A new year means a new beginning. A fresh start. Sure, there are things we bring with us from 2022 that hang on our shoulders like baggage. But even with some baggage from past years, this one is fresh, new, and I'm ready for another go at it. I hope you are, too. I don't know what 2023 will hold for any of us, but I know that as long as God gives us breath, we should make the effort to grow a little more each day, go a little further this year than last, and expect to grow stronger and more faithful in our walk with God.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Read Psalm 139:1-6

Our first responsibility is our Personal Growth. The old saying says, "If it's to be it's up to me!" Well, not everything is up to you, but the first step is in your court.

The first part of Psalm 139 lets us know how well God knows us. He knows everything about us! 2023 can be a time where we get totally honest with God and get to work on overcoming the things that are holding us back from walking closer with Him.

Verses 5 and 6 let us know that God loves us anyway. I love to consider this truth:

GOD IS ALREADY IN TOMORROW SO I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT.

Get into your Bible. Study it, meditate on it, pray for understanding – and GROW.

CHURCH GROWTH

Read Ephesians 4:1-6

This is one of my favorite passages in scripture. It tells me how to walk in relationship with other believers in the Body of Christ – the Church. Jesus died for His Bride (the Church) and He wants every believer to be connected to His Church.

Take a close look at verse 3, "...making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

Make the commitment to BUILD UNITY & PROTECT UNITY in your church.

This requires humility, gentleness, patience, and love so each of us must think of yourself "LESS" and others "MORE." If we all do this, we'll see wonderful church growth all around our association in 2023. Unity in Christ must be a priority.

GROW in SHARING

Read 2 Timothy 1:6-14 I've heard this quote for years and hope you'll like as much as I do:

"I want my life to be so committed and faithful that people who know me but <u>don't know God</u> will want to know God <u>because they know me</u>."

I want to be so unashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that I will boldly and gladly share it, even if it means suffering. Christian, live your life in such a way that it will invite others to inquire about your faith. Then, <u>TELL THEM the GOOD NEWS!</u>

We have a great opportunity in this new year. Let's GET up, LOOK up, and SPEAK up so others will WAKE up to salvation.

Bro. Andy



What is it? Disciple Now...

- ...introduces Jesus to spiritually-lost teenagers
- ...strengthens the walk of believers by diving headfirst into Scripture
- ... grows a community of like-minded student believers in Troup County

What does Exit 18 mean?

Exit 18 (a play on the Lagrange Exit from I-85) represents the combined hearts, visions, and ministries of the Church in Troup County. It represents all of our student ministries working together for the sake of the Kingdom.

Troup Baptists, PRAY for these students and Leaders from the time you get this newsletter through January 13-16 weekend and beyond.

Association News

MINISTRY NEWS

December was a great month of ministry and celebration. I enjoyed writing the Advent Devotionals for the month and was encouraged to have so many receiving the daily emails. The first week of Advent I was

privileged to fill in for Dr. Lamar Truitt at Lakeview.



On December 6, we held our Annual Pastor's Christmas party at Baptist Tabernacle, Thank to Pastor Jimmy McMillan and the Baptist Tabernacle folks for hosting us and thanks to Jeff Higgins and Higgins Funeral Home for sponsoring this fun and encouraging night of celebration. We had a great time of fellowship together. I wrote my and read my

own Troup Baptist Association edition of "The Night Before Christmas" filled with the antics of our pastors and staff in preparation for Christmas. We celebrated our grand prize winners with a gift from the Association. Our Pastor's Wife winner was Mrs. Linda Dukes (Concord) and our Pastor's winner was Dr. Lamar Truitt. (Lakeview) (pictured below)





On December 15th, Kim and I attended the immersive Christmas experience at Rosemont Baptist (Pastor Adam Camp) called "THE ONE." It was an incredible outdoor telling of God's plan to send Jesus from the dawn of creation. It was a beautiful presentation of the Christmas story in an outdoor, creative, and spectacular format. Thanks Rosemont BC.

