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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

<u>The Greatest Gift</u>

In the home I grew up in, the gift-giving aspect of the Christmas season would be enjoyed over a period of a couple of weeks. Whether it would be at church, within both my maternal and paternal extended families or in the confines of our simple house it seemed around every corner there would be another gift. If we would include Christmas break from school, and time playing or having fun making simple Christmas decorations, and of course the wonderful food, it seemed as if Christmas was the season that simply kept on giving. However, with all the gifts I received, the one I treasured the most was my Dad's presence in our home. During this season he would take extra time off from work and would spend more time with us in these festive times of celebration. Simply having him present was the greatest gift.

Today, as part of my daily reading I finished the book of Ezekiel, and as the prophet is bringing to a close the amazing book in the Bible, we are offered the vision of the Great River of God that flows from the temple out onto the Araba bringing life, fruitfulness and healing to all that would live in and by its waters. Ezekiel then proceeds to speak to the inheritance that is the people of God's, and gives a word about the great city of God. The last verse in this reading captured me, it is a simple verse found in Ezekiel 48:15. It reads, "The distance all around will be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE." Of all the amazing gifts offered by God to his people the greatest is his presence.

As we enter the Christmas season and as we focus on the one who is the Christ, we remember all of the names that describe who he is and his gifts to us. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, The King of Kings, The Light of the World, The Son of God, The Counselor, but the name offered Jesus that brings my heart the greatest joy and hope is Emmanuel, God with us. Hear the words of John in chapter 1 of his Gospel, as he writes in John 1:14, speaking of Jesus who would be born in a manger; the one who through whom the whole universe came into being, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."

My prayer for each of us during this Christmas season is that we will allow the presence of our Heavenly Father through Christ and the Spirit to so surround us and indwell us, that we would know the fullness of his grace, the greatest gift of all is his presence. Here we will know peace, here we will know love, here we will find hope, and here we will celebrate in joy!

Merry Christmas Jeff Nonprofit Org US Postage PAID Floyd, VA



Advent Season at Floyd Baptist

November 29–1st Sunday of Advent–The Prophets December 6th–2nd Sunday of Advent -The Preparation

December 13th–3rd Sunday of Advent–The Peace

December 20th -4th Sunday of Advent–The Presence



December 24th–Christmas Eve Service 6:00 PM: Christ Candle (This service will be outside and feature Christmas Carols, Reading of Christmas Story and a Nativity Scene.)
December 27th–The Proclamation

Beyond Capacity: Living the Grace-based Transformational Life of Christ

My heart is full of anticipation for what God is up to in and through his people. I sense there is a movement of Grace being unleashed by God in his people for all people. This is the time for the people of God to shine brightly! This is the time for the people of God to live into her calling! Now is the time for the people of God to be the transformational force in the world we have been destined to be. The world needs the transformational life of Christ to be extended to all people in all places. Some phrases that have surfaced as the Beyond Capacity Team has gathered to hear God together, these really speak to the nature of what we are about, phrases like; We Receive Grace to Be Grace, We Exist to Love, Serve and Empower, as We are Loved, Served and Empowered by God, and We Want to Move People Toward Instead of From. I am excited for what God is up to and the opportunity to play a small role in this movement.

In January we will begin a six-month journey with Carey Simms and her team as we learn and develop "Needs-Based Discipleship. This type of discipleship begins with the needs of the participants and not the following of a curriculum. Carey has much experience in leading groups in discernment processes and will be highly instrumental in leading us in the discovery phase of this process. **There are still a couple of spots open for this journey.** Let me know if you would like to join us. Carey will also be offering training in "Discerning the Voice of God", one of the courses that will be a part of the Beyond Capacity Curriculum. For more information on how you can join the team contact me at <u>jeffch5051@gmail.com</u>, or (540)577-0839.

Below is a list of Courses that will make up the Beyond Capacity Content for Content-based Discipleship:

- * Unbridled Grace, Unbridled Love
- * Pathway to Greater Spiritual Presence and Power
- * The Same Mission Lived Out in Specific Ways
- * Discerning the Voice of God (Content by Carey Simms)
- * Transformational Proclamation
- * The Grace of Open Doors
- * Leadership Pipelines
- * Being a Family on Mission—Fulfilling Your Destiny in Christ
- * Pathways to a Family on Mission: The Same Destination Accessed via Different Routes
- * Building a Discipling Culture
- * Naturally Supernatural Being a Family on Mission—Fulfilling Your Destiny in Christ

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid Page 2 him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn...



