

## MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

Tis' the season as they say. It is hard to believe that Christmas is once again upon us. The fact that we have gotten to this point of the year in what seems like no time at all just blows my mind.

Every person I have talked to about Christmas being here so quickly say they feel the same way as I do; the year seems to have flown by in what seems like seconds. The holidays can be chaotic, but they can also be rewarding (and I'm not talking about gifts). I'm talking about taking time to share the good news of the gospel and sharing Jesus' love with them.

Try to take every chance you have this year to tell people about Jesus' love and try not to lose focus on that in your own lives. Christmas can be a wonderful time of the year, but it can also be a time that people are depressed over the things they've lost. Open your ears, eyes, and heart and the Spirit will guide you in helping speak the words they need to hear.

## Things You Need to Know

- **Sunday December 15** at 11 AM Worship we will be doing our annual Christmas Play. Please come out and share in the joy and excitement, everyone has worked hard and are excited for you to see this unique play.
- **Sunday December 22** at 7 PM we will be having our Christmas Candlelight Service
- Each week we will be lighting a different Advent candle and will be having a special reading..it all starts Sunday December 1 and will go through Christmas.



Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection.  
-Winston Churchill

## Advent

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming," which is a translation of the Greek word *parousia*. Most know Advent today as a time of anticipation and expectation of the birth of Christ. However, Advent began as early as the 4th and 5th centuries as a time of fasting and prayer for new Christians. The first mention of Advent occurred in the 300's A.D at a meeting of church leaders called the Council of Sargossa. It gradually developed into a season that stretched across the month of December. Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. The Advent season not only symbolizes the waiting for Christ's birth but also for his final return.

Advent readings are themed Scripture readings for each Sunday of Advent. The four weeks of Advent are broken down into the themes:

Hope (the Prophecy Candle)  
Faith (the Bethlehem Candle)  
Joy (the Shepherds Candle)  
Peace (the Angel's Candle)  
Light & Purity (Christ's Candle)

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# MAIN STREET MEALS

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Our church has been involved with Main Street Meals in co-operation with Main Street Baptist Church in Luray since the beginning of the program. Beginning January 1, 2020 we will no longer be making meal deliveries in Stanley for Main Street Meals.

Over the past few weeks several things have taken place at Main Street Baptist Church that involved revamping the Main Street Meals program. Through the years the program has turned into more of a meal delivery service (similar to Meals on Wheels) and has not been doing anything to spread the gospel or minister to those receiving the meals.

Main Street Baptist's new minister Pastor Tim Scott and I have spoken several times over the past few months about how the program could evolve and Stanley Baptist's continued involvement. There were talks of Stanley Baptist possibly cooking meals on a given Saturday and taking that responsibility over for Main Street Baptist volunteers.

Due to our already thin list of volunteers and our inability to get others involved this would not work. Additionally, Pastor Tim wanted to ensure that there was some type of ministry work taking place when the meals were delivered. Basically, no meals are to be left and personal contact needs to be made at each delivery so the person making the delivery can minister to the person receiving the meal in some way.

Main Street Baptist has decided to change the service around in effort to help ease the burden on their volunteers and accomplish their ministry goals. Beginning January 1 they will only do two meals a month on alternating Saturdays in which they will deliver to Luray and make a personal connection with each delivery. For the months that have five Saturdays they will be doing a meal at the church with no deliveries being made. With this change no deliveries to Stanley will be made by Main Street Baptist Church or volunteers from Stanley Baptist Church.

For the future, we at Stanley Baptist will be talking about how we could help our community of people in need in Stanley by preparing and serving a meal at the church. However, if this were to happen it would be further in the future and after discussion and approval by the church body as a whole. In the meantime, we are going to be assessing what the actual need within the community are and determining our best course of action to help. Our hope would be to involve other churches in our community to work as a group in helping our community. Please take the time to pray about this issue and speak to the Pastor or one of the Deacons if you have questions or any suggestions.

## Bible Study

We have changed our Bible Study around schedule wise and are only meeting at the 10 AM Bible Study. This is due to the poor attendance of the 7 PM evening Bible Study. If enough interest is shown and attendance is substantial then we can always start the 7 PM study back up. For now we will continue to meet the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 10 AM.

As we move toward finishing our Bible Study on the Book of Acts we are going to be moving into the book of Jude then to the book of Revelation. We are looking at finishing the Book of Acts some time in March or April then beginning the new study.

If you are interested in the upcoming study of Jude and Revelation we encourage you to ensure that you can make as many of the Bible studies as you can. These Bible studies are going to be very in depth studies and missing multiple Bible studies will make it nearly impossible to keep up.

We will make sure to announce the Bible study on Jude and the Book of Revelation as soon as we have a firm start date.