On December 19th, our Pastor's Fellowship went out to spread Christmas joy to our community. We sang carols and Christmas songs at Poplar Creek and Vernon Woods Assisted living homes. It was a wonderful time sharing with the residents and talking with friends and family we have known for years. And let me brag on the guys for a minute – THE GUYS CAN SING! Wow! I'm thankful for their willingness to go and share their love and joy with others. Our plan is to continue going out to serve once a quarter as we encourage each other and sharpen one another in the Lord.





Andy, Lamar, Tim, Kenneth, Jerry, Tony, Derek, and Doug



Jerry with Mrs. Mona Gamble



Andy with Mrs. Sandra Simpson



Finally, I was also privileged to fill in on January 1 at Teaver Road Baptist for Pastor Ben Turner. It was a great service with a wonderful group of kind and encouraging people. We kicked off the new year with 3 prayers related to my article on the front page. We stopped and prayed for our Personal growth, our commitment to the Church, and our commitment to be a witness in 2023. I pray you will join us in that prayer of commitment.

I'm looking forward to a wonderful year serving you and the TBA churches. I pray for you and hope you will continue to pray for me.

> 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 Collegiate Ministry 2023 At LaGrange College

The new semester kicks off on Monday, Ian 9, with our first meeting. Franklin Road BC will be serving chili to the students.

Each Tuesday during the semester we will help feed the students and share with them. If your church would like to take a week or help for a week, please call us here at the office. 706-884-1975

Association - Church Prayer List

For **January 2023**, please pray for the following churches:

Week of January 1, 2023 - Callaway Baptist Church Week of January 8, 2023 - Concord Baptist Church

Week of January 15, 2023 - Confidence Missionary Baptist Church Week of January 22, 2023 - Creekside Baptist Church Week of January 29, 2023 - Davidson Baptist Church

For **February 2023**, please pray for the following churches:

Week of February 5, 2023 - Dunson Baptist Church

Week of February 12, 2023 - East LaGrange Baptist Church Week of February 19, 2023 - East Vernon Baptist Church

Week of February 26, 2023 - Eastside Baptist Church

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

Baptist Tabernacle (BT) - During the month of December, God blessed the church family with 4 new members. "Praise God for He is always good." • December was a busy time for the Food and Clothes Closets. The Food Closet gave away 151 boxes of food, 154 meals, and 120 backpacks with weekend food for children. The Clothes Closet gave out 38 coats and served 103 individuals. The Clothes Closet is in need of coats. So, if you have one to donate, BT would appreciate it. • On December 6, BT hosted the Pastors' and Wives' Christmas Dinner for the Troup Baptist Association. There were around 110 attendees. They enjoyed a delicious meal, played games, had fun, and fellowshipped together. The tables and dining area were beautifully decorated. "Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this event a successful one." • On December 14, the Awanas went Christmas caroling. • Around 300 Christmas gifts were given to students of Clearview Elementary School. "God truly blesses our church each year with people who purchase these gifts and share them with the school.'

- The Christmas Cantata was held on December 18. It was a beautiful service of music and preaching. The children also put on a Christmas program which was awesome.
- The JC McMillian Christmas Eve Men's Breakfast was held on December 24 at 8 am. Approximately 50 men attended. They enjoyed a delicious meal, had fun, and fellowshipped together. This is an annual men's breakfast that was started by Rev. JC McMillian.
- Awana started back on January 4.
- Brotherhood Breakfast meets on the second Saturday of every month at 8 am. The next breakfast will be January 14.
- The Lighthouse Keepers meet on the third Monday of each month. Lighthouse Keepers are seniors 55 and over.
- BT encourages everyone to begin the New Year with God, worshipping and praising His holy name. The end of the year is a time for reflection on the past and the New Year is a time to begin anew.
- BTC wishes everyone a Happy and Blessed New Year.



