



The Beacon

The Newsletter of First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City

December

Vol 3 Issue 12

A Word From Your Interim Pastor

Christmas is a time for giving. Jesus taught us how to give in both his life and in his sacrificial death. His humble beginnings did not seem to portend great things in his life. In that society you almost always stayed within the class in which you were born. But Jesus was not class conscious; he didn't care if you were of the highest standing or the lowest. In fact many of his statements and actions suggest he was more interested in saving those in society marked as low in status. Can we do no less?

The call to serve others is part of the fabric of Christmas traditions in this country. Most of us have never been the receivers but always the givers of extra gifts. Few of us have been on welfare or gone hungry because food money was short.

Now I want us to consider the opposite. What can we give to ourselves this season? What do you want in your deepest heart? This is a tricky question. Don't answer too quickly. I'm not talking about getting a Wii III or the cosmic transformer alien from Taurus. Most people want, deep in their souls, something intangible such as safety, freedom from fear, respect.

It is not unlike the questions I asked during our weekend retreat: What is something that for you is so important that no cost is too great? What in your life gives you purpose and satisfaction and meaning? How can you receive this gift this Christmas? It might be the smallest gift, yet have the biggest impact. It can be a new perspective, a new attitude, a new way of seeing the world and your life. I encourage you to look at your Christmas experience in 2009 from this different perspective. It will put Christ back in Christmas because these deepest needs come out of faith and trust in God.

In the Spirit of Christmas giving,
David Henry

December Happenings at First Baptist:

- Dec 2: Ruth's Circle in the parlor at 6 pm
Dec 9: Live Nativity 6 to 9 pm in Bonneville Glen
Dec 11 – 12: Salt Lake Men's Choir Christmas Concert, Sanctuary 7:30
Dec 14: East Millcreek Children's Choir Concert, Sanctuary 7 pm
Dec 15: Child Care Team at 6:30
Dec 16: Council of Ministries Dinner at Peg's 7 pm
Dec 18: Child Care Christmas Party 4 -6 pm
Bingo at 7 pm
Dec 20: Sunday School pot luck brunch at 9:30—NO CLASSES
Dec 24: Christmas Eve service at 7 pm

Happy Birthday to:

Dec 2: Fran Foster, Dec 3: Angela Bond, Dennis Peterson, Dec 5: Wendy Winzenried, Dec 7: Karen Carter, Dec 9: Lilian Brown, Dec 11: Andrew Thompson, Dec 12: Ian Kinghorn, Jessica Hall, Dec 13: Chelsea McCarty, Stephanie Reyes, Dec 15: Mark Rausher, Dec 16: Aaron Barnes, Max Bond, Dec 19: Abby Reyes, Dec 20: Ron Hall, Dec 21: Alyssa Wilson, Matt Keysaw Dec 22: Jackie Sullivan, Chuck Payne, Dec 27: Georgine Parmeter
Dec 28: Abigail Nelson.

Financial Reminder:

All gifts to the church that need to be included in 2009 giving statements must be banked by Dec 30th this year.

Do we have your pledge card for 2010? It is not too late to get your card to the church office. Please send it right away so we can finish the budget process for 2010.

Nativity in the Glen

Join your church family as we participate in the live Nativity in the Glen on Dec 9th from 6-9 pm. Bonneville Glen is located at 1050 S 1500 East. Food is being collected that night for the Utah Food Bank. FBC joins with Wasatch Presbyterian Church St Ambrose and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Parishes and the Bonneville Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Dress warm! Our youth group will be making all the luminaries and you might see several of our folks in the cast.

New way to do Hospitality for 2010

We are going to try to do hospitality time in a new way for the first part of 2010. Each family will be assigned a Sunday. Pat Ditton will be making out the schedule. We will print the first 3 month schedule in the January Beacon. You will receive a reminder the Monday before you are to host. Instructions and ideas will be included. If you cannot serve on the Sunday you are assigned you will be responsible for finding someone to trade with. Hospitality time is great fun and a very important function. Join the fun!

