



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH | DECEMBER 2020

## Children's Department

The children have started practicing the music for this year's Christmas program. We are blessed to have Mrs Julie's youth join us in this endeavor. The plan is for the children to be in Children's church every Sunday in November. The program will be December 20th, and we will have a small party afterward. Our final practice will be the morning of the 20th during the Sunday School hour. Along with getting ready for the Christmas program the children will be studying the Christmas Story. We will start with Mary and the Angel and conclude with Jesus growing up.

I will be offering another young leader training program in January. I am looking forward to what the next year will bring for

this program and the youth that sign up. If you have any questions about the program please let me know.

We have started taking donations for our in-house Christmas offering "Operation Showing God's Love". As of this letter we will be helping four families for a total of ten kids this year. Please be in prayer for this program.

I want to thank all our awesome volunteers. You are the reason we have great programs. We can always use more volunteers in the children's and youth departments. If you feel led to help, please let me know. Please be praying for these ministries.

Blessings  
Nikki



### Our Current Schedule

**Sunday School Classes 9:30 am**

**Sunday Worship 10:45 am**

**2nd Mondays at Noon Women on Mission**

**Monday Night Prayer 6:15 pm**

**Tuesday 6 am Men's Group at Spangles**

**Wednesday Adult & youth Bible study 6:30 pm**

**Wednesday Children's Programs 6:15pm**



## Youth Update

Merry Christmas!!! As we celebrate the birth of Christ, encourage your student to be a part of Sunday morning Bible Study and Wednesday night youth groups. Encouraging one another is huge for students--and their leaders! Please pray for all of our students and leaders. Satan is prowling around looking for someone to devour and we want to pray a hedge of protection over each of them.

F.U.E.L. will be having a Christmas party on December

16th. That will be the last Wednesday night for youth until January 2021. In 2021, we will be looking to the summer to see if SuperSummer Camp will be a possibility or not. Camp is a great time of spiritual renewal and is very important in their lives. Please be praying they will have this opportunity.

Lisa Crook



## Outreach

The Outreach team would like to bring some Christmas Cheer to the truckers that might not be able to make it home for Christmas. We will visit the Towanda Service Center to deliver cookies, our thanks, prayers and a little Christmas cheer.

We need bakers to help out with cookies. If you're not a baker but would like to donate your time or help deliver, please let me or an Outreach member know. Everyone is welcome to join. We will meet at the church on December 20th at 3:30 pm to pick up cookies and head to Towanda Service Center. If you have any questions please let me know.

Janna Davis

## Facilities Team Update

Your facilities TEAM has been diligently working behind the scenes changing out light fixtures and transitioning the building away from florescent bulbs and to the much brighter and more efficient LED variety. We have also been working on moving storage in the basement and creating a family bathroom down there.

We have a vacancy of one member. If interested in joining our team, let Jerry DeWitt, Charles Greenwell, or John Brickley know.

We want to thank Stan Nixon for the lawn and yard work he did this year. We also want to thank Jill Greenwell for the beautiful flower garden she put in and cared for this year. If anyone is interested in planting and caring for the flower garden next year, please notify anyone listed above.

Facility team chairman  
Jerry DeWitt





# Pastor's Pen

Greetings Church! (Of the Holiday variety!) Love you Church! (Of the Heavenly variety!)

Have you ever felt more in need of a beautiful holiday season than in 2020? Yet have you ever felt more in question that we will even have one? I mean, if there was ever a need to be together with loved ones from whom we have had to social distance or avoid interstate travel, it is certainly in our present sense of isolation. We were created for intimacy with God and others through fellowship and sharing life together. We have found Zoom to be an inadequate substitute for our longings to touch and embrace. Yet as Covid-19 is spreading more rapidly, the holidays are being viewed with trepidation and discouragement this year. We all have probably had to change our plans or at the least, wait and see what health developments will arise before making more definite plans. We must be wise to protect our vulnerable from this sickness. But how do we deal with the vulnerabilities that isolation creates?