Dunson: Above: Caroling at Carolyn and Stanley Woods house

Right: Pam Cole delivering Christmas cards to Elise Cash Creekside - In December, twenty-five members went to Clark's Chapel for the play, "From the Christ Child to the Judgement." • On the second Sunday of December they held a candlelight ornament service. Members gave some moving testimonies. • On December 17, members enjoyed breakfast prepared by the Brotherhood. Afterwards they made ninety fruit bags and distributed them to their shut-ins in the community. That evening the choir members enjoyed a supper hosted by choir director, Chris Studdard. Everyone enjoyed games and fellowship.

- The choir presented a Christmas musical, after which Santa came to visit the children. Each child received a gift.
- Creekside members and guests enjoyed a New Years' Eve singing with "The Seekers" singing and praying the new year in. The house was full!

Dunson - December was a very blessed month for Dunson as they shared their blessings with others. Christmas gifts were provided for a family of three children and Dunson members had so much fun purchasing these items.

- After the Christmas musical and luncheon a group loaded up on the bus and Pastor Kenneth took them caroling to their shut-ins. Mr. Kenneth Bridges did an excellent job leading the carols. WMU members made beautiful goody trays of homemade pound cake, candies, cookies, and muffins to deliver to their shut-ins along with Christmas cards from church members. The Wednesday night kids were treated to a "Happy Birthday Jesus" party, including gifts, and a visit from Santa. Pastor Kenneth had a bag of different symbols that he produced one at a time explaining how they related to Christmas and most importantly to Jesus!
- Dunson exceeded their Lottie Moon goal of \$1000.
- Dunson is looking forward to the new year and starting the Sunday night service again at 6 pm beginning January 8. Everyone is invited. It will be an informal service in the fellowship hall. WMU is in the process of planning a Valentine's Banquet. Dunson will have a Relay for Life Team again this year. The Survivor Luncheon is March 25 at noon at Faith Baptist Church. If we can help anyone register as a survivor, please contact Kay at 706-884-7814 and she'll be glad to help. The Relay for Life Walk will be at the track on Fort Drive, on Friday, April 28, at 6 pm. The Theme is "Every Team Brings Hope." If you don't have a church team, Dunson would love to have you on their team. "This is a great time of Christian fellowship for us and we love to celebrate all survivors!"



Dunson: Children's Happy Birthday Jesus Party with Pastor Kenneth Cole teaching them about Jesus.

FBC Hogansville - The Youth had their annual Christmas party on Saturday, December 10. After a good meal, the group boarded the church van and went to Newnan to look at Christmas lights! It was a great time of food, fellowship, and a fun way to celebrate Jesus' birth! Other groups, among them Ladies Under Construction, Prime Timers, and Grapevine Sunday School Class, also had special celebrations during this joyous season.

• A hot dog supper and dessert auction was held on December 11 to benefit the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The auction was well attended and great fun! "We give God the glory that this event brought in a little over \$1,200. Since this offering goes entirely to foreign missions, it is exciting to think about sharing God's word around the world just by making a few sweets." • During the morning service on December 18 the Adult Choir, under the direction of Mrs. Lynn Campbell, performed the Cantata "We Call it Christmas Because of Jesus." The solo part was sung by Isabella McGhee. We appreciate the dedication of these individuals who gave their time to practice and shared their talents in bringing this beautiful performance.

• On the chilly Wednesday evening of December 21, a group of hardy folks from church went Christmas caroling. They visited some of our members and friends who are not able to come to church on a regular basis. The singers were blessed to be able to share the love of Jesus with others and to help their Christmas to be a little more merry, and those

who were visited had smiles on their faces!

