



# The Voice

December 2021

*“For we are God’s Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10*

## *Message from our Pastor Dr. Shawn White*

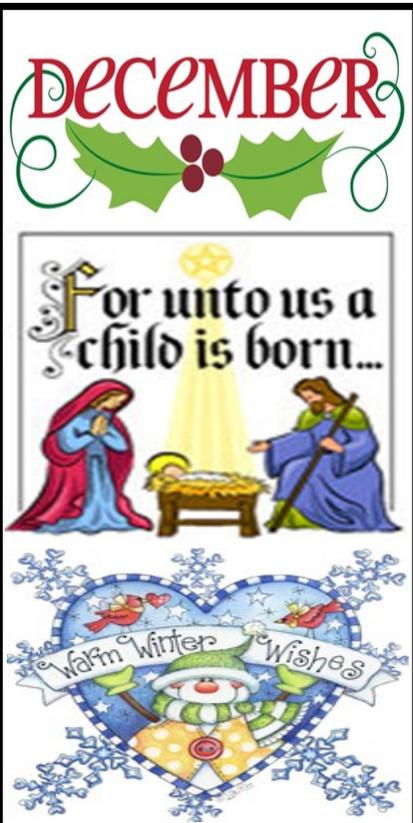
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“It’s the most wonderful time of the year!” According to Andy Williams, this most wonderful time is characterized by jingling bells, parties, marshmallows for roasting and a few scary ghost stories of Christmases long, long ago. There certainly are many benefits to joy-filled celebrations, but for the follower of Jesus, these do not make this the most wonderful time of the year.

As we enter the Advent Season, we again remind ourselves that the longing of the human heart to be loved, to belong, and to have purpose is fulfilled in the life and ministry of Jesus. Jesus’ entry into the world as Immanuel, “God with us,” is a proclamation of the LORD’s steadfast loyalty toward us. This truly makes it the most wonderful time of the year.

In this edition of the Voice, you will find an article by Heather reminding us of some of the special music and musical guests that will be part of our Advent celebrations. You will also find the last article in our series of “what Baptists believe” and a recap of the events of 2021. In January, we will lay out our ministry aims for 2022.

## Mission and Ministry Opportunities



**Baptist Women’s Day Circle**  
3rd Thursday at 10:30 am  
Bring a Snack



**Ruby J. Louthan Circle Meeting**  
December 14th at 6:00 pm



**OASIS Members**  
**December 11th**  
2:00 to 4:00 pm  
Christmas Celebration  
Townley’s Home

## Message from Pastor Shawn White

### WHAT WE BELIEVE

We close out our series on “what Baptist’s believe” with a quick comment on “Last Things” or eschatology. I say a quick comment because, overall, Baptist believers have a range of beliefs about “last things.” So, let’s consider what may be a general way of understanding last things. This statement is from the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message: “God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.”

So, the essentials, which many Baptists would hold, are these:

1. God will draw this current state of creation to a close;
2. This closing involves the physical return of Jesus;
3. The dead will be raised;
4. There will be a judgement of the righteous and unrighteous;
5. There will be an eternal state of bodily existence as a reward for the righteous.

The parts where believers begin to diverge, and there may be no “majority” position, is over the terms *millennium*, *rapture*, *tribulation*, and *Heaven*. You will notice that these terms do not exist in the Baptist faith and message, either 1963 or 2000, and for good reason. Any system that a believer advances to lay out a timeline for the return of Jesus always involves trying to line up passages from 1 Thessalonians, Matthew, and Revelation that are not using the same language or even trying to make the same point. Any position on the timing of a rapture (a word that does not occur in the Bible itself), a tribulation, and a millennium must make a series of assumptions that people who hold a different view will not share. Is that a sufficient cause for fighting? Perhaps we can take our cue from comedian Emo Philips who wrote the following joke, which was voted as the “funniest religious joke” in an informal poll by [shipoffools.org](http://shipoffools.org):

*Once I saw this guy on a bridge about to jump. I said, "Don't do it!" He said, "Nobody loves me." I said, "God loves you. Do you believe in God?"*

