep it that way.

We are a small church, by the numbers, but a giant in spirit. I am blessed each Sunday by the music and have to admit that the traditions of our music are in keeping with my style of worship. I delight in joining the group on Sunday mornings for "coffee and treats" as we prepare for Sunday School. Whether the subject is Saturday's football games, listening to the latest joke someone heard, or catching up on the latest news about our family of faith, the conversation is always lively. It is in moments like this, sharing our lives together, that we are truly the Church of Jesus Christ.

Here is my hope for the New Year: Jesus said we will be known by our love for one another. Our church



buildings tell the community we have been a church on the hill for more than 100 years. But the real church we are is demonstrated in our love for one another. Loving is tough. It means accepting others on their own terms, thinking, as Paul writes, less frequently about ourselves than we do others. It means admitting when we are wrong and when we have offended others and asking for forgiveness. It means helping others swim the stream of life and get to the other side where we are met by the risen Savior. We are Falls Baptist Church together; One Body is what the New Testament says. Here is a suggestion for 2020: let's be "kind" to one another. We will be challenged to practice kindness and civility next year, an election year. We need to relearn the old shibboleth — know how to disagree without being disagreeable. Let's show our neighbors we can disagree with them and still love them. Let's discover the common ground we all stand upon and refuse to support divisive agendas. Quite simply, as C.S. Lewis put it, let's be "little" Christs to one another.

— Tom Jenkins



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