



2011

Christmas Newsletter

First Baptist Church, Ingersoll

From the Pastor's Desk:

More than any other time of year, the Christmas season often ends up "sneaking" up on me. I suddenly realize, "It's Christmas!" though everyone else seems to have been aware of this for quite some time. There is much about this time that is special. We think of the time with family and friends. We think of the Christmas Carols and the nostalgic feeling they bring. We think of the snow which at any other time of year is nothing more than cold white stuff, but at Christmas it takes on a great beauty.

But all of these events and "things" pale in comparison with "Who" Christmas is about. Christmas marks the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. What wonder fills our hearts when we are reminded of God's great love for us in sending His Son to us. Jesus' coming was an event thousands of years in the making! God saw our need and sent His only Son here to fill that need. It's no wonder, two thousand years after Christ's birth, death and resurrection, we celebrate His coming with such joy and anticipation!

As we come together to this Christmas season, let me encourage you to remember the "reason for the season," Jesus Christ our Lord. But let me also encourage you to not only remember Jesus, but spend time this season seeking Him with a heart open to His leading and calling on your life! Jesus came to provide the way to God and to draw us into a life devoted to Him. Let me challenge you to listen to God as He is leading you and respond with the same sense of love and humility as Mary, "I am the Lord's servant, may it be done to me as you have said." Merry Christmas to you and blessings to you in the name of Jesus our Lord.

Pastor Shawn, Juanita and Liam (and another one... in time...)



from

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From Your Deacon's Board:

Christmas is almost here and we all look forward to the celebration of Christ's birth in the stable in Bethlehem. We wait in anticipation of Christmas Day to gather with family and friends to open presents, sing carols and enjoy a wonderful Christmas meal.

Did you know that our Saviour Jesus Christ has put some gifts for each one of us under the great Christmas tree of life – gifts that we often overlook?

The first gift is **REST**. "Come unto me, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". (Matt. 11:28) How we long for rest after Christmas is over with all of its business.

The second gift is **the Keys of the Kingdom**. "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven". (Matt. 16:19) At Christmas time young people and older people as well might ask for the keys to a new car. Christ offers us the keys to a kingdom that lasts forever.

The third gift is **the power over evil spirits**. "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over the power of the enemy; and nothing by any means hurt you".

The fourth gift is **living water**. "But whosoever drinks of the water of that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life". (John 4:14)

The fifth gift is the bread of heaven. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world".

The sixth gift is **Eternal Life**. "And I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand". (John 10:28)

The seventh gift is **the legacy of peace**. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27)

These are your gifts from Christ. The Deacons pray that they will not be left on the Tree of Life but opened and applied to our hearts and our daily living. Wishing each and everyone a Blessed and Merry Christmas and a God filled prosperous New Year.

Your Board of Deacons

Upcoming Events:

Chapelaire's Christmas Concert – Dec. 4, 7:00

Christmas Eve Service- Dec. 24, 7:00

Christmas Morning Service-Dec.25, 10:00

New Years Eve Party-Dec.31

Small Groups-Experiencing God-Jan.8

From the Music Director's Desk:

Every time I read the scriptures I find something new. It has been my goal for me this past fall to sit and read every day a passage from the Bible, just for the sake of reading. So often I'm searching for something specific as I'm getting ready for a Sunday morning service or preparing a study for youth group. Those times of reading are fairly intense and somewhat rushed as I have a deadline. It has been refreshing just to sit and read allowing the Holy Spirit to guide and speak to me. As I read I've been marking verses that stand out.

This past week I've been reading and re-reading the account of Jesus birth in Luke's gospel, each time approaching the passage as if I've never read it before. I've been amazed as what I've missed all these years!

What has captivated me is Luke 1:37. The angel Gabriel is finishing up his announcement to Mary that she is to have God's son. Mary, totally unsure as to how this could possibly happen asks, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" Gabriel explains to her about the Holy Spirit and tells her that even her cousin Elizabeth in her old age is to have a son. He finishes up by saying....."**For no word of God will ever fail.**" (vs. 37) Just a short verse tacked on to the end of a conversation, BUT one with so much significance. It is a confirmation that God keeps his word, He says what He means, He keeps his promises.

Reflecting back over the year 2011 at First Baptist, I see this truth played out over and over. As a Church Family we can take so many verses and claim them as our own, as we experience many situations. My favourites this year are **Philippians 4:19;** "**And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.**" Also **Isaiah 43:1-3** is one I have chosen this year; "**Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.**"

Take time this Christmas season to reflect on the year. Take notice of how God has kept His promises to you.

Christmas Blessings,
Owen & Janna, Alex and Christine Baigent