

The VISITOR
December 2024
The Story of the Nativity

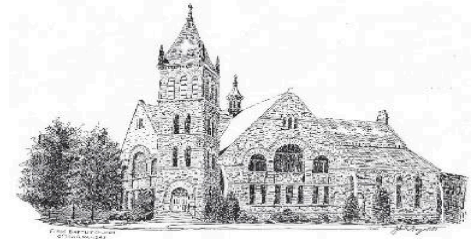
The Christmas story never grows old and never gets cold. The warmth of the story has potential to melt the heart of even the grinchiest of grinchers. The characters in the divine drama represent all of us, from the humble teenage peasant girl Mary, blue collar Joseph, outcast shepherds, a struggling to believe priest and his barren wife, far out and wealthy wise men, a murderous and envious king, a no named innkeeper and angels, so many angels. We rehearse and tell the stories over and over. And some people collect nativity sets, the story in miniature.

Harma McKenzie collected nativity sets. She had them representing cultures from all around the world; the Christmas story in miniature refracted through many varieties of the world's people and cultures. Harma gifted her vast nativity collection to Cynthia and I but because they belonged to Harma, they belong here with you. You will see these nativity scenes on display in the sanctuary and in the parlor. May they remind us all of her persistent faith as they tell us the story again and again.

May we each experience ourselves unexpectedly invited to the Bethlehem stable where the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes holds all the hopes and fears of all the years even as he is being held by Mary, his mother. May we even imagine holding the newborn baby, the Messiah, God in the flesh, love incarnate and experience pure love reflected back to us through the eyes of the Christ child, the Word become flesh. I don't think anyone who encountered baby Jesus in Bethlehem was ever the same again. That is indeed why we revisit the story year after year after year. We are allowing ourselves once again to make room in the "inn" of our minds, our hearts and our very souls for this one who came to save us and be the loving presence of God to us and for us.

It is just now the beginning of Advent. That means it is a long way to Bethlehem. But the reality of hope, peace, joy and love make the treacherous journey worthwhile, even necessary. So even though the world seems cold and dark at times, I think I hear angelic voices inviting us to come and see this thing the Lord has done. Maybe we're not that far from Bethlehem after all.

Merry Christmas!
Grace, peace and love,
Tiger



JOIN US
SUNDAY MORNINGS
WORSHIP BEGINS AT 9:30

785-242-2713

OttawaFBC@gmail.com

fbcottawa.org

410 Hickory Street

Ottawa, KS 66067

Follow us on Facebook:

@firstbaptistchurchottawa

Live Stream of worship each week!

You are invited and welcome.



First Baptist Church of Ottawa is part of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region (ABC/CR and American Baptist Churches, USA (ABC/USA).

First Baptist Church Ottawa is a Welcoming and Affirming Congregation
The radically inclusive love of Jesus inspires us to be a fully welcoming and affirming congregation. All are loved here. All are safe here. All are invited to full participation in our life together.

Based upon calling, gifting, talent, experience and maturity, we celebrate baptism, communion, marriage, leadership, teaching and ordination with any gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation or identity.



*Sunday School following worship
for all ages!*

Communion December 1st & 24th

Celebrating the Lord's supper.

Those of you worshipping with us at home, please have your elements ready so that you are able to take communion along with us.

Continuing this Sunday, whenever we celebrate communion, we will encourage giving to the deacon's fund for benevolence



Deadline for the **January** newsletter is **December 18th**, please have any information emailed to the office by this date for inclusion in the newsletter. Information received after the deadline will be published in the next month's newsletter.

Christmas Eve Service

Please join us for our candlelight communion Christmas Eve Service at 6:00pm on December 24. We look forward to celebrating this special service with you.



PRAYER TIME: Wednesdays at 12:30 EH. If you have a prayer request for Wednesday let Pastor Tiger know or call or email the church office.

