



First Southern
Baptist Church
Messenger

December 2024

FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST
CHURCH
200 Oil Hill RD
El Dorado KS 67042
316-321-3465
fsbclaura@gmail.com



Being confident of this,
that He who began a
good work in you will
carry it on to completion
until the day of Christ
Jesus.

Philippians 1:6

Sunday School Christmas Challenge

The Sunday School class that completes the most Christmas food baskets to give away to families will be served breakfast by the other classes on December 22nd. Each box must have: stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy packets, canned yams, canned cranberries, and a boxed dessert (brownie, cake and frosting, etc.)

The Deacon's Corner

Greetings Church Family!

Wow, I have been Blessed by the Forward study that we are taking part in on Sunday mornings! Have you been Blessed? If so, I would love to hear your thoughts or your testimony of how God is working in your life.

All of the lessons have been good, but the lesson, "Believe", was particularly attention getting for me. I was struck by Dr. David Jeremiah's comment about how you can be both a Christian and have an optimistic attitude. Dr. Jeremiah was quick to distinguish this type of mindset versus the "name it and claim it" philosophy that is so popular in our society today. Biblical optimism is centered around Faith and Trust in God's promises. Remember what Paul stated in Phillipians 4:13. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

It is not uncommon to hear friends, family members, and coworkers say things like "just keep a positive attitude," or "think positively." These statements, though well meaning, are not what Dr. Jeremiah was talking about.

What struck me most about his commentary is that our positive attitude rests upon God's very nature. He has promised to "never leave or forsake us," and his faithful promises have never failed. In other words, our optimism is not based upon our efforts, but on the strength of Christ who promises that the good work that he started in us will be completed. I encourage you to finish this study and get ready for what God has in store for you next.

Blessings to All,
Rod Luehrs,
Chairman of the Deacons



The Pastor's Pen



Merry Christmas Church! I love you Church! And I loooove Christmas! It is the (🎵 🎵 🎵) *Most Wonderful Time of the Year!* It is a time to tune in to the intimate beauty of the incarnation story of Jesus our Savior and celebrate by singing our favorite carols with friends, family, and our church family. In fact, I will be using the carols as a theme for Advent, this year. Did you know that some of the carols we sing are not exactly in harmony with the Biblical account of the Christmas Story? Some take license with details that make for a nice idea but have no Biblical support. Some take a biblical detail with the absence of other details and come up with a song that is not exactly true but carries generations of singers along with it as if it were exactly true. Some use the true meaning of Christmas and a creative notion to create a well-meaning carol that captures the hearts of everyone but isn't Biblically tied. Some just get it wrong. So, at the risk of coming off as the Grinch who stole Christmas, I am going to use the theme of Correcting the Christmas Carols. Hopefully it will be fun, light on criticism but deep in truth, and have beauty that will make this Christmas ring loud and true in our life song. I hope your family will make worship attendance a priority for advent season.

Here are a few other events to help the Christmas be meaningful to us all:

- 🎁 **Christmas Decoration Party**—November 30, 3 p.m. Come help us decorate the church for Christmas! The singing and the laughter are contagious!
- 🎁 **Lottie Moon Christmas Offering Week Of Prayer**—December 1-8. Each year, Southern Baptists support international missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. 100% of your gifts enable gospel transformation among unreached people groups in our world. Join us in praying for our church to reach our goal of \$2024 and how God wants you to help make it happen.
- 🎁 **Sunday School Christmas Challenge**—Each Sunday in December. The Sunday School class that completes the most Christmas food baskets to give away to families will be served breakfast by the other classes on December 22nd. Each box must have: stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy packets, canned yams, canned cranberries, and a boxed dessert (brownie, cake and frosting, etc.) Classes can recruit those who don't go to a class yet to help! May the best grocer elves win!
- 🎁 **Christmas Parade Outreach**—December 7. We will be walking the route to invite people to our church this Christmas and give each family an ornament for their tree. Will you come help?
- 🎁 **Christmas Caroling**—December 22, 4 pm. Join us as we take the message of Christmas to our nursing homes and shut-ins through song and smiles. So much fun! Come be part of the blessings and share in a warm beverage when we are done.
- 🎁 **Candlelight Christmas Eve Service**—December 24, 6:30 pm. This very special service will help you set aside all the busyness of Christmas and simply worship the newborn King! Bring your family and friends!