Beyond Capacity: Living the Grace-Based Transformational Life at Floyd Baptist Church

January 2021

Unbridled Grace, Unbridled Love is a twelve-week course that will lay the foundation for how to live the grace-based, transformational life of Christ. We will journey together in this content over the first twelve weeks of the New Year. My heart is that you will not only receive the teaching but be able to incorporate it into your life, the life of your family, and or Bible Study Group. Below you will find different ways the content will be made available and suggestions on how to engage with the content as a group. Don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Blessings, Pastor Jeff

Delivery of Content

- 1. Sermons—Sunday Mornings or via Facebook Live
- 2. Written Lessons--\$10.00 per person (contact Pastor Jeff)
- 3. Digital Lessons--\$3.00 per person (contact Pastor Jeff)
- 4. Missional Institute—Written Lessons plus small video teaching--\$15.00-month subscription. (contact Pastor Jeff)

Group Engagement with Content

- Sunday School Class—Sunday School Time is given to discuss the content from which ever way participants have received the content (Contact Pastor Jeff for Suggested Discussion Questions)
- 2. Home Gathering—Gather people you know together in your home for coffee and dessert and following the following process:
 - A. Reception—everyone gathers and simply shares how things are going. If children are present then get them settled and engaged in an age appropriate fun activity.
 - B. Reflection—Simply go around the room and ask people what they sense God was saying to them from that week's lesson.
 - C. Response—Simply go back around the room and ask people to identify what they will do about what they are hearing.
 - D. Ragged End—After prayer, begin the ragged end. Remind people of the pre-set time that the gathering will be over—and inform people they are welcome to stay up to that time or to feel free to leave at any point up to that time.
- 3. Discipleship Journey with Pastor Jeff—Date and time will be set after the group has been formed to best meet the needs of the group. Contact Pastor Jeff at (540) 577-0839 to join.

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.



Celebrating a Gift of Service to the Floyd Community

As many of you are aware, Terry Morris will be retiring from her position as the Floyd County Administrator at the end of the year. We join our voices together in thanking her for the countless hours she has offered our community over her tenure as the County Administrator and an extended period of time in offering service within that administration. Over the last few years, she has faithfully provided guidance through several very difficult seasons. She has represented the Kingdom of God well in her faithful service to this community.

THANK YOU NOTES

Senior Smiles

The response to the Senior Smiles nursing home ministry has been so encouraging. I just want to thank all of you who have contributed so generously. In the near future, I will be placing a box for donations at the back entrance of the church near the social hall. Again, I just want to thank you all. *Judi Dempsey*



Dear Floyd Baptist Church,

Scott and I are grateful for the many thoughtful acts expressed to us by you, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, following the death of my Sister, Cynthia Stovall. The cards, the prayers, the meals, the flowers, the carport visits, and the **oh so kind** words have helped me grasp how this earthly loss becomes a heavenly celebration, as Cynthia was a Christian.

Special thanks to Pastor Jeff for the calls, prayers, and the text which I shared with Momma Irene.

And special thanks to our Deacon, Jack, and Terry Morris for attending the graveside service. *Sincerely, Isabel A. Lovitt* We, along with the remainder of our family, want to thank Floyd Baptist Church for the many expressions of friendship during the loss of our Dad, Arlie Thompson. We appreciate the flowers from the church along with the donations of food, prayers, calls, texts, cards and acts of kindness from our church family. We are so very thankful for you all. *Brenda Weeks and*

Danny & Martha Thompson



Thank You Church Family, for sending the very thoughtful and uplifting Get Well cards, calls, scripture verses, and messages of prayer during my recent knee surgery and recovery. It meant a lot. *Much love, Mark West*

... Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. Page 4

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In December:

December 21, 7:30pm - Deacon's Meeting December 24, 6:00pm - Christmas Eve Service December 24-25 - Church Office Closed December 20 - Deadline for January Informer December 31-January 1 - Church Office Closed (*No Church Council Meeting*)

Inclement Weather Schedule

Our winter closing policy will remain the same as in previous years. During the week, scheduled activities will be **CANCELLED** if Floyd County Schools are **CLOSED** due to bad weather (unless you are notified otherwise) On Sundays, the decision to cancel a Worship Service will be made by the pastor and deacons. A cancellation will be announced, when possible, by phone tree message and **cancellations will be posted on TV channels WSLS-10 and WDBJ-7**.



