

MERRY Christmas

From the TBA &
The MESSENGER



DECEMBER 2023 • VOLUME 58 • ISSUE 12



It's that "most wonderful time of the year" when most are in full celebration mode and are listening to the beloved songs of Christmas. It could be anything ranging from (my childhood favorite) the Christmas Cowboy, Gene Autry, to Handel's Messiah. It's hard to think about Christmas without thinking of a favorite song.

There are some songs of the Christmas story though, that you might miss if you're not looking carefully. And those are the songs written right into the Christmas story. These are the ones that I have grown to love more and more over the years.

ELIZABETH'S SONG

*"Blessed are you **among** women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! (Lk 1:42b)*

When Mary came into her home, Elizabeth and her unborn baby were overwhelmed by the presence of Jesus, the Son of God, and his faith-filled mother, Mary. John the Baptist sang with his little body inside the womb by leaping for Joy. Elizabeth used the beautiful word "blessed" to describe Mary among all women. Mary was not above other women, but her humble faith as the chosen servant to carry the Son of God, made her a stand-out for all women. She carried the Word of God in her, growing in her, to be born through her, to change the world around her! What a miracle! "Blessed is she who believed..." (v45) is what set her apart.

I pray your humble FAITH will be your best song this Christmas season.

MARY'S SONG

⁴⁶And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. (Lk 1:46-47)

I'll ask you here to stop and go read Mary's song in its entirety from Luke 1:46-55. It is a beautiful expression of delight in God's power to work through a humble young woman. It is a powerful song of faith and praise that can teach us so much.

Mary's song is titled by historians, "*The Magnificat*," because of the Latin translation of the word "Magnify." Her desire was solely to **MAGNIFY** the LORD, not herself. Eight times she declares what God will do for those who fear Him and place their faith in Him.

A quick look back to Luke 1:38 reveals another wonderful expression of Mary's character when she says,

"Let it be to me according to Your Word."

Standing in an unknown situation, with an uncharted journey ahead, without an in-depth explanation from God, Mary humbled herself and submitted her life to God. That's a very beautiful song of praise!

I pray that your Christmas song this year will be one of humility and submission to the work God is doing in your life and the plans He has for you regardless of how you feel or how things look.



SIMEON'S SONG

²⁹ "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; ³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation ³¹ Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, ³² A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel." (Lk 2:29-32)

Simeon finally got to meet Jesus 8 days after He was born. Simeon had served God and anticipated Jesus' arrival for many years. Unlike the crowd in the temple that day, Simeon was expecting Jesus to show up – and He did!

Simeon's song expresses such deep satisfaction and contentment in God that I just can't point you to it enough. The Bible tells us that he took Jesus up in his arms, blessed God, and shared his song. He was so full of the Spirit that he basically said, "God, I'm ready to go on to Heaven now because I have seen Your great Salvation!" Nothing in this world could compare to a glimpse of Jesus, the Light of the World!

Simeon saw beyond what was right in front of him; he saw what was of ultimate importance. He saw his need and the world's need for salvation through Jesus, the Savior and Lamb of God!

I pray that your Christmas song this year will be one of ultimate significance. I pray that you will look beyond what this world sees as needed and necessary so that you might see what matters the most.

May your heart be as full as Simeon's, Elizabeth's, & Mary's as you sing your humble, faithful, and joyful Christmas song. May you find your best gift in your worship of the humble Savior at the manger this Christmas.

"Joy to the world, the Lord has come!"

Love, Blessings, and Merry Christmas!

Andy and Kim

MINISTRY NEWS

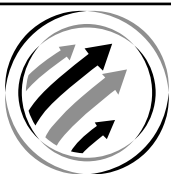
NOVEMBER went by so fast! Even so, it was a full month of encouraging services and ministry all around the TBA. I was privileged to share a 2-sermon series of messages called "Thankful, Grateful, and Blessed" at Mt. Pleasant (Heard) Baptist and then began the Advent season at Callaway Baptist on the last Sunday of the month. I continue to be encouraged by all the loving and supportive members of our Association. Thanks to all of you!



We have also enjoyed some great Pastor's Fellowship Meetings on Monday mornings at 11:00 am at the TBA Building. We've held round-table discussions this month on the topics of "How to Pray for the Church," "Planning and Preaching During Christmas," and "What are the Marks of a Healthy Church?" These meetings are encouraging to our Pastor's as we pray for one another, our churches, and the ministry of the TBA.



On the Thursday before Thanksgiving break, the BCM leadership held a "Thanksgiving Table" on the college Quad where students could write down things they are thankful for on a large poster. Our team was there to pray with the students and talk with them if there were special needs. It was a great time of sharing an "attitude of gratitude" and a special lead-in to Thanksgiving Break.



