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Well it is December again, and that means it is time for my yearly Christmas rant! Words have meaning and far too often we want to convince ourselves that we don't really mean what we say. Just yesterday, which was November 20, I had a call at the office. The lady was calling to ask if, "we had any programs to help her 'get Christmas' for her children"? It is unfortunate that this phrase, which should be so puzzling, is easily understood by not only our culture, but by Christians. To 'get Christmas' is to purchase gifts. Now don't get me wrong I believe in giving and receiving gifts as a part of the celebration of the Savior's birth. However, when you say you have to get or buy Christmas the focus is away from the one whose birth we celebrate and on the things we 'get'!

I wish I could have thought a little quicker and the conversation might have been very different. I might have asked where is Christmas that you have to get it? Do you need a ride out to "Come To Bethlehem" at the Bethea Baptist Home? Can I get you a Bible story book, or better yet a Bible, to be able to read the Christmas story to your children? Do you know the Christ of Christmas, is he your Savior?

How is it that, Christmas, "a Christian festival marking the birth of Jesus Christ" (Encarta Dictionary), has become all about what we get, give, buy, and sell? We have gotten far away from God as a nation and the practice of those claiming to be Christian has

mirrored the culture, rather than Christ. It is fine for those who are not believers to not celebrate a holiday marking the birth of our Savior. It is not a good thing when you cannot tell a difference, in the celebration, between those that are Christians and those that are not.

For those of us that have been given so much, our focus should be on the gift of the cross which came via the gift of the manger. When our focus is correct, our words will reflect it. So, that marks the end of my rant, and now, being true to my word about words..... I hope you have an extremely merry celebration of the birth of our Savior! I also hope that you will celebrate it as you gather with the church in worship, parties, caroling, and other events of worship, fellowship and service. As you gather with your families, which often include believers and unbelievers, do all you can as a believer to set the tone for the celebration that it might be centered on the Savior and not the event! Also, think about what you can give that will be of eternal value! Merry Christmas!

Looking forward,  
Chris

# Exposure

*Florence Baptist Association, December, 2013*



## **Prayer Corner:**

*Please include  
the following  
prayer needs on  
your prayer lists  
and in your  
prayer times.*

### **Churches without Pastors:**

*Ariel  
Greenwood  
Hebron  
Ridgecrest*

### **New Work: Hispanic Ministry**

### **CLC Program Financial Support**

### **Good News Clubs! Pray as it expands to Darlington School District Financial Assistance**

### **Family Promise Financial Support Host Churches Day Center**

### **Partnerships Akron/Canton Ohio New Brunswick, Canada**

### **Human Trafficking Task Force**

## **Sleep, Child**

*Sleep my sweet little child,  
and close Your little eyes,  
for soon You will trample,  
all of the enemy's lies*

*I am not sure why I was chosen,  
yet God has placed You in my life,  
Learning to be a new young mother,  
While becoming a new young wife*

*You are sent here to us from God,  
to save our cold and sinful souls,  
and bring us close to You,  
through all of life's trials and tolls*

*It is so hard to fathom,  
You are so small but yet You're a King,  
One day You will rule every nation,  
and Your praises we will all sing*

*Right now I just want to love You,  
and hold You tight in my arms.  
I want to soothe away Your fears  
and keep You from all harm.*

*Children are supposed to trust their mothers,  
Yet I am supposed to trust You.  
You will give your life to save me,  
before Your mission is through.*

*I will have You here for a little while.  
This time we have I will treasure.*

*I wonder do You know,  
of the pain You will face beyond measure.*

*So for now sleep sweet little One.  
Save Your strength for then;  
For the day when satan will lose,  
And You my child shall win.*

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*Merry Christmas from the Florence Baptist Associational Staff!*

Mark your calendars with these important dates:

- ⇒ **January 16;** 5 pm - 8 pm - Spirit Night for Good News Clubs at Chick-Fil-A on Irby Street. A percentage of the profits will be donated to our Good News Clubs.
- ⇒ **January 18;** 8:30 - 12:30 pm; Good News club training, Timmonsville Educational Center New Century Cafeteria, \$15 Pre-register and \$20 at door.
- ⇒ **January 30;** 5 pm - 8 pm - Pancake Fundraiser Supper for Good News Clubs at Calvary Baptist Church; 915 Cherokee Road. Eat in or take out. Tickets are \$7 and are available at the FBA office. Catered by Junebugs Care
- ⇒ **February 6;** 5 pm - 8 pm - Spirit Night for Christian Learning Center (CLC) at Chick-Fil-A on Irby Street. Come out and support our CLC program.
- ⇒ **Lifechangers - June 15 - 20, 2014** - Registration details will be mailed in January. Please note that graduation for FSD1 students is later this year - June 7, 2014, so please note this in planning your VBS and summer camps.