Our church family has finally been affected by the Covid virus as our community experiences more sickness. Our local scene has people experiencing a wide variety of emotions: fear, nervousness, frustration, scorn, worry, and longings for normalcy. The many changes in behaviors, business, wardrobe, schedule, and holidays have us all longing for something of value and substance to stay the same. These are difficult times and life in church is no exception. The deacons have struggled with what we are going to do as a church to be good shepherds and protect our church family members from the dangers of spreading a sickness while still being very present to encourage and guide in each journey with Jesus in this chaotic world. We have had to try to walk fine lines between prudence and faithfulness, public witness and private faith, management and mission. It has not been easy and none of us are absolutely convinced that we have done it right. We will continue to plan without fear or arrogance while seeking wisdom and discerning prudence. But the days are troublesome and we will continue to wrestle with troublesome days ahead, seeking to be faithful to the tasks God has for us.

The deacons have decided to take advantage of a natural pause in our holiday schedule for healing and prayer by having **no services on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, this Sunday, November 29**. We



know not everyone agrees with our decision and few are pleased that we won't get together as normal. A part of us takes solace in the fact that everyone **wants** to get together for worship. Your deacons do too and we have struggled with this decision. We do want to assure you that absolutely none of our discussion had to do with a governor's mandate. What is going on in the political world or scientific world was not the basis for our decision, but only what has been happening in our local community. We appreciate so much everyone who approached us Sunday and kindly said they didn't like the decision but are praying for us every day! Their grace has made us love you even more and want even more to serve you well! We know we will get through this...together!

In lieu of the worship service, we are issuing a call to prayer. We can and must fight this virus and the world's chaos in the spiritual battle fields. To help your family pray and worship together this Sunday, we are providing a prayer guide in this newsletter for you to read Scripture together and pray specific topics together. If you prefer, I will also be posting on our Facebook page a pre-recorded video of my guiding you through the prayer call.

Our holiday meal is postponed from December 6. However we **will** have our Annual Meeting that day to approve the budget for 2021. (Copies of the proposal are available for preview at church or by email request). We will ask those who want to attend in person to return at **one o'clock** from a quick lunch. For the rest, we will set up a private Facebook video event to allow remote participation. The Facebook event will **not** be available from our regular page or by any search. To participate remotely, you will need a **special invite** to the event. If you want to



# Pastor's Pen continued

request that invite, email the church office and we will send you the link invite you will need for the event. This is being done through facebook, so you will need to have a facebook account to receive the invite. We hope you will be able to attend this very important meeting in the life of our church by either mode. By the way, it is vitally important that you keep our budget outlook positive by maintaining your faithful giving whether or not you are able to worship with us in person.

We are also proceeding with our Advent plans. Our theme will wrap up our 2020 Focus on the Gospel to our City with "The Gospel of Christmas." Please invite someone to join us in worship or via Facebook in the hopes that the Gospel of Christmas takes root in their souls, they might be saved, our church can grow, and Christ might be glorified. This is the time of year that people are most open to an invite to worship. Our Children's program will be December 20, and we will have our Christmas Eve candlelight worship as well.

May you and yours be more connected in Christ this season than ever before!

Pastor David Crook

## Prayer Guide

**LEADER:** We want to be prayer warriors. Our world and our community and our church need prayer warriors. Today we put on our spiritual armor and we engage the spiritual battle in prayer. Paul said right after his list of the armor of God in Ephesians 6, "Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints. Stay alert is not telling us, "don't fall asleep during prayer," but rather keep watching – for 1) what prayer needs arise in the body of Christ when times are tough and 2) for God's answers to our prayers. Pray and see what else needs to be prayed for and pray some more and see what God does. That's what prayer warriors do. They look for needs to pray for and get giddy when God answers!

