



THE WINDOW

A publication of The First Baptist Church of Ahoskie, North Carolina

Volume 54

January 13, 2021

No. 1

Two Worship Services Coming

Our church chose the middle ground. Some churches are not meeting in-person at all. There are some churches that have not had in-person gatherings since March of 2020. Other churches resumed in-person gatherings; however, they have stopped them once again. On the other end of the spectrum there are churches who meet in-person on Sundays. However, these congregations have little – or no – covid restrictions in place.

Our practice, since we resumed in-person gatherings in October of 2020, has been to split the difference between these two approaches. We continue with in-person gatherings. And, we have strong covid restrictions in place. Reservations are required. Masks are required. Distancing is maintained. So far, so good. While nothing is risk-free, all indications are that our current approach to gathered worship is low risk.

To maintain our current success with in-person worship, we will begin to offer two morning worship services on February 7, 2021. The first service will begin at 8:30am and the second service will begin at 11am. Reservations will still be required. Masks will still be required. Distancing will still be maintained.

The reasons for this move are twofold. First, as the year progresses and more and more people become more and more comfortable with a return to in-person worship, we do not want to have to say “no” to anyone who wants to be in our sanctuary for worship on Sunday mornings. To facilitate a potential increase in sanctuary worship participation, two services are necessary. Second, and as implied in the first reason, we want to continue to keep everyone safe from the transmission of covid. Two ser-

vices then will reduce the number of people gathered in the sanctuary at one time. Of course, once we step outside of our homes there is no guarantee of immunity from covid. Though, the dissemination of the vaccine is slowly moving us in this direction. However, we want to continue to keep our in-person worship gatherings as low risk as possible.

The two worships services will be identical. In other words, the early service will not be an abbreviated version of the 11am service. You will not miss anything by participating in the early service. The only activity not offered at the early service that is offered at the 11am service is the nursery. Furthermore, only the 11am worship service will be streamed on Facebook and aired on the radio.

For this worship format to be successful we will need people to make reservations for the 8:30am service. Are you an early bird? Is the worship of God, through Christ, with fellow believers earlier in the day more congenial with other Sunday activities? Are you willing to give the early service a try and see how it fits you? Please do consider the 8:30am service when we begin this new format on February 7.

In Christ,
Trey



Worshiping Together

January 17, 2021

The 2nd Sunday of Epiphany

Half-Full

James 1:1-4; 12

Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam

From the Associate Pastor

When my parents first settled in Ahoskie they rented a garage apartment located beside Creech Memorial Baptist Church. That's where they chose to worship until, when I was six months old, they moved into a rental home across town. Encouraged by their new neighbors to visit First Baptist Church of Ahoskie, they did so and found their church home. So, from the time I was six months old to the present, I've been a Baptist!

There have been times when I've found other denominations attractive. (I once served as secretary at a Presbyterian church when I was a seminary student in Richmond, VA.) But through childhood and adolescence, college and seminary (twice), I continued to make my home among Baptists. As far as I can tell, that's where I will remain.

There are a myriad reasons why I'm attracted to the Baptist denomination. High on that list is Baptist belief in what is commonly referred to as the "Four Fragile Freedoms." And though I've long been grateful for these freedoms within Baptist life, recent political strife within our country has made me more grateful for them than ever before.

Many of you FBC folks are like me, life-long Baptists. Some of you long-timers know your Baptist history well and are quite familiar with the "Four Fragile Freedoms." But perhaps other long-timers would appreciate a refresher. Some of you came to FBC from other denominations or no previous faith background, and may not be familiar with these freedoms. Whatever your perspective, I hope you'll carefully read the information below. All but the second paragraph is found on the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship website. That second paragraph comes from the website of McClean Baptist Church in McClean, Virginia. Perhaps, after reading it, you will add belief in the "Four Fragile Freedoms" as one of the reasons you're glad to be a Baptist too!

Our understanding of Baptist faith and practice is expressed by our emphasis on freedom in biblical interpretation and congregational governance, the participation of women and men in all aspects of church leadership and Christian ministry, and religious liberty for all people.

Unlike many Christian denominations, Baptists are not unified through a central governing authority.

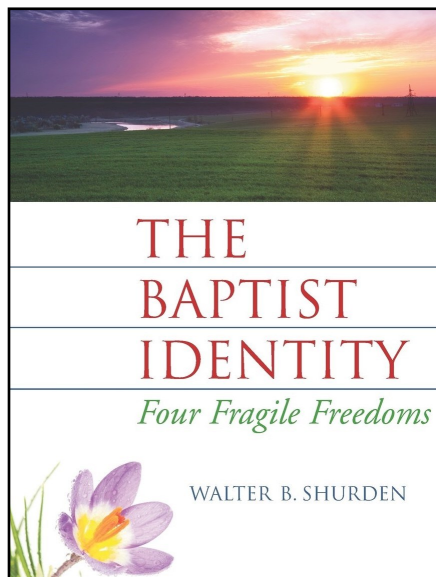
Baptists do not have an equivalent to the Pope. What we have are four freedoms that we piece together to create our distinctively Baptist identity.

