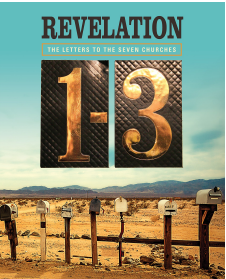


FROM THE PASTOR

As 2020 slowly drags to a close, I am optimistic and hopeful that things will soon begin stabilizing in early 2021. While I am looking forward to those days, I am grateful for this season of life and what it has done for our church. You may wonder how reduced attendance and limited ministry is a good thing, but I believe that it has helped us to see the strength and priority of the church. To God be the Glory, people continue to be saved, drawn to worship and compelled to live a life that points others to Christ. Just this week a first-time visitor shared with me, that upon moving into the area she looked for a new church home. After she spoke with others, she said, “I have heard so many wonderful things about this church and what you are doing for the community, that I wanted to come see for myself.” I rejoiced in my heart hearing those words and realizing impact that Second Baptist continues to make in the midst of this pandemic.

Our staff is working diligently to develop plans at regathering in 2021. Tentatively we are aiming to regather for Life Groups on January 3, with children’s ministry and the regathering of youth ministry following on Wednesday, January 6. Additional ministries will be determined and announced later in the month of January. I am also excited about two upcoming events. First, we will be gathering for a Christmas Eve candlelight service at



5:30 PM. We will celebrate the birth of our Lord through singing, the Lord’s Supper and reflection from God’s word. Second, I want to encourage you to be here on Wednesdays, beginning January 6, for our Winter Bible study, on the 7 Churches of Revelation. John received messages from God for seven churches that existed in his day. These were real churches, each facing challenges that threatened their existence and effectiveness. By studying these letters, believers will be challenged to look for ways the lessons learned from these churches can be applied today.

Last week I shared the principles behind a sabbatical, but this week I want to share the purpose of my sabbatical. First and foremost, I am looking forward to focusing on my own spiritual renewal. For 20 years I have served the local church faithfully, and rarely have the opportunity to just worship. There is always work and demands that coexist on Sundays for a minister. So, my family will continue to be connected to Second Baptist during the Sabbatical but are looking forward to visiting other churches as worshippers only. We have marked out some churches in our community that we want to attend for encouragement, as well as a few out of town. During the days, I plan to spend increased time in personal study and reading. So often my personal and pastoral life intersect and the things I study or read connect to what I preach. I will spend time in a prayer retreat as well as participating in a virtual pastors conference. Secondly, I want to focus on my health during this time— mentally, emotionally and physically. The last few years have definitely taken a toll mentally and emotionally. We have lost 55 members to death, walked through dozens of difficult counseling issues and navigated this pandemic. While God has supplied strength for each situation, it has definitely culminated. As I turned 40, I quickly began to realize that I have neglected my physical health which negatively impacts my mental, emotional and spiritual health. I plan to maximize this time in developing some new disciplines in order to serve the Lord faithfully for the next 20

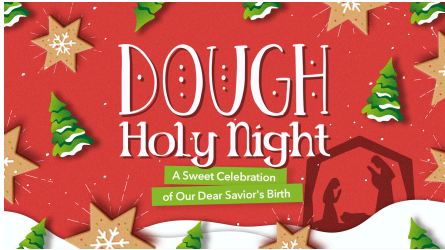


years. Finally, I desire to utilize the last two weeks of this sabbatical as a time of preparing for the future. Historically, I have always prepared messages and cast vision 1 year in advance. However, the last two years I have struggled to prepare adequately. I have been stuck in a short cycle of only knowing what is to come for about a month at a time. It is essential to get refreshed and reset my mind for what lays ahead. My hope is to outline my sermon schedule for the next 18 months, while developing a fresh vision for the next decade. Upon my return, this reset will allow our staff to plan and work together. This 18 month schedule is crucial to effectively planning calendars, curriculum, music, and events.