More from Pastor David:

RESULTS OF “THE WEEKEND:”

The process was wonderful for those who attended and the ripple effect into the congregation for those who did not get to experience it has lasting effects. The product part was four emphases around which we can form our future.

- Mission
- Faith Development
- Safe Place
- Love

We came up with this list by individually identifying one or two of our own core values – the pursuits we hold most dear. Then small groups combined the individual values into values we in the church share and that began to sum up the church’s values. We then, as a whole group, listed the small group findings and combined them into big/encompassing words that carry the individual thoughts and small group summaries into values or concepts that reflect the congregation’s. The result identified four areas that stood out to us as expressing what we hold dear in common. (Note: You can get a summary packet of materials from the shelves outside the church office.)

We reminded ourselves that just because we agree these values are important does not necessarily mean we do them well. It does mean that because we value them we should make a concerted effort to do them better and with integrity. This becomes a part of our journey to incorporate these values as keystones to our identity and purpose.

What happens next? Someone stated “we’ve done this many times before but nothing ever happens.” Well, the Council of Ministries will keep this effort on their docket and will lead you as a congregation to continue the work and even push you to engage in completing the process of identifying the purposes of this congregation and applying them to our life together. This will include managing the use of our limited resources as we develop new or drop old programs that aren’t part of the new direction this congregation is moving.

BUDGET 2010

Our annual stewardship program is drawing to a conclusion. Remaining is the reception of tardy pledge cards and finalizing the budget. Now our financial future can be based on the purposes and goals identified in our retreat and follow-up work. Between the resources available and our normal areas of work we now need to adjust our ministries and efforts to match our goals and purpose, the pursuits that enable our vision to be realized.

These are difficult times. Someone recently said retired people who have plenty of money still worry that they will run out. This past one and a half years has just simply reinforced that fear. No one wants to run out of money before they die. I have seen people living on low incomes and for some it is a big burden; for others it seems to be no problem at all. Attitude makes the difference. We must have sympathy for those who have suffered loss of jobs, diminished income, changes in their life circumstances. Let us not be arrogant about how well we might be doing for it is a steep precipice. Read Psalm 73 and see how ‘my foot almost

slipped.' Keep your heart open to be kind and generous for those who struggle in this time of economic recession. Let us together, in prayer and tangible giving, support one another so we as a community travel together through the troubled waters. And may our budget be fully subscribed so we can continue with strong programs for all.

Advent Themes 2009

OVERALL THEME FOR ADVENT 2009:

In these uncertain times of economic chaos, severe unemployment, uncertainty of medical costs, political leaders disparaging anyone who disagrees with them yet showing no leadership: we would think God would come and give us certainty, take control back from our fumbling human incompetence and put things straight. But instead, God sends the baby Jesus. We want a strong, sovereign leader and God sends a baby. What is God thinking!!!!????!!!

God gives us an unexpected and unanticipated renewal in Jesus. God's imagination far exceeds our expectations and delivers what we need, not what we expect (or want). The surprise of the incarnation is not that God gives us what we don't expect but that in the giving of the Divine Presence God gives us what we need, and more abundantly than we could hope.

Advent 1 November 29 Isaiah 2:1-5 Matthew 24:36-44 "God Is A Thief"

THEME: We like to think of our lives as secure, stable, permanent. We enjoy thinking of ourselves in control of our lives and circumstances. This is delusion. The truth is that God, the same Creator who formed the earth out of chaos, keeps creating, keeps pushing back the chaos, keeps working for our ultimate redemption. Look up! This time, this sometimes frightening time, is God's time. Our redemption is drawing near.

Advent 2 December 6 Isaiah 11:1-10 Matthew 3:1-12 "Get Wild, Get Fire"

THEME: John the Baptist offers instruction on how to prepare during this season of Advent. We need to do more than decorate our trees, exchange presents, and go to church. We need to repent, experience a changed life, and prepare for the one who is coming. The coming Messiah will baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire, melting and molding us into new creations.

