

# FIRSTLIFE

HOW WE SHARE THE CHRISTMAS STORY  
BY VINCE VAWTER



First Baptist's tradition of putting up a life-size nativity scene is more than 25 years old. It has become a staple of the holiday season for the community, but what exactly goes into making this iconic scene "appear" each year?

A crew of around a dozen church members gathers soon after Thanksgiving to begin the process. First, the fiberglass figures, the wooden replica of the stable and the dozen or so pieces of the heavy plywood platform are removed from the storage area beneath Trentham Hall. Multiple loads with a truck and trailer are required to haul the heavy pieces up steep Walnut Street to the front steps of the church.

When the superstructure is complete, the crew lifts the 14 giant figures onto the platform. These are made of a fiberglass resin over a structure of metal. The wise men and camel are the heaviest, each weighing around 125 pounds. The crew then spends a good amount of time debating where each wise man goes, which way the angels face, and how the animals should be situated. Someone usually reminds the crew that a picture was taken the year before but no one can ever remember who took it. Miraculously, all the figures find their proper places each year.

The nativity scene is the brainchild of Jim Wright, a local attorney who saw something similar at the Opryland Hotel and commissioned an artist to build it. Church member Tommy Nipper was the mastermind behind platform construction, which have held up well these many years.

Stories connected to the nativity scene are legendary, such as the year the Knoxville Police Department called the church to report that one of our "lost sheep" was found on Gay Street, thanks to some college-age pranksters. It was returned unharmed.

Of course, what goes up must come down. Soon after the first of the year, another crew takes everything apart and hauls the platform and figures back to storage. Most years the upright figures are heavier due to rainwater and/or snow collecting in the cavities of the bases where it freezes. The ice must be chipped out of the bases and the figures dried before they go back on their pallets and are put away for the year.

In addition to keeping the figures nicely painted, church members occasionally must make fiberglass repairs, such as rebuilding a wise man's broken finger or patching an angel's trumpet. But that's another story.

## WEEKLYUPDATES

### Last Week's Attendance

Sunday School	335
First Community	85
11:00 am	274
Deaf	52
Worship Total	411

### Thank You for Your Prayers!

An updated Prayer List can be picked up in the Welcome Center or in your Sunday School class.

If you would like to receive the Prayer List by email, contact Kim Pieratt at [kpieratt@fbcknox.org](mailto:kpieratt@fbcknox.org).

Monthly Budget	Oct '17	FY 2017/18 YTD
Unified Expenses	\$174,797	\$651,600
Unified Receipts	\$157,229	\$574,542
Offering	\$140,599	\$489,150
Transfer from Designated	\$6,580	\$48,787
Kitchen	\$3,450	\$10,206
Parking Lot	\$6,600	\$26,400
Estate Gifts	\$0	\$0
Less: Money moved to Missions	(\$6,875)	(\$27,500)
Total Receipts	\$150,354	\$547,042
Excess/Deficit	(\$24,443)	(\$104,558)

### First Baptist Knoxville Contacts

865-546-9661 | [info@fbcknox.org](mailto:info@fbcknox.org)

**Richard Buerkle**, Minister of Music & Worship

**Scott Claybrook**, Minister with Young Adults

**Arthur Clayton**, Minister of Congregational Mission and Minister with the Deaf

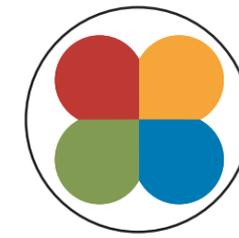
**Pam Neal**, Minister for Administration

**Tom Ogburn**, Senior Pastor

**Susan Tatum**, Minister with Children & Families

**Dave Ward**, Minister Emeritus

**Ben Winder**, Minister with Youth & Families



# FIRSTBAPTIST KNOXVILLE

11:00 AM | DECEMBER 17, 2017

### Order of Worship

Prelude Rhonda Carpenter

**"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring"**  
J.S. Bach

Call to Worship Sanctuary Choir

**"Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming"**  
PLEADING SAVIOR

Christians all, Your Lord is coming, drawing near in holy birth.  
Ring the bells and sound the trumpets, let your music fill the earth.  
Dance and move to show God's glory; kneel and pause to hear God's word.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Rise and let your songs be heard.

\*Advent Reading Sanctuary Choir with Belltone Believers,  
Congregation and Zack and Ann Cole

**"Come, Lord Jesus, Come"**  
Joel Raney

Words by CHARLES WESLEY Music by JOEL RANEY



Leader: Advent is marked by a spirit of joy and celebration.

**Congregation: With joyful hearts we celebrate the coming King.**

Leader: Advent is a time to open our eyes to our many blessings.

**Congregation: With joyful hearts we celebrate the coming King.**

Leader: Advent is a time to appreciate the bonds of human love.

**Congregation: With joyful hearts we celebrate the coming King.**

Leader: Advent is a time to remember the promise of God.

**Congregation: With joyful hearts we celebrate the coming King.**

Today we light three candles – the candle of hope, the candle of peace, and the candle of joy. The light of this third candle reminds us that we have no reason to be fearful or anxious, because God has sent us a Savior. We should be glad in this affirmation of God's love for us and pledge to serve him faithfully with joy-filled hearts.

Welcome

Pam Neal

See pictures and read the full story at: [fbcknox.org/firstlife-blog](http://fbcknox.org/firstlife-blog)

Children's Sermon Susan Tatum  
[Four year-olds and Kindergarteners who are attending Passage (Children's Worship) will be escorted at this time to the Kids Connection hallway.]

