



# The Visitor

## Combined Services

Wade Allen

This year, we have the unique circumstances of both Christmas and New Year's Day occurring on Sunday. There has been considerable conversation about churches deciding to cancel services on Christmas Day. Some have canceled Christmas morning services in lieu of Christmas Eve services the night before (see [Ben Witherington's blog](http://bit.ly/closedc) at <http://bit.ly/closedc>).

I will not detail the discussions about meeting on Christmas Eve versus Christmas Day. However, I do want to let you know about five combined services that will be taking place at First Baptist Church Muncie in the next two months, due to holidays as well as other traditional celebrations.

There has been consideration given to holding combined services at 10:30 a.m., but much discussion among members of Church Council has resulted in a decision to have the combined services at 11:15. To have anything other than 9:15 or 11:15 means that 3 events would have to be changed (Early service, Sunday school, Late service). In the past, this has proved to be very confusing for those who are loosely connected with our church and for those in the community. This past Easter, we met at 10:45 AM; at 11:15 AM some 40 people walked in during the middle of the service. There were also many questions as to when/whether Sunday school would be held. Having the combined service at 11:15 AM only requires one change. Those who attend early service will need to adjust their schedules for the day, but the later service provides consistency for our community and prospective visitors. Meeting at 9:15 AM would also provide consistency, but it is difficult for families with young children to attend. This decision is not preferring one group of people over another. It is simply a matter of timing and consistency to accommodate the most people.

We are one church; observing these holidays and special times together in one body is a wonderful way to celebrate. After the holidays, the early and late services will resume their normal times. We typically do not do have this number of combined services in such a short period of time. This year is different because both Christmas Day and New Year's Day are on a Sunday. (continued on page 2)

### In Worship

11/6/2011

#### **Closing Corinthians**

Wade Allen

11/13/2011

#### **The Bible & Poverty: Old Testament**

Wade Allen

11/20/2011

#### **The Bible & Poverty: New Testament**

Wade Allen

11/27/2011

#### **First Sunday of Advent**

Wade Allen

## COMBINED SERVICES (CONT.)

We hope that you will mark these dates on your calendar and plan to attend the special services as follows:

- Sunday, November 20 - Harvest Dinner Worship 11:15 AM (a special Thanksgiving lunch will follow)
- Sunday, December 18 - Cantata 11:15 AM
- Saturday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Service 7:00 PM
- Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Day Worship 11:15 AM\*
- Sunday, January 1 - New Year's Day Worship 11:15 AM\*

\* There will be no children's Sunday school on these dates. Other Sunday school classes may choose to meet. Talk to you Sunday school leaders as to whether your class is going to meet on these days.

---

ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS

"I was born and raised in the South. I never thought I would ever attend a meeting like this!" He said that just a few feet from where Lydia and I had been sitting. We were attending the first New Baptist Covenant in 2008, in Atlanta. He was African American, I was white. We embraced each other, then went our separate ways. The New Baptist Covenant was a gathering of Baptist from the various Baptist groups in our country. This included our own American Baptist Churches, the three main African American Baptist conventions (National Baptists), the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, to name a few. Together, they represented over half of all Baptists in the United States. Attending the meeting was one of the most exciting events Lydia and I had ever been to. It was truly an historic event and brought a real sense of celebration of a common faith and heritage among Baptist of all stripes, ethnic groups, and styles of worship.



The second New Baptist Covenant will be held again in Atlanta this November 17-18. This time, due to the economy and also with a desire to reach to a broader audience, video of the meeting will be streamed live to local churches around the country. Provisions have been made via the internet to stream it live to local churches. It will be shown live here in Muncie at First Baptist Church. The schedule for the worship sessions is shown here:

- Thursday November 17, 2011  
8:00pm - 11:00 pm Worship 1
- Friday November 18, 2011  
10:00am - 1:00pm Worship 2  
8:00pm - 11:00pm Worship 3

Those who attend are encouraged to spend Friday afternoon in a time of fellowship with their fellow Baptists in their city and then to engage in local mission projects on Saturday. We are challenged to invite our fellow Baptists to attend with us. This is definitely an opportunity to come together to celebrate our common faith and heritage as Baptists.