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Bob Lovett (Kim Randel's father); Norma Coble (Dana Coble's mother); Glenda Schmidt; Nathan Ball; Shelly Frank; Tom Lantis (Kelli Ball's father); Mattie Willhite; Janet Wolken; Bill Kern; Carol Fenton (Janet Wolken's sister)

Shut-Ins: Dana Coble; Doris Grogan; Sylvia Starky; Bev Hughes; Golden Peterson; Gloria Terrill; Carol Allen; Marsha Hermreck; Gene Bromert

Military Service People: Brad Davis-Kuwait (Bill & Janice Kern's grandson); PFC Aaron Bigge-Fort Meade, Maryland (Sandy Holbert's grandson); Lt. Matt Ashwill in Kuwait (Melissa Ashwill's son)

We make every effort to keep this list updated. Please inform us when there are changes.

TITHE ONLINE

It's simple!!

Through First Baptist's website (fbcottawa.org)



you now have the capability to make your contributions electronically using Tithe.ly. It can be a one-time gift or recurring. To make a contribution, go to the Give tab and click on **Donate**. Contributions will be

tracked through our membership software & reflected on contribution statements.



We will be collecting for Hope House the first Sunday of each month.

Pasta Sauce, Saltine Crackers, Jelly, Instant Oatmeal Packets

Toilet Paper, Kleenex, Paper Towels always needed

*No longer needing plastic containers

Radio Ministry

First Baptist Church believes it is important to keep the Radio Ministry funded, as this is a blessing to many in our community.

Please designate

contributions to: Radio Fund.

Men's Bible Study will meet on Saturday, **December 14th at 9am.** We will be studying the 5th chapter of Matthew. Come join us for study and fellowship with one another. We will meet in the **Homebuilder's Room**, the North Sanctuary door will be open.



The office will be closed December 23-25 & December 30, 31 & January 1

Church Leadership



Fellowship Committee

Meeting is December 9th, 9:30am EH

Outreach

Meeting is December 11th, 6:30pm



Church Council meeting is canceled for December

Committee chairs, please have your previous meeting minutes emailed to the Church office.



December 14th at 9:30am in EH, there will be time to fellowship with one another and discuss the book we have been reading. Everyone is welcome to come join us!

In **January** we will start a new series which is called Real-Life Discipleship by Jim Putman and Disciple Shift by Jim Putman and Bobby Harrington with Robert E. Coleman. If people are interested in this series we will discuss it once a month please contact **Jordan Fritz 785-342-0539.**

Help Support Our Church



Price Chopper Gift Cards are available at the office for purchase. We get 5% for each sale and YOU get the FULL VALUE of each card you purchase.

Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of our church!

Price Chopper cards can only be purchased in \$100 increments.



If you would like to order a Christmas poinsettia in memory or in honor of someone for Christmas Eve each poinsettia is \$18.75. Please let the office know by December 12th or order forms will be available on Sunday December 1st and 8th. Each poinsettia is \$18.75. Please write poinsettia on the memo line of your check.

Beautiful Space for Grace

Please continue over and above generous giving in support of the fabulous exterior painting renovation. **Gifts can be designated beautiful space for grace/painting.** We have received **\$33,710.25** of the **\$117,115** needed.

Message from Carolyn Kimbrel

The Library is still being updated BUT it is always ready for you to come in and find that right book. The

Christmas shelf is full for your Christmas reading during the holiday season. WHY THE NATIVITY by David Jeremiah is a question and answer book. ALL IS CALM AND ALL IS BRIGHT by Colleen Coble are two stories in one book. Some Christmas DVDS are on the shelf for your watching, also.

These items are all new to the library.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



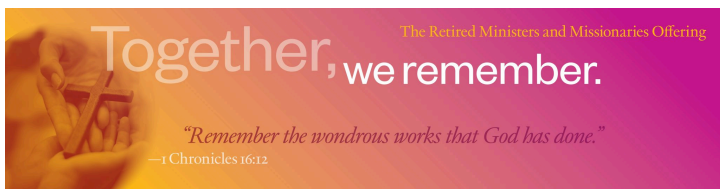
Save the Date

We will celebrate Tiger on Sunday, January 5th after church. Please plan to join us for his retirement party. More details to come.

Praise

Thank you all so much for your help with the Thanksgiving meal. We served 90 people, including 18 of our friends, and sent home 34 meals. Blessings to you all.

