

Happy New Year! It is that time to turn the page on another year, giving us the opportunity to reflect upon the past twelve months and, for some, the opportunity to start over. As a staff, we took a day early in December to do just that and we are excited about the possibilities of ministry for 2018. You will see some adjustments and new opportunities in this newsletter, then more will be shared at our Annual Meeting on January 21. I pray that you will be in attendance and that your Sunday School class will participate in our Chili Cook-off.

While visiting the in-laws for Christmas last week, I slipped off to visit some former church members that we have remained connected to the past ten years. A surprise was when I ran into some members of the church where I served as youth minister. It has been more than fifteen years since I had seen most of them. Since I was within a few miles of the church, I thought I would take a trip down memory lane and drive to the church, knowing that no one would be there and all I could do was drive around the building.

The church is as I was remembered, but the area around the church has changed. The subdivision that was just starting when I was there now has several hundred homes in it and has grown to almost connect with the church property. The town as a whole has grown toward the area of the church, including new businesses along the road to the church and thousands of cars drive by the large church sign every day. I can remember the pastor sharing that this growth was going to happen and the potential was great for growth within the church, as young families would flood the new subdivision that would grow toward the church.

But each week the 100-year-old church has less than 30 people in attendance. The sanctuary was built to seat about 300 and the people I talked to said that most of the church is not used each week. They struggle to pay the bills each month. While I was filled with great memories as I drove around the church building, my heart broke when I considered the condition of the church.

What happened? The church experienced some growth and was averaging close to 200 each week, but some long-time members did not like the growth and forced some decisions over ten years ago that stopped all outreach into the nearby subdivision. The pastor left, followed by many families because they did not want to be part of an inward-focused church. The members that I spoke with last week said, "We believe God has left this small group for something special." All I could think was "you were part of something special" but decisions stopped the work the Lord was doing in the church and it continues to suffer the consequences.

Why do I share this story? Our church is not immune. While we may not be located in an area of growing population, we are surrounded by lostness. The unchurched and de-churched population continues to grow. We will make decisions that will either enable or enhance our ministry, or they will decrease our effectiveness. Before you think, "It won't happen to us. We have been here a long time," the people at Bethel Station Baptist Church thought the same thing!

I am excited about the possibilities for 2018. Our Leadership Team continues to work on our 2020 Vision. Our ministries have a firm foundation. But we cannot be satisfied. Paul said it best in Philippians 3:13-14, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Our January sermon series is "We Are Called," as we remember our priorities as a church.

God bless,  
*Bro. Clint*

P.S. A huge "THANKS" to those who decorated the church, both inside and outside, for Christmas this year. It looked great!



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## **"Building Spiritual Giants" Parents' Lunch Sunday, January 28, at noon.**

This is a new effort we are starting to assist parents in the spiritual formation of their children. **If you have children at home, regardless of their age, or the years of experience you have, please plan to join us for lunch.** Reservations are required by **Tuesday, January 16**, by emailing [clint@fbcyazoo.org](mailto:clint@fbcyazoo.org) or using the church bulletin. Childcare will be provided.

**Join us Sunday, January 7, at 4:00 pm in the fellowship hall honoring Taz Ketchum and Blanche Hester for their years of faithful service to FBC. A table will be available for cards and everyone is encouraged to share your appreciation.**

**Everyone is urged to attend the MS Baptist Evangelism Conference on Sunday evening, January 28, at 6:00 to hear former Southern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter of New Orleans. This will be held at Brandon Baptist Church. More details will be shared, but mark your calendar and plan to attend.**

**We will continue to collect the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering through January 21. Please continue to give in support of the estimated 4,000 missionaries serving unreached people.**

**Thanks for your support of our Chile Missions fundraisers.** We are at the point of discussing and determining future steps in Chile. We are also planning to do a dinner theatre as a fundraiser in February. If you are interested in being involved in the dinner theatre and/or being part of an upcoming trip to Chile, please **meet on Sunday, January 14, at 5:00** in the Fellowship Hall.

**40 Days of Prayer** for Revival starts **January 9**. A devotional prayer guide, written by our ministerial staff, will be available Sunday for you to use. Everyone is encouraged to participate in this spiritual preparation. Our revival services are **February 18-21**. Please mark this on your calendar now. **Dr. Rick Lance, Executive Director** of the Alabama State Convention, will be our revival preacher.

