



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
515 N. LADD STREET
PONTIAC, IL 61764

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Growing the Family of God

Telling the Story

Serving the Community

Nurturing Believers

Coffee with Jim



The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

For the Gospel of John, the beginning is not a specific event in time like Jesus' birth (as in Matthew and Luke) or the beginning of Jesus' public ministry (as in Mark). In John's narrative the beginning is outside the normal calculations of time, in the cosmic pre-existence of the Word with God. This beginning focuses the reader's attention immediately on the meaning of what follows—the Gospel story is about the very character of God and how God makes Godself known to the world through the life and death of Jesus. (Gail R. O'Day, The New Interpreter's Bible)

John 1:14 is important because it demonstrates to the reader John's understanding of the incarnation. The eternal Word completely enters the human and time-bound sphere by becoming flesh. The story of Jesus is the story of the Word become flesh.

It is the incarnation which needs to be the focus of our Advent/Christmas celebrations. We can spend a great deal of time and energy focusing on the precise date of Jesus' birth, but to no good purpose. The date of Jesus' birth is irrelevant compared to the life-changing proclamation of John: the word became flesh.

In The Message, Eugene Peterson puts it this way: The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. When a new family moves into the neighborhood it is obvious to everyone that someone new has arrived. The new folks may become close friends with whom we socialize, or perhaps just the people who live up the street. Regardless, something on the street has changed.

Likewise, when the incarnate Word entered the world as an infant life on the street changed. In the Word there is a light that shines in the darkness that cannot be extinguished. The incarnate Word shows us, as never before or since, the very heart of God. In the words of Jesus, we hear the voice of God. In the actions of Jesus, we see the soul of God. John puts it this way: The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known (John 1:17-18).

From the Pastor (cont.)

Jesus said of himself: Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. (John 14:9)

I like Christmas. I enjoy the music, worship, and even Christmas trees. Presents are always nice to give and receive. But I love Jesus - God's flesh and blood presence of the street where I live.

Jim



Love Gift



As is our custom this time of year, we are collecting donations for a love gift to be presented to our pastors.

If you would like to take this opportunity to express your gratitude for all that our pastors do for us through the year, please leave your donation with Shai Nyi as soon as possible but no later than December 22nd.

You're Invited...

The Wolfe family invites you to join them for their annual holiday open house on

**Sunday, December 15th
1:30 - 3:30 pm**

817 Cimmeron Dr.
Pontiac, Illinois



Office Notes

In honor of the upcoming Christmas holiday, our church office will be closing at noon on Tuesday, December 24th and will be closed on Wednesday, December 25th, and Thursday, December 26th.

We will also be closing at noon on Tuesday, December 31st and will be closed on Wednesday, January 1st. And Thursday, January 2nd.

We wish our entire church family a happy and healthy holiday season!

Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting is scheduled for 11:30 am on Sunday, December 8th.

Winter Weather



A reminder as we make our way into a season of unpredictable winter weather, if Pontiac schools are closed or close early due to inclement weather, all church activities scheduled for that day will also be cancelled.

To the best of our ability, church cancellation notices will be broadcast on WEEK, WCIA, and posted to our Facebook page.

We encourage everyone to use their best judgment and be safe during hazardous weather!



**Prayer Chain
Number**

815.419.4454

If you wish to receive prayer chain calls, please contact the church office at 815.842.4321 and request that your name and number be added to the list.

2020 Church Directory

We're in the process of gathering information for inclusion in the 2020 edition of our church directory and we're very excited to offer a new, on-line option for submitting your corrected information!

If your information has changed or if you were not listed in the 2019 directory and you'd like to be listed in this year's version, simply click the 2020 directory tab on our website (www.fbcpontiac.org) and complete and submit the form! That's it, you're done! If you prefer to submit your information via a more traditional means, you can grab a form either in the Narthex or in one of the Sunday Morning Connections rooms, complete it and drop it by the church office.

Remember that while we will do our best to ensure the 2020 edition of our directory is as complete and accurate as possible, it's your responsibility to submit your information in a timely manner.



Newsletter Deadline

All articles for inclusion the January edition of our church newsletter must be submitted to the church office no later than Monday, December 16th. You may submit your articles by phone (842.4321), fax (844.6943), by e-mail (Rhonda@fbcpontiac.org) or by leaving them in the black box outside the church office door

Happy New Year *Happy New Year*

Letters to Santa



The Little Free Library at the north end of our parking lot has a “Letters to Santa” mailbox attached to the library post for the children of the community to mail their letters. My hope is to reach each one and answer them “from Santa” if they have a return address on them. If there are enough letters, I’ll recruit women of the church to help write to the children.

Please share this with family and friends. This is such a good opportunity to brighten someone’s Christmas Season and share our faith.

Thank you,

Karen Meister



We would like to thank our church family for your kindness shown with the loss of our dad, John Lind. Thank you for the prayers, cards, dinner, and most of all just being there for us. Thank you to Pastor Jim for doing dad’s service. We are truly blessed.

