

Mountain *Messenger*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF MCCONNELL BAPTIST CHURCH - DECEMBER 2020

Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 13th, 6 pm

Presented by McConnell Choir, Praise Band & Special Guests, Directed by Chris Adams

This year, stand in the shoes of those who first heard the incredible news that Christ was coming! Imagine being present on the night Jesus was born--knowing that you were chosen to be part of delivering, witnessing and receiving the Good News. How would it feel to cast your eyes on a baby swaddled in a manger, and know that at this moment you are in the presence of God--that on this very night, everything's changed: God is among us!

Blending traditional carols with fresh musical expression and thought-provoking narration, ***On This Very Night*** reveals a heartfelt perspective and profound truth: that God came to real people, and His coming had real implications for their lives. We can relate to them because God comes to us every day, and His presence provokes a response. How we respond to God reveals the condition of our hearts. Sometimes, what is revealed is a surprise to us.

Christmas Eve Services

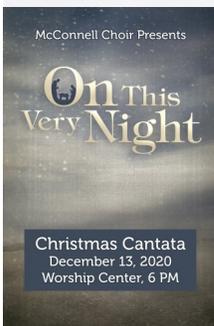
This year, we will offer two candlelight services, both observing the Lord's Supper, for Christmas Eve, at 4 pm and at 6 pm. A benevolence offering will be received at each service. In order to balance attendance and provide physical distancing, registration is required. Watch your Sunday Bulletin for more information!

Church Events

- Dec 2nd - 2021 Budget discussions
Private - 5 pm, FLC-219
Public - 6 pm, FLC-231
- Dec 6th - Called Church Conference, following worship service to vote on 2021 budget.
- Dec 13th - First Steps, 11:45 am, The Lodge
- Dec 13th - Christmas Cantata, 6 pm
- Dec 15th - Red Cross Blood Drive, 12:30 - 5 pm, FLC
- Dec 24th - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 4 pm & 6 pm, Worship Center

84 CHURCH ST HIAWASSEE, GA 30546

PHONE: 706-896-2281 EMAIL: INFO@MCCONNELLCHURCH.ORG



Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering® is an annual offering collected by believers around the world to support international missions. The offering was officially named in 1918 by Woman's Missionary Union in honor of the missionary to China who urged churches to start it and give sacrificially.

This offering is unique from other mission offerings in that 100% of gifts provide for missionaries all over the world. It is a valuable part of Southern Baptists' 175-year history of reaching the nations with the gospel and vital to reaching the vision of a multitude from every language, people, tribe and nation knowing and worshipping our Lord Jesus Christ ([Revelation 7:9](#)).

Our goal is \$30,000, won't you please pray and give generously?

Finance Committee

Proposed Budget discussion will be Wednesday, December 2, 2020. Private discussion from 5-6 pm in FLC-219. Public discussion from 6-6:30 pm in the Cornerstone Classroom. There will be a called church conference on December 6, 2020 to vote to approve the 2021 proposed budget following the morning service.

Year end contributions may be given on any Sunday in December or you may give online at:

<https://mcconnellchurch.org/give/>.

Since the church office will be closed December 24th through January 1st, your mailed or online financial contributions must be postmarked or given online through our website on or before Thursday, 12/31/2020, to be included with your 2020 contributions.

Awana Club News

Effective November 9th, the Awana Clubs began meeting in the Family Life Center on Mondays at 3:15 pm. This allows the clubbers an opportunity to play Awana Games indoors during the colder winter months! At the Awana Christmas Store, on Monday, December 14th, the clubbers will be able to purchase Christmas presents for their parents, grandparents & siblings with the Awana Bucks they have earned by memorizing scripture verses. Thank you for your kind donations to the Awana Christmas Store!

Thank you!!



Total - 387

(includes 66 online)

Blood Drive

Tuesday, December 15th,
12:30 - 5 pm, Family Life Ctr



There's currently an urgent need for blood donors of all blood types. Our annual Christmas blood drive helps ensure that blood products are readily available for patients in need at a time when the need is critical. A decision to donate blood can save a life, or even several, if your blood is separated into its components - red cells, platelets & plasma - which can be used individually for patients with specific conditions. Please visit www.redcross.org to make an appointment to donate.

First Steps Class

If you are new to the church or want information on joining the church, please join Pastor Steve & Pastor Danny as they share information about McConnell, who we are and our vision. We meet in The Lodge immediately following the morning worship service on December 13th. A light lunch will be served. This class is a prerequisite for joining the church. Call the church office at 706-896-2281 to register.