• The candlelight service on Christmas Eve was beautiful. The music and message filled everyone's heart with the true meaning of Christmas. One of the highlights of the special music was provided by several of our youngest girls who sang "Away in a Manager." Then Sondra Lee and her granddaughter Willow McGhee sang "Where's the Line to See Jesus." The candlelight setting gave Pastor Greg's message and the ordinance of communion a special significance. • A grateful "Thank You" to those who decorated the church so beautifully for Christmas and also to those who took their time to put things back to normal for January. • A special thanks to Bill Dollar and Dustin Chapman for the Lighted Cross they fashioned for the church yard. It shows the heart of Christmas.

• FBC Hogansville members are looking forward to where God leads in 2023.



Above: A group from FBC Hogansville went caroling to members and friends in their community.

First Baptist on the Square - is hosting Date Night with Drs. Les and Leslie Parrot on Feb. 11 from 5:30-8:30 pm. Date Night is an engaging and fun event for couples of any age or stage, featuring real-life and practical content from Les and Leslie Parrot. Tickets are \$30 per couple and include dinner, music, games, a Better Love assessment, real-life examples, and practical content. For more information or to register, go to fbclagrange.org/event/date-night. What better way to spend Valentine's than a Date Night with your spouse?





FBC Hogansville Choir under the direction of Lynn Campbell performed the Cantata, "We Call it Christmas Because of Jesus."



Above: Several of the youngest girls of FBC Hogansville singing "Away in a Manger" during the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

First Baptist West Point - Dot Allen, a member of First Baptist Church of West Point, celebrated her 100th birthday on December 27, 2022. She was joined for the occasion by family, friends, and fellow church members in the activity room at Diversicare of Lanett, AL where she resides. Pictured are Frances Reeves, Dot Allen, and Vi Hudmon, who are all members at First Baptist.



Dot Allen's 100th Birthday CelebrationL-R: Frances Reeves, Dot Allen, and Vi Hudmon, who are all members at First Baptist in West Point.

Grace - In December, Grace gave out boxes of free food to 132 people. Free boxes of food are available to anyone who wants it every 3rd Saturday. The drive-through starts at 10:00 am in the parking lot of the church. • The Clothes Closet helps anyone in need. • Ladies of Grace made and delivered 26 fruit baskets to shut-ins and met for breakfast at Cracker Barrel. • Christmas toys and clothes were given to 15 children by Mark Peak's Sunday School class and Ladies of Grace. Jimmy Pruitt's Sunday School class helped provide some CASA children with Christmas toys and clothes. • Grace provided their Partner in Education, Long Cane Elementary School, a BBQ lunch for all the teachers and faculty and a table full of homemade desserts for them to enjoy all week. They wanted the teachers and staff of Long Cane Elementary School to know how much they are appreciated. • A Christmas Fellowship with finger foods was held after the morning service on December 18.

- Reformer's Unanimous meets every Friday night at 7 pm. and 3rd Talk streams live on Facebook at approx. 8:00-8:30 pm and is available on the YouTube page.
- Please visit the webpage http://www.gbclagrange.com/ for updates and links to their Facebook and YouTube sites.



Highland - The first Thru-The-Bible class finished their reading on December 31 and members were presented certificates of achievement during Morning Worship Service on January 1. Several members have signed up to go thru the class again this year and will meet each Tuesday to discuss what they read. Cookie Rainwater did an outstanding job of helping members understand the scriptures and answer any questions they had this past year. She will continue to lead the class thru 2023.

• The WMU ladies had a brunch meeting on December 27 to plan projects for 2023. Each month this year they will collect items for Project Joy Distribution next December at God's Bread Basket. For January, they will be collecting disposable razors. • Highland had a wonderful Christmas Eve "Carols, Communion and Candles" Service with 80 in attendance. They also had a great Christmas Day Morning Worship Service. • The choir did an outstanding job of the cantata "Christ Was Born For This" on Sunday, Dec. 18, followed by a Christmas meal in the fellowship hall.



Highland Choir performing their Christmas Cantata, "Christ Was Born For This" on Christmas Morning.



