



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

Most people have strong opinions on how early to start celebrating Christmas. Some feel Christmas has become too commercial and that it's lost its meaning. Others are so into the pageantry that they can listen to Christmas music and keep up decorations all year.

While the decorations, music, and events make Christmas joyful, I hope we haven't forgotten that Jesus is the reason for the season. If we ever forget that, then we might as well end all festivities. That said, I have noticed similarities between Jesus' birth and our Christmas festivities.

The highlight of Christmas is gifts. Who can't wait to find out what they are getting for Christmas? Some don't even wait until Dec. 25 to open presents. The greatest gift ever was the Baby wrapped in swaddling clothes. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..." (James 1:17)*. Is there a more perfect gift than the One who took away the sins of the world?

Many people decorate for Christmas. Offices and neighborhoods sponsor decorating contests and TV programs showcase some of the grandest displays. The greatest Christmas decoration ever was the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem. *"When [the wise men] saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" (Matthew 2:10)*.

Christmas parties are also popular. I like getting together with friends, enjoying a great meal, and belting out a few carols. I may be a little prejudiced, but the greatest Christmas celebration is also found in the Bible. Shepherds were informed of Jesus' birth and couldn't wait to see the Christ child. After seeing Him, *"...the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them" (Luke 2:20)*. The right kind of celebrations make for great memories. No doubt, the shepherds had a night to remember.

Whether you have already started your Christmas festivities or are waiting until it gets a little closer, I hope you get to spend some time with family and friends. I pray that you have a very Merry Christmas.

God Bless,

Pastor Kevin



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Upcoming Events

- December 4** Business Meeting
- December 7** Baptist Men's Meeting, 7:30 am; Church Clean-Up Day, 9:00 am
- December 15** Christmas Dinner, 4:00 pm
- December 24** Christmas Eve Service, 6:00 pm
- December 25** Christmas



"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son" (Hosea 11:1).



Compared to the sweet and pure Christmas story in *Luke*, the account in *Matthew 2* is full of action and danger, with a murderous King Herod seeking the young Jesus' life. "*Flee to Egypt*" (v. 13) was the angel's warning to Joseph, precipitating a nighttime escape. Matthew linked Jesus' sojourn to Egypt and eventual return to an Old Testament prophecy, "*Out of Egypt I called My Son*", connecting *Matthew 2:15* and *Hosea 11:1*. A closer inspection of *Hosea 11:1* shows that the context is about the nation of Israel, not the Messiah: "*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son*". The rest of *Hosea 11* details Israel's history from the Exodus to the Exile, even commenting on Israel's sacrifices to Baal (v. 2). So what is Matthew doing taking an Old Testament verse about Israel and force-fitting it to talk about Jesus in the New? It turns out that *Hosea 11* was not the only Old Testament scripture Matthew had in mind to describe Jesus.

Isaiah 49 speaks of a Servant called by the Lord from the womb of His mother (v. 1). That Servant will be named Israel (v. 3), who will "*bring Jacob back to [the Lord], so that Israel is gathered to Him*" (v. 5). In other words, Isaiah is saying that there are two Israels, the first a human Servant who will bring the second Israel, the nation, back to the Lord. The Servant is most certainly human, for His formation in the womb of His mother is mentioned twice (vv. 1, 5). Not only charged with redeeming His chosen people, the Lord has a greater task for His Servant Israel. He shall be a "*...light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth*" (v. 6).

God's description of Israel as His son goes back even further. In *Exodus 4:22-23*, Moses told Pharaoh that the Lord considered Israel to be His firstborn son. To King David, the Lord described a father-son relationship with his descendants in *II Samuel 7:12-16*: "*I will be his Father, and he shall be My son*".

Matthew's choice of Old Testament references to foreshadow Jesus' stay in Egypt is now clearer. The servant-nation and father-son links used by the Old Testament would have been familiar to Matthew's Jewish audience, and they would have seen the events in Jesus' life as reflecting and paralleling those of the Jewish nation. And just as both Israel and Jesus returned from Egypt, they were both called to Egypt in similar ways. In both cases, a man named Joseph, who received dreams from heaven, brought Israel to Egypt to escape death and destruction. Whether to flee a yearslong famine or a vengeful king, the Old Testament-New Testament pattern of events would strengthen Matthew's case in showing who Jesus really was. Jesus was born to complete a mission behind enemy lines, so to speak. His life was one of suffering, discomfort, and danger. As *Matthew 20:28* says, "*...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*" The sacrifice and service we associate with Jesus' death at Easter truly started at the beginning of His earthly life, so Matthew's reminder of all that Christmas was helps us to better understand all that Jesus went through for us.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2025
from the *Lantern* staff.

Member of the Month: Isabel Cullins

- ★ Born: Nov. 23, 1964 in El Puerto de Santa María, Spain
- ★ How long a BBC member: since Nov. 6, 2024
- ★ Church offices held: choir member
- ★ How she first came to BBC: "My husband was called to serve as pastor".
- ★ Favorite Hymn: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"
- ★ Favorite Bible verse: *Isaiah 41:10*
- ★ Age at baptism: 23 years old
- ★ Childhood church: Iglesia Bautista del Puerto
- ★ Most famous person she's met: Christian film writer Stephen Kendrick
- ★ Personal claim to fame: "making hashbrown casserole and banana pudding".
- ★ Most important historical events in her life: "meeting my husband and the births of my children".
- ★ Farthest place she's been from Barnesville: Morocco (approximately 3,800 miles away)
- ★ Story on first name: "My first name is actually Maria. I have always gone by and been known as Isabel".
- ★ Most important technology invented in her lifetime: FaceTime
- ★ Hobbies: trying new recipes, decorating



