



The Barnesville Lantern

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Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105).



The Pastor's Spotlight

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a Son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us')" (Matthew 1:23).

Jesus, Lord, Messiah, Son of God, Redeemer, Savior, Prince of Peace, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Light of the World, and the Bread of Life: these are just a small part of why we all celebrate Christmas, when God the Son Himself took on became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus was the Father's gift to us all, so we all can celebrate along with Mary the great news she received from the angel Gabriel that, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35)* And then as the shepherds first heard in *Luke 2:10-11*, all believers can take joy in the angel's proclamation that, *"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord."*

Christmas is a good time to begin to looking at our own lives and ask the question, am I being all that God wants me to be? Am I showing true compassion and love to all the folks that God has placed into my life? Am I grateful for His love and mercy toward me?

I hope that we all as a church family here at BBC can come together this Christmas season and worship Jesus like never before. Please try to participate in all the services that we have planned to worship Jesus and to bring Him all of our praises this Christmas season. Cindy & I would like to take this opportunity to say Merry Christmas to all of our church family. I hope to see you at the Christmas Cantata on Dec. 16 and then stay for our parsonage open house to share a meal and fellowship time with us.



God Bless,

Pastor Danny

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Upcoming Events

December 5 Business Meeting
December 9 Christmas Bell Concert, Christmas Dinner
December 14 Lunch with Watkins Cabinet
December 15 Baptist Men's Meeting, Ladies' Cookie Exchange
December 16 Cantata, Parsonage Open House
December 23 Children's Birthday Party for Jesus
December 24 Christmas Eve Service
December 25 Christmas



"...For out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel" (Matthew 2:6).



The Pew Perspective

Lee Michael

The nativity scene is one of the most common symbols of Christmas. St. Francis of Assisi started the first nativity scene in the year 1223, when he held a live nativity scene in an Italian cave after returning from a trip to the Holy Land. From there, the tradition of both live nativities and nativity sets quickly spread throughout Europe. Even though there are many styles and sizes, everyone is familiar with the figurines of Mary & Joseph surrounded by shepherds, wise men, and maybe even various animals and angels, all peering in to see the infant Jesus in a manger. However, the classic set-up does get several details wrong. I hope you won't think me too Grinchy if I correct several common nativity mistakes:

There were no angels in Bethlehem. The shepherds received the angelic announcement out in the fields, which is from where the heavenly host departed. "...*The angels had gone away from them into heaven*" (Luke 2:15).

The angels may not have been floating in the sky above the shepherds. Luke 2:9 states that "...*behold, an angel of the Lord stood before...*" the shepherds to announce the good news, and then the angel was joined, presumably still standing in front of the shepherds, by "...*a multitude of the heavenly host praising God...*". Seeing the hillsides covered with angels seems just as impressive as if they were flying.

The Christmas Star only moved 5.5 miles. Some nativity scenes manage to include the Christmas Star by tacking it atop the peak of the stable roof, which would seem to present a fire hazard or at least a sunburn concern. However, Matthew 2:2 only indicates that a star was seen in the East by the Magi, but did not serve as a personal GPS tracker until the very end of their westward journey. The star was sufficiently interesting or unusual enough to the Magi to compel them to travel to Jerusalem. It was only after the wise men had learned from King Herod and his court that they should travel to Bethlehem did the star begin to move the five and a half miles from the capital city to the town of Bethlehem. "...*Behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was*" (Matthew 2:9).

The wise men did not observe Jesus being swaddled in a manger. Matthew 2:1 makes the actual sequence of events plain: "*Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem... wise men from the East came...*" The Magi missed the manger scene completely, as by the time they did arrive, Joseph's family had managed to secure more permanent housing. "*And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother...*" (Matthew 2:11). In fact, the wise men may have not arrived until about two years after Jesus' birth. According to Matthew 2:16, King Herod "...*put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men*".

The Bible doesn't say there were three wise men. The belief that there were three Magi is based on the statement in Matthew 2:11 that there were three gifts, and that someone with the job title of "wise man" would be smart enough

Continued on page 4, column 2

Biblical Shepherds Scramble

Can you match these 20 shepherds in the Bible with their description? Answers are on the bottom of page 3, column 2.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Abel | A. called to prophesy |
| 2. Abraham | B. owned large herds |
| 3. Amos | C. called to tend Jesus' sheep |
| 4. Bethlehem shepherds | D. chose speckled and spotted sheep |
| 5. David | E. his seven daughters tended sheep |
| 6. Doeg | F. first shepherd |
| 7. Isaac | G. invited to see newborn King |
| 8. Jacob | H. tended flock near Horeb |
| 9. Jesus | I. King Saul's head herder |
| 10. Joseph | J. Egyptians despised their job |
| 11. Judah | K. fool who angered David |
| 12. Laban | L. the Good Shepherd |
| 13. Lot | M. king of Moab |
| 14. Mesha | N. tricked by Tamar on way to shear sheep |
| 15. Moses | O. wrote Psalm 23 |
| 16. Nabal | P. had large herds like his father |
| 17. Peter | Q. tricked son-in-law to tend seven extra years |
| 18. Rachel | R. grazed flocks near Sodom |
| 19. Reuel | S. shepherdess |
| 20. sons of Israel | T. tended herds with older brothers |

