



# The Visitor

## Advent

Wade Allen

As we enter the season of Advent, we eagerly await Christmas. Children anticipate the possibility of presents. Adults long for time off work; the chance to be with friends and family is energizing for many. But soon enough, January will be here. Christmas will be over and life will return to normal. Will the holidays have made a difference in our lives? Will we simply return to the ho-hum of life?

The season of Advent is a time of longing, of expecting God to show up. Perhaps we don't have the same anticipation that God's people once had. Perhaps we are more focused on completing our shopping list; do we really long for God to show up? This Advent season, we are going to spend most of our Sundays in the book of Isaiah. Isaiah lived in a time when the people of God desperately needed God to do something. The people of God had drifted away; they were heading down a road of doom and destruction. What was going to happen? Would God allow his people to drift into oblivion? It is in this context that we find Isaiah's words.

Isaiah has good news for the people of God. He tells them that God is going to show up. He tells them that God is going to rescue them. It is of no effort on their part, but God is going to work in a way beyond their expectations. Join us this holiday season as we explore the words of the prophet. May we revive our anticipation for God to move? May we long for him to show up this Christmas? May the holidays make a difference in our lives this year?

### In Worship

12/4/11

#### **The Promise**

Wade Allen

12/11/11

#### **The Messiah is Coming**

Wade Allen

12/18/11

#### **God's Everlasting Covenant**

Wade Allen

12/24/11

#### **Christmas Eve Worship**

Wade Allen

12/25/2011

#### **Christmas Day Worship**

Wade Allen

## ROBERT'S RAMBLINGS

Let's go caroling! It is that time of the year! I really love the Advent and all we do to celebrate the coming of Christ into the world, especially the songs we all grew up with that celebrate His birth. Everyone, including members of Riverside and First Baptist who wishes to come are invited to gather at Riverside at 4:00 pm Sunday, December 18. We will then go caroling for many of our friends who are either confined at home or in nursing homes. It doesn't matter whether or not you can sing, the whole point is to visit people where they are and make a joyful noise for the Lord as we celebrate his birth. Mary Harry and Terry Hartke are preparing a list of people who are home bound or in nursing homes. As you think of persons who need someone to come and carol at their place, please pass that information on to them.



Following a time of caroling, we will gather again at Riverside at 6:00pm for a fellowship meal. Meat and drink will be provided, but everyone should bring food to supplement that. (I am especially fond of deviled eggs and chess pie, but don't let that influence any of you!) A special bonus will be a program presented by a newly formed men's quartet. The quartet includes two well known to us all: Dr. Joe Songer, and the Rev. Dr. Woody Noblit. This continues a long and well established tradition of caroling that began many years ago at First Baptist and has come to be a special time of celebration among our two sister churches. What better way than caroling to renew in us all the true spirit of Christmas!

Those who missed viewing the New Baptist Covenant meeting last week can download each session on their web page at <http://newbaptistcovenant.org/videos/>. There were two messages that I especially appreciated. One was Friday morning by Judge Wendell Griffen entitled "Justice and Mercy" which was especially relevant to recent studies on poverty and racism at our two churches. The other, which would be a favorite to us all would be the Friday evening message by Tony Campolo called "The Time Is Now".

In another note, there is the possibility of a new opportunity of service. A nearby residential center for developmentally disabled adults is planning a three-day day camp sometime this summer. Stay tuned for more details to come. In the mean time, Merry Christmas.

- Robert

## HELP PORTRAIT

We are joining hands this holiday season with 2 other downtown churches to carry out a ministry called help-portrait. Common Way, The Bridge, and First Baptist will be partnering to help those who are unable to afford a family portrait to have one made this holiday season.

There'll be a sign up sheet with opportunities for you to serve on this day. The portraits will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on December 10, 2011. At 5 p.m. there'll be a dinner served at First Baptist for the families whose portraits were taken. We are planning a concert at 6 p.m. following the dinner for the portrait participants and members of the 3 churches.