Baptist Global Response - The Bucket Project: Hospice Kits

Bob and Pam Parker are serving as the coordinators for the SC Bucket Project. The initial goal for SC is 770 Buckets of Love by Monday, June 30, 2014. These buckets will fill one shipping container to go overseas to people in need - those suffering from acute problem such as disasters, wars, epidemics as well as poverty, hunger, poor health, etc. One bucket will cost about \$100 and there are very specific items that go in each bucket. There are downloadable resources on the website - [www.gobgr.org/buckets](http://www.gobgr.org/buckets). More information will be in the January Saltshaker with specific items that are needed.



Living Nativity

Come to Bethlehem

Live recreation of the first Christmas

December 6 & 7

6:30 - 9:00 pm

Free presentation at the

Bethea Retirement Home

Season of Prayer for  
International Missions

December 1-8, 2013

National Goal: \$175 million  
Matthew 22: 36-39



Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday  
January 16, 2014  
7:00 pm  
FBA Office

This is an important meeting because the updates and changes in our constitution and bylaws will be voted on as presented at the annual meeting on October 13. If you would like a copy emailed to you for your review, please call the FBA Office.

Dec. 2013

- 1-8 Season of Prayer for International Missions
- 5 Ministers and Spouse Social; Calvary; 6:30 pm
- 6-7 Come to Bethlehem
- 23-31 **Christmas Holidays; FBA Office Closed**

Jan. 2014

- 1 **New Year's Holiday; FBA Closed**
- 7 Associational Council Mtg. 9:00 am
- 7 Ministers Conf. FBA; 11:30 am
- 16 **Executive Committee Mtg FBA; 7:00 pm**
- 16 Spirit Night for Good News Club at Chick Fil A on Irby Street
- 18 Good News Training; TEC; 8:30 am -12:30 pm
- 30 Pancake Fund raiser Supper for Good News Club at Calvary; 5 - 8 pm



We Are Grateful!  
October Contributions

Church	Oct.	Budget YTD
Ariel	81.00	625.50
Bethel	.00	400.00
Beulah	.00	400.00
Calvary	1,385.62	14,147.11
Calvary, Lake City	100.00	1,000.00
Cartersville	650.00	2,083.00
College Park	554.96	4,699.51
Coward	50.00	500.00
Ebenezer	1,044.76	10,664.39
Elim	.00	5,333.36
Evergreen	155.64	1,580.09
Florence 1st	1,000.00	7,599.98
Grace	1,046.39	8,191.22
Greenwood	667.36	6,709.55
Hebron	100.00	1,000.00
Hoffmeyer Rd	1,145.00	12,360.00
Immanuel	241.83	2,548.14
Kingsburg	100.00	400.00
Korean	.00	.00
Lake City First Baptist	.00	3,900.00
Mizpah	286.14	3,714.22
Mt. Zion	.00	1,800.00
New Hope	.00	75.00
Northgate	409.61	3,533.04
Oakdale	293.59	2,605.69
Pamplico 1st	1,614.88	4,913.23
Pee Dee Community	.00	.00
Peniel	300.00	900.00
Quinby	370.82	1,891.73
Rehoboth	.00	550.00
Ridgecrest	736.33	6,662.85
Sardis	862.50	3,449.50
South Florence	.00	3,538.49
Southside	1,551.44	15,756.13
Sparrow Swamp	650.33	6,572.06
Tans Bay	.00	.00
Timmonsville 1st	125.00	500.00
Union	1,726.71	4,545.65
Unity	176.58	2,310.80
Willow Creek	.00	137.76
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>17,426.49</b>	<b>147,598.00</b>

Support Associational Missions

Think - -  
3% Basic  
4% Glory  
5% Hallelujah

Happy Birthday

- 4 Rev. Stan Sullivan (P), Sparrow Swamp
- 7 Rev. Darryl Davids (P), Quinby
- 21 Rev. Jim Crooks (P), Southside
- 24 Rev. Ray Rogers, retired
- 26 Rev. Jay Perez (AP), Southside
- 27 Rev. Landon Reynolds (MM), Calvary

Happy Anniversary

- 5 David (P) & Diana Wike, Ebenezer
- 12 Pam (Ed) & Tom Gaddy, Ebenezer
- 29 Henry & Genelle Simmons, retired
- 31 Ken (P) & Anita Moore, Elim

Around the Association

**Ministers Conference...**Next Ministers Conference will be held Tuesday, January 7th at 11:30 am at the FBA Office.

Empty Pantry  
at the  
Lighthouse!



Once again, we need your help. The need for food and hygiene items is greater than the supply. In addition to people coming for assistance, our First Friday Homeless Connect Event has placed a tremendous strain on our limited food resources. Some of the churches are regular donors to the panty and have been lifesavers many times. But now, our food supply is very low and we have to again ask for your help. Cans with pop-tops are especially needed for homeless people without access to can openers and we are in extreme need of all food groups, but especially protein items, such as canned meats or tuna, peanut butter, etc. Hygiene items are put into Ziploc bags to be given to homeless people the First Friday of each month and we are in dire need of those items. Please keep in mind that homeless people carry all of their belongings with them, so regular, rather than family sizes of shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, etc. are more practical for them.