**Our annual Chili Cook Off and Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 21, at NOON.** This is a change of time from previous years in hopes that more people can attend. All Sunday School classes are asked to provide 1-2 large pots of chili. The winner of the cook off will be determined by the one with the most money given. All money given goes toward the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. This will be a time of celebration over the past year and looking at ministry in 2018.



Due to the reduction in staff effective the first of the year, the office phone will now be answered by an automated system. Upon answering, you will be directed to select which person you wish to speak to. If you get a staff member's voicemail, please leave a message to have your call returned. Please do not immediately call their cell phone, as there are many reasons why they cannot answer their office phone. Also, during office hours it is requested that you call the office first, rather than a staff member's cell phone, because the staff member could be on vacation or in a position where a non-emergency phone call can be disruptive. The office number is 746-2471. Please add this to your phone contacts.

**Bring a "white elephant gift" to exchange.**

**PRIME TIMER'S ANNUAL BIRTHDAY BASH**  
**January 23, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**  
**Tickets \$10 INCLUDES a catFISH LUNCH**

**For Your Enjoyment:**  
**Christian Comedian**  
**& Speaker**  
**Peppi Garrett**

Please Join Us for a bridal shower honoring  
**Hanna Mathis**  
 Bride elect to Dillon Bridge  
**January 14**  
 2:00 - 3:30 pm  
 in the fellowship hall  
 Registered at: Yazoo Drugs, Downtown Market, Good Hope,  
 William Sonoma, Belk and Bed Bath & Beyond

Gifts were received for the following designated funds:

To Lottie Moon in memory of June Mathis  
 To Lottie Moon in honor of Gerry McGraw, Clint & Jennifer Ritchie, Mr. & Mrs. James Pearson, Taz & Betty Ketchum and Frank Griffing  
 To the Children's Ministry in honor of Patty & John Yates  
 To the Youth Ministry in honor of Lizzie & Aaron Sibley  
 To Chile Missions in honor of Clint, Jennifer, Addison & Whitley Ritchie  
 To Missions in memory of Frank Griffing  
 To the Missions Fund in honor of the FBC Staff  
 To the Capital Improvement in honor of Polly Sudduth

\*\$19,183.41 required weekly to meet budget.

December 3	December 10	December 17	December 24
Bible Study	Bible Study	Bible Study	Bible Study
Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance
246	283	230	248
Worship Service	Worship Service	Worship Service	Worship Service
Attendance	Attendance	Attendance	Attendance
277	417	n/a	256
Budget Offering	Budget Offering	Budget Offering	Budget Offering
\$24,464.72	\$25,042.20	\$15,179.30	\$18,838.45

**Financial Report through November**

Total Budget Offering \$833,276.60 less Expenses \$884,768.98 = **-\$51,492.38**

Total Approved Budgeted through October 2017 = \$916,660.61

Actual Expenses \$884,768.98= \$31,891.63 *spending under budget*



**HAPPY NEW YEAR!!** Some of you may jot down resolutions and do whatever it takes to fulfill each. Then there are some, I'm sure, who no longer bother doing so. This apathy could come from past failures or there could be some deep-seated reason you no longer take the time to do so. It really doesn't matter. What matters is the state of your spiritual walk and the walk of your family. We have a fine group of teachers and workers in our kids area and due to the growth are always looking for more. Our workers feel God has called them to the position of teaching and are faithful every Sunday and Wednesday yet no matter the energy and preparation these teachers put forth, it cannot match the influence of parents. Our Sunday School program is geared specifically for your child and their spiritual understanding but they must be here to benefit. That is up to you mom and dad. The Wednesday night program is an exciting and fresh way to learn Bible truths. AWANA kicks off the first Sunday in February and you add that to the mix and we have everything to help your child/children to grow in the Lord. Do whatever you can do to get your child here at 6 p.m., Wednesday night.



