

Mountain Messenger

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | MCCONNELL BAPTIST CHURCH | DECEMBER 2023

Christmas at McConnell

December. A month filled with opportunities to celebrate the birth of our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ!

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

Southern Baptists observe a Week of Prayer for International Missions (December 3rd—10th) each year for the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering emphasis. Will you join your heart to pray for missionaries around the world who are faithfully sharing the gospel and to make a donation to this ministry during the month of December? Our goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering this year is \$40,000.

Include your neighbors, friends and family by inviting them to services & events at McConnell and in the community.

Ladies Christmas Brunch (ticketed event)

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Saturday, December 2nd, 10:30 am, Family Life Center

Towns County Sheriff's Office Christmas Parade

Watch for the McConnell Float!

Saturday, December 2nd, 5:30 pm

Lord's Supper

Sunday December 3rd, 10:15 am Worship Service

Christmas Cantata -The Promise of Christmas

Sunday, December 17th, 6:00 pm, Worship Center

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service & Lord's Supper

Sunday, December 24th, 6:00 pm, Worship Center

Church Events

- Dec 2nd – Ladies Christmas Brunch, 10:30 am, Family Life Center
- Dec 3rd – Senior Breakfast, 8:00 am, Family Life Center
- Dec 3rd – Lord's Supper, 10:15 am, Worship Center
- Dec 17th – Christmas Cantata, 6:00 pm, Worship Center
- Dec 24th – Worship Service, 10:15 am, Worship Center, (No Sunday School today)
- Dec 24th – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 6:00 pm, Worship Center

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First Steps Class

For those new to the church or who 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'll meet in The Lodge immediately following the morning worship service on December 10th. A light lunch will be served. This class is a prerequisite for joining the church. Please call the church office at 706-896-2281 to register.

Financial Contributions

Your year-end financial contributions may be given any time in December. Mailed or online financial contributions must be postmarked or given online through our website on or before Saturday, 12/31/2023, to be included with your 2023 contributions. You may give online at: <https://mcconnellchurch.org/>

Blood Drive

Tuesday, December 19th, 1-6 pm

Every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. It is essential for surgeries, cancer treatment, chronic illnesses, and traumatic injuries. Whether a patient receives whole blood, red cells, platelets or plasma, this lifesaving care starts with one person making a generous donation. This is your opportunity to be that one person! The Red Cross is reporting that demand has been outpacing supply since the summer months. To help those in our community, McConnell will host a Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, December 19th, from 1-6 pm. Please register at www.redcrossblood.org/ and give the gift of life!

Op Christmas Child



Thank you!! McConnell filled 523 physical shoeboxes and another 172 online for a grand total of 695 shoeboxes this year! Just think, 695 children will be reached with the love of Christ because of each of you being the hands and feet of Jesus!

The Samaritan's Purse Drop Off Center, operating at McConnell, received shoeboxes from 15 local area churches and 8 individuals in the community for a grand total of 2,183 shoeboxes from our area. A huge thank you to all the volunteers who participated in this effort!

Called Church Conference

There will be a called church conference on Sunday, December 3rd, immediately following the morning worship service for the purpose of voting on the 2024 Budget.

Welcome



Wayne & Donna
Diagostino



Tyler & Michayla
Moody



Janet Oliva



Averi Rountree



Merritt Turner



Gary & Diana
Young



Steve Taylor

Lead Pastor

Pastor's Pen

Christmas Displays

I want you to stop and think with me for a minute as we are getting ready to head into the Advent season. Over the years, what's the best Christmas display you've ever seen? What made it memorable and caused it stand out to you?

Over the years, I can remember seeing some pretty incredible Christmas displays but the ones that stand out to me were those that were not filled with flashing lights and moving characters. No, the ones that stood out were the ones that were simple, elegant, and filled with light that illuminated the darkness. The contrast was beautiful and stark and drew me in to see things that I would have otherwise missed had it not been for the light. The same thing is true as we enter this Christmas season.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light had dawned. Isaiah 9:2 (NIV)

Isaiah spoke about a Christmas display that would come at a future time and would light up the world. He spoke about the coming Messiah as being a light that would illuminate the darkness and lead people to God. Its contrast would be simple and beautiful and it would draw people in from the darkness.