TROUP BAPTIST TRAINING

We have several MINISTRY TRAININGS in the works now for the first quarter of 2024. We will be offering workshops in **Church Visual Media Presentation**, and **Church Finance and Book Keeping**. We will publish these dates well in advance so you will have time be a part of each training.



Our Lagrange College BCM prepares for a new semester in 2024. We have had a great year so far and our students are actively praying and sharing the Gospel on campus. Please pray for them.

Would your church provide snacks for a Monday night meeting OR lunch for Soul Food Cafe? I need your help, so let me know:

andy@troubaptist.org or
call the TBA Office at 706-884-1975



DECEMBER

- 1 Rev. Michael T. Stiggers
- 5 Mrs. Stacey Hardigree
- 6 Rev. Jamie Kelley
- 9 Rev. Doug Bingham
- 20 Rev. Andy Buchanan
- 22 Rev. Bill Bryant
- 31 Rev. Westley Boatman

JANUARY

- 3 Rev. Howard Longshore
- 4 Rev. L. W. Booker
- 5 Rev. Bryan Geter
- 9 Rev. Tom Owensby
- 15 Rev. Sam Wood
- 17 Rev. Lincoln Anderson
- 17 Rev. Craig Marshall
- 18 Rev. Terry Rainwater
- 24 Rev. Chad Bishop
- 24 Rev. W. T. Edmondson

Annual Church Reports

Thank you to the 24 churches in the Troup Baptist Association who completed their Annual Church Reports.

Antioch - LaGrange	First BC, West Point	Mt. Pleasant
Bethlehem	Flat Shoals Salem Rd.	New Hope, Greenville
Callaway	Fountain	Roper Heights
Concord	Highland	Rosemont
Creekside	Hilyer	Shoal Creek
Dunson	Lakeview	Teaver Road
First BC, Hogansville	Long Cane	Unity
First BC, LaGrange	Mountville	Western Heights

Association - Church Prayer List

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

Week of December 3, 2023 - Anointed by Faith
Week of December 10, 2023 - Antioch Baptist, LaGrange
Week of December 17, 2023 - Baptist Tabernacle
Week of December 24, 2023 - Bethel Baptist
Week of December 31, 2023 - Bethlehem Baptist

For **January 2024**, please pray for the following churches:

Week of January 7, 2024 - Callaway Baptist
Week of January 14, 2024 - Concord Baptist
Week of January 21, 2024 - Confidence Missionary Baptist
Week of January 28, 2024 - Creekside Baptist

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

Church News & Announcements

Baptist Tabernacle (BTC) - The Food Ministry served 539 individuals, giving away 214 boxes of food.

- The Hunters for Christ group had their annual hunt for disabled hunters the weekend of December 2. This is a special time with good, Godly fellowship for everyone involved.
- The Awana program did a craft night at Florence Hand and they all had a great time fellowshiping with some of the seniors of our community.
- BTC will be having their Christmas Cantata service on Sunday, December 17. The choir has been practicing the Christmas special songs and everyone is excited for a great service.
- The youth group will be going on their winter trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, on December 18-22.

Dunson - December is a busy month at Dunson as we remember and celebrate the birth of Christ. The church is beautifully decorated in celebration of this blessed event.

- The Christmas musical, "Silent Night, Holy Night" will be Sunday, December 10, at the 11:00 am service. "Please join us!" That evening from 4:00 -7:00 pm, Pastor Kenneth and Pam are hosting members and guests to "Christmas at the Farm" where Jaye Copeland will be at the piano and Steve Vickery will be leading us in Christmas Carols and of course, there will be BBQ, hot chocolate, coffee and s'mores around the campfire.
- On December 17, there will be finger foods and fellowship after the morning service. Later that afternoon there will be Christmas Caroling and delivering goodie baskets to shut ins.
- The children and youth will be learning the true reason we celebrate Christmas, going to the carousel and having a birthday party for Jesus this month. "We love celebrating Christmas at Dunson!"
- Dunson's local mission project this month is donating to the LaGrange Warming Center. Their state mission project is donating a mattress to Camp Pinnacle. Their foreign mission project is donating to Lottie Moon.
- Dunson recognized their veterans with a special service. Uniforms from all branches except the Coast Guard and Marines were displayed in the sanctuary along with photos and awards. Mr. Stanley Woods, a Navy Veteran, led in the Pledge of Allegiance. The choir sang the fight song of each branch of service. Pastor Kenneth showed a video of present veterans, past veterans, and family members' veterans.



Above: Dunson recognized their veterans in a special service.