Biblical Shepherds Word Search

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A I S A A C G N R L B P R D
B N M Y M E A L D O N Z Q T
R R E D O B L J P T V Y N J
A M H D A Z D E E H N N T Z
H P E L Q V T H P S A M O S
A L L T D E I E A A U R P Y
M E H L R X S D H D S S L Q
B H T N E O L S L E U R N X
O C E A J A E E S W E J J N
C A B B P M R O B U Y T M Y
A R J A V N M S E A Y D M D
J Y P L D J J L I Z W N Y T

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Word Bank: Abel, Abraham, Amos, Bethlehem, David, Doeg, Isaac, Jacob, Jesus, Joseph, Judah, Laban, Lot, Mesha, Moses, Nabal, Peter, Rachel, Reuel, (sons of) Israel

December Birthdays

- 2 Tina Appleton, Elnora Caudell
- 5 Robin Berry
- 6 Justin Yates
- 17 Roy Leibrand, Mary Ann Luhn, Cindy Moore
- 24 Ashlinn Cole
- 28 Ralph Cooley
- 29 Ollie Baumbaugh
- 31 Larry Michael



Prayer Concerns

Ashlinn Cole
Dennis Bryson
Dot Fowler & family at the passing of her sister, Helen Hughes
Gene Bennett & family at the passing of his wife, Patty Janet Magruder
John Beach
Linda Roberts
Nick Cole
Paul Fields
Susan Rice
Teresa Gardner
the men & women of the Upper Montgomery Co. V.F.D.
Seniors: Gene Bennett, Hisle Beach, Janet Magruder, Jo Blalock, June Luhn, Arlene Luhn, Bilyie Luhn, Margie Stream, Ollie Baumbaugh, Paul & Trudy Meissner, Rebecca Umstead, Phoebe Rogers, June (Cole) Houseknecht
Cancer patients: Pauline Fowler, Gail Palestine, Charlie Driver, Cathy Rockenhauser, Dennis Oden
Our missionary friends: Manuel & Cindy Batres (Guatemala) and Matt & Ellen Zell (Honduras)



*"The LORD is righteous in all His ways,
Gracious in all His works.
The LORD is near to all who call upon Him,
To all who call upon Him in truth.
He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;
He also will hear their cry and save them"*
(Psalm 145:17-19)

Business Meeting Briefs

Report from the Monthly Business Meeting in November:

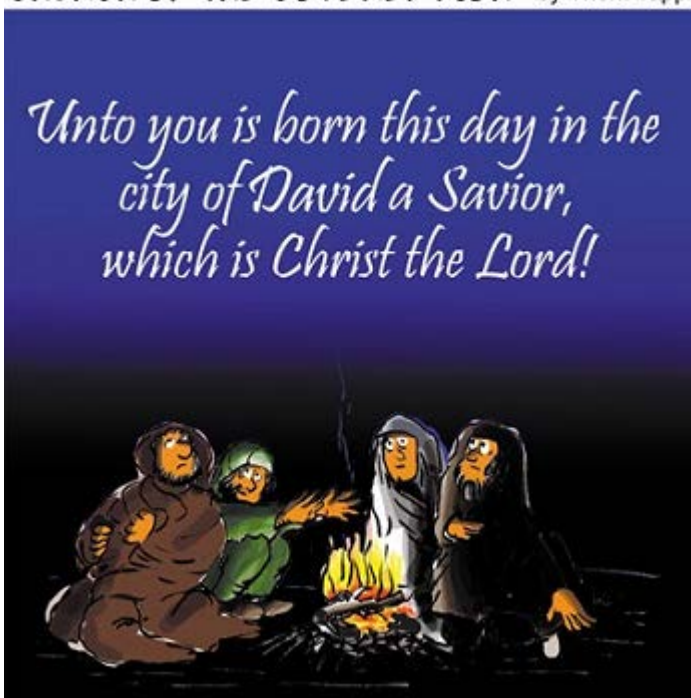
- The Outreach Cmte. motion to pay for the meals of children 16 and under at the Dec. 9 Christmas dinner was adopted.
- The Church approved the Internal Administration Cmte. request to increase spending authority for the Electric BLI by \$500, the Fuel Oil BLI by \$1,000, and the Official Vehicles BLI by \$5,000.

Expected at the December Business Meeting:

- The Finance Cmte. will offer a motion to approve its recommended 2019 Church budget of \$219,202, which is \$20,850 less than the 2018 adjusted budget amount of \$239,752.
- The Deacons will offer a motion to approve the membership application of Teresa Gardner, by statement.