From Lisa and I both, We wish you a very merry Christmas!
Pastor David

Operation Christmas Child (OCC) Update

Well, another successful shoebox collection season has come and gone. God is so good! Praise the Lord for His goodness in providing us with the resources to pack all the boxes we did.

This month we are focusing on praying for all the boxes that have been collected. Pray that they reach their final destination without any hiccups and that each one impacts not only the child that receives it but also their family and friends with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are also in need of some more money for shipping our boxes. Thanks again church family for your generosity. We couldn't do this work without you.

Remember, Christmas sales are good chances to snag good deals on items needed for next year's boxes.

Here is an inspiring story about how a 10-year-old Missouri girl sold flowers to benefit Operation Christmas Child and Children's Heart Project and sow seeds for the gospel.

Jaci Snowden loves flowers.

"Flowers make me feel close to God," Jaci said as she cut colorful zinnias in her backyard garden for a bouquet. "They are His wonderful masterpieces created in Christ Jesus for a purpose."

For 10-year-old Jaci, part of that purpose is to grow beautiful flowers, arrange them into delightful bouquets, and sell them to raise support for two Samaritan's Purse ministries that are particularly special to her—Operation Christmas Child and Children's Heart Project.

When Jaci was 6, she learned

about Operation Christmas Child and set up a hot chocolate stand in her front yard in Republic, Missouri, to buy items to fill a shoebox and to give the \$10 donation for processing and shipping. She packed a single box.

The next year, she expanded her stand to include lemonade and raised enough money to pack 10 boxes. Twenty more followed the next year. But Jaci wanted to do more. "Why don't we raise money all year long?" she asked her mom, Brooke. "The more money we raise, the more we can accomplish what Jesus said about taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth."

It sounded like a good idea, but they would need to do something other than sell hot and cold drinks to bring in more money. So, they prayed—and God gave them an unexpected answer.

A New Garden

Brooke distinctly recalls the Holy Spirit prompting her to start a garden and then sell the flowers they grew to raise money for shoeboxes. But planting flowers wasn't something she felt comfortable doing. "I kill house plants," she laughed. Brooke also didn't think she could add another thing to her already busy life, which included homeschooling Jaci and her three other children—Finley (8), Ruthie (6), and Colt (4). She's also an in-demand photographer. However, convinced a garden was what God wanted them to do, she embraced the idea.

"God takes you to your weakness because He can be glorified," Brooke said. "He takes you to something

ridiculous that you think is absolutely not for you and, if you say yes, He will show up."

Brooke's husband, Seth, and her father built flower boxes in the backyard, and she and Jaci studied flowers and began planting seeds. Now, just over a year later, their garden boasts nearly 30 different varieties of flowers, and it has become a sanctuary for prayer. "I wake up in the morning and the Lord calls me here so I can be with Him," Brooke said. "And watching my kids work in this garden is very much them walking in the will of God. It's beautiful."



For Jaci, the garden represents a place where the Gospel can grow. "We plant seeds for flowers to grow, so that we can plant seeds for the Gospel in children's hearts through the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. It's important for children to learn about Jesus so they can have eternal life."

The Flower Sisters

When the flowers bloom, the cutting and arranging begins. Jaci sees similarities between making a bouquet and packing a shoebox. "You have a focal flower in a bouquet and that's like your wow item in a

shoebox,” she said. “A sunflower is like a soccer ball. And you’ve got your filler flowers, which is like school supplies and coloring books, and you’ve got your foliage, which is like your essential stuff in a shoebox—a toothbrush, a washcloth, a cup. It’s very much the same thing if you think about it.”

Jaci, Finley, and Ruthie, dubbed the Flower Sisters by Brooke, each have their own role in the garden. Ruthie is the official “de-leafer”; Finley waters and weeds; and Jaci arranges. The girls sell their bouquets from the back of their grandpa’s pickup truck during the week and on Sunday mornings at their church. Last year, they raised over \$1,200 and packed 62 shoeboxes with the proceeds.

A New Mission

Last year, Brooke discovered that Children’s Heart Project is part of Samaritan’s Purse and started reading about it and watching videos with Jaci on our website. Jaci was immediately interested in the program because it arranges critical congenital heart surgery for boys and girls living in countries where such operations are not available. It struck a chord with Jaci because she underwent heart surgery when she was five months old and again when she was three years old to close a hole in her heart. Oxygen-poor blood was flowing the wrong way, which could lead to heart failure and other complications.

“I believe God healed me so I could make an impact in this world,” Jaci said. “Children with heart defects live every day saying, ‘Is this the day I’m going to die?’ I want to help get

them out of that fear so they can live a happy, normal life.”



A Joyful Meeting

Earlier this fall, Samaritan’s Purse surprised Jaci and her family with the opportunity to meet two heart patients from Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. For weeks, she carried around pictures of Khangai, 10 months, and Ananda, 14 months, telling her friends and church family about her opportunity to go to Cleveland, Ohio, to meet them. The family’s September road-trip vacation couldn’t come soon enough. Traveling over 700 miles in a minivan, the six Snowdens finally arrived at the home of Children’s Heart Project hosts Rex and Lois Raper for the long-awaited meeting. When mothers Zaya and Amara came outside holding their babies, the Snowden family overflowed with excitement. Over the next two days, they delighted in connecting with one another as families who shared similar heart-surgery scars. When Ananda and his twin sister, Ayalgun, were just five months in utero, Amara learned that one of them had a heart defect and began to worry. Their July 4, 2023 birthday, while a joyous occasion, was quickly clouded with Ananda’s health concerns.

“He was weak. He kept crying.

He couldn’t calm down and didn’t stop when nursed like other kids,” said Amara, now the mother of three. “He had no idea what was ‘happy.’”

Ananda’s oxygen saturation fell below 40 percent before they were able to get him to a Mongolian hospital for his first heart surgery—similar to Jaci—at three months old. The surgery proved to be a temporary fix but more complex surgery was needed. This, however, was not available in Mongolia. Amara made the difficult decision to leave behind her two other children for a season so she could get help for Ananda at Cleveland Clinic through Children’s Heart Project. An interpreter named Chuka traveled with her together with another mother, Zaya, and her child. Khangai was Zaya’s firstborn so she had no other experience to draw on when she learned when he was two days old that he had a heart defect. Her mind raced with questions: Why has this happened? What did I do wrong?

Zaya and Amara both wore strings of Buddhist prayer beads when they traveled, placing their faith in the religion dominant in Mongolia.

Four New Hearts

But each day they were in the United States, Chuka led the mothers in Bible studies, using *The Greatest Journey* discipleship materials, originally designed for Operation Christmas Child shoebox recipients. When they got to a lesson that asked if they wanted Jesus in their lives, Amara and Zaya both prayed to receive Him as Savior and Lord. The

date was July 18, just 11 days before their babies were scheduled for their heart surgeries. As they approached that difficult day, they removed the Buddhist prayer beads from around their necks and prayed to the one true God, through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Khangai's surgery was successful, but afterward, he couldn't stop crying. Both the medical team and his mother didn't know how to make him stop, so Zaya turned to her newfound faith. As she began to pray for him in Jesus' Name, she said, "He became calm. I thought, God is really working through my prayers!" And slowly her head knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ began gaining strength in her daily life.

As Amara waited for Ananda during surgery, she sensed the Lord's presence: "I felt God was walking with us. He was working through our prayers." When he finally came out of the operating room, his former meager cries were replaced with healthy ones, and he soon began to play. With adequate oxygen, he started crawling, to the delight of Amara, the Rapers, and the Snowdens alike.

Early in her discipleship times with these women, Chuka began praying that Zaya, a gifted vocalist, would learn to praise God by singing "Amazing Grace." Her prayers were answered when Zaya began to learn

the song in Mongolian and then in English.

"I was lost and now I'm found," Zaya said. "When I got here, I didn't know I was lost, but now I'm found and my boy had surgery on his heart. Life is like new. The words are very true for me. When I sing this song, John 3:16 comes out. God gave his one and only Son for us."

Faith Like a Mustard Seed

Jaci delights in the fact that she is a sister in Christ with these two Mongolian mothers. She gifted Amara and Zaya with mustard seed necklaces like the one that hangs around her own neck.

"As Flower Sisters, we plant seeds in the ground, and we also plant seeds in hearts," she said, "seeds of the love of Christ and we want them to blossom and grow."

Jaci created handmade cards for each of the mothers with a heart scar on the front. She also included the words of Matthew 17:20 (NIV, paraphrased): "Truly I tell you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing is impossible for you."

Brooke quickly chimed in with her own blessing: "As the mustard seed, may you grow fast in good, fertile soil." Jaci then told them, "Yesus khairtaishuu," which is "Jesus loves you" in Mongolian. "Meeting them was just a miracle,"

Jaci said. "I will be praying for the babies. I want them to be strong and courageous. I want them to be kind and gentle. They may not remember this day because they are so young, but I hope to be an inspiration to them."

New Stories to Tell

Khangai and Ananda are among over 1,600 heart surgery recipients sponsored by Children's Heart Project over the past 26 years. Director Cindy Bonsall emphasized, however, that this means far more than 1,600 lives changed. "It's like a New Testament miracle in each village through what happened to one little child." Family and community members all witness firsthand the power of God and many choose to put their faith in Him.

Zaya and Amara plan to start attending the same church in Ulaanbaatar for ongoing encouragement in their new faith. And Children's Heart Project will continue to walk with these families as Khangai and Ananda grow. Zaya is determined: "I have to raise my kid in God's Word."

As the Mongolian mothers returned home with their healed babies, Brooke's advice to them was simple: "Tell their stories and let them marinate in how faithful God was to them."

FSBC Kids' Ministry

December 2024

First Southern Baptist Church

200 Oil Hill Rd, El Dorado, KS

316-321-3465

Bus 316-452-3594

Paula Mattice 316-258-6596

Upcoming Dates:

Dec. 15, 10:45 am: Kids' Christmas Program

Dec. 18: Kidz Club Christmas Celebrations

Last Kidz Club for 2024

Dec. 22: Caroling and Cocoa

Dec. 25: Merry Christmas!

Jan. 1: Happy New Year Blessings!

Jan. 8: Kidz Club resumes

Merry Christmas Everyone!

This is the time of year that puts our whole being into meaning. It is such a joyous blessing to be able to share our Savior's birth story with your children. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity. We have been teaching students about ways they can share the love of Jesus with others in their lives. This is a wonderful time of year to do just that! Look for opportunities for your family to share the Christmas Story with someone that doesn't know the true story of Christmas. Visit a neighbor. Deliver a gift to someone not expecting one. Go caroling at a nursing home. Find a charity to make donations towards or better yet, find a charity that has areas of service that your family could do. Here at FSBC we have packed Operation Christmas Child boxes and made magnets to sell to raise money for the postage. There are always ways to make a difference for Jesus, no matter what your age. I'm praying for this time of year to be the opening for sharing about Jesus. I'm praying for you all this season.