Help-Portrait will be on December 10th at Open Door and First Baptist. It will run from 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. We will need five people to sign up as hosts and others to help prepare and serve the meal. You can read more about help portrait on their website: [www.help-portrait.com](http://www.help-portrait.com)

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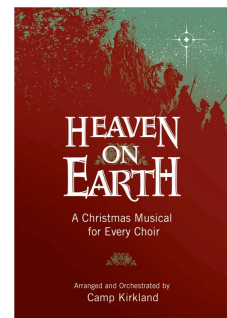
MALL BELL RINGING

We will be ringing bells at the Muncie Mall on December 13th from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and December 15th from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. There is a sign up sheet located in the lower hallway bulletin board. If you are interested in ringing please sign up for a slot or two.

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CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Rehearsals for the Christmas cantata, "Heaven on Earth" will be held each Sunday in December from 4:00-5:00 PM until December 18. 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).



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ANNUAL FBC & RIVERSIDE CAROLING & CHRISTMAS DINNER

On December 18 at Riverside we will be meeting to go caroling and then share a Christmas meal together. We will leave from Riverside at 4:00 pm to go caroling for shut-ins. Dinner will begin at 6:00 pm. Please bring a dish or two to share. Meat, drink, and table service will be provided. There will be a dinner program that will feature a quartet that includes Joe Songer and Woody Noblitt. Special guests will also be the Riverside Friendship Class.

## TEAMWORK

As part of our focus on poverty, First Baptist Church has been involved in a fundraising campaign for TEAMwork for Quality Living, the group that uses our building for some of their work in helping people in poverty build resources to become self-sufficient. Our goal, suggested by Betsy Whaley, who leads a Circles© initiative in Indianapolis, is \$5,000.

A total of \$1,536 dollars has been given or pledged to TEAMwork to support Circles©, the work that brings people highly motivated to leave poverty together with intentional friends from middle class who provide encouragement and serve as accountability partners.

As you make your year-end tax-deductible gifts, please remember TEAMwork. Some ways in which money can be used:

- \$250 provides for a community meal for 60-90 participants.
- \$400 pays for a person to receive a living wage stipend for a sixteen-week training course, the first step in getting out of poverty.
- \$750 helps a case manager work with families who are stabilizing housing, transportation, childcare and other issues.

A donation envelope may be found in the back of the pews.

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## CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION FOR JESUS

The Birthday Celebration for Jesus will be held on Sat. December 10th from 10:00 to 11:30. This is for children in preschool through 5th graders. Please RSVP to Christ Allen at: [wadechristy@gmail.com](mailto:wadechristy@gmail.com)

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## POINSETTIAS

Remember a loved one this Christmas season by purchasing a poinsettia to be used in decorating the Sanctuary this Advent season. Red, white, or pink potted flowers are available for \$8. Order forms can be found in the office and in the bulletin each Sunday. The final day to purchase a poinsettia is December 12. If you have any questions please contact Molly Flodder: [flodder@comcast.net](mailto:flodder@comcast.net)



## BRIEF BUSINESS MEETING

There will be a brief business meeting at 10:15 on Sunday, December 11 to approve the 2012 budget. You can pick up a copy of the budget ahead of time so that you can ask questions before the meeting. We will gather to vote on the budget and continue to Sunday school following the vote.

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## CHRISTMAS THANK YOU'S

If you are interested in contributing to Christmas gifts for our Pastor and staff, please give your check or cash to the at-large representatives; Troy Hershman (1st service) & Adam Fink (2nd service) or to moderator Joe Songer by Sunday, December 18.

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## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who brought in filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We collected a total of 37!

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## WHITE CROSS UPDATE

Thanks to all who donated games and puzzles for White Cross. We have exceeded our Quota & they are on their way to Dayton Christian Center.