Polka Dot Girls (grades 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>) will start up on Wednesday night, January 3<sup>rd</sup> as well. With the pressures of bullying, type of clothing worn, physical changes and anything else your preteen girls may be experiencing, this program deals with them all and helps assure your girl that she's a child of The King. Please get her here on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

I recently had someone approach me to ask how they could serve in Project 226 (FBC kids ministry). First off I have to say I was excited to get that inquiry. That hasn't happened nearly as often as I'd like. Let me say we do have immediate needs. We have a fantastic teaching team but would never turn down those who would be willing to come in for crowd control. Those willing to drive or ride the van on Sunday morning, evening, or Wednesdays would be very much appreciated. If you have felt like God was telling you to "live out your faith" and you wanted to be obedient but just weren't sure how to do so, this is it. Maybe you have seen a group of dedicated workers on Sunday providing leadership to our kids during the worship service and felt called to help but have hesitated. Please see me and I will help you get plugged in. There are more opportunities than teaching. Not everyone is called to teach but we are all called to serve. Let me hear from you and trust me...you will be blessed in the process!

John

## The Season for Singing



Christmas has often been called the season of singing and it definitely has been this past month at First Baptist Church. I am grateful to everyone who helped in so many different ways with worship music in December. Our instrumentalists, choir, soloists, sound and tech crew, and tv crew put a lot of work into helping making our Christmas season a time of meaningful worship. Add to that our ushers, security team, cooks, childcare workers, and our church staff and we easily can count at least 100 different people who were faithfully serving during our worship services. What a beautiful picture of the Body of Christ working together!

Now we are at the start of a new year which means a fresh start for all of us. I want to encourage you to be actively involved in the life of our church and to make sure you and your family are fully engaged in our worship services. It's easy to slip into the habit of not making Sundays a priority, but the New Year is a great time to make the commitment to lead our families in prioritizing worship and serving. In choir, we will begin working on new music for worship, our upcoming Revival services, and Easter season. I am hoping that all of my choir members will be returning and invite any others who might be interested in serving in this area and willing to commit to rehearsals and Sundays. We will resume our regular rehearsals this Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 6:45 in the choir room.

***Small Groups and Awana will restart on Sunday, February 4.***

## Student Ministry

**Youth Worship** will start back on Wednesday, January 3 at 6pm.

**January 5&6** We will take two students to a new retreat called Discern which helps young men wrestling with a call into vocational ministry. Please be in prayer for these students.

**January 26-28 will be D-Now.** Our theme is Everyday Faith. We will examine what it looks like to have strong faith in our day to day lives and not just in the moments we set aside for God. Neil Tullos will be speaking and The Anse Rigby Band will lead in worship. Please be in prayer for our students and those who are leading them.

Our **Wednesday Night Meal** is going to be discontinued for the foreseeable future. It has become increasingly difficult for our teams to cook as regular as is required of them, and we have been unsuccessful in finding additional teams. Also, fewer families are taking advantage of this offer. Our Wednesday services for all ages will continue at 6:00pm, with choir practice following at 6:45pm.

# January 2018

## Regular Weekly Sunday Services

9:45 am—Sunday School  
 11:00 am—Worship Service &  
 4:00 pm FAITH Teams, 5:00 pm—Awana & Small Groups

## Wednesday Services

6:00 pm—Prayer Meeting, Children's & Students Bible Study and Ladies Bible Study  
 6:45 pm—Choir Practice

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 5th Sunday Local Benevolence offering	1 office closed	2	3 Services start at 6 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45pm	4	5	6
7 Retirement Reception for Taz & Blanche- 4pm	8	9 40 days of prayer for Revival begins	10 New Ladies Bible Study "Wait & See" begins - 6pm	11	12	13
14 Deacons Meeting at noon Hanna Mathis Bridal Shower-2pm Chile Mission Meeting -5pm	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Annual Business Meeting & Chili Cook off—noon Last day to give to Lottie Moon offering	22	23 Primetimer's Birthday Party 11 am	24	25	26 DNOW	27
28 DNOW Building Spiritual Giants Lunch noon MS Baptist Evangelism Conf.-6pm	29	30	31			



### WATCH US LIVE ONLINE!

Sunday morning service are available **LIVE** online. You can watch the service live by going to [www.fbcyazoo.org](http://www.fbcyazoo.org)  
 And clicking on the "Live Stream" on our home page.



328 Grand Ave. Yazoo City, MS 39194

RETURN ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED to PO Box 780 Yazoo City MS 39194

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday

8:00 am - 5:00 pm

FRIDAY—CLOSED

### PHONE:

662-746-2471

### Website:

[www.fbcyazoo.org](http://www.fbcyazoo.org)

### EMAIL:

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