Rick and Deb Golliday
Joe and Pam Lind
Mike and Janet Runyon
Tom and Lisa Lind

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve is always a beautiful and meaningful service. In the beauty of candles, music and the spoken word we hear again the wonderful message of “Peace on earth...”

Please plan to be in attendance on Christmas Eve at seven o’clock p.m. to celebrate the life-transforming message that the “Word became flesh.”



Christmas Shopping Got You Stressed?



Donations to the church and her specific ministries can make wonderful gifts for those hard to shop for people on your gift lists! You can even make your donation by going to our website and utilizing our on-line giving option.

When you make a gift donation to the church in a loved one’s name the church will acknowledge your gift by sending a lovely thank you note letting your loved one know of the gift you made on their behalf. If you would like to honor a friend or family member by making a gift to the church, please be sure to include the person’s name and address as well as the specific ministry to which you’d like your gift applied.

Board of Ministries

The Board of Ministries met on Thursday, Nov. 14th at 7:00 pm.

Stewardship: World Mission Offering received \$2,597.19.

Adult Ministries: Ruth Circle will be ringing bells for Salvation Army on Dec. 9th.

Donations were delivered to the Friendship House in Peoria.

Collected \$859 in the special offering on American Baptist Women’s Sunday.

Youth Ministries: Numbers have been growing with 12 now attending regularly.

Children’s Ministries: We now have an average of 13 children in ABK each week. Fellowship: Holiday feast will be held on Dec. 1 at noon.

We served 404 children at the Drive and Treat this year.

In October the food pantry served 71 families representing 204 people.

Diaconate Council: Our 13 shut-ins will be receiving a gift certificate and a card for Christmas.

Senior Pastor: The 31st Jubilee Christmas is being held Dec. 14th here at FBC.

HOLIDAY LADIES AFTERNOON OUT

Ladies, let’s usher in the holiday season with food, fellowship, and fun! Please join us for the Holiday Ladies Afternoon Out on Monday, December 9, 2019, 11:45 am – 2:30 pm in the church gymnasium. Janice Staley has offered to prepare chili, so we will start our event with lunch. The menu includes chili, crackers, cheese, veggie tray, drink and dessert – along with whatever “fixins” you ladies prefer. Each lady who attends will also receive a nominal holiday gift. PLEASE sign up for this event by calling/texting Jan Jolynn (815-210-3721), or stopping Janice or Jan in the church building to let us know of your attendance. We need a headcount for lunch, as well as your chili fixins preferences. (Please Note: Janice keeps the chili mild so everyone should be able to enjoy it.) (ALSO NOTE: This event replaces SWOF, which normally meets the 2nd Monday of the month.) We hope to see you there!

Offering Envelopes

If you don’t currently have a set of offering envelopes and you’d like one for 2020, please drop a note in the offering plate or let Debbie Verdun, Sue Schell, or the church office know so we can make a set available for you next year.



December

2 Stevie Carroll
2 John Pohanka
2 Hope McKenna
4 Lindsey Flessner
4 Lindsey Lind
5 Roger Christianson
5 Erik Mitchey
7 Mikayla Stewart
7 Ron Ingram
7 Carol Toon
8 Debbie Carroll
9 Dale and Teri Newsome
9 Shai Nyi
10 Brittney Lundeen
11 Jo Zimmerman
12 Betty Riffey
14 Ryan Ingram
16 Jamie Beck
18 Judy Pohanka
19 Eric Hoover
25 Aaron Newsome
29 Chuck and Ruth Ann Peck
30 Vicki McBeath
30 Shirley Alltop
31 Jillian Christianson
31 Rick and Deb Golliday

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship Noon - Family Feast	2 7:00 pm Ruth & Esther Sm. Gr.	3 	4 9:00 am ROMEO Club 9:00 am Ruth Circle 1:00 pm Esther Circle 5:30 pm WYRED 6:00 pm ABK 6:30 pm Adult Choir	5 6:30 pm Experiencing God's Presence Sm. Group	6	7 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
8 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 11:30 am Congregational Meeting	9 11:45 am - Ladies Day Out 7:00 pm Ruth & Esther Sm. Gr.	10 6:00 pm Parents Grief Supp. Group	11 9:00 am ROMEO Club 5:30 - 6:30 pm WYRED 6:00 pm ABK 6:30 pm Adult Choir	12 6:30 pm Experiencing God's Presence Sm. Group	13	14 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
15 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 1:30 - 3:30 pm Wolfe Open House	16 Newsletter Deadline 7:00 pm Ruth & Esther Sm. Gr.	17	18 9:00 am ROMEO Club 10:30 am Grief Support Group 5:30 - 6:30 pm WYRED 6:00 pm ABK 6:30 pm Adult Choir	19 6:30 pm Experiencing God's Presence Sm. Group	20 	21 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
22 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 	23 1:00 pm Single Women of Faith 7:00 pm Ruth & Esther Sm. Gr.	24 Christmas Eve 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27	28 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
29 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 	30 7:00 pm Ruth & Esther Sm. Gr.	31 New Year's Eve				