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## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Prayer Shawl Ministry meets each Wednesday at 4:00 pm 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, 765-358-3911 or 765-212-8318

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## 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,



## 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 "January Newsletter" on the form or in the subject line of the email. The **deadline** for the information to be submitted is **Tuesday, December 27!**

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## UPCOMING HOLIDAY SERVICES

Here is a friendly reminder of the upcoming changes in worship times and holiday services.

- **Combined Worship Service** - Sunday December 18 at 11:15 AM & Sunday school at 10:15 AM

- **Christmas Eve Service** - Saturday, December 24 at 7:00 PM

- **Christmas Day Service** - Sunday December 25, combined service at 11:15 AM & Sunday school at 10:15 AM. (No Children's Sunday School)

- **Combined New Years Day Service** - Sunday, January 1, combined service at 11:15 AM & Sunday school at 10:15 AM (No Children's Sunday School)

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THANK YOU NOTE

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you for your loving support, shown in so many ways. We appreciate your cards, prayers, flowers, food, and other expressions of sympathy at Dad's passing. "There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another." - Romans 12: 5b (CEV)

Sincerely,  
Roger, Fran, & Carol Nelson

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THANK YOU NOTE

To the Funeral Dinner Committee,

The food was wonderful and a great example of a church family. I wanted to thank you for your kindness and sympathy at a time when it was deeply appreciated. Also thank you so much for all of your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,  
Donna Fouch

## DECEMBER 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  
 (Until December 18)  
 5:00 p - Youth at Ratchford Home  
 (December 4 & 11)

**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  
 (December 7 & 21)  
 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  
 7:40 p - Choir Rehearsal

**December 1**

6:00 p - OPT Dinner

**December 5**

6:00 p - Special Leadership Council Meeting

**December 10**

9:00 a - Help Portrait  
 9:00 a - Christmas Choir Rehearsal  
 10:00 a - Children's Birthday Party for Jesus  
 5:00 p - Help Portrait Dinner

**December 11**

10:15 a - Budget Business Meeting  
 1:45 a - Worship Arts Team Meeting

**December 13 & 15**

9:00 a - Bell Ringing at Mall

**December 17**

9:00 a - Final Christmas Cantata Rehearsal

**December 18**

11:15 p Combined Service (Cantata)  
 4:00 p - Riverside/FBC Caroling Meal  
 (at Riverside)

**December 24**

7:00 p - Christmas Eve Worship

**December 25**

11:15 a - Combined Worship Service

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

Tyler Stinson - December 2  
 Bettyanne Morrow - December 3  
 Shirley Johnson - December 4  
 Kasey Kirklin - December 8  
 Julie Morency - December 9  
 Bill Eidson - December 11

David Jones - December 13  
 James Londt - December 24  
 Randolph O'Bryant - December 26  
 Grace Wright - December 30  
 Robert Kirklin - December 30  
 Rodney Head - December 31

## BELOVED FRIENDS OF GOD AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Our Daily Bread devotional had a note in it a while back that we ought to write some of those whom God stationed along our way to encourage, strengthen, and guide us. I thought that was a good idea, so I started with the churches to whom He sent me to preach, teach, and learn. Through the years I have learned that when God wanted to teach me a lesson, change my direction, or simply to be challenged & strengthened, He placed persons who did His work of love in my life. You are some of those persons God used in my behalf.

So, I write to say thank you for your part in my growth and development as a pastor, teacher, and servant of God. I loved the job He called me to do and did my best to share that love with you. May God bless you and guide you still as you continue His work in helping others to learn, to love, and serve Him. Would you pray with me that our nation will return to its calling to be a nation under God. As we began, unique among the nations of the world that offered freedom to be all one as enabled to be by God's grace and responsible to, for, with, and in the larger community to be the best citizens possible. This country offered the grand hope of being treated fairly by all. We may have set aside our uniqueness in order to be like all other nations, and that seems to have left us less than our best.

Blessings again, to each of you as you love and serve God in His people.

- Dan & Iris Mattox

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