Advent 3 December 13 Isaiah 35:1-10 Matthew 11:2-11 "How Jesus Should Act"

THEME: In Advent, we are awaiting the Messiah, expecting the advent of the Christ. When Christ comes, when expectation becomes reality, sometimes he is not the messiah whom we expected. Christ comes to us, rearranging our conceptions of God, our expectations for the way a messiah ought to act. Can we risk encounter with the Christ? Can we accept him as he is rather than as we would have him be?

Advent 4 December 20 Isaiah 7:10-16 Matthew 1:18-25 "Changing Jesus' Diapers"

THEME: Joseph was the second person to receive the good news of the birth of Jesus. He was the second person to have his life disrupted by the saving work of God. Joseph, an ordinary man, quietly, obediently, rather courageously followed the commands of God and thereby pointed the way for the rest of us. We are ordinary people, some of us quiet, quite ordinary people who are called by God to be disciples of Jesus.

FROM YOUR COUNCIL:

Over three Council meetings stretching from last summer to last week your Council of Ministries has worked to develop a statement that clearly states what the church expects from members and friends of the church and what you can expect to receive from your church. Here is the result of this important work:

BEING PART OF THE COMMUNITY OF FIRST BAPTIST INCLUDES:

- Attending worship regularly
- Growing in spiritual formation through prayer, study and devotional reading
- Giving generously of resources (time, talent, treasure) to the church, community and world
- Engaging in the life of the church, its activities, well being and mission
- Respecting each individual's voice and appreciating their experiences

YOUR FIRST BAPTIST COMMUNITY WILL SUPPORT

- Meaningful worship experiences
- Opportunities to live out your faith in service to others
- Opportunities to develop deep and lasting friendships in community with others
- Wise stewardship of your contributions of resources (time, talent, treasure) to the church
- Opportunities for lifelong learning as you deepen your own understanding of the Bible and your Christian faith

CHURCH LADIES:

Church Ladies met at Brenda Ruthizer's home on October 19 and Peg Keiffer led the discussion of The Shack. We gave this book an overall score of 7.5 but we had scores as high as 9.75 (Rating Scale: 1 to 10).

You are invited to attend our next book club meeting, Kindness of Strangers by Katrina Kittle, on Monday, January 11. Book discussion leader will be Marian Stephen.

Reading ahead: Guernsey Literary & Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer, led by Kathy Felker; That Went Well by Terrell Harris Dougan (local author), led by Karen Carter; and Trespass - Living on the Edge of the Promised Land by Amy Irvine (local author), led by Lee Fry.

Church Ladies are going to Lava January 29-31, 2010. If anyone is interested, please contact Marion Deware 435-882-0708 or email at mdeware@erda.net. Sharing a room costs \$79 per person for the two nights with a queen bed and \$129 for a King Bed.

Crossroads Urban Bazaar report

Sad news/happy news. Sad to say income was down from last year in every category **except** the Sweets & Treats booth (which First Baptist & a Methodist congregation sponsored), which took in almost \$400 more in 2009 than 2008!! Thanks again to all who contributed sweets, other homemade items, & time. See what our collective Acts of Services accomplished in Jesus' name!!

Prison Ministry--Why?

Recently our Prison Ministry volunteers were on our way out of the chapel after our regular Tuesday evening Bible study with inmates. The Corrections Officer who was locking up said something we'd never expected to hear. He thanked us for the difference we make in the men's lives. He said there are two activities inmates look forward to: going to the gym and coming to our group. He went on to say we volunteers had no idea what is said about us back in the units, nor what happens there because the men have been with us. We thanked him for telling us something we otherwise would not have known. Our hearts were full as we drove home that evening.

To learn more about prison ministry ask Gaylene Barnes, David Henry, Dave or Marian Stephen. Perhaps this is a ministry God is leading you to investigate. What you don't have to be is an expert on either the Bible or the justice system. The traits that do serve volunteers and inmates well are an intense belief in and gratitude for God's endless and abiding love, and an ability to accept individuals as they are--in other words, the way God accepts each of us!

