

Troup Baptist Association

The Labor Pains Intensified

"But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6) (KJV)

I am not a prophet, or the Son of a Prophet. Neither do I play one on TV. (Those my age and older will get that.) However, I am a Christian and most of the time I have a good sense regarding Spiritual matters; I have a decent amount of commonsense, and my wife tells me all the time that I have, "an astute grasp of the obvious!" When my wife senses something in her spirit that is "off," she tells me, "You better watch that person, place, or situation. All my bells, buzzers, and whistles are going off." Of late, all my bells, buzzers, and whistles have been going

off concerning what I am sensing in my spirit, what my commonsense is telling me, and what is glaringly obvious.

In all aspects of life, there is a rhythm. Lately, I am sensing and seeing that something in the Spiritual realm (heavenlies) has shifted and the timing of life has changed. For example, when we met at the funeral home a week or so ago to lineup in procession to go to the cemetery for my granddaughter's memorial service, someone asked the owner of the funeral home how many bodies they had. Besides my granddaughter, he had eleven other bodies. This past Sunday, while attending the memorial service for a beloved pastor's youngest daughter, I was conversing with the pastor's son-in-law. He works at the aforementioned funeral home. I asked him how many bodies they had. He told me, "Aaron, for the past week or so, every day we have had thirteen or more bodies and we are doing three to four funerals a day." Folks, this is only one funeral home in LaGrange. And I have just heard that two nursing homes in our area, one in Troup County and one in Meriwether County, have a Covid-19 positive test rate

of nearly 100%! I have never seen things like they are right now. Every time Marianne and I turn around, we are hearing of another death. I could probably name thirty or more friends, church members, and associates who have died in the past month or so. (And don't even get me started on the political side of this equalization!) I am sixty-five years old, and again, I have never seen things like they are right now!

As I pondered all of this, along with the scriptures above, I also thought of the verses in Matthew 24 that provide us with some of the signs of the end times. *"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places."* (Verses 6-7) *"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."* (Verse 9) *"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."* (Verses 11-12) Without a doubt, we are witnessing these things today as never before. But

then I go back to what Paul said, and I paraphrase, "The nearer the birth of a child, the more frequent and intense the labor pains become!" So it is with the coming of Jesus. But we are not in the darkness that this day should catch us by surprise. Now, I do not profess to know the day or hour that Jesus will return. However, I do know that all my bells, buzzers, and whistles are going off regarding what I sense Spiritually, what commonsense teaches me, and the truths that are glaring obvious to me. And I firmly believe that we are in the "Season of His Return." And I believe that the labor pains just caught another gear; the timing changed; something in the heavenlies moved; the pains are more frequent, and they have intensified!

I close today with the lyrics to the chorus of an old hymn: "Prepare to Meet Thy God." "Careless soul, oh, heed the warning, for your life will soon be gone; oh, how sad to face the judgment, unprepared to meet thy God." Christian friend/church, it is time we are up and about the business of preparing people to meet Jesus!

Brother Aaron

News

Association - Due to the rise in Covid-19 cases in Troup County, the association office will not re-open for larger group meetings as originally planned. The office IS open for business with social distancing and other safety protocols in place. • Bro. Aaron continues to produce and add videos to the online library. The most recent videos in the series, "Faith, Fun and a Touch of Foolishness" are "The Fury of the Fatherless" and "When God is Silent". These can be viewed from the association website. Please continue to keep Bro. Aaron and Mrs. Marianne McCollough and family in your prayers due to the recent passing of their granddaughter, Miss Abbie McCollough.

Faith Bible Institute will not meet in person for the current spring semester as originally planned. Each class will be available for online viewing for each registered student. Textbooks and workbooks are available for pickup at the association office for students.



American Red Cross

Blood Drive

Grace Baptist Church
3731 West Point Road
LaGrange, GA

Saturday, January 23, 2021
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Appointments are needed. Schedule online at
www.redcrossblood.org or call
1-800-RED CROSS.

Note: Come for a chance to win trip for 2 to Super Bowl LVI in LA!
rcblood.org/SuperBowl

Circles of Troup County

is taking applications for the next group. Circles provides coaching, skills and support for people who want to:

- ◆ Increase income
- ◆ Pay bills on time
- ◆ Raise credit score
- ◆ Reach goals to make changes in a job, relationships, health or spiritual life.