Hundreds of years later, John would begin his gospel by talking about the Light that Isaiah prophesied about but never saw. John had seen Christ. He'd walked with him, talked with him, and witnessed the way Jesus brought light of God wherever He went (John 1:1-14). Rather than just recounting the events of Jesus birth, John began his gospel by talking about the Light of the World—that Jesus was the one true light.

John recognized that Christ came to serve as a light in a world darkened by pain, sin, and hate. More than

that, he came to give us hope for the future. Christ became flesh to dwell among us so that we could see him as a light—an example of how we should live, act, and serve in our own lives. Likewise, Christ came to give us a light of our own and make us beacons in the darkness for those around us.

As the Christmas season nears, we'll see plenty of lights. There will be stars on top of trees, lights draped across yards, and even parades of beautiful light displays for us to marvel at. However, whenever we see those lights shining brightly, let's remember our role as children of God. Rather than just admire the lights around us, let's put ourselves on display as the brightest and most beautiful lights of all—lights of Christ.

For once you were darkness, but now you are
light in the Lord. Live as children of light...

Eph. 5:8

Who serves as light in your life right now? Stop and give God thanks for the way they have shined love, friendship, and Christ in you life. Now, ask yourself this question. In what ways can we become a brighter light in our community?

Jesus is the Light of the World. John 8:12

In Christ,

Pastor Steve



Merry Christmas

from your Church Staff

Servants in Ministry

December 3

Welcome Desk - J. & K. Vaughan
Cart Drivers - Captain - D. Rabon
W. Benson, B. Cone, T. Folmar
PEAK Kids - Calah Pearson
PEAK Jr - Paola Estrada, Tammy Skinner

December 10

Welcome Desk - B. Stallworth, C. Nitzsche
Cart Drivers - Captain - T. Taylor
J. Brock, D. Rudder, S. Berkstresser
PEAK Kids - Averil Rountree
PEAK Jr - Virginia Awtrey, Haley Thornton

December 17

Welcome Desk - S. Pipkin
Cart Drivers - Captain - T. Wade
W. Nelson, R. Parker, D. Rabon
PEAK Kids - Merritt Turner
PEAK Jr - Carol Chastain, Emily Blair

December 24

Welcome Desk - K. Long
Cart Drivers - D. Rabon
G. Osborne, G. Denton, R. Signor
PEAK Kids - Alex Awtrey
PEAK Jr - Shelby Dyer, Kelly Douberly

December 31

Welcome Desk - S. Childress, N. Dearborn
Cart Drivers - Captain - D. Rabon,
J. Church, B. Grimsley, R. Signor
PEAK Kids - Family Worship Service
PEAK Jr - TBD

Sympathy to

Marshall & Lorene Avery, at the death of Marshall's brother, Clyde Avery.

Margaret & Mike Hedden, at the death of Margaret's brother-in-law.

Chris & Raquelle Solon (former members), at the death of their son, Austin Davis.

Manita Berrong, Mary Joyce Kimsey, Haley Thornton & Hannah York, at the death of Manita & Mary Joyce's sister, and Haley & Hannah's grandmother, Jimmie Harmon.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Sunday, Dec 17th

Christmas Cantata, 6 pm

Sunday, Dec 24th

No Sunday School
10:15 am Worship Service
6:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Monday, Dec 25th–Friday, Dec 29th

Church Office Closed

Sunday, Dec 31st

9:00 am, Sunday School
10:15 am, Worship Service

Monday, Jan 1st

Church Office Closed

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, Jan 1st

Church Office Closed

Tuesday, Jan 2nd

Church Office Opens at 8:00 am

Sunday, Jan 7th

Senior Breakfast, 8:00 am
Awana Zip Line, 5:00 pm

Tuesday, Jan 16th

Thrive Moms, 6:00 pm

Monday, Jan 22nd

Deacons Meeting, 7:00 pm