

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
309 E. Adams Street
Muncie, Indiana 47305
Phone: 765-284-7749

Place
Stamp
Here



The Visitor
DECEMBER 2012

Drunk

Wade Allen

It is hard to believe that December is almost here. The Allens pulled our Christmas decorations out of the attic this weekend, turned on holiday music and transformed our interior and exterior decorations. We even indulged in a couple of holiday movies. It was a festive time for our family. We began our month-long celebration of Christmas. But Christmas is not yet here. It does not arrive until December 25. It may be more accurate to say that we began the *anticipation* of Christmas. This Sunday, we celebrate the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is not Christmas. Advent is the season of anticipation prior to Christmas. We often lose sight of this as we have succumbed to cultural understandings of the holiday season. Yet, we should learn to live in Advent. This year, we will follow the lectionary passages during Advent. This year's texts point to the second coming of Jesus. We will spend four Sundays considering the urgent and expectant posture of Scripture regarding Jesus's re-

turn. While various interpretations have confused the matter, Scripture is clear that Jesus will return. This week, we will look at Jesus's description of his return; next week, we will consider Paul's writings to the Philippians about Christ's return. How do we make sense of such a complex issue? When is it going to happen? How will it unfold? What clues do we have in Scripture about it? How are we to respond to Scripture's teaching? It would take pages to unpack these questions. I will not attempt such a feat. Yet, I will point to Jesus's advice to us; we are instructed toward a particular posture. Jesus warns, "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap." (Luke 21:34 NIV) What is Jesus saying? The word *dissipation* describes a drunken headache, a hangover. Hangovers make it difficult to focus on work or chores. No doubt, the alcohol steals our attention. Jesus understands

the detriment of worldly anxieties. He knows that we have the tendency to be tipsy on the cares of this world. They prevent our urgency, our anticipation of Jesus returning. When is the last time you thought about Jesus's return? I have to admit that His coming does not often receive my focus. I seldom concentrate on Jesus's promise to return. Yet, Scripture writers put intense emphasis on Jesus's return. Jesus tells us to "Be always on the watch,

and pray" (Luke 21:36 NIV) May we learn to share this anticipation. May we shake off the hangover of worldly anxieties. May we clearly look toward Jesus's return with expectancy. I hope you will join as we worship in the season of Advent. I pray that our engagement of these texts will enlighten Jesus's promise and our prayer, "'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20 ESV)

Robert's Ramblings

Robert Burton

It is almost time to go caroling. Our annual Christmas Caroling party will be Sunday December 16. We will meet at Riverside at 3:00pm that afternoon to divide into teams to go caroling. Then we will reconvene at Riverside for a Christmas party and meal at 6:00. Entertainment will be provided by the renown quartet "Eastern Gate." Eastern Gate is enhanced by the presence of such notable voices as our own Dr. Joe Songer and former pastor Woody Noblitt. Meat and drink will be provided, but bring an extra side dish. It will be a good evening of fellowship and caroling. Feel free also to pass on names of those who would appreciate having caroling at their homes to Terry Harke.

Sue Mutter is planning a trip to Washington, DC this Spring. The dates are May 16–21. Cost will be \$699.00 per person for double occupancy, or

\$892.00 for a single traveling alone. The price includes all meals and transportation round trip from Muncie. Sights to see will include the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Capitol, the White House, and other points of interest. It is important to get your reservations in early in order to hold the motor coach and lodgings at a reduced rate. The deadline therefore is December 15. Contact Sue as soon as possible if you are interested.

In the coming months we will be exploring ideas for an expanded ministry to Senior Adults using the combined resources of First Baptist and Riverside. Feel free to offer your suggestions as to how we may best value our senior members.

Robert

Missional Communities

The Young Adult small group that has been meeting for the past three years has been working through a season of discernment. The group is continuing to meet through the end of the year as it closes this season of ministry.

In January, the group is shifting its focus to what some call *Missional Communities*. The group will be doing a pilot missional community to explore the possibility of expanding this model church wide. A team has been formed to plan and implement this ministry in January. Look for more information in the January Visitor about specific dates and times. Please keep this group in your prayers as they discern God's leading.

Business Meeting

A business meeting will be held on **December 16 at 10 a.m.** There will be a combined service this day. A Q & A meeting will be held on **Wednesday, December 12 at 5:30 p.m.** for those who have questions or concerns about the items proposed at the meeting. The 2013 budget and a proposed change regarding the church council description in the church constitution will be presented.

FBC & RABC Caroling and Christmas Dinner

The annual Caroling and Christmas Dinner at Riverside will be **Sunday, December 16**. The caroling will begin at **3:00 p.m.** with a dinner to follow at **6:00 p.m.**. A program will follow the meal. If you plan to carol please contact Terry Harke: 284-2852 so we can set up caroling groups. If you can transport a caroling group please let Terry know. The meat, drink, and table service will be furnished. Please bring a side dish or two to share. You do not have to carol to attend the dinner.

Wednesday Evenings During Holidays

On **Wednesday, December 26** and **Wednesday, January 2**, there will be no Wednesday Evening Programs. We will resume Wednesday evening programs on January 9, following the holidays.

Combined Worship Services in December

There will be several combined worship gatherings in the month of December.

On **Sunday, December 16** we will worship in a combined gathering at 10:45am. A special choir will lead us musically as we anticipate the arrival of the Christ child during this third Sunday of the Advent season.

On **Sunday, December 23** and **Sunday, December 30**, we will meet as a combined service due to the holidays. Both weeks, a combined Sunday school hour will begin at 9:15 a.m. and the worship gathering will begin at 10:45 a.m.