To apply, go to circlesoftroup.org or call the Circles office at 706-883-1687

Association - Church Prayer List

For January 2021, please pray for following churches:

Week of January 3, 2021 - Dunson Baptist Church
Week of January 10, 2021 - East LaGrange Baptist Church
Week of January 17, 2021 - East Vernon Baptist Church
Week of January 24, 2021 - Eastside Baptist Church
Week of January 31, 2021 - First Baptist Church, Hogansville

For February 2021, please pray for following churches:

Week of February 7, 2021 - First Baptist Church, West Point
Week of February 14, 2021 - First Baptist on the Square
Week of February 21, 2021 - First Hispanic Baptist Church
Week of February 28, 2021 - Flat Shoals Salem Rd Baptist Church

Please pray for God to bless these churches and meet their needs.

Troup Baptist Association

Mission Statement:

The Troup Baptist Association is a Spiritual, educational, and community resource that, through cooperative fellowship, equips pastors, staff, and churches as they seek to fulfill The Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

Baptist Tabernacle (BTC) - added four new members to the family of God. "Praise God!" • During December, the Food Closet gave away 293 boxes of food, fresh vegetables, fruits and bread serving 578 individuals. A total of 425 meals were also given away and 120 backpacks were given to children for week-end food. • The Clothes Closet is in need of coats, especially children's coats. Please drop off donated coats to the church office. • The Christmas Cantata was held on December 21. It was a beautiful service of preaching and singing. • BTC partnered with Clearview Elementary School and 150 gifts were given to their students for Christmas. "God truly blesses our church each year with people who purchase these gifts to share with the school." • Year-end is a time to reflect on the past and the new year is a time to begin anew. BTC encourages everyone to begin the new year with God, worshipping and praising His holy name. • BTC wishes everyone a happy and blessed New Year.

Important Announcement: Due to COVID-19, BTC will be closing in-person church services until further notice.

Services will be held virtually as they were in the spring and summer. Rev. Jimmy McMillan will have musicians and singers here to help him with the service for Facebook, YouTube and maybe Zoom. Virtual services will be available for Sunday morning and Wednesday night only. "We hope you will join us."

First Baptist Hogansville (FBH) - served hot chocolate and donuts to those attending the Hogansville Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 5. It was a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and great fun to be part of the crowd who had come to enjoy the parade. Our young people also enacted a Nativity scene as a reminder to everyone that Jesus is the Reason for the Season. They were excited to have a part in this annual event, so it was a blessing for the participants as well as the passersby.

• A number of children, youth and adults went Christmas Caroling on Wednesday evening, December 16. This was an especially good opportunity to share the Christmas spirit with many members who have not been able to get out as much because of the pandemic. Psalm 100:1 says: *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.* These carolers certainly made joyful music as was evidenced by the smiles at each house along the way.

Highland - held a Christmas Eve Service on Facebook Live. Due to the rise in Covid-19 cases in Troup County, Sunday morning services will be by Facebook Live and teleconference only for at least the first two weeks of January.

News (continued)

First Baptist Hogansville (FBH) - Celebrate Recovery is a biblical and balanced program that helps people overcome hurts, hang-ups and habits. First Baptist Church Hogansville has been hosting Celebrate Recovery meetings weekly for a little over 7 years. On Sunday, December 6, the group was honored to hold a graduation ceremony for 29 participants who have completed all of the requirements in an 18-month program offered by the court system. These individuals represented courts in Troup, Meriwether and Coweta Counties. All 29 people have been a part of the Celebrate Recovery Ministry. We were delighted to welcome special guests, Judge Jeanette Little and Case Manager Hilliard Daniel of Troup County as well as proud family members. Everyone in attendance and everyone involved in Celebrate Recovery was blessed to be a part of this graduation event.