COTCD Cartoon

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



Biblical Shepherds Scramble Answers

1. F (Genesis 4:2); **2. B** (Genesis 12:16); **3. A** (Amos 1:1); **4. G** (Luke 2:15); **5. O** (1 Samuel 17:34); **6. I** (1 Samuel 21:7); **7. P** (Genesis 26:14); **8. D** (Genesis 30:32-35); **9. L** (John 10:11); **10. T** (Genesis 37:2); **11. N** (Genesis 38:12-14); **12. Q** (Genesis 31:19); **13. R** (Genesis 13:12); **14. M** (2 Kings 3:4); **15. H** (Exodus 3:1); **16. K** (1 Samuel 25:2); **17. C** (John 21:17); **18. S** (Genesis 29:9); **19. E** (Exodus 2:16); **20. J** (Genesis 47:3).



News You Can Use

Christmas services planned. BBC has several special events scheduled to celebrate Christmas. On Sunday, Dec. 9, the Bell Choir will perform followed by the Christmas Dinner at St. Mary's Pavilion at 5:00 pm. The ladies will meet on Saturday, Dec. 15 at 1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall for a cookie exchange. The Choir will present its cantata on Sunday, Dec. 16. The parsonage open house will then be held at 12:30 pm. The Children's Ministry will hold a Birthday Party for Jesus after church on Sunday, Dec. 23. On Christmas Eve, a candlelight service will be held at 6:00 pm.

Fall fellowship. BBC youth, children, and families



enjoyed the fall weather and foliage during its last youth event of the year with a hayride to Sugarloaf Mountain on Saturday, Nov. 3 followed by a

hot dog roast, s'more-making, and two bonfires on the parsonage grounds.

Giving thanks. BBC held a Thanksgiving Eve service on Wednesday, Nov. 21. Joe Yates led opening and closing prayers, Lee Michael read from *Psalms 136* for the responsive reading and *II Corinthians 9* for the scripture reading, and Cris Driver sang "We Gather Together". Several people described the blessings and kindnesses for which they were thankful to the Lord during a time of sharing. Pastor Danny gave a devotion, where he noted that BBC was able to give away a large abundance of turkeys and Thanksgiving meals through the Food Ministry.

Outreach activities. The WMU was blessed and humbled by the generosity of those who donated 30 wrapped shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child packed with Christmas presents for needy children around the world. BBC has also stepped up to generously provide Christmas gifts for 40 children in the poorest area of Baltimore by partnering with Northeast Baptist Church. Presents should be brought to BBC no later than Sunday, Dec. 9, not Dec. 16.

Congratulations. BBC celebrates God's blessing to Ann & David Bennett, who are the proud grandparents of Vera Ruth born to Lois & Jim Hogue on Nov. 1. Vera joins older brothers Angelo and Dante.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal set at \$2,000. Dec. 2-9 is the week of prayer for the 2018 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. Together, we and the IMB are able to send out more than 4,000 missionaries to share the Gospel all over the world. The national goal is \$160 million; BBC's is \$2,000. Last year, IMB missionaries engaged 811 people groups, planted over 12,000 churches and baptized more than 46,000 people. Please pray about a sacrificial gift for foreign missions.



*Southern Baptist missionary to China
Lottie Moon*

Christmas poinsettias for sale. If you would like to purchase a Christmas poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one, please contact Kitty Cooley at 301-349-5119. The poinsettias will be used to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas services and throughout the holiday season. Four sizes are available this year: 6" for \$11.00; 7" for \$17.00; 8" for \$27.00; and 10" for \$35.00.

The Pew Perspective, continued

not to come empty-handed: "And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh". It is interesting to consider that the Magi's gifts may have arrived just in time to finance Joseph & Mary's hurried escape into Egypt.

There is no mention of a stable, hay, or animals in the Scripture. The Bible only says where Jesus was not born...in the no-vacancy inn. *Luke 2:7* states that Mary "...wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn". A manger is an animal feed trough of sufficient size to hold an infant. While it makes sense that you would find a manger in a stable, the oldest tradition states that Jesus was born in a cave rather than a wooden structure. *Luke 2:16* notes that the shepherds "...came with haste..." to see the newborn Babe, which makes it unlikely they brought any sheep with them during their nighttime dash into Bethlehem.

So what is left then of our cherished nativity traditions? To fit to scale, the Magi need to be placed down the street, the angels should be displayed up in the attic, the shepherds can only remain a short while before getting back to their herds, and all the donkeys, camels, and sheep need to be penned up in the basement. But what's left is really all we need for Christmas: an obedient Mary, a trusting Joseph, and a Savior, who is Christ the Lord (*Luke 2:11*).

Merry Christmas and a Happy 2019 from the *Lantern* staff.