FBC Hogansville - Pastor Greg spoke at White Oak Grove Baptist Church in Senoia on December 3. Pastor K. G. Bailey and Pastor Greg trade pulpits twice a year in the spirit of unity in worship. It is a true blessing for both churches.

FBC Hogansville (continued) -It is a privilege to welcome two new members into our fellowship through baptism: Miss Evelyn Presley and Mr. Brian Thornhill. "We look forward to serving with them as they grow in God."

- Many First Baptist ladies participate in a Secret Sister Ministry. For one year each lady encourages her secret sister with a note, a small gift, a card, and most of all prayer. This year's big reveal was held at the home of Mrs. Sondra Lee, and the ladies discovered who had been secretly supporting them all year. The evening was filled with laughter and anticipation for another year of clever subterfuge for a worthy cause.
- Some of our men have begun meeting at the church on Tuesday evening for Prayer. It is a time of song, fellowship, and, primarily, prayer for the lost as well as individual situations. They meet at 6 pm. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to join with them in this new opportunity to pray with one another on a regular schedule. The men continue to visit in the community on Saturdays.
- On Wednesday, Nov. 22, the Community was invited to join us for a Thanksgiving meal. What a blessing it was! We are thankful for the opportunity to have served 175 people through home/work delivery and others who came in to enjoy dinner. God surely provided a feast! We are grateful to all who prepared and served/delivered the meals and to those who came to join with us in this season of giving thanks!
- Celebrate Recovery makes periodic visits to the Atlanta City Baptist Rescue Mission. They preach, give testimonies, and generally encourage the men in attendance with conversation and friendship. Many of the men have accepted Christ as a result of these interactions. CR has also done volunteer work at Contemporary Christian Music concerts showcasing Mercy Me, Toby Mac, and Zach Williams. They go wherever they can make a difference.
- December is always a busy month, but we focus on the true meaning of this season. Among the opportunities are the Ladies Christmas Party and Fellowship at the Hogan House on December 11 from 6 to 8 pm, the Children's Christmas Program on December 13 at 6:30 pm at the church, and the Adult Choir Christmas Cantata on Sunday morning, Dec. 17.



Above: FBC Hogansville's Community Thanksgiving Meal

Below L-R: Meal delivery, Baptism of Evelyn Presley, & Thanksgiving Meal



Church News & Announcements

Grace - served 368 people with free food in November.

- One teen was baptized in November!
- Grace's Partners in Education, Long Cane Elementary, teachers & staff were provided BBQ sandwich plates, with chips, slaw, pickles, desserts and drinks the Tuesday before Thanksgiving break.
- A Thanksgiving meal was enjoyed after the morning service on Nov. 19.
- Ladies of Grace made 17 fruit baskets and delivered them to Grace shut-ins. They also helped to buy Christmas presents for 24 children. (photo at right)
- See webpage for more info: <http://www.gbclagrange.com/>



Highland - • The annual Hanging of the Green was held on Sunday, December 3 at 11:00 am. The Sanctuary was decorated with Christmas wreaths, bells, poinsettias, etc. Christmas carols were sung and special music was presented by the choir.

- The choir will present the beautiful cantata "The King Is Born" on Sunday, December 17, at 11:00 am, followed by a church-wide luncheon in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited. There will be **no** Sunday School that day.
- Christmas Eve Worship Service will be at 11:00 am. There will be **no** Sunday School that morning.
- The Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service will be at 5:00 pm. "This is a beautiful service and we would love for you to join us."
- On Sunday, December 31, there will be an End of Year Sunday School Fellowship in the Fellowship Hall in place of the regular Sunday School Classes. Morning Worship Service will begin at 11:00 am.

• Highland celebrated Pastor Appreciation Day with lunch following the Morning Worship Service on Nov. 5. A large group gathered in the Fellowship Hall to show how much they appreciate Pastor Terry and Cookie and all they do for our church. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship and delicious meal. (at right)



Mountville Trunk or Treat on October 25

Lakeview - Breakfast is served every Sunday at 9:15 am in the fellowship hall.

- Brotherhood met at Doodlum's BBQ in Woodbury on November 2.
- A large crowd enjoyed a bountiful Thanksgiving feast on November 15.
- Lakeview members are participating in the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. Both the WMU and the Brotherhood made donations to a homeless shelter in November.
- The sanctuary was beautifully decorated for Christmas on November 25. Above is WMU leader, Audrey Holloway finishing up the Christmas tree decorations.
- Dr. Paul Baxter will be the special speaker at the 11 am service on December 3.
- On December 13 a Christmas celebration will be held at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary; finger foods and light refreshments will be served.



Mountville (MBC) - Mountville had one salvation/baptism in November! ❤️

- Mountville held its annual "Trunk or Treat" on Wednesday, October 25! It was a great time of fun and fellowship for our little Mountville community!
- MBC had a baby dedication in October. Lilly Grace Perdue was dedicated to the Lord on October 9! Proud parents are Tyler and Hope Perdue and proud grandparents are Dwayne & Danna Perdue!
- The MBC Ladies Group met on Saturday, November 11 at the home of Jeff and Diane Ealy. They had a wonderful meal and fellowship! Sherri Brown, Executive Director of Circles of Troup County, was the guest speaker and shared her heart about their mission and program!
- Mountville Team Kids have been learning about gratitude and thankfulness during the month of November!



Above: Sherri Brown (top right) speaks to the MBC Ladies Group



Mountville Team Kids

Church News & Announcements



At Left:
Mountville
Hanging of
the Greens,
November
26



Mountville - showered Preacher Dwayne and Mrs. Danna with lots of love and appreciation on Sunday, November 12 during their Thanksgiving Luncheon after church. "We have so much to be thankful for!"

Operation Christmas Child - More Than A Shoebox

First Baptist Church on the Square and Western Heights Baptist Church were shoebox drop-off locations for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. A total of 4,355 shoeboxes were collected at both drop-off centers! Then those shoeboxes were packed into larger cartons. David Blackwell provided two Blackwell Inc. trucks and drivers to transport the cartons. The trucks drove to Phenix City, Al where the cartons were transferred to Samaritan's Purse trailers that go to the Atlanta Processing Center. Each shoebox represents one soul times seven. (Samaritan's Purse estimates that for each shoebox, seven more family members also have the opportunity to receive Christ.) Churches, schools, and families pack shoeboxes, filled with toys, school supplies, and personal hygiene items. These shoeboxes are sent to children around the world. Samaritan's Purse also provides trained volunteers in the respective country who present the gospel message to the children and their families. Troup County along with surrounding counties is part of the Chattahoochee Valley Team. This year the Chattahoochee Valley collected 19,868! "Thank you to everyone who participated."



Above Left: Shoeboxes are being prayed over.
Upper Right: David Blackwell and team load cartons onto trucks.
Lower Right: Bible Baptist Church donated 711 Shoeboxes.

Mountville continued - The Hanging of the Greens was held on Sunday night, November 26. It was a beautiful night of praise and worship as we prepared our hearts to usher in the Christmas season and celebrate the birth of our Savior!

- The Mountville Choir will present a Christmas Cantata on Sunday, December 17 at 11:00 am.
- MBC will have a special Christmas Eve service on Sunday, December 24 at 11:00 am. "Come join us!"

Roper Heights - members enjoyed their annual Thanksgiving meal of soup and chili on November 19. "It was all so good."

- The adult choir cantata will be December 17 at 11 am and the youth's Christmas play will be that evening at 6 pm.

Second - Second Baptist Church would like to congratulate Helen Baker. On Sunday, November 19, Ms. Helen celebrated 70 years of membership at Second Baptist. Even at 92 years of age she still attends every time she is able.

• Thank you to all our faithful members in supporting Operation Christmas Child. We might be a small church, but we were able to collect 67 boxes for those precious children around the world. "Thank you, Jesus, for this opportunity to serve you."



Above Left: Helen Baker celebrated 70 years as a member of Second Baptist Church.



Above Right: Second Baptist Church prepared and donated 67 Operation Christmas Child Boxes.

Wehadkee -

Thanks be unto God, for his unspeakable gift.

2 Corinthians 9:15

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalms 34:8

December Birthdays:

December 4	Dot Newton
December 21	Eddie Mastin
December 25	Jesus Christ
December 26	Beverly Brewster

December Anniversary:

December 10	Leon and Deborah Wessinger
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1. What music genre do the elves listen to during gift-making?
2. Who is Santa Claus's favorite all-time singer?

Answers: Wrap, Elf-is Presley



178,177

CAME TO FAITH IN 2022
THROUGH THE WORK OF YOUR
IMB MISSIONARIES.



**LOTTIE MOON
CHRISTMAS OFFERING**

**DON'T FORGET
TO PRAY & GIVE
THIS MONTH.**

Imb.org/lottiemoon



CHRISTMAS EVE

**Candlelight
Services**

JOIN WITH US ON DEC. 24 AT 4:30 AND 6 P.M.

FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH ON THE SQUARE



We wish you a very
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!

*Bro Andy & Kim
Angela & Randall*

**Troup Baptist Association
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**TROUP BAPTIST
Association**



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Postmaster: Send Address Changes To: The Messenger, P.O. Box 550 LaGrange, Georgia 30241