



FIRST CHRONICLES

December, 2024

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” – Ephesians 2:8-10

When we think about passages in the Bible that connect to Christmas, we tend to immediately think of the first few chapters in Matthew and Luke. With a little reflection, the first chapter of John may come to mind along with some of the prophecies of Jesus’ birth such as, “the virgin shall give birth...” and “but you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah...” Even though we may not remember the exact reference for these, we know the content and can apply them to Jesus’ birth. You know what most likely doesn’t come to mind? Ephesians 2:8-10.

What’s interesting to me is that I didn’t originally pick this with Christmas in mind. I chose this to show the foundation for why we need to be equipped in our Christian walk—and I’ll get to that in a moment. But, I can’t help but notice the phrase “it is a gift of God” at the end of verse 8. This gift is Jesus. God sent Jesus to this world to save anyone and everyone who would believe in Him. This is God’s gift to us—the first literal Christmas gift given. “The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us...” Through Jesus, we are saved.

But our salvation is not an end in itself—just like a Christmas gift isn’t an end in itself. We give gifts with the intention that they be enjoyed and some gifts are given with the intention that they be put to work. For example, the gift of a hammer leads to hammering nails and the gift of a “how-to” book leads to learning and applying what is learned. So it is with the gift of salvation given through Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:10 says that this gift leads us to do the good works that God has prepared for us beforehand.

However, it’s difficult to work if we don’t have the tools we need to accomplish the tasks. How can we write a book without a writing utensil, bake a cake without a cake pan, or loosen a bolt without a pair of pliers? We need tools to accomplish those tasks. This is something I am passionate about in my ministry here. It is so important that we read the Bible and understand it that I want to give training on tools for how to do it (like memorization, meditation, and application). I want to do the same with prayer, confession, worship, and evangelism. Without these tools, the works that are prepared for us to do will be difficult and we’ll struggle to live out the purpose that God has for our lives.

This month, be encouraged to thank God for His gift of salvation. But don’t stop there. Plug into the different ministries and small groups at church to receive teaching, training, and equipping. The foundation for our works and our equipping is our gift of salvation. So let’s work out our salvation with fear and trembling to the glory of God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

In Christ,
Jesse

OUR SCHEDULE!

GREETERS	NURSERY WORKERS	CHILDREN'S CHURCH
Sunday, December 1 Darren & Julie Kramer	Sunday, December 1 Terresa Wagenaar	Sunday, December 1 Abby Kramer
Sunday, December 8 Daryl & Mary Kramer	Sunday, December 8 Donna DeBoer	Sunday, December 8 Rachel Kramer
Sunday, December 15 Greg & Lesli Kramer	Sunday, December 15 Alyssa den Hoed	Sunday, December 15 Sarah Gruis
Sunday, December 22 Janice Schneidermann	Sunday, December 22 Judy Eben	Sunday, December 22 Christmas Program
Sunday, December 29 Dennis & Gracia Schrick	Sunday, December 29 Abby Kramer	Sunday, December 29 Katie DeBoer



December	1	Delores Jurrens Michael Kramer
	4	Junior Stubbe
	5	Bethany DeBoer
	6	Sweer Arends Ross Kooiker
	11	Jesse DeGroot Gwen Winter
	14	Jozephine Kaufman
	16	Harold & Helen Eben
	17	Taylor Kramer
	18	Dax DeGroot
	22	Dave & Rita Busse Katie DeBoer
	26	Kelly & Stacie DeBoer
	28	Jesse Schrick
	30	Dustin DeBoer Glenda DeBoer
	31	Bob Johnson Jesse Cottington



Bud Fuchs serving in Utah

This fall was unique because of all the travel, visiting supporters and conducting workshops. The travels took us to Alberta, Minnesota, Manitoba, North Dakota, Iowa, and Oregon. Bud spoke in churches, conducted training workshops on how to reach out to internationals in the community, and spent time with those who support this ministry.

Praise:

*For all the training/workshops Bud facilitated this fall and safety in thousands of miles driven and flown.

*For meeting new students this summer and how the Lord is at work in Utah.

Prayer:

* For former students facing serious persecution back home and those dealing with Utah culture.

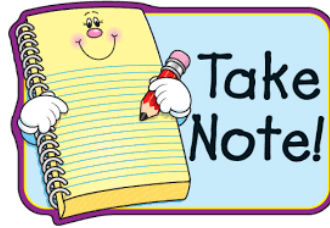
*For International Christian Fellowships in our home throughout the fall and winter months.

*For another treatment in November for Bud's neck and therapy he'll receive.

*For healing of son Jesse's eyes and granddaughter Naomi's ear.

Please pray that we obey the greatest commandment to love God and love our neighbor.

The Mission Board



- We will be going Caroling on December 8 at 4pm with a lunch to follow. Meet at the church and we will disperse from there.
- Pastor Jesse & family would like to invite the church to the parsonage to celebrate Christmas together on Sunday, December 15, from 4:00-7:00pm. There'll be music, soup, and Christmas cookies! Feel free to stop by at any time and leave when you'd like. We hope to see you there!
- The Sunday School Christmas Program will be Sunday, December 22, at 10:00 am.
- Christmas Program Practice will be during Sunday School for all grades on November 24, December 1, 8, & 15. On December 15, there will be a dress rehearsal during the Sunday School hour in the Sanctuary (Adult Sunday School will be in the Fellowship Hall).
- Join us for a Night of Holiday Music on Sunday evening, December 22, at 6:30. Lunch to follow. Group 4 is asked to work in the kitchen and bring 1 ½ doz. bars or cookies.



Thank you to all who donated items/money to purchase items for the Christmas Shoeboxes. We were able to pack 100 boxes! Thank you to all who stayed to help pack them! -CE Board

Thank you to all my friends and family at First Baptist for all the prayers and encouragement I have received over the past two years since my diagnosis. I am doing well and feeling good. God is good! - Helen Eben

Thank you for the flowers in memory of my dad. We have a loving church family, and we feel the prayers.
- Greg & Sharon DeBoer and Family of Art Heronemus

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 ADVENT BEGINS COMMUNION SUNDAY 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship 6:30 PM Discipleship U	2	3	4 6:30 PM Awana 7:00 PM Youth 7:00 PM Visitation	5	6 6:00 PM Wedding Rehearsal	7 2:00 PM Schneiderman Wedding
8 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM Mission Board Mtg 4:00 PM Caroling	9	10 7:00 PM Deacon Board Meeting	11 6:30 PM Awana 7:00 PM Youth 7:00 PM Adult Prayer Meeting and Bible Study	12	13	14 Sternke Piano Recital
15 MISSION SUNDAY 9:00 AM Program Practice Dress Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship 4:00-7:00 PM Parsonage Open House	16	17	18 6:30 PM Awana 7:00 PM Youth 7:00 PM Visitation	19	20	21
22 9:00 AM Sunday School Bell Choir 10:00 AM Sunday School Christmas Program 11:00 AM Trustee Board Mtg 6:30 PM Holiday Concert	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 6:00 PM Candlelight Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY No Activities	26	27	28
29 BUILDING FUND SUNDAY 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Worship	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 7:00 PM New Year's Eve Service	SERVING MEALS ON WHEELS MON-FRI ALL MONTH			