

Encourager

Walker Baptist Church

December '22/January '23



www.walkerbc.org

Activities described in the Encourager and on the calendar are subject to change as needed. The online calendar is kept up to date when changes occur. You can access the updated version on the website.

“Let us not give up meeting together. . . but let us encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the day approaching.” – Hebrews 10:25



“For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6 NLT)

These familiar words offer us a glimpse into the true nature of Christ. He is the Son of God, the Savior of the World, the Suffering Servant, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords – yet he is also a personal and intimate face of the divine who desires to know us fully. THAT is the Christ that the Father sent to the world on that very first Christmas. Our Advent sermon series this year is designed to help us look more closely at these very personal aspects of Jesus Christ. Please join us this Christmas season as we build our faith through Advent by experiencing together these messages...

11/27	He Shall Be Called Wonderful Counselor
12/4	He Shall Be Called Mighty God
12/11	He Shall Be Called Everlasting Father
12/18	He Shall Be Called Prince of Peace
12/24	She Will Call Him Immanuel

It's fitting that the calendar year ends with an emphasis on the coming of the Savior into the world and into our lives, for that renewed focus is then something that we can take fresh into the new year. With that in mind, here's a glimpse into how I would like to see our church enter 2023. Our Wednesday night adult study was based on a book by Vance Pitman called **The Life of a Jesus Follower**. In it, the author describes three levels of relationships that Jesus modeled for us. First, his relationship with God the Father. The key word for this relationship is **Abide**. Next, his relationship with his disciples. The key word is **Connect**. Finally, his relationship with the world, and the key word is **Share**. The author's point is that Christ followers should also focus on these three relationships (with Christ, with the church, and with unbelievers).

The relationship-emphasis in Pitman's book really spoke to me, and has continued to do so, even after we have finished the study. I sense that God is asking us to take it one step further, so we will move into 2023 with this theme: **Pray. Love. Serve**. This will be our mission statement for 2023.

Pray. Our first-level relationship commitment is to God. We strengthen that relationship through ongoing communication with him in prayer, which leads to worship, honor, reverence, respect, and obedience.

Love. Our second-level relationship commitment is to one another (the church). The New Testament is filled with challenges and exhortations to love one another, encourage one another, challenge one another, etc.

Serve. Our third-level relationship commitment is to the world. Our mission is to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the best way we can do that is through our actions. We will serve our fellow man in the spirit of Jesus, and do so with generosity and grace, for that is how Jesus reached us.

There you have it – the first 3 sermons for 2023. Our Mission Statement for Walker Baptist Church. Pray. Love. Serve. May we do so with joy as we follow Jesus in 2023.

Your Pastor,

Chuck

Comfort Zones

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. —James 2:14-17 (NIV)

Comfort zones are nice. We all like them. They are the places in life where we feel the most at home and the most “in our element.” They are the places where we thrive and achieve our best performance with the least amount of effort. They are also the places where we are able to rest and get refreshed most effectively. The Cambridge English Dictionary defines a comfort zone as “a situation in which you feel comfortable and you do not have to do anything new or difficult.”

Some of us would like for life itself to be characterized this way. Sounds nice, doesn’t it? A life which has no challenges, no disappointments, no hurdles, no pain.... Of course, the part about there being nothing “new” does not appeal to many people because it denotes boredom and the status quo. We like new and exciting and interesting things for the most part – as long as they fall within our comfort zone.

Everyone’s comfort zone is different. We are all created uniquely, and each of us has had a unique set of circumstances growing up that helped to shape us into the person we are. So each of us has a different idea of what is good and desirable. Some of us may believe that God created us to live only within our comfort zone; therefore, whenever we are outside of it, something is wrong. