



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FAIRDALE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER / 2023



The holiday season is a time of year that can't just "sneak up" on someone. It would be difficult to miss the holiday displays in stores, Christmas songs playing everywhere you go, or all the festivals, parties, and events that pop up right after Thanksgiving. Despite this, we may not be fully ready to focus on and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. The classic Christmas song *Joy to the World* instructs "every heart [to] prepare Him room" and our church has several things available to help prepare room in our hearts to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

We begin our church celebration of Christmas well before Christmas Day every year by incorporating Advent into our schedule. Each Sunday leading up to December 25, we light an Advent candle and celebrate what it represents. We also have our Advent series *Troubled at Christmas*

each Sunday to help focus our hearts and minds on what God says to us through the Christmas story. Finally, our Advent devotional that was written last year is available again this year for you and your family to use in your personal time with the Lord.

This weekend, we look forward to our annual Ladies' Christmas Culture Exchange. All ladies are invited to enjoy brunch and fellowship while learning about and praying for the work God is doing in Kurdistan, Iraq. Along with this, we are collecting the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering during December and January. All designated donations go directly to support international mission work. Our church's goal this year is \$5000. We hope that this focus on God's work among the nations will help you remember that Jesus came for all people.

Then during our normal Sunday evening service time on December 10, our Ekids will be presenting a special program *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. Pastor Matt McBroom, his team, and the kids have been working hard on this for several weeks. Please come out and support our kid's ministry and be reminded about the true meaning of Christmas!

Finally on Christmas Eve, we will have two services: our Sunday morning service to wrap up our Advent series and then our traditional Candlelight Service at 6:00 PM. The candlelight service is a family service designed to focus our minds on the Lord before the celebration of Christmas Day. Through all the events, programs, and activities of the Christmas season, may you make every effort to prepare room for the Savior who has come - to know Him, to worship Him, and to love Him even more!

# He Will Be Great!

## Josh Greene | Pastor

“Hey, how was the concert last night?” they asked.

“Oh, it was great! We had such a good time. We loved it!” they responded.

Greatness is a simply-profound way of describing something awesome! Greatness can be describing the large size of something. Or greatness can be describing how something is very good.

In Luke 1:32 when the angel is telling the Virgin Mary about the coming birth of her son Jesus, the angel gives this simply-profound expression to the soon to be born Savior Jesus - “He will be great.”

The message is to the mother, Mary. Her son will be great. And great He is! In fact, He was great, He is great, and He will always be great. He is the eternal son of God. And just like “of His kingdom there will no end,” so of His greatness there will be no end.

How great is Jesus?

To be fair, His greatness is inexhaustible. He is 100% God and 100% human. And there is so much that could be said about how great Jesus is.

In the context of this passage with the foretelling of His birth, His authority and power and reign are in view. The Bible says He has a throne. The Bible says He will reign forever. And the Bible says He has a kingdom that will never end. That undeniably is greatness. He is great!

But His power and authority are only one of many ways to see His

greatness. Another way to see His greatness is in the very reason that He came to us. In Matthew 1, when a different angel tells a different person the same message - that the Savior is coming as a baby. There we have this clear explanation, “for He will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21).

Here we see His greatness from a different angle. Not only does He have power and authority, He also is savior of sinners. He reigns as King, but He also serves as Savior. This is greatness! He is great!

As you enjoy this holiday season, let me encourage you to think more upon how great Jesus is.

Remind yourself of truths like these:

- He knows your every thought and move
- He sees you where you are
- He cares for you
- He is always with you
- He gives more grace
- He is able to save to the uttermost
- As far as the East is from the West, He has removed our sins from us
- He will return one day
- He loves the outcast
- He cares about our needs and He provides for our needs
- He forgives sins

Wow! I think I could just keep adding and adding to that list in thinking about how great Jesus is.

How about you? Remember this early Christmas statement. So simply-profound - **He will be great!**

## BEING A CHURCH THAT PRAYS

We have been reciting Psalm 24 during our Call to Worship since July. As we finish up the year, let's pray through some of the verses of this psalm:

- Thank God for His power and sovereign rule over all creation (vs. 1-2)
- Praise God for His holiness - how He is entirely good and set apart from humanity (v. 3)
- Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to live a life of holiness and purity (v. 4)
- Thank God for the blessing of your salvation in Jesus Christ. Praise Him for His righteousness that covers your sin (v. 5)
- Pray that you would be strengthened to seek the Lord (v. 6)
- Praise God for his glory, His strength, and His majesty. Pray that God would help you declare His greatness to those around you (v. 7-10)

*He is the King of Glory!*

# Salvation and Joy in Christ: Student Ministry Update

**Garth Farmer | Minister of Youth**

It's hard to believe that we have already come to the end of 2023. As I reflect on the past year of student ministry, I'm humbly reminded of just how good God has been to our church and to our student ministry. Our students enjoyed great events like Disciple Now Weekend, Summer Camp, Lock-in, and Fall Retreat and we got to celebrate in the baptism of one of our students on homecoming weekend. God has been so faithful to us! I believe that God is continuing to work in the hearts and lives of our students - that they are growing in their knowledge of him and in their love for one another.

Back in November we had our Fall Retreat weekend. This was a weekend where our students traveled to Country Lake Christian Resort and spent time together having fun and studying the Word of God. Jake Beattie preached to our students on the topic of salvation. One of the things we regularly try to remind our students of is how miraculous salvation is. We serve a great and mighty God who graciously and miraculously saves sinners through Jesus Christ. It was wonderful for our students to take a weekend and contemplate how God saves sinners like us!

In addition to these events, we have recently concluded a sermon series through the book of Philippians on Wednesday nights. Philippians was a wonderful reminder of how genuine joy is found in Christ and in living according to His purpose. Paul makes it so clear to the Philippians that true Christian joy is found in Christ



and in the community of the church. My prayer for our students is that they would live with joy in Christ, as Paul says, "shining as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life" (Phil. 2:16). It is very tempting to seek joy in things other than Christ, so please pray that God would guard our students' hearts from this temptation.

2023 has been an incredible year and the student ministry team is already planning for more in 2024. Please join us in praying that our students would continue to grow in their knowledge of God. Pray that they would continue to grow in community with one another. Pray that God would continue to bring more students and more families to First Baptist Church of Fairdale and that myself and our team would faithfully love them well and point them to Jesus!

***"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say rejoice. Let your reasonableness be made known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all knowledge, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."***

***Philippians 4:4-7***