## GIVING THANKS IN DEED AS WELL AS WORD

As we enter November and see the holidays on the horizon, I'm aware that for many in our community this season serves to highlight the disparity between those who "have" in abundance and those who "have not." According to the U.S.Census for 2010, 20% of the citizens of Delaware County are living in poverty. What does that mean exactly? What kind of challenges does someone in Muncie who is living without sufficient resources face regularly? Here are a few examples that come to mind.

1. A single mother is unable to work because she cannot afford safe childcare. Because she is unable to work she feels hopeless.
2. Working parents cannot afford to go to the doctor because, while they have too much income to qualify for public health benefits, they do not make enough to purchase the insurance offered by their employers. Because medical care is unavailable to them, small health problems become big health problems.
3. A flat tire on the way to work is a crisis rather than an inconvenience because the owner of the car has no funds to replace the tire. He risks losing his job if he misses work.
4. A senior citizen must decide which of his medications he will take at half the prescribed dosage since he can't afford to buy all of his medications this month.
5. An eight year old has trouble staying awake in class because his mom's need to work a second job means he does not get home from the babysitter and in bed until after 11pm most nights.
6. A father lies awake at night worrying about how he will keep the utilities and rent paid with just his unemployment benefits.

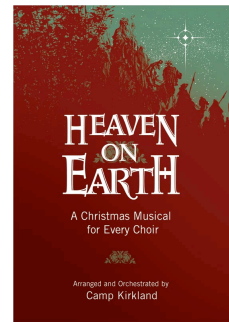
Every day our neighbors here in Delaware County are struggling with challenges such as these. It's easy to insulate ourselves with our neighborhoods and social groups so that we don't have to see the pain that is in our community. We are being called, however, to open our eyes to the suffering that is all around us. We are being called as individuals and as a congregation by God to see the needs and to respond. What will you do, in this season of Thanksgiving, to give thanks through your deeds? What will you do to step outside your comfort zone and begin to build friendships with those in our community who are struggling with the challenges presented by a lack of resources?

I encourage you to learn more about poverty by attending the elective class on Sunday Mornings, "What Every Church Member Needs to Know About Poverty" at 10:30am in the back of the lower auditorium. Also consider a financial gift to support "Circles" in our community. Circles is a innovative program which helps people move from poverty to self-sufficiency. Our church has set a goal of raising \$5,000 to support the work of Circles.

-Betsy Whaley

## CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Rehearsals for the Christmas cantata, "Heaven on Earth" will be held each Sunday in November from 4:00-5:00 PM. Adults and youth are welcome to become involved in rehearsals. "Heaven on Earth" will be presented on **Sunday, December 18 at 11:15 AM** during a combined worship service. If you have any questions please contact Cynthia Smith, [cynthialucilesmith@yahoo.com](mailto:cynthialucilesmith@yahoo.com).



---

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Prayer Shawl Ministry meets each Wednesday at 4:00pm in the conference room. We welcome any newcomers who would like to participate in this ministry. Even if you don't knit or crochet, please join us and we will teach you. For more information contact Dana Davis at [Twoddavis@aol.com](mailto:Twoddavis@aol.com), 765-358-3911 or 765-212-8318

---

THANKSGIVING BASKETS FOR SHUT-INS

On Saturday, November 19th we will be gathering at 9:00 am in the church kitchen to assemble Thanksgiving baskets for Shut-Ins. Volunteers are needed to help put together the baskets and to help deliver them that same morning. If you have any questions or are interested in volunteering please contact Polly Ratchford [polly1961@comcast.net](mailto:polly1961@comcast.net) or (765) 759-0977

---

HOLIDAY DECORATING

On Saturday, November 26th we will be putting up holiday decorations in the Sanctuary. We will meet at 9:00 am in the Sanctuary. A brunch will follow the decorating. Please make plans to join us. For more information please contact Molly Flodder, [flodder@comcast.net](mailto:flodder@comcast.net)

---

THANKSGIVING WEEK EVENTS

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, there will be no Wednesday night meal or events on November 23. Band, Handbell, and Choir Rehearsals will all take place Tuesday November 22 at their regularly scheduled times.

