

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

FAITH FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH

SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

“Knitted Together”

Whether they're ugly or beautiful, scarves, sweaters, mittens, and hats are some of the most popular homemade and store-bought gifts of the season; and all it takes are two needles, a ball of yarn, and some well-placed knots. The word “knit” actually comes from the word “knot,” and it refers to the strong binding of threads. The word “knit” also occurs in the Bible. Between the Old and New Testaments, the exact word is used six times. References similar to knitting are found in other places as well. In I Samuel 18:1, it talks about the soul of David being knit with the soul of his best friend Jonathan by the love they had for one another.

That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;” – Colossians 2:2

Ephesians and Colossians talk about how the whole body of the Church is “knit together in love” (Colossians 2:2, Colossians 2:19, and Ephesians 4:16). In Hosea 11:4 the Lord talks about the nation of Israel and says “I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.” When God sent Jesus to this world to die on the cross, He was knitting our hearts together with his, drawing us with threads of grace, and weaving our lives into a tapestry for his glory. His sufficiency becomes intertwined with our need, and our earthly lives become cross-stitched with his eternal purpose.

This is the essence of Christmas; and as Christians, we should look past our church gatherings and programs to see those in the world who may not know Christ. The mission of Christ dying for our sins knits us together with him, and that's the only hope for every single soul in the world. The apostle Paul was compelled by the love of Christ to share the Gospel with everyone. He said, “Woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel”. What better time than Christmas for Christians to cultivate a similar burden? This year, ask yourself: Who around me needs to feel the warmth of the Savior's love and the shelter of Christian community? It could be a family member, a friend, someone at the store that you've never crossed paths with before. We are to be lights that share the Gospel. The Bible doesn't point out that we are to share it only with people we know, but with EVERYONE. (The majority of this article came from a portion of the December issue of David Jeremiah's *Turning Points*.)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Miss Betty and her mother

Crystal and Troy – health

David Neal – health

Kaye and Gary as they search for jobs

Barry and his health

David and Carolyn Lawson

Barbara and her health

Lecia Handy – recovering from a fall

Ann – health concerns

Denise's niece

Steve Miller's friend with heart trouble

Tim Owensby's mom and her upcoming surgery

Marcus Lawson

Miranda and Tim Owensby

Our church: we want to see it grow in number, but first we need to see our congregation growing in spirit and knowledge of the Bible. We need to find our desire and zeal for the Lord.

Pastor Vic, Associate Pastor Josh Maness, and our other teachers and leaders

(If you ever have a request that you want added to this list, email us at: faithfreewill@gmail.com)

WEB UPDATES

The facebook page has really taken off in the last month. We are up to 2,250 followers! On average, we gain about 20-30 new likes each week. This is an awesome outlet for sharing the Gospel. Facebook allows you to share tiny pieces of information or images quickly and because of the brevity of most posts, more people read them. As we all know, all it takes is one small thought to get us thinking about the bigger picture.

I want to apologize regarding the website. Since I started back to work I have struggled with managing my time correctly. I haven't put as much time and energy into the site as I was when I wasn't working, but I'm trying to change that. Church should come before all other things and I have let things (mostly Netflix) get in my way. Again, I'm sorry for slacking on my responsibilities.

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas and New Year's

Thanksgiving has come and gone very quickly. I pray that everyone enjoyed theirs and had a chance to reflect on the many things that God has blessed us with.

December is a busy month for all of us for holiday reasons and the same is true at church. We have several dinners and special events coming up.

- **Wednesday, December 10th:** Men's and Women's Bible Study at **7pm**
- **Saturday, December 13th:** Ladies Breakfast at J&S Cafeteria off of Wendover Ave. The event begins at **9am** and everyone is bringing a \$5 gift to exchange.
- **Wednesday, December 17th:** Men's and Women's Bible Study at **7pm**
- **Sunday, December 14th:** Christmas Program Practice at **2pm. NO EVENING SERVICE.**
- **Saturday, December 20th:** Christmas Dinner. The event begins at **5pm**. Everyone is invited and encouraged to wear an "ugly" sweater. There is a sign-up sheet for food on the table in the foyer at church. We also have some photo booth items similar to the setup that we had on Old Fashioned Sunday.
- **Sunday, December 21st:** Christmas Program at **6pm**. If you have gifts/cards for church members, the best time to hand them out is after the program. The White Christmas Offering will also be taken up on this day.
- **Wednesday, December 24th:** **NO BIBLE STUDY**
- **Wednesday, December 31st:** New Year's Eve Service at 7pm. Josh and Vic will be delivering messages to ring in the new year (but have promised not to hold until midnight ☺). We will be having finger foods and snacks after the services.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP

I know there are lots of charities and organizations that ask for donations and money around this time of year, but I spoke with my cousin this week who is currently serving in the US Army and is stationed in West Africa -specifically in Monrovia, Liberia. His unit is over there dealing with the Ebola outbreak and they are expecting to be there for another 5 months or so. He said that they are having a hard time keeping enough hygiene, laundry, and snack supplies. There are about 600 US soldiers over there, but he is in charge of 15. My mom and I are fixing a few boxes of stuff to send to them. If anyone wants to donate anything, I'll be getting those ready in the next week or so. I'll be fixing them a few more times between now and spring. He said the most requested items are:

- Laundry Soap: (individually packaged – either small boxes/bottles or the pods that you throw in the wash. He said they are easier to divide up than a large box/bottle).
- Hygiene Products: I'm guessing travel sizes work better again for dispersing. Deodorant (average temps are 90-high and 70-low year round), shampoo, soap, disposable razors, etc.
- Snacks: (requested ones are: Vienna Sausages, Captain's Wafer crackers, Sour Cream and Chives crackers, pretzels, peanuts, sunflower seeds) Pretty much anything that won't melt and has a decent shelf life.