In His Service,

Ms. Paula

13 Books written by Paul:

Romans	1 Thessalonians
1 Corinthians	2 Thessalonians
2 Corinthians	1 Timothy
Galatians	2 Timothy
Ephesians	Titus
Philippians	Philemon
Colossians	

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

From Your Children's Ministry Crew:

Paula Mattice

Karen Leibbrandt

Marsha Piha

Joe & Deb Reinert

Jessica Gill

John & Christine Brickley

Memory Work:

1. List the 13 books in the New Testament written by Paul
2. Memorize Matthew 28:19-20 "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Volunteer Rotations

Date	Prayer	Bus Driver	Children's Church	Nursery During Church		Head Counter	Counter 2	Counter 3	Date	Wednesday Meal Prep
11/24	John B.	Sheila	Guest	Johnie G.	Rod L.	Deb S.	Ulala P.	Johnie G.	11/27	Darlene & Sandy
12/1	David C.	John	Brickley	Julie H.	John B.	Rod L.	Susan F.	Laura L.	12/4	Robert & Carol
12/8	Joe L.	Angel	Brickley	Kat H.	Cara S.	Rod L.	Janna D.	John T.	12/11	Susan, Marsha, Paula
12/15	Joe R.	Deb	Brickley	Keith A.	Cara S.	Rod L.	Laura L.	Marsha P.	12/18	Mary G. Carolyn
12/22	Rod L.	Janna	Brickley	Johnie G.	Cara S.	Rod L.	Ulala P.	Deb	12/25	Darlene & Sandy
12/29	Johnie G.	Sheila	Guest	Julie H.	Cara S.	Rod L.	Susan F.	Laura L.	1/1	Robert & Carol
1/5	John M.	John	Reinert	Kat H.	Rod L.	Johnie G.	Janna D.	John T.	1/8	Susan, Marsha, Paula
1/12	John B.	Angel	Reinert	Keith A.	Cara S.	Johnie G.	Laura L.	Marsha P.	1/15	Mary G. Carolyn
1/19	David C.	Deb	Reinert	Johnie G.	Cara S.	Johnie G.	Ulala P.	Deb	1/22	Darlene & Sandy
1/26	Joe L.	Janna	Guest	Julie H.	Cara S.	Johnie G.	Susan F.	Laura L.	1/29	Deb & Laura

Wednesday Meal Prep Workers

4th Wednesday (Nov 27th)—No Programs

1st Wednesday (Dec 4th)—Robert & Carol

2nd Wednesday (Dec 11th)—Susan, Marsha, Paula

3rd Wednesday (Dec 18th)—Mary G. Carolyn J.

4th Wednesday (Dec 25th)—No Programs

1st Wednesday (Jan 1st)—No Programs

2nd Wednesday (Jan 8th)—Susan, Marsha, Paula

3rd Wednesday (Jan 15th)—Mary G. Carolyn J.

Food Pantry Grocery List

December:

- Stuffing
- Mashed potatoes (box)
- Gravy mix
- Canned Yams
- Canned Cranberries
- Boxed (or bagged) dessert mixes (brownies, cake & frosting, cookies, etc.)

DEC 2024-JAN 11, 2025

1	2 Olivia Baca	3	4	5 Carolyn Jorn, Mark Wint	6 David Crook SCASB Christmas Dinner	7 City Christmas Parade
8 Brian Huston Holidays Meal Annual Meeting Kids' Program	9	10 Paula Mattice	11 Penny Nielsen 9 am Newsletter Items Due	12 Kinley Nielsen	13	14 11 am Ladies Christmas Event
Lottie Moon Week of Prayer 8-14						
15	16	17 Glenna Wise, Carol Mitchell	18 Last night of programs for the year	19 5:30 Facilities Team Meeting	20 Nathan Wright, Mark & Melynda Wint	21 Bread of Life
22 Jerry & Sandy DeWitt Caroling & Cocoa	23	24 6:30 Candle-light Service	25 Christmas	26 Susan Ballard, Tom Edwards	27	28 Dylan Davis, James & Kelly Davidson
Office Closed 25-Jan 2nd						
29	30	31	1 David Baca	2	3 Gunther Baca	4 9:30 am— Breakfast and undecorating party
Office Closed 25-Jan 2nd						
5 Sophie Simpson	6	7 Kevin Tarrant	8 Willie Spivey Wednesday night programs resume	9	10	11
Pastor Out of Town 5th—10th						
12 Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Soup, Salad & Dessert Potluck A-Team	13	14	15 by 9:00 am Newsletter Items due	16 Nathan and Nancy Wright	17 Gloria Tucker	18