Next week I will share how you can help make this sabbatical a success not only for me, but ultimately for our church. As I have spoken to Pastors who have taken this journey, they all spoke of the long term benefits to the body of Christ they led. My desire is not to take time off, but rather take time to be a better pastor, leader, preacher, husband and father.

For His glory,
Pastor Justin

CHILDREN



Who likes cookies? Join us this Saturday, as we virtually host “Dough Holy Night”—a deliciously fun family experience with the true meaning of Christmas baked in. Together you’ll bake a batch of Christmas cookies and, along the way, hear the story of the very first Christmas. There’s minimal preparation and a video that leads you step-by-step through the entire experience. It’s so easy! Fill out this brief survey with your email address and you will receive all the materials via email Saturday morning. <https://forms.gle/2a2P4afbEhTubiC29> Complete this activity along with your Advent Calendar devotional for Saturday, December 12th. You won't want to miss out on this! Don't forget to invite your friends in on the fun!

YOUTH

“If Christ is your life, you are free from the desperate quest to find life in situations, locations, and relationships.” Tripp

As a Christian, a believer in Jesus Christ, you have been freed from the endless quest for life that consumes so many people. So many look for life where it cannot be found. They hope their marriages will give them the happiness they have not found yet. They look to tier jobs to give them identity. They look to people and possessions to give them peace. They don’t know it, but they are asking the situations, locations, and relationships of everyday life to be their saviors. Sadly, they’re drinking from wells that are dry and eating bread that will never

satisfy. The situations, locations, and relationships of daily life are wonderful to enjoy, but we must understand that they will never, ever satisfy our hearts. For that, we have been given a true Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So instead of wasting time on that endless quest for life, you have been invited to enter into God’s rest for the rest of your life. Rest in your identity as his child. Rest in his eternal love. Rest in his powerful grace. Rest in his constant presence and faithful provision. Rest in his patience and forgiveness. Rest.

As we move ever so closer to Christmas I am encouraged by the faithfulness of our students to stay engaged with the youth group despite not meeting together as one. We are two 2 weeks into our three week challenge and it is as close as it can be for overall attendance average. Just a reminder that Middle School meets Wednesdays at 6:00 PM and High School meets Sundays at 5:00 PM. We are encouraging all students to wear a mask at this time when attending service.

Winter Retreat sign-up is out in the Upper Room. This trip is January 15-18, 2021 and I know the kids are excited about going. There is a \$50 deposit due by December 20. We are planning and preparing for this trip just as we would any other time except with some extra precautions. As we get closer to Winter Retreat there will be more details available. I am needing a few men to chaperone and possibly lead a small group. If you would like to serve in one of these roles, please contact me and I will give you more details. Cost this year is \$175 per student and \$75 per adult. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I hope you have a great weekend. See you Sunday!

Blessings,
Bro. Brad

EDUCATION

I am a creature of routine: I like to know the way things generally will run throughout my day. A few weeks ago, Covid-19 changed that. I found myself having to isolate from my family and focus on resting. For the first couple of days, it felt like a prison sentence in our guest room. But you know what? I found a routine and a rhythm for each day. For 10 days I lived the Covid-19 routine. Oddly enough, I had a hard time moving from my Covid-19 routine back into my daily routine. As a church, our next step is to move from the Covid-19 routine into our in person church routine. I praise God for the blessing of technology and how it has kept us connected digitally while we couldn’t meet physically, but digital connection is only a temporary solution. The church, the body of Christ, is meant to be together in person. With the calendar rolling over to 2021 and a vaccine on the not too distant horizon, there’s hope that a return to a new normal is coming soon. So how do you move back into a church routine that’s been interrupted for the last 9 months? How do you get back to Life Groups and in person worship once you feel safe to do so? Over the next few weeks I will look at the steps to reestablishing the Life Group routine. Those steps include: making the decision to come, preparing ahead of time, taking that first step, and getting up when you stumble. I pray that through these steps we’ll see how to move back into the attendance routine.