FLOWER COMMITTEE



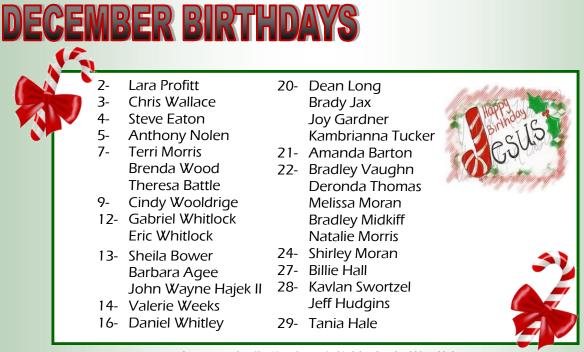
Christmas Poinsettias



(For the Sanctuary)

As in years past, you are invited to bring poinsettias for those you wish to Honor or in Memory of loved ones this Christmas Season. Please remember to attach a card with the name of the person you wish to honor and who it was donated by. Poinsettias may be picked up anytime after the Christmas Eve Service on December 24th. If anyone needs assistance, please contact one of the Flower Committee: Mary Gardner, Elizabeth Reynolds or Janice Yearout-Patton.

Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth, peace, good will toward men...



Please contact the office if you know of a birthday that should be added, corrected or deleted in the birthday calendar. floydbaptist@swva.net or 745-2677.





To celebrate the Christmas season and to reach out to each other during a time when we sadly can't do it in person, Young at Heart will be participating in a Secret Santa

Project throughout the month of December. All Young at Heart participants will be receiving a letter about this project and the name of who they will be the Secret Santa for. Anyone is always welcome to join our activities so if you'd like to join, please call Kathryn West at 745-3281 and I'll add you to the list. Secret Santas will be praying for and sending cards, small gifts, and possibly leaving small gifts at the home of their person or couple. Secret Santas will remain anonymous until Christmas although



they can leave some clues as to their identity. It will be fun for all of us and a way to do special things for our church friends.

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Christmas Music

The incarnation, God becoming man, was heralded by angels singing a simple song even lowly, frightened shepherds could understand. In the twenty centuries since that miraculous birth, the song has never been silent: *peace on earth, joy, the child, a star, the Magi.* Wherever Christ is known, the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany resound with carols.

For those of you who know me well, know that music brings Christmas to life for me. Each song has its own story, and I would like to share the story of "Mary Did You Know?" with you.

Buddy Greene's simple and touching melody coupled with Mark Lowry's dynamic lyrics draw listeners to its perspective. This song's gift to the world might have been lost forever had not Mark's parents chosen to believe in the promise and potential God placed in their son.

Mark, a singer with the Gaither Vocal Band, a humorist, a songwriter, and a person who never stops moving. Mark started singing almost before he could talk. He began as a preschooler singing in the school choir and singing the lead parts in the Easter musicals. Mark seemed to stand out as a problem child in grade school - an energetic klutz. His parents made sure that this "curse" was looked at as a blessing. They emphasized the positive, trying to put all Mark's energy into something good. The Lowry's assured Mark that God had a plan for his life and that his uniqueness was a part of it. They discovered that Mark loved performing, so they put him on every stage that they could find. The audiences seemed to not be able to get enough of him. Benson records saw the potential that his parents saw, and so began his musical career.

One of Mark's songs, "Mary Did You Know?" evolved while Mark was living and working in Houston, TX. His pastor asked him to write the music for their living Christmas tree program. Mark decided to write a song thinking about what it would have been like to have been Jesus' mother. He began by interviewing her on her thoughts of what it was like to be the mother of Jesus. The words to this song came from his interview. Mark was not completely happy with the outcome, so he laid the song aside and decided to wait on the Lord's timing to finish.