Our next Thankful Thursday meal will be Thursday December 26, 5-6:30



We will collect for RMMO in January. Recipients include retired ordained ministers and commissioned missionaries who have devoted 15 years or more to ABCUSA, as well as surviving spouses. The recipients always pause to express their gratitude. RMMO celebrates, and expresses thanks to our servant leaders. The funds collected are distributed as thank you checks.

BOOK OF THE MONTH LUKE

Dr. Luke, M.D. apostle of Jesus. Jesus chose 12 men, from all walks of life, to follow him, to radically change the world. Jesus said “*The Son of Man came to find and restore the lost*” (Luke 19:20).

With God there are no “outsiders”. When Dr. Luke met Jesus he became “a most vigorous champion of the “outsider”. Luke was the only Gentile in an all-Jewish group of ragtag diversified, multi talented men that followed Jesus.

The 4 Gospels written by Matthew, Mark, Luke & John are called the Synoptic Gospels, because they give the same general view of Christ life, “Their authorship, mutual relations, and possible connection with a common original” is called the “Synoptic Problem.”[1]

Matthew was a tax collector. One day Jesus invited him to follow him. Matthew did. (Luke 5:27,28). Matthews' goal was to present Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. He traced Jesus' lineage back to Abraham, naming him the “Father of Jews”.

“Themes of Mark’s Gospel are movement, activity, strong commitment-and a divine Savior who came to serve.” [2] Mark’s focus was ministering to the Romans.

“Luke's purpose is to present an accurate account of the life of Christ and to present Christ as the perfect human and Savior.” [3]

Luke gives us 4 nativity songs, songs of Joy. The *Magnificat* of Mary (1:46-55); the *Benedictus* of Zechariah (1:68-79); the angel's announcement to the shepherds (2:14); and

Life *Nunc Dimittis* the song of Simeon. (2:29-32).

Praise be to God for His mighty perfect love for us. I am awed at the knowledge He has provided for us through the history he has provided for us in the scripture connections from Genesis to Revelation.

EVERY WORD IS TRUE

It stands the tests of time.

The Lord's blessing to you and yours!

LMC ABWM

[1] Halley’s Bible Hand Book pg 486

[2] David Jeremiah Study Bible pg.1340

[3] NIV Life international study Bible pg.



Starting December 5, 2024, and continuing every Thursday through January 9, 2025, including special services on Christmas Eve, December 24, 26, 2024 and January 2, 2025 (pre-recorded and sent via email). Join us live on Zoom at 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT for a season filled with blessings and reflections.

Join us and be renewed in the spirit of Advent.

Thursday, December 5, 2024, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

You Are A Blessing: Luke 1:26-38 (The angel Gabriel comes to Mary). Isaiah 43:1-7 ("I have called you by name")

Thursday, December 12, 2024, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

We Can't Go Alone: Ruth 1 (Ruth says to Naomi, "Where you go, I will go") Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 ("A threefold cord is not easily broken")

Thursday, December 19, 2024, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

Do The Good That Is Yours To Do: Luke 3:7-16 (John the Baptist proclaims how to bear good fruit) Isaiah 58:9b-12 ("You shall be called the repairer of the breach")

Tuesday, December 24, 2024, (pre-recorded sent via email)

Hope Is Worth The Risk: Matthew 1:18-25 (The angel visits Joseph in a dream) Luke 1:46 -55 (Mary's song)

Thursday, December 26, 2024, (pre-recorded sent via email)

Love Knows Your Name: Luke 2:1-20 (The nativity story) Isaiah 9:6 ("Wonderful Counselor; Prince of Peace").