Christmas has always been my favorite time of the year. It also happens to be almost everyone else's as well, including my mom. When I was growing up, the Christmas season at the Taylor house didn't officially begin until the day after Thanksgiving. We would set up the Christmas tree, the nativity, and all the decorations but the most time-consuming part was putting the lights on the tree. Mom insisted that the lights be woven in and out of every branch so that the tree appeared to literally glow. After all, what would Christmas be without lights?

Putting up the tree each Christmas was a major undertaking for everyone until mom got tired of taking it down and setting it back up again each year and just decided to leave it up all the time. Since then, mom has added even more trees to her collection, and now she leaves them up all year. Right now, I believe there are no less than six or seven Christmas trees, along with other Christmas decorations, adorning their home year-round. You've got your hobbies... my mom's got Christmas. Plus, it just makes her happy to look at the lights whenever she wants.

Although we take the tree down after New Year's Day, I tend to agree with her. What would Christmas be without lights and a star on top of the tree? Think about it. That first Christmas, there wasn't a tree (that would come later) but there was most certainly a light that shone in the darkness to guide the Wise Men to Jesus. The star appeared and the wise men followed it; believing that it would lead them to the One who would be king. Ultimately, it led them to the One who is the *Light of the World*. By the way, like the Wise

Men, ***your direction will always determine your destination.***

As we enter the Christmas season, I cannot think of anything we need more in 2020 than more a little more light; light to shine in what has been a pretty dark time. We need the Light to give us illumination so that we can find our way through this dark time. If we follow the Light, we will find hope, peace, and comfort in our time of need.

My brothers and I left home a long time ago and now have started Christmas traditions of our own. But if we ever wanted to find our way home again at Christmas time, it would be pretty simple. All we would need to do is look for the house with the lights. The same thing is true for you in a spiritual sense as well. If you've lost your way and long to return to your one true home, all you need to do is look for the Light.

So, let me ask you something. Who or what are you following as you go into this Christmas Season? Will it take you where you want to go and ultimately where you want to be? Or will it lead you deeper into the darkness? If not, you might want to consider changing course and that only comes by changing your focus and looking for the *Light*.

Pastor Steve

Sympathy to

Marcene Friedley, at the death of her husband, David Friedley.

Anita Guss & family, at the death of her father, George Allen, Jr.

Randy McNabb, at the death of his father, Tommy McNabb.

Kaila Reece, at the death of her grandfather, James Melton.

Ken Rode, at the death of his wife, Kelley Rode.

Weekly Servants

Nursery & PEAK Kids - As scheduled by J. Shook & S. Awtrey

Ushers - As scheduled per J. Hyatt & D. Gardner

Greeter Team - #4 (or as scheduled by J. & C. Nichols)

Security - F. Witkowski

Welcome Desk

12/6 - D. Harrison & P. Wroten

12/13 - R. & C. Larson

12/20 - N. Dearborn & D. Heard

12/27 - D. Harrison & P. Wroten

Welcome Carts

12/6 - Capt. R. Parkman
H. Hensel, M. & C. Mummaw, B. Cone

12/13 - Capt. J. Nichols
G. Boyd, J. Brock, D. Willrich

12/20 - Capt. T. Bouma
T. Taylor, J. Kimball, P. Anderson

12/27 - Capt. S. Casey
J. Noon, A. Kloock, G. Denton

December

Schedule Changes:

Tuesday, December 22nd

Hope Room Closed.

Wednesday, December 23rd

No services or activities

Thursday, December 24th

Hope Room & Church Office Closed
Christmas Eve Services, 4 & 6 pm

Friday, December 25th

Church Office Closed

Monday, December 28th

No Deacon's Meeting

Wednesday, December 30th

No services or activities

The **church office** will be closed **12/28 thru 1/1** and will re-open on Monday, January 4th at 8 am.

The **Weekday Preschool** will re-open on Tuesday, January 5th.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, January 3rd

Awana Zip Line, 5 pm, FLC

Thursday, January 21st

Griefshare Support Group, 10 am, FLC
(available in person & online)

From your church staff:

During this season, we will celebrate Hope, Peace, Love and Joy! Our prayer for you is that all four of these will fill your life in every way this Christmas and beyond. This Christmas, as in all previous years, we celebrate "Immanuel" (God with us). Without Christ's presence among us we would be lost. Through God's presence working within us we are being healed, transformed, reconciled and made whole.

We pray that you have a wonderful Christmas!