December Birthdays

- 2 Tina Appleton, Elnora Caudell
- 7 Harper Ahalt
- 17 Roy Leibrand, Mary Ann Luhn
- 28 Ralph Cooley
- 31 Larry Michael



Prayer Concerns

Members: Mary Yates, recovering from heart surgery; Stephanie Runkles, injured back; Linda Roberts, health and future care

Family and Friends: Jody Reed, cousin of Janna Williams, health; Joyce Dunn's relative Jessie, health; Brad Hogue and Jim Hogue, in-laws of the Bennetts; Betty Ritorto, friend of Mary Ann Luhn; Morgan and Dade Pumphrey, Will Pumphrey's daughters; Joe Yates' niece Cindy, eyesight; Bob Runkles, health; Angela Wagner, cousin of Tina Appleton, ALS and dementia; Andrea Appleton, Billy Appleton's sister; the Upper Montgomery Co. V.F.D.

Seniors: Barbara Swank; Cortland "Pop" Moore; Eddie & Pauline Fowler; Janet Magruder; Ralph Cooley; Shirley Yates; Susan Rice

Cancer patients: David Carlson, brain tumor; Sharon Keeney, sister of Donna Belcher, lung cancer; Blake, 15-year-old with leukemia; Glenn Norris, colon cancer; Pat Luhn, breast cancer; Kitty Cooley

Missions: MBA leaders Dr. Ron Blankenship and Rev. Michael Mattar; BCM/D Executive Director Tom Stolle and staff; NAMB and IMB missionaries; church planters in MD/DE; King of Glory Church in Pakistan; MBA-sponsored church plant Hope Fellowship Church in Ashburn, VA



*"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:

- No new motions were offered during the Nov. 2024 business meeting.

Expected at the December Business Meeting:

- The Finance Cmte. will offer a motion to approve its recommended 2025 Church budget of \$208,302, down \$1,650 from the 2024 adjusted budget of \$209,952.
- The Pastor and Deacons will present the membership application of Tom Roff, coming by statement.
- A motion to hold the January 2025 business meeting on Jan. 8 instead of Jan. 1 will be offered.

COTCD Cartoon

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



"Merry Christmas... pass it on."



News You Can Use

Celebrating Christmas. We are excited to have a full schedule of worship and fellowship

activities to celebrate the birth of our Savior for the Christmas 2024 season.

The festivities start straight away on Sunday, Dec. 1, when LT Tyler will sing Christmas songs during the morning worship service.

On Sunday, Dec. 15, the choir will present a Christmas music program during the service, followed that evening by the Church Christmas Dinner at St. Mary's Pavilion at 4:00 pm. Sign up in the vestibule to bring a side dish and/or dessert to share. A voluntary white elephant/Yankee swap gift exchange will also be held.

We will be preparing Christmas gift bags for Spring Arbor seniors that will be due by Dec. 22. Specifics on the gift bags will be announced soon.

On Tuesday, Dec. 24, the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 6:00 pm. There will be no Wednesday Night Bible Study on Dec. 25. The January 2025 business meeting will be held on Jan. 8; there will be no services or meetings on Jan. 1.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal set at \$3,000.



The Nov. 15 turkey dinner was a good time of fellowship and food

Dec. 1-8 is the week of prayer for the 2024 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. We and the International Mission Board (IMB) are able to send out more than 3,500 missionaries to share the Gospel around the world. The national goal is \$205 million; BBC's is \$3,000. In 2023, thanks to your support of our IMB missionaries, 879,798 people heard the gospel; 141,206 new believers were saved; and 116,992 were baptized. Please pray about a sacrificial gift for foreign missions. Offerings via envelope and online will be collected until the end of Jan. 2025.



Harper Ahalt sang "Ten Thousand Reasons" on Nov. 17

BCM/D annual meeting report. BBC messengers Kevin & Isabel Cullins and Lee Michael attended the 188th Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware annual meeting on Nov. 10-12 and pastor's conference on Nov. 12-13 in Ocean City, MD. Dubbed "The Gathering", this year's annual meeting included breakout sessions and corporate prayer. All BCM/D officers were re-elected for a second term and a \$7.5 million annual budget was adopted, retaining 63% of Cooperative Program receipts for BCM/D priorities. BBC Pastor Kevin Cullins was selected to serve on the General Mission Board representing the MBA.



Pastor Kevin Cullins preached his first sermon as BBC pastor on Nov. 3

Ollie Baumbaugh, 1931-2024. We regret to announce the passing of our sister in Christ and BBC member Olive "Ollie" Baumbaugh on Nov. 8 at age 92. Ollie was a BBC member from 1969 to 1973, and then since 2001. She was known as a strong prayer warrior and a bold witness for sharing Jesus with others. We extend sympathies to her family at this time. She was buried next to her husband Bud in Monocacy Cemetery in Beallsville, MD.



Christmas poinsettias for sale. If you would like to purchase a Christmas poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary in honor or in memory of a loved one, please contact Kitty Cooley at 301-349-5119. Sizes and prices are 6" for \$13, 7" for \$20, 8" for \$32, and 10" for \$42.

Clean-up day. A church clean-up day will be held on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 9:00 am. See Head Groundsman Billy Appleton for details on projects and tools needed. The Baptist Men will hold their monthly breakfast meeting on the 7th at 7:30 am to align with the workday.