Lakeview - December was a busy month at Lakeview. A recent mission for the WMU was providing coloring books and crayons for foster children and also a Christmas donation to Georgia Baptist Children's Home. Lakeview participated in the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. On Sunday mornings, Carol Truitt provided refreshments and coffee prior to Sunday School and will continue doing this from 9:30 am to 10:00 am every Sunday. • Association Mission Strategist Andy Buchanan presented an inspiring and informative Advent message on December 4.

• The church was beautifully decorated for Christmas and yard decorations were in memory of founding member Nancy Heflin. • Pastor Lamar Truitt and his wife Carol hosted a church social at their home on December 12 and those attending enjoyed delicious food, group singing, and stories of Christmas memories. • Morning worship was held on December 25 and the Lord's Supper was celebrated.



Lakeview Pastor Lamar Truitt and his wife Carol hosted their Church Christmas Party in their home on December 12.



Above: Mountville Youth provided special music for the Christmas Day service.

Colin Elliott from Ireland will be performing at Mountville Baptist Church on February 15 at 6:30 pm.



Mountville (MBC) - December was a busy month at Mountville! The MBC family was blessed to provide Christmas gifts for 5 foster children and 12 children /6 families! • The kids had a special visitor on Wednesday, December 21. Santa shared some tricks, cookies, and lots of love. He closed the service by sharing the book, "Santa's Prayer" which reveals the true meaning of Christmas, which is the birth of our Savior, Jesus!

- Mountville had a beautiful Christmas Day service. The Youth provided special music.
- MBĈ is excited to welcome Colin Elliott from Ireland on Wednesday, February 15 at 6:30 pm!

Colin Elliott's Christian faith influences his life and music. He gave his life to the Lord when he was only 8 years old through the ministry of evangelist Dick Saunders and is currently one of the hardest-working Gospel singers in the United Kingdom. Colin has been involved in Gospel music both in groups and as a solo artist for over 30 years. He started singing at the age of fourteen and has been 'on the road' ever since. Colin is both a solo artist and sings with the Country/Gospel band, Live Issue.





MBC Children had a special visitor on December 21. Santa shared the true meaning of Christmas with the children.

On The Lighter Side



An antique dealer is walking through town and sees a cat drinking milk from a saucer in a shop window. He is shocked when he realizes that the saucer is very rare and expensive. He enters the shop and asks the owner, "Hey, I really like the cat. Would you be willing to sell it to me?"

The store owner replies, "Not for sale."

The antique dealer thinking quickly responds, "I'll give you \$100 for it."

The shop owner agrees and the antique dealer grabs the cat. He acts like he is about to leave then adds, "Oh, would you mind throwing in the saucer, the cat seems to like it."

The shop owner replies, "No, that's my lucky saucer. I've sold hundreds of cats since I got it."

New Hope (LaGrange) - On Sunday, January 1, New Hope was blessed and excited to welcome Trey Bradley as their Minister of Music along with his lovely wife, Ava and their two children Harper and Piper. Trey received his Bachelor of Arts in music from Truett McConnell University with a minor in Great Commission Studies. He served as worship leader at The Church On The Hill establishing live stream ministry and directing the worship band, choir, youth worship, and tech ministries. Trey likes to play his guitar and other instruments, and teach music. He is an auto mechanic, a freelance photographer and enjoys rock climbing. • "Thank you, Jeff Manion, for your faithfulness in leading the music during the interim."

• Sisters of Hope enjoyed their Christmas party at the home of Patti Manion. She had games, refreshments, and a craft for the ladies. The fellowship was sweet, and we thank Patti for a wonderful time. At the Sisters of Hope regular meeting on Saturday, December 10th, the ladies made Christmas packages to distribute to home-bound and nursing home friends. On Sunday, December 11, they played bingo with residents at Vernon Woods. The next Sisters meeting will be Saturday, February 11, at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. Ladies, please note this date and plan now to join us for a light breakfast, Bible study, and a mission project.