*He said, "Yes." I said, "Are you a Christian or a Jew?" He said, "A Christian." I said, "Me, too! Protestant or Catholic?" He said, "Protestant." I said, "Me, too! What franchise?" He said, "Baptist." I said, "Me, too! Northern Baptist or Southern Baptist?" He said, "Northern Baptist." I said, "Me, too! Northern Conservative Baptist or Northern Liberal Baptist?"*

*He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist." I said, "Me, too! Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region, or Northern Conservative Baptist Eastern Region?" He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region." I said, "Me, too!"*

*Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1879, or Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1912?" He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1912." I said, "Die, heretic!" And I pushed him over.*

As we draw our series on “What Baptist’s Believe” to a close, I trust that one truth we hold near and dear are the words of our Savior as he looked at a group of men during a supper meal and said, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’”<sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.<sup>35</sup> By this all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another” (John 13:33-35 ESV).

## Message from Heather Shockley, Director of Music

The First Baptist Music Ministry is so excited to celebrate our Savior's birth through music this year. We encourage you to come and celebrate with us each Sunday morning from November 28<sup>th</sup> – December 26<sup>th</sup>. I want to share with you a glimpse of some of the music planned for the special Christmas season.

The first Sunday of Advent, November 28<sup>th</sup>, our youth choir, youth handbell choir, and the adult choir will each be sharing the message of Hope through music. Come and worship with us as we sing and listen to several beautiful classic Christmas melodies.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, our congregation will be blessed by the Bluefield University Trombone Quartet. These four young men are excited to come and celebrate Christmas with our church. Also on December 5<sup>th</sup>, our adult choir and youth handbell/flute ensemble will be performing a beautiful selection called "Ding Dong Merrily on High".

Our adult and youth choirs will bring a musical celebration of our Savior's birth on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Come and worship with us as we sing about the "Good News from Heaven" and "The Manger Medley" which will include our precious children's choir singing "Silent Night".

Our children's choir will also be sharing their celebration of Christmas music on December 19<sup>th</sup>. Come and celebrate Jesus' birthday with our children. This Advent Sunday will also include a couple of duets as well.

One of our most beloved Christmas traditions is the Christmas Eve Service on December 24<sup>th</sup>. Join us on this special night as we worship our Lord and celebrate His coming.

I hope that you and your family will join us each Sunday as we rejoice and celebrate our Savior's birth.



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*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6*

### *December Birthdays*

|         |                   |         |                 |
|---------|-------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Dec. 02 | Karen Thurmer     | Dec 19  | Carol Broyles   |
| Dec. 05 | Regina Ramsey     |         | George Filer    |
| Dec. 07 | Judy Woodward     | Dec. 21 | Elaine Hincer   |
| Dec. 11 | John Abbey        | Dec. 23 | Hannah Shockley |
|         | Charles Reese     |         | Alexandra Stout |
|         | Dennis Roebuck    | Dec. 25 | Eric Broyles    |
| Dec. 12 | Novelda Pritchard |         |                 |
| Dec. 14 | Anna Wright       |         |                 |
| Dec. 15 | Brad Ayers        |         |                 |
|         | Joshua Scruggs    |         |                 |



### *December Anniversaries*

|         |                      |
|---------|----------------------|
| Dec. 08 | Bob & Regina Ramsey  |
| Dec. 11 | David & Kris Toney   |
| Dec. 14 | Ron & Carol Townley  |
| Dec. 23 | Ronnie & Amy Nichols |
| Dec. 25 | Tom & Brenda Lafone  |



### Dates in December to Remember

Nov. 28-Dec. 5 Lottie Moon Week of Prayer for International Missions

Dec. 04<sup>th</sup> Church-wide Christmas Party, 5:00 pm, dinner will be served, bring a gag gift or good gift

Dec. 05<sup>th</sup> Trombone Quartet from Bluefield University performing  
Youth Handbell and Adult Choir  
Called Business Meeting

Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> OASIS Members are celebrating Christmas at The Townley's, from 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> Youth and Adult Choir

Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> Ruby J. Louthan Circle Mtg. 6:00 pm

Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> Baptist Women's Day Circle Mtg. 6:00 pm

Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> Children's Choir

Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve Candle Light Service 7:00 pm  
No Deacon's Meeting No Business Meeting

Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> Merry Christmas

*Don't forget to bring your Christmas Cards to the Church*

**\*\*2022 Flower Chart is in place, please select your Sundays**