Thursday, January 2, 2025, (pre-recorded sent via email)

Don't Forget To Laugh: Luke 2:10, Matthew 2:10, Isaiah 9:2-3, Psalm 148, Psalm 126:1-3, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Isaiah 55:12-13 (Selections on joy)

Thursday, January 9, 2025, 7 PM ET / 4 PM PT, Live on Zoom

The Road Isn't Straight: Matthew 2:1-12 (Magi come from the East) Isaiah 43:16-21 ("I am doing a new thing, now it springs forth") from the East)

American Baptist Women's Ministries' Advent Worship Series is free. [Donations are welcome.](#) Your donation will allow American Baptist Women's Ministries to continue providing programs, resources, and leadership training for our ministries with women and girls



The American Baptist Women's Ministries will meet on Wednesday, Dec 18 at 9:30 in Elliott Hall. Janet Wolken will be hostess and also lead our Bible study on James 1:5. It has been great to see how each of these scriptures relates to our theme of "Be Strong, Be Courageous". Jan Lee will present the program about the region project and an offering will be taken for that project. All women are invited to come and enjoy the time of fellowship and learn more about the ministry of American Baptist Women, locally, regionally and nationally.

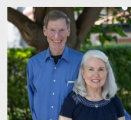
Mid-Winter Missions Conference

Mark your calendars for the 2025 Mid-Winter Missions Conference, January 17-18, 2025, at Prairie Homestead in Wichita, KS. Global Consultants for International Ministries, Jeanine and Walt White will be the guest speakers. Registration and hotel accommodation information will be shared soon.

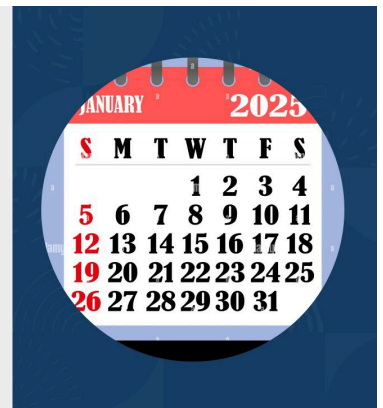
Save the Date:
January 17-18, 2025

Mid Winter
Missions Conference

Location: Prairie Homestead,
Wichita



Guest Speakers:
Jeanine and Walt White
Global Consultants
International Ministries





Providing food boxes to one of the thousands of people in Ukraine who are still in great need, homeless, and displaced.

In her latest journal, [Global Consultant Kristy Engel](#) shares her heart about what she has seen and experienced while continuing to serve in Ukraine. She wrote it on the 1,000th day since the war began. "24,000 consecutive hours," she writes, "of missiles, drones...loss of life. Hours upon hours hiding, running, and sitting in darkness."

The journal is a mix of the stark reality many have forgotten as time has passed *and* the hope that only God can bring in the middle of crisis and devastation.

"Imagine what life would be like if you were born in Kyiv and not Kansas City. Or Odessa and not Orlando," she writes. There is something powerful about remembering our shared humanity and taking a moment to think about the reality facing tens of thousands of people today.

Although donations, volunteers, and government funding have decreased (or stopped completely in some cases), the need has not; it has remained unchanged, making resources scarce. And yet..."Where there is hope, there is love, and where there is love, there is God."

Kristy shares how God is seen through the laughter and voices of children and the boxes of food brought to the shelter. She encourages us to pray, learn, and share if we cannot give or go. The work is far from over in Ukraine and it is not easy, but she (and we) can "choose hope over despair, action over silence, and love over hate.

Pray for Kristy, our ministry partners in Ukraine and the people they serve, that God would provide for their needs and encourage their souls.



Welcome to Bethlehem, an

Immersive Living Nativity

December 6-7-8, 2024

**Tours Departing from 5:45pm until
8:30pm each evening.**

FREE ADMISSION!

Join us at Camp Chippewa, 2577

Idaho Road, Ottawa, Ks 66067

Parking Onsite — Local Artisans

Free Hot Cocoa, Coffee, & Cookies

**DRESS WARMLY for this 45 minute
walk through Bethlehem!**

**Accessibility: Volunteer driven Golf
carts available**

**Reservations: Encouraged for Large
groups or special needs**

Please email

obc.bethlehem.project@gmail.com

Visitor

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410 S. Hickory Street P.O. Box 308
Ottawa, KS 66067



John Kimbrel 12-2
Rachel Smith 12-2
Isabella Lewis 12-3
Caroline Robinson 12-4
Jacqueline Robinson 12-4
Kennedy Huggard 12-9
Lola Linck 12-10
Mel Winstone 12-10
Mari Martin 12-16
Spencer Testorff 12-19
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Elijah Fast 12-20
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