On **Monday, December 24**, we will gather as one church family on Christmas Eve at 7 p.m..

Organ Concert

The local chapter of the American Guild of Organists and our church have partnered to present an advent organ concert on **Sunday, December 9, at 3 p.m.** at First Baptist Church. This event will be our Christmas gift to the community.

The program "Advent Blessings: Songs, Lessons, Pipes, and Bells" will feature seven local organists, soloist Meryl Mantione, First Baptist's bell choir, and hymns by combined church choirs and congregation. In addition, scriptures and narrative will be read by several of our members.

Featured organists will be Leonard Atherton, Kirby Koriath, Kristi Koriath, Tim Lewis, Ron Rarick, Christy Reilley, and Cindy Strietelmeier.

Please plan to attend this free advent program and invite your family, friends and neighbors to join you. We will have childcare so that younger families may attend.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

There will be a Candlelight Christmas eve service at 7:00 p.m. on December 24. We will celebrate Christmas as a church family as we consider the Christmas story, participate in communion and sing together the songs of Christmas. This is a special time as we inaugurate the Christmas season.

Children's Birthday Party for Jesus

Kids, it's our favorite party of the year, and you can read all about it.. right here! We'll have games and crafts, fun with friends, presents to open and lunch at the end. Just let Christy know if you plan to be there, and a gift will await you to unwrap. Our party will celebrate the birth of our King, to Him, the birthday song we will sing!

Date: Saturday, December 15th **Time:** 10:00 a.m. - noon **Place:** Lower Auditorium **RSVP:** Christy (call or text 717-5229) *In order for your child to have a gift at the party, We need to know if they will be there.*

Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed from Monday, December 24 through Wednesday, January 2. You may contact one of the pastors during this time if you have a pastoral need. Wade (765-405-0131), Matt (765-405-0536) or Robert (765-749-6105) will be available by phone.

Sanctuary Choir

Sanctuary choir is open to new members. Reading music is helpful but not required; just have a love for praising the Lord in song. We rehearse 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., Wed evenings, except on special occasions and participate in worship leading during the traditional service.

Handbell Rehearsals

The Handbell Choir will be on a holiday break from December 12 - January 2. They will rehearse on December 5 and will resume rehearsals on January 9, 2013.

Bell Ringing

Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army will be **December 12 & 13* this year. You may sign up on the bulletin board in the basement.

Advent Sermon Series

During the season of Advent, we will live in the anticipation of Jesus's return. The season of Advent is a season of waiting, hoping and looking forward to the coming of Jesus. Historically, the suspense is not limited to Jesus's birth; it includes his second coming. We will consider Jesus's words about His return in Luke as well as Paul's epistles. I hope you will join us during this special season.

- December 2, His Return (Luke 21:25-36)
- December 9, Expectant (Philippians 1:3-11)
- December 16, Refocus (Philippians 4:4-7)*
- December 23, Mary's Song (Luke 1:39-55)
- We will be meeting in a combined service (10:45 a.m.) on December 16.

Toiletries for YWCA

Does anyone have toiletries you have gathered from hotels, motels? Our neighbors, the residents of the YWCA, will make good use of these items and will be pleased to have them. There will be a basket in the church office in the area that we collect food for the food pantries designated for these items. If you have a chance to buy one & get one free, that is a good opportunity to share, too - shampoo, lotions, conditioners, soap, etc.

Thank You Notes

Operation Christmas Child – Thank you so much for all the people who packed boxes for Operation Christmas Child. In this area of Indiana over 3600 boxes were sent. Of those First Baptist completed 37.

Thank you again! Jane Patton

Thank you to the pastor, staff, and congregation of – Thank you to the pastor, staff, and congregation of First Baptist Church for all that you have done for Tonya. You have truly been the hands and feet of Jesus in her life. Your visits, gifts, and support meant the world to her and to those of us that love her. Being able to have her memorial service at the church was such a blessing and everyone went above and beyond with help! May God richly bless all of you.

Sincerely,

Dan & Alison Ringlespaugh and the family of Tonya Paul

Calendar

Sundays – 9:15 a.m. Early Gathering/Early Sunday School, 10:15 a.m. Fellowship Time, 10:45 a.m. Late Gathering/Late Sunday School, 4:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Wednesdays – 5:30 p.m. - Evening Meal, 6:00 p.m. - Childrens' Program, 6:15 p.m. - Band Rehearsal, 6:30 p.m. - Bible Study & Handbell Rehearsal

- There will be no Wednesday evening programs on December 26 and January 2

December 9 – 3:00 p.m. - Advent Organ Concert

December 10 – 7:00 p.m. - Leadership Council Meeting

December 15 – 9:00 a.m. - Advent Choir Rehearsal

December 16 – 3:00 p.m. - FBC & RABC Caroling 6:00 p.m. - Dinner & Program at Riverside

December Birthdays

We would like to say Happy Birthday to the following people in the month of December. Please let them know that you are thinking of them on their special day.

2 Tyler Stinson
3 Bettyanne Morrow
4 Shirley Johnson
6 Katelyn Richardson
6 Aurora Richardson
8 Kasey Kirklin
9 Julie Morency
11 Bill Eidson
13 David Jones
19 Levi Allen

23 Benjamin Whaley-Jones
24 James Londt
25 Jean Jones
26 Randolph O'Bryant
Grace Wright
28 Thomas Scisoe
30 Jake Jackson
30 Robert Kirklin
31 Rodney Head