Jesus was a mighty prayer warrior. In fact, He was the mightiest! He prayed often. When He prayed out loud His disciples would learn from Him. Luke records such an event in Chapter 11:1-4

**READER:** Luke 11:1-4

**LEADER:** Let us each one spend some time quietly praying as Jesus taught us to pray in preparing our hearts to pray deeply. (Pause for silent prayer)

**LEADER:** PRAY

**LEADER:** Praying Scripture is a powerful way to pray. It can guide us and help us find words to express what we in our hearts feel deeply and our lips struggle to say. Let's let some scriptures lead us to pray in this battle.

In many of the Psalms there appears a word that tells us how to interact with the actual words of the Psalm. The word is Selah. It tells us to stop. "Don't go any farther. Pause to meditate on what we just sang or read. Don't move on until you have let these words hit deep within your soul." So as we read and pray Psalm 46, we are going to pause where we are told to and let the Lord lead us before moving on.

**READER:** Psalm 46:1-3 then pause

**LEADER:** PRAY, including *Isaiah 54:10*

**READER:** verses 4-7 then pause

**LEADER:** PRAY

**READER:** verses 8-11 then pause

**LEADER:** PRAY

**LEADER:** When times get tough, God wants us to cry out to Him for help. Sometimes He brings the tough times just so we will! Solomon prayed a great prayer when he dedicated the temple that encourages us to cry out to God in our tough times today.

**READER:** 1 Kings 8:37-39

**LEADER:** PRAY and ask others to pray for the following:

- Pray that God would have mercy on us with our sinful ways and grant us deliverance from Covid in our world
- Pray for our church to grow and fulfill God's mission for us and that God would lead its leaders
- Pray for our city to be healed and turn to God for help
- Pray for an awakening in America, that people would seek God





# Women's Ministry

Our Women's ministries are updating our schedule. We pray that these changes allow us to better serve the ladies in our church family.

Beginning December 14th, our Women on Missions meetings will be Mondays at noon for a luncheon. Our leaders are working on having speakers come to those meetings. Food will be provided unless otherwise stated. Keep watching the bulletin and future newsletters for updates.

Starting in January there will be a ladies' Bible study Sunday evenings at 5:30. The first study we will dive into is "He Speaks to Me" by Priscilla Shirer. Julie Hager is leading this study.

Contact Deb Reinert for more information on the Luncheons, or to volunteer your talents to cook.

# Operation Christmas Child

Wow, what a collection season! We as a church packed 134 shoeboxes or gospel opportunities : ) Praise God for His goodness! Thank you to all who helped purchase things for packing, for those who packed, and those who helped in other ways. Boxes are probably finished being processed and being sent out to their country to be distributed to the places that will hand them out to the children. Each distribution is a party where the gospel is presented and then the gift (shoebox) is handed out to each child. Each child receives a booklet about Jesus in their language with their box. Afterwards, each child is invited/encouraged to come back to participate in a 12 lesson discipleship program. Here they learn more about Jesus and have the opportunity to receive Him as their Savior. At the end they have a graduation ceremony and receive a New Testament in their own language.

If you are interested in hearing personal accounts of a life that was changed by a shoebox, go to [www.samaritanspurse.org/OCC](http://www.samaritanspurse.org/OCC) . Thanks again for another great year. I am already looking forward to next year's!

Karen Leibbrandt



## CONTACT US

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# DECEMBER 2020 UPDATED 11-24-2020

		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Olivia Baca	<b>3</b> Taylor Davidson	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Mark Wint
<b>6</b> David Crook 1 pm Annual Meeting	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Marty Scott	<b>10</b> Dianna Stroer	<b>11</b> Penny Nielsen	<b>12</b> Kinley Nielsen
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Noon Women's Luncheon	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 6:15 pm Youth Christmas Party	<b>17</b> Glenna Wise, John Meister 5:30 pm Facilities Team Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 2 pm Outreach Meeting, food Pack & Delivery
<b>20</b> Nathan Wright, Mark & Melynda Wint Children's Program Cookies for Truckers	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Tony Allmond, Jerry & Sandy DeWitt	<b>23</b> No Programs or Services	<b>24</b> 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Services	<b>25</b> Christmas	<b>26</b> Susan Ballard, Tom Edwards
Dec 21st—Jan 2nd NO REGULAR OFFICE HOURS						
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Dylan Davis, James & Kelly Davidson	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> No Programs or Services	<b>31</b> Barry & Sue Mohler		
Dec 21st—Jan 2nd NO REGULAR OFFICE HOURS						