Adult Sunday School in January—FBC Café Style

We will return to the Café Style of class for the four weeks of January. Our focus will be on being of service in our community and learning about ways we can help. We will have guest teachers from the community here to educate us on the following subjects:

January 10 – How can Faith and community partner?...Bill Tibbitts

January 17 - Do we Heat or Eat?..Sarah Martindell

January 24 - Understanding the Legislature..Linda Hilton

January 31 - Food Fight

Invite Your Family and Friends to the Christmas Eve Service

We will help you with this! Barbie Willett has offered her services to market our Christmas Eve service. All you need to do is give us the addresses of your family and friends and she will send them an invitation. Use the form enclosed here, or in the Sunday Bulletin and get your names to us by December 13th.

It would be great to have the Sanctuary full to the brim on Christmas Eve! It is a beautiful service that should be shared with those we love and associate with, so get your names to us as soon as possible.

Any questions please contact Dennis at the church office.

**Invite your friends, family, neighbors, co-workers to the
First Baptist Church Christmas Eve Program, Dec 24 at 7 p.m.**

Your name _____
Phone number _____

Provide your friends' and neighbors' mailing address and/or email address and we will do the rest. Deadline Sunday, Dec 13, 2009

First Name (s)	Last Name	Street Address	City	State	Zip Code	Email Address
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Personal Message:

First Name (s)	Last Name	Street Address	City	State	Zip Code	Email Address
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Personal Message:

Salt Lake Men's Choir Christmas Concert

The Salt Lake Men's Choir, under the direction of Dennis McCracken, returns to the Sanctuary of First Baptist Church on December 11th and 12th for their annual Christmas Concert. The Concert begins at 7:30 pm. Admission is \$10 and food for the food bank. (The Steinway grand piano returns to the Sanctuary too!) The concert includes holiday favorites, three new original pieces, flute, violin, and Dennis and Aaron providing a 4 hand organ accompaniment to one piece. Join us for a festive evening of music.

Do your holiday shopping the night of December 4th at 10,000 Villages and Crossroads Urban Center will get part of the proceeds.

Here are just a few more reasons to stop by:

- Get your holiday shopping done, yes, done!
- Support third world artisans, it feels great.
- Eat yummy treats provided by Crossroads, Lofthouse cookies anyone?
- Have a free cup of fair trade coffee and pick up an extra pound for home.
- Buy handmade Chanukah, Christmas and Seasons Greeting cards.
- Pick up a rainforest chocolate bar for a holiday stress emergency.
- Buy a bag or two or three of chocolate covered espresso beans to keep you going and going and going through to the new year. You know you WANT them.
- Find a new tablecloth, serving dish or decoration to make your home more festive.
- Get a cool game for the adults on your list or a great toy for the kids.
- Grab a chocolate advent calendar.
- Pick up some new jewelry and add some bling to your holiday outfits.
- See a bunch of your friends!!!!

Linda Hilton will be on hand to be your personal shopper if needed.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Sunday School Christmas Brunch

On December 20th, join us for our annual Christmas Brunch. There will not be classes that morning. Bring a covered dish to share. We will begin at 9:30 am in Keck Hall. Beverages will be furnished.

There will not be Sunday School on December 27th or January 3rd.

Christian Education will resume on January 10th.

Poinsettias for Christmas

Buy a poinsettia for the Sanctuary. These may be purchased in honor of someone, or in memory of someone. The list of dedications will appear in the Christmas Eve Bulletin. Plants are \$9.00 each this year and may be taken home following the Christmas Eve service or after worship on December 27th.

Orders need to be in the office no later than December 20th.

Name of giver _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Number of plants _____ X \$9.00= total paid _____

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

The traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will begin at 7 pm this year. We have had many requests to begin the service earlier so we are going to try it. The service includes wonderful music from the Cathedral Choir, all your favorite Christmas Carols, the telling of the Christmas Story, candlelight and communion. Bring your families and friends (see other article about invitations) and join your church family as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Penny Project Update

As of December 1st, we have collected **55,120** pennies as part of the Penny Project. Our goal is 94,000 pennies, so keep the change and bills rolling in.

Christmas Child Update

Thanks to all who brought Christmas boxes for the Christmas Child project this year. We delivered 50 boxes!