---

HARVEST DINNER

The annual harvest dinner will be held on November 20th. There will be a combined worship service at 11:15 and then a meal will be served after. Meat, drinks, and rolls will be provided. We ask that you please bring a side dish. If you are interested volunteering please contact Kendra Ervin at [Kendra\\_Ervin@progressive.com](mailto:Kendra_Ervin@progressive.com) or (765) 744-2161.

## NOVEMBER EVENT CALENDAR

**Sundays**

9:15 a - Early Gathering  
 10:15 a - Sunday School  
 11:15 a - Late Gathering  
 4:00 p - Choir Rehearsal for Christmas Musical  
 TBA - Youth Group Events

**Tuesdays**

7:00 p - Young Adult Bible Study at Stiger's  
 7:00 p - Friendship Class for Group Homes  
 (Riverside)

**Wednesdays**

10:00 a - Women's Small Group at Riverside  
 (November 2 and 16)  
 4:00 p - Prayer Shawl Ministry  
 5:30 p - Wednesday Evening Meal  
 6:15 p - Children's Program  
 6:15 p - Band Rehearsal  
 6:30 p - Handbell Rehearsal  
 6:30 p - Prayer Hour  
 6:30 p - Financial Peace University  
 7:40 p - Choir Rehearsal

**November 7**

6:00 p - Special Leadership Council Meeting

**November 9**

5:00 p - Children's Ministry Team Meeting at Allen's

**November 13**

4:00 p - GEMs and Teens  
 5:15 p - Worship Arts Team Meeting

**November 14**

7:00 p - Leadership Council Meeting

**November 19**

9:00 p - Thanksgiving Baskets for Shut-Ins

**November 22 (Tuesday)**

6:15 p - Band Rehearsal  
 6:30 p - Handbell Rehearsal  
 7:40 p - Choir Rehearsal

**November 26**

9:00 a - Holiday Decorating in Sanctuary

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**We'd like to say Happy Birthday to the following  
 November birthdays!**

Michael Songer - Nov 8  
 Emme Hembree - Nov 11  
 Pamela Barnhouse - Nov 12  
 Marsena Washburn - Nov 13  
 Betty Clark - Nov 14  
 Darlene Hill - Nov 18  
 Wanda McGalliard - Nov 21

Thelma Jones - Nov 23  
 James Butler - Nov 24  
 Kara Conley - Nov 24  
 Dick Flaherty - Nov 25  
 Dawson Allen - Nov 27  
 Maren French - Nov 29  
 Gerry Minnick - Nov 30

## RECYCLING AT FIRST BAPTIST

There are recycling bins with blue bags on each floor of the church: the kitchen, the fellowship hall, the office, and the choir room. The following items can be placed in these bins: newspapers, magazines, books, paper, corrugated and paper board packaging, aluminum, glass, plastic bottles & jugs: nos. 1 -7 plastic containers, and tin & steel products. Questions? Contact: Cynthia Smith, [cynthialucilesmith@yahoo.com](mailto:cynthialucilesmith@yahoo.com)



---

SOMETHING MISSING

If there is an event, story, photo or special thanks that you would like put in the December newsletter, please email a request to [will@fbcuncie.org](mailto:will@fbcuncie.org) or fill out an event information form. This form can be submitted through the church website, mailed, hand-delivered, or faxed into the church office. Be sure to indicate "December Newsletter" on the form or in the subject line of the email. The **deadline** for the information to be submitted is **Tuesday, November 22!**

---