Soul Freedom — *We believe in the priesthood of all believers and affirm the freedom and responsibility of every person to relate directly to God without the imposition of creed or the control of clergy or government.*

Bible Freedom — *We believe in the authority of Scripture. We believe the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, is central to the life of the individual and the church. We affirm the freedom and right of every Christian to interpret and apply scripture under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.*

Church Freedom — *We believe in the autonomy of every local church. We believe Baptist churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ, to determine their membership and leadership, to order their worship and work, to ordain whomever they perceive as gifted for ministry, and to participate as they deem appropriate in the larger body of Christ.*

Religious Freedom — *We believe in the freedom of religion, freedom for religion, and freedom from religion. We support the separation of church and state.*



If you're interested in learning more about these freedoms, I highly recommend Walter B. Shurden's book titled, "The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms."

Grace & peace,

2020—2021 Global Missions Offering Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Our goal for this offering is \$5000.
It will be received through March 2021.

CWJC Thank You

Dear Church Members,



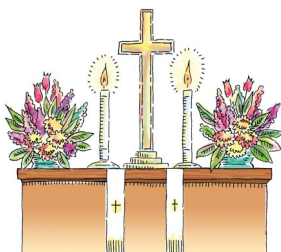
I cannot thank each of you enough for the wonderful response to our Christian Women's Job Corps Angel Tree Ministry. We were overwhelmed with your kindness and generosity. Each family had a wonderful Christmas due to you. The women and mothers were full of giggles and tears and they said their children had the best Christmas ever.

I was so proud of our church and their desire to help those less fortunate. Our church family never fails in our efforts to help others with needs. Showing this kind of kindness is unusual to most of my participants. They often say that our church must be true Christians because we are inclusive and kind. This is not something they have always experienced.

God bless you all as we work together to show His love in action, and help others to find His path for their life.

Love in Christ,
Pat Byrd

Flowers for Worship in 2021



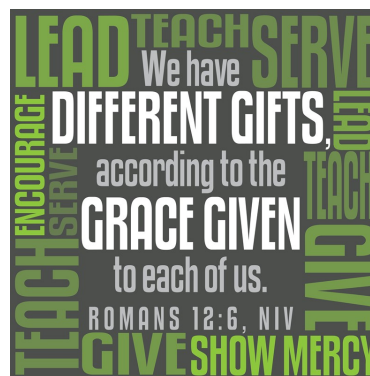
On Monday, January 4, letters were mailed to all who provided flowers for worship services in 2020, inviting them to consider continuing to do so in 2021. Please respond by January 18 so we may begin to fill any vacancies as soon as possible.

If you did not provide flowers last year, but would like to do so this year, please contact Anita and she will let you know dates that are available.

In Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family of Buddy Hyatt who died unexpectedly on January 11. Buddy served as Music Associate/Organist for us 2014-2018.

2021 Deacons



Serving from Jan. 1, 2019 to Dec. 31, 2021

Austine Evans	Jim Wiggins, <i>Secretary</i>
Betty Joyner	Andy Woodard
Buzzy Swain	

Serving from Jan. 1, 2020 to Dec. 31, 2022

Carolyn Arrington	Claire Presley
Rick Burns	Penny Rose, <i>Chair</i>
Charles Hughes	

Serving from Jan. 1, 2021 to Dec. 31, 2023

Don Joyner	Kari Pierce
Bill Magette	Chuck Revelle
Scott Outlaw, <i>Vice Chair</i>	

Wednesday In-Person Activities

... will resume on February 3.



January 10, 2021

Weekly Need	\$ 8,755.72
Weekly Offering	\$ 6,455.00
Difference	\$ 2,300.72
YTD Needs	\$ 17,511.44
YTD Offerings	\$ 12,960.00
YTD Difference	\$ -4,551.44
CBF- Global Missions Total	\$ 2,261.69
Benevolence Offering	\$ 515.00
Capital Campaign Offering	\$ 25.00

Thank You for your generous gifts!

SERVING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Week of January 17 - 23, 2021

Minister on Call

Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam, 398-7321
trey@fbcahoskie.org

Deacons on Call

Bill Magette, 209-4676
Andy Woodard, 396-1599

Sound System—January 17

Josh Brinkley

Floral Offering—January 17

Vicky Overman

Food Pantry— January 22

Carroll Thompson & Anita Thompson

Week of January 24-30, 2021

Minister on Call

Rev. Anita Thompson, 395-0061
anita@fbcahoskie.org

Deacons on Call

Kari Pierce, 217-8017
Penny Rose, 287-8531

Sound System — January 24

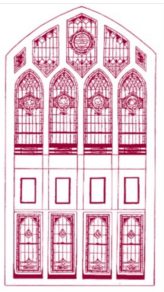
Frank Britt

Floral Offering—January 24

JoAnn Herring

Food Pantry— January 29

Vicky Overman



The Window

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Main and West Streets
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Ahoskie, NC 27910-0649

NON PROFIT ORG.
BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
AHOSKIE, N. C.

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