• Sunday morning worship on Christmas day was wonderful! Pastor Steven preached a message on Luke 2 and everyone was also blessed with a duet by Emma Prestridge and Spenser Smith. Spenser will be missed at New Hope as he moves to East Vernon as their Minister of Music. "We love you Spenser and pray for God's blessings on you as you enter this new path in your life."

• The Children's Department under the direction of Kim Fitch had a wonderful "Parent's Night Out" on Sunday, December 18. The children had a blast just playing, watching a Christmas movie, and decorating a gingerbread cookie man. Thanks to some of the youth who came and helped.

• The Youth Department, under the leadership of Jacob Bell, will participate in DNOW on January 17-19 hosted at Rosemont Baptist Church.

• Life Groups will resume meeting on Sunday, January 15. Groups will be studying the "Experiencing God" study book. If you are not attending a Life Group you are urged to get plugged in and grow in Christ along with us.

• Have a blessed, happy, and peaceful new year!





New Hope (LaGrange) Above Left: Christmas Day Duet by Emma Prestridge and Spenser Smith. Above Right: New Hope Children decorating Gingerbread Cookies at the Parents Night Out event.

Roper Heights - The kids went to Gatlinburg, TN for Winter Extreme with Roper Heights Baptist Church leaders, Preacher Eric Rice his wife Nikki Rice and Brittany Brown.



Above: Roper Heights Youth in Gatlinburg for Winter Extreme.



Above: Roper Heights Youth with their Leaders

Wehadkee - On December 17, Wehadkee celebrated the Christmas season with food, fun, and fellowship. "Thanks be to God for the birth of Your Son, JESUS CHRIST. He is the reason for this season!"

• In this New Year, be grateful that God has given you victory over many things this past year. May every day of the New Year be filled with God's Joy, Peace, and Grace for you and your family.

January Birthdays:
 Kim Sams - January 3
 Haywood Cliett - January 6
 Jimmy Treadwell - January 12
 Deborah Wessinger - January 19



New Hope welcomes Trey Bradley as their Minister of Music along with his wife, Ava and daughters, Harper and Piper.



THE SOCK HOPS

In concert with four part harmonies of everyone's favorite songs from the 50's, 60's and 70's.

Come share the fun as we stroll down memory lane.

Troup High Fine Arts Auditorium

1920 Hamilton Road - LaGrange, Georgia

January 28, 2023 7:00 P. M.



roup High Alumni

Tickets Available at: Troup High School, LaGrange Toyota, Landscape Supply of LaGrange and Weathers Honda 8.....

Church Financial Conferences 2023 Register at gbfoundation.org/CFC23

Dates & Locations include:

- March 21 5:00 8:15 pm Columbus Calvary Baptist Church
- March 30 5:00 8:15 pm Jonesboro First Baptist Church

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Creative Tools for Fueling Your Mission Reporting Revenue Above Reproach • Budgeting to Build the Kingdom Don't Let Your Pastor Labor in Vain

JANUARY

Rev. Howard Longshore Jan 3

Rev. L. W. Booker Jan 4

Rev. Bryan Geter Rev. Tom Owensby Jan Jan

Jan 9 Rev. Jack Sapp

Rev. Sam Wood Jan 15

Rev. Lincoln Anderson

Rev. Craig Marshall

Jan 18 Rev. Terry Rainwater Jan 24 Rev. Chad Bishop Jan 24 Rev. W. T. Edmondson

Rev. Jim Cheyne Feb 3 Feb 5 Dr. Greg Brown

Feb 11

Rev. Jamie Duran Rev. Ronnie Jordan Feb 16

Rev. Lenn Martin Feb 18

Rev. Jeff McCartney Feb 18

Feb 22 Rev. Michael J. Jackson

Feb 22 Rev. Kenneth Whitlock

Feb 24 Rev. Jerry Parkerson

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED





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