Firmly in His hands,
Bro. Sam



FROM THE COUNSELOR’S DESK

Over the past several weeks I have been previewing several of the mini-books in our Care & Counseling Corner. I hope you will utilize these resources either in your own walk with Jesus or place one in the hands of one who may need sound Biblical advice and encouragement. Today, I want to focus on the inward change that must happen in order to be saved and possess the power to overcome life’s temptations. The prophet Ezekiel writes, “*I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statues and be careful to obey my rules*” (Ezekiel 36:27). Notice the word Spirit is capitalized. This distinguishes it between the Holy Spirit and the inner spirit. You must experience a work of the Holy Spirit in your inner man in order to be born again and experience lasting change. When you do at the moment of conversion, you will then follow Jesus and obey His Word. Simply put, you will not only have a desire to change but you will experience change. If you are NOT experiencing victory over sin in your life, could it be you have not had the inward transformation that is necessary giving you the power to overcome entangling sin and temptation? I was reminded of the importance of victory in a conversation with Cherry Hiens this past week. You will not experience perfection over sin but you must experience victory over sin and then you will know you have experienced true lasting life change; after all when the Spirit of God is present, people are enabled to live.

Firmly in His hands,
Bro. Russell

MISSIONS

LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS



LOTTIE MOON
CHRISTMAS
OFFERING®

A Great *Multitude* + You
Rev. 7:9

National Goal:
\$175 million

Given to Date:
\$2,100

PACK THE PATROL CAR

We are collecting **non-perishable** food items and **new toys** on behalf of the Union City Police Department for the Chimes for Charity baskets. If you would like to help, please bring your food items or new toys to the north entrance this Sunday.



SYMPATHY

Jennifer Powers and her family on the death of her grandmother, Jeanette Spiller.
Brenda Williams and her family on the death of her husband, Jerry Williams.
Marsha Bone and her family on the death of her husband, Jackie Bone.

BIBLE READING PLAN

Mon.	December 7	Habakkuk 2 & Luke 21
Tues.	December 8	Habakkuk 3 & Luke 22
Wed.	December 9	Zephaniah 1 & Luke 23
Thurs.	December 10	Zephaniah 2 & Luke 24
Fri.	December 11	Zephaniah 3 & John 1
Sat.	December 12	Haggai 1 & John 2
Sun.	December 13	Haggai 2 & John 3

FINANCIALS


Week of November 29, 2020			Year-To-Date		
Budget Actual	\$	31,184.76	Budget Actual	\$	379,934.14
Budget Goal	\$	33,934.05	Budget Goal	\$	441,142.65
Journey of Faith	\$	465.00	Journey of Faith	\$	9,930.00
Children’s Home	\$	50.00	Children’s Home	\$	1,315.00
Lottie Moon	\$	875.00	Lottie Moon	\$	2,100.00
Designated Offering	\$	355.00			

Please note: When making your contributions online, please choose the option to use your routing number and account number, instead of using your debit card. The fees for debit card use are on the rise and we want to use as much of your contribution as possible for the Kingdom.

TEXT to GIVE is now enabled. If you would like to give your tithes and offerings through text, follow these 4 simple instructions the first time.

1. Text GIVE to 731-251-4343 (save this number in your phone)
2. Click the link in the reply message
3. Log in using your online giving ID and password or set up an account
4. Give a one-time gift or set up a recurring contribution

While you are logged in, click the 3 lines in the top left corner, click My Account, then click Account Info. While in this portal, add your cell phone number to the account information. Once this is done, you will simply be able to text an amount to 731-251-4343 to make future contributions. If you have any questions, please call Jessica at 731-885-5223.



DECEMBER 8, 2020

Stay connected by viewing our Sunday morning services through these avenues:
Television: Sundays • 8:00 PM on CH 8 or 26
Radio: Sundays • 10:45 AM on FM 104.9
Facebook: Second Baptist Church-Union City Official
YouTube: Search Second Baptist UC (live Sunday AM)



SECOND BAPTIST
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Union City, TN 38261

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