Later, Bill Gaither was looking for a singer to fill the Gaither Vocal Band. He liked Mark's enthusiasm and musical talents, and invited him to join the group. Mark packed his bags and came on board. About two years later, Buddy Greene joined the band. He was also a talented songwriter and musician. Mark decided to share "Mary Did You Know?" with Buddy.

Greene went to work on Lowry's God-inspired words. When he finished, he called Mark on the phone and sang the song to him. Lowry loved it and within a week they had put together a demo. Many artists have recorded the song since its beginning. Southern gospel music has given the world a new Christmas carol.

There can be no doubt that Lowry was born different. His curiosity and energy could have held him back, but his parents channeled those gifts so Mark could thrive. He looked at Mary's story in a new

light. "Mary Did You Know?" is a song about a mother like no other, whose song came from the hand of a man like no other.

I wish you many blessings this holiday season. Allow the music of Christmas to continue to heal your soul as you travel through the holidays.

YOUTH MINISTRY

THE Christmas POST OFFICE

This year our youth will be manning the "Christmas Post Office". For those not familiar with what this is..... If you would like to send Christmas cards to fellow church members/ attendees, you can use the "Christmas Post Office" here at church instead of the United States Postal Service. Just fix your cards with the names of the recipients on the front of the

envelope and place your cards in the appropriate letter cubicle in the "post office" located in the hall across from the Cheerful Helpers Sunday School Class. On the Sunday mornings in December, our youth will deliver these cards to the appropriate Sunday School Classes or to folks in the sanctuary before the worship service begins. As is the custom, if you would like to make a donation for the "postage", there will be a container for that on the table. Donations will be used by the youth for the Operation Christmas Child/Samaritan's Purse project for 2020.



The Christmas season has arrived and the children at preschool are excited and busy with many activities in the *"Spirit of Christmas"*.

The children learn that giving is a wonderful feeling so they help with Angels from Floyd Elementary and the nursing home!!! Also, the children will be giving to our food boxes with non-perishable food donations as we do every year!! We will learn about the true meaning of Christmas as well as have fun talking about Santa!!



The 3's Christmas Party will be on Thursday, Dec. 17th. The 4's Christmas Party will be on Wednesday, Dec. 16th.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year !

Love, Ms. Janice

Santa

SERVICE MINISTRIES

Deacon of the Week

December 6	Darrell Thompson
Decemer 13	John Weeks
December 20	Janice Yearout-Patton
December 27	Michael Browning
January 3	Connie Browning

Greeters					
December 6	Richard Wood Jim & Louellen Sharp				
Decemer 13	Maurice & Connie Quesenberry Chris & Kim Bond				
December 20	Connie Browning Danny & Martha Thompson				
December 27	Robert & Donna Petty John & Ashlee Weeks				



MISSION NEWS

This year the Angel Tree is being done a little differently than in years past. Christmas For Children has made the decision to give a gift card in an equal amount for each child on their list. They are anticipating approximately 200 children and the plan is \$50.00 per child. In addition, as in years past, Christmas For Children will also give each family a food certificate from Slaughters. Our church normally provides gifts for 20% of the Angels on their list so our support is CRITICAL. We ask that you either send a check to the church with "Angel Tree" in the memo section or send a donation directly to Christmas For Children P O Box 750, Floyd, VA 24091.

Our family has decided we will sponsor the same number of children we always have and hope you can as well. If you can't give \$50.00, any amount will be appreciated. If you can give more, please do! Thanks as always for your support!!! For more information, contact Dirk Davis.



Food Drive

Please help us with our collection of food items for the local food bank. The theme for December is: <u>Canned Meats (tuna, Spam, Treet, etc.)</u> Please drop off your donations by <u>December 31</u> in the box outside the Fellowship Hall.

MISSION NEWS

Christmas Food Boxes and Fruit Baskets



Delivery of the Christmas Food Boxes and Fruit Baskets will be done as always with the boxes and baskets ready for pick-up on **Sunday, December 20th.** As in the past, if you sign a person up for a food box or fruit basket please be prepared to deliver it and put your contact information on the sign-up sheet. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board beside the pastor's office. Decorated boxes have been set out for food donations. We are also accepting monetary donations that will enable us to purchase items. Please make your checks payable to the church and put "Food Boxes" in the memo section. We anticipate a heavy demand this year so please help us in continuing this wonderful outreach! <u>*Please have all names and donations submitted by*</u> <u>*Wednesday, December 16*</u>. For more information, contact Dirk Davis.