## December Events

- 6th 1 pm Annual Meeting
- 14th Noon Women's Luncheon
- 16th Youth Christmas Party
- 17th 5:30 pm Facilities Team Meeting
- 19th 2 pm Outreach Meeting, food packing and delivery
- 20th Children's program
- 20th 3:30 Cookies for Truckers
- 21st-Jan 2nd NO REGULAR OFFICE HOURS
- 23rd No Programs or services
- 24th Christmas Eve Services 6:30 pm

We are working to accommodate those who wish to come to the business meeting but are uncomfortable in large gatherings. We will provide a socially distanced area in the sanctuary, and will stream live on Facebook with a private event. Email [officefsbceldorado@gmail.com](mailto:officefsbceldorado@gmail.com) to get your invitation!

## December Birthdays and Anniversaries

2nd—Olivia Baca  
3rd—Taylor Davidson  
5th—Mark Wint  
6th—David Crook  
9th—Marty Scott  
10th—Dianna Stroer  
11th—Penny Nielsen  
12th—Kinley Nielsen  
17th—Glenna Wise, John Meister  
20th—Nathan Wright, Mark &

Melynda Wint  
22nd—Tony Allmond, Jerry & Sandy DeWitt  
26th—Susan Ballard, Tom Edwards  
28th—Dylan Davis, James & Kelly Davidson  
31st—Barry & Sue Mohler



# JANUARY 2021 UPDATED 11-03-2020

**1** David Baca

**2**

**3** Young Leader  
Training  
5:30 Women's  
Bible Study

**4**

**5** Austin  
Prewit, Sophie  
Simpson

**6**

**7**

**8** Willie  
Spivey

**9**

**10** Young  
Leader Training  
Potluck  
"A Team"  
Meeting  
5:30 Women's  
Bible Study

**11** Charles &  
Jill Greenwell  
Noon  
Women's  
Luncheon

**12** Stuart  
Smith

**13**

**14**

**15** Vivian  
Thiessen

**16** Nathan  
and Nancy  
Wright

**17** Gloria Tucker  
Young Leader  
Training  
Calendar Dates  
and Newsletter  
Articles due  
5:30 Women's  
Bible Study

**18**

**19**

**20** Walter  
Shepherd

**21**

**22** Deb  
Reinert

**23**

**24** Jakiyah  
Warren  
5:30 Women's  
Bible Study

**25** Lisa  
Crook

**26**

**27** Lesa  
Rumsey

**28** 5:30  
Facilities  
Team Meeting

**29** Opal  
Wartick

**30**

**31** John Meister  
5:30 Women's  
Bible Study

## January Events

- Sunday Nights at 5:30 Women's Bible Study
- 3rd, 10th, 17th Young Leader Training
- 10th Potluck
- 10th "A-Team" Meeting
- 11th Noon Women's Luncheon
- 17th Calendar Dates and Newsletter Articles Due
- 28th 5:30 pm Facilities Team Meeting

## January Birthdays and Anniversaries

1st—David Baca

5th—Austin Prewit, Sophie Simpson

8th—Willie Spivey

11th—Charles & Jill Greenwell

12th—Stuart Smith

15th—Vivian Thiessen

16th—Nathan and Nancy Wright

17th—Gloria Tucker

20th—Walter Shepherd

22nd—Deb Reinert

24th—Jakiyah Warren

25th—Lisa Crook

27th—Lesla Rumsey

29th—Opal Wartick

31st—John Meister