First Baptist Hogansville Youth Nativity Scene Cast

First Baptist on the Square - will relaunch Contemporary Service and Children and Youth Programs. Starting on January 10, First Baptist Church on the Square will have three Sunday service times, relaunching their contemporary service at 10:00 a.m. in the New Life Building at the corner of W. Haralson St. and Church St. The two services currently held in the Sanctuary on Broad St. will move to 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. and will be a blended worship style with hymns, contemporary songs, and various musical ensembles. First Baptist's livestreams will also move from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Facebook, fbclagrange.online.church, and TV33 (Charter channel 22). The safety protocols put in place during the pandemic are still practiced. Social distancing is practiced and masks are recommended at all services. Due to the recent spike in cases, masks will be mandatory in all hallways, lobbies, bathrooms, and stairwells beginning on January 10. For those with greater health concerns, the individuals sitting in the balcony during the 11:00 a.m. worship service will be required to wear masks for the duration of the service. Also on Jan. 10, First Baptist on the Square is relaunching the children and youth programs. Children's programs will be at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. with a more focused Bible study time at 10 a.m. and large group worship at 11 a.m. that ends in small group time. Youth Bible study and service options will also be available at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. Masks are required for children and youth, but not preschoolers. Preschool childcare is available for all three worship services. More information about service times is available on the church's website at fbclagrange.org or by calling the church office at 706-884-5631.

Grace - The Ladies of Grace and Brotherhood groups enjoyed a Christmas party in December. See photo below. Grace will host a Blood Drive on Saturday, January 23 from 10:00 am until 3:00 pm. Appointments are needed. Please schedule by going to redcrossblood.org or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS. Blood donors will have a chance to win a trip for two to the Super Bowl LVI in LA. • Join us for Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., morning worship in the sanctuary at 10:45 a.m. and Wednesday service at 7:00 p.m. Children PreK-3rd grades will meet in the George Harris Building during Sunday and Wednesday services. We will follow the CDC guidelines. All services will be streamed live on our Facebook page and available on our YouTube page. Reformer's Unanimous meets every Friday night at 7:00 p.m. and streams live on Facebook at 8:30 p.m. and available on their YouTube page. Please check our Webpage <http://www.gbclagrange.com/> for updates and links to our Facebook and YouTube or search Grace Baptist Church LaGrange Georgia and RU Recovery Ch. 1078.



Grace Christmas Party

Lakeview - Sunday School continues at 10 am with social distancing precautions in place. Masks and hand sanitizer are available. Sunday morning worship will be at 11 am, also with Covid-19 precautions in place. Nursery will be available if needed. Wednesday evening services will continue at 6 pm. • Thanks to all who participated in decorating the sanctuary so beautifully for Christmas. • Missions for December included the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and participating in the Gideon's Bible for Jesus project. • Observing social distancing protocols and with food provided, the ladies' Sunday School Class and the WMU ladies met for a wonderful time of fellowship. They collaborated on a mission project of providing blankets and candy for residents of Dunson Senior Apartments and also providing food and Christmas gifts for a family with three young children.

Unity - The Adult Choir Christmas Cantata was held on December 13 with the children singing one song. • No Sunday School or Children's Church for now. This will be re-evaluated on January 17. Sunday morning worship will be held at 10:00 for in-person or Facebook Live. • In Awana, the children were able to buy their families presents with their Awana bucks on Dec. 9. Their Christmas party was Dec. 16 and each child received a gift. Awanas will not meet on January 6 or 13.



Unity Children singing in the Christmas Cantata

JANUARY CALENDAR

- 1 New Year's Day, TBA and GBMB offices closed
- 4 Pastor's Prayer Fellowship, 11:00 am In Person & Zoom
- 11 Pastors' Prayer Fellowship, 11:00 am In Person & Zoom
- 18 Martin Luther King Day
- 18 Pastors' Prayer Fellowship, 11:00 am In Person & Zoom
- 19 Faith Bible Institute - First week of Spring Semester
- 25 Pastors' Prayer Fellowship, 11am at TBA

TBA refers to Troup Baptist Association office
 Association Prayer Group meets by conference call Wed. at 11am
 Faith Bible Institute is doing online classes this semester

Happy Birthday January



- 3 Rev. Howard Longshore, Davidson
- 4 Rev. L.W. Booker
- 5 Rev. Bryan Geter, Creekside
- 9 Rev. Tom Owensby
- 9 Rev. Jack Sapp
- 17 Rev. Lincoln Anderson
- 17 Rev. Craig Marshall
- 18 Rev. Terry Rainwater, Highland
- 24 Rev. Chad Bishop
- 24 Rev. Willie Edmondson, Bethlehem



Happy New Year!



I've given up social media for the New Year and am trying to make friends outside Facebook while applying the same principles. Every day, I walk down the street and tell passersby what I've eaten, how I feel, what I did the night before, and what I will do tomorrow. Then I give them pictures of my family, my dog, and me gardening. I also listen to their conversations and tell them I love them. And it works. I already have three people following me—two police officers and a psychiatrist.

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