\*Hymn 85 Congregation  
"Christians All, Your Lord Is Coming"  
PLEADING SAVIOR

Pastoral Prayer Tom Ogburn  
\*Hymn 140 Congregation  
"Jesus Came to Dwell Among Us"  
HARLAN

Scripture Reading (1 Peter 2:9-10) Susan Tatum  
Offertory Prayer Ben Winder  
Offertory Sanctuary Choir  
"My Soul Rejoices in the Lord"  
Joseph Martin  
Jill Hobby, soloist

Behold, a virgin shall conceive. A virgin shall conceive; and she will bear a Son, and she will bear a Son; and they will call His name Emmanuel. Emmanuel, God is with us. Emmanuel, God is with us.

My soul rejoices in the Lord. My heart exalts my Savior; for He regards me with His love, and shows to me His favor. My soul rejoices in His light; and I am fill with wonder. His grace speaks softly as the rain. His truth resounds like thunder.

Glory be to God on high. Glory, laud, and magnify.  
I can hear the angel cry, "Call the baby, Jesus."

Rejoice, ye people; lift your song. The time has come for singing. Lift your voices loud and strong, till all the world is ringing. Glory be to God on high. Glory, laud, and magnify. Lift your voices to the sky. Praise the name of Jesus.

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free. My soul rejoices in the Lord. My heart exalts the Savior. From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in Thee. My soul rejoices in my God. My soul rejoices in my God.

Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art.  
Dear desire of every nation. Joy! Joy! Joy! (x2) Joy of every longing heart.

Glory be to God on high. Glory, laud, and magnify.  
Lift your voices to the sky. Praise the name of Jesus. I will sing alleluia! (x2)  
My soul rejoices in the Lord. (x2) I'll call my baby Jesus. All shall call Him Jesus.

Sermon Tom Ogburn  
"A Royal Priesthood"  
1 Peter 2:9-10

\*Hymn of Response 120 Congregation  
"Emmanuel"  
MCGEE

Sharing of Public Decisions  
\*Spoken Benediction Tom Ogburn  
\*Sung Benediction Congregation  
"Go Tell It on the Mountain"  
GO TELL IT  
Chorus, Stanza 2, Chorus

Organ Postlude Rhonda Carpenter  
"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"  
Paul Laubengayer

\*Congregation is asked to stand as you are able.

## SERMONNOTES

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### A Special Welcome to Our Guests

We are glad you have joined us today! We invite you to the Welcome Center following the service, where we have a gift for each guest and more information about First Baptist Knoxville.

### Worshipping with Children

As a family discipling church we desire to come alongside families, enabling them to raise their children to be all God is calling them to become. We welcome your family to worship together!

All Children are invited to worship using the children's bulletin, which is available at all entrances, and to come to the front of the Sanctuary for the Children's Sermon during the service.

Children 3 and under may attend Preschool Extended Session on the Education Building 1st floor.

Children age 4 – Kindergarten may attend Passage, our children's worship experience on the Education Building 2nd Floor following the Children's Sermon.

**Restrooms are located in the hallway directly behind the choir loft.**

**Hearing devices are available in the Reception Office courtesy of the Senior Adult Ministry.**

# SUNDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Throughout the month of December, we have a goal of giving \$20,000 to mission through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (IMB) and the Offering for Global Missions (CBF). Please pray about how you might contribute and change lives.

### Inclement Weather Policy

If Knox County Schools close on a weekday, we cancel all activities that day, including meetings. For weekend activities, we will make decisions based on conditions and share them with you, posting closings or delays on local television stations, [fbcknox.org](http://fbcknox.org), and our Facebook ([fb.com/firstbaptistknoxville](https://fb.com/firstbaptistknoxville)). The 11 am service will be held each Sunday. If you have any questions, contact the church office.



### Winter Schedule

- Sanctuary Choir will continue meeting every week *besides* December 27
- December 24** - Regular Sunday morning schedule plus our Christmas Eve Service at 5 pm
- December 25-26 & January 1** - Offices closed
- January 10** - regular activities resume

### Christmas Eve

Regular Morning Services | Candlelight Service, 5 pm

Since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, we will have our annual evening service in addition to our regular Sunday morning services. This means First Community, Sunday School, and the 11 am service are all happening as normal. At 5 pm, we will have our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with the doors opening at 4:15 pm. This service normally fills up fast, so arrive early for a good parking spot and a good seat.



### End-of-Year Giving

Through December 31

The church offices will be open to receive year-end gifts through December 29 at 5 pm. However, you may continue make contributions until December 31 at 12 pm through our online giving portal: [give.fbcknox.org](http://give.fbcknox.org). Any gift given before this date will count toward your 2017 charitable giving tax deduction. We are grateful for your generosity and what it means in the life and ministry of our church family. For a list of ways you can give, check out [fbcknox.org/yearendgive](http://fbcknox.org/yearendgive).



### Be On Our Security Team | Orientation Meeting

January 14, 12:15 pm, 242, Lunch Provided

In the wake of the church shooting in Texas, we would like to enhance our Security Team and invite anyone who would like to be involved to this orientation meeting. We have multiple ways you can serve, some of which can be done while sitting in worship. RSVP to Pam Neal at [pneal@fbcknox.org](mailto:pneal@fbcknox.org) if you are interested in attending.

### 175th Anniversary Update

Kick-Off Celebration: January 21, 10:30 am | Luncheon to Follow

Our 175th Anniversary is just around the corner. At the Kick-Off Celebration, we will unveil plans for the 175th year, as well as introduce The Anniversary Campaign, which is geared toward preparing our church building for the next generation of believers. Tickets for this event will go on sale soon. Check back here for more updates, or sign up to receive our special 175th Anniversary Email at [fbcknox.org/175](http://fbcknox.org/175).