Operation Christmas Child Collection

Praise God for His blessing and guidance during another collection week for Operation Christmas Child. Many prayers were answered by the wonderful collection of boxes this week. Floyd County collected 1,117 boxes. That is only about 50 boxes short of last year. In this crazy year, I am thrilled! Thank you so much to each person who made the decision to build a box to give a child the gift of an opportunity to learn about Jesus and His love.



A huge thank you to Floyd Baptist Church. With the boxes donated and the money and donations given to the Youth, we had 205 boxes this year! I want to say a special thank you to Faith and Winky for all the work they put into this project and all the youth who helped fill the boxes. I also want the thank all the volunteers who helped me all week with the collection. I certainly could not do this alone. Also, a big shout out to Danny Vaughn for taking the cartons to the Central Dropoff location in Hillsville. *Judy Britt*



Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

"You have. . .heard about this hope in the message of truth, the gospel that has come to you. It is bearing fruit and growing all over the world, just as it has among you since the day you heard it. . .Colossians 1:5-6 Your prayers and gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering will help the Gospel continue to resound throughout the nations as you send and sustain missionaries and their work. Thank you in advance for your Lottie Moon Offering during this Christmas Season!

Merry Christmas From Heaven

I still hear the songs I still see the lights I still feel your love On cold wintery nights

I still share your hopes And all of your cares I'll even remind you To please say your prayers

I just wanted to tell you You still make me proud You stand head and shoulders Above all the crowd

Keep trying each moment To stay in His grace I came here before you To help set your place

You don't have to be Perfect all of the time He forgives you the slip If you continue the climb

To my family and friends Please be thankful for today I'm still close beside you In a new special way

I love you all dearly Now don't shed a tear Cause I'm spending my Christmas with Jesus this year

John Wm Mooney, Jr.









DECEMBER 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				3		
		1	2 10am-FB Live Prayer	3	4	5 8-4 Browning, FH
			TUalli-FB Live Prayer			о-4 Бгоwпіну, ГП
					11pm –Last Week's Warnhin Saniaa an	
			7-9 pm AA & Al-Anon, FH		Worship Service on Citizen's Channel 20	
6 2nd Sunday Advent	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lord's Supper	,		10am-FB Live Prayer			
9:45am-Sunday Schoo (for the classes that	1					
are meeting)						
11am-Worship Svc					11pm –Last Week's	Hearts and
12pm-Last Wk Svc on Citizens Channel 20			7-9 pm AA & Al-Anon,		Worship Service on Citizen's Channel 20	Hammers
6-8pm Boy Scouts	7-9pm, FH, AA		FH		Chizen's Channel 20	
13 ^{3rd Sunday} Advent	14	15	16	17	18	19
Mission Sunday			10am-FB Live			
9:45am-Sunday School			Prayer			2-4pm, FH Tucker
(for the classes that are meeting)						
11am-Worship Svc						
12pm-Last Wk Svc on					11pm –Last Week's	
Citizens Channel 20			7-9 pm AA & Al-Anon,		Worship Service on Citizen's Channel 20	
6-8pm Boy Scouts	7-9pm, FH, AA		FH		Olizen 3 Onamier 20	
20 ^{4th Sunday} Advent	21	22	23	24	25	26
9:45am-Sunday School			10am-FB Live Prayer	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	
(for the classes that				Office Closed	Office Closed	
are meeting)				2-4pm-FH,		
11am-Worship Svc 12pm-Last Wk Svc on				Marcy Turner		
Citizens Channel 20	7:30pm Deacon's Mtg		7-9 pm AA & Al-Anon,	6:00 pm Christmas	11pm –Last Week's Worship Service on	
6-8pm Boy Scouts	7-9pm, FH, AA		FH	Eve Service	Citizen's Channel 20	
27	28	29	30	31		~
9:45am-Sunday School			10am-FB Live Prayer	New Year's Eve		
(for the classes that are meeting)				Office Closed		
11am-Worship Svc						
12pm-Last Wk Svc on						
Citizens Channel 20			7-9 pm AA & Al-Anon,			
6-8pm Boy Scouts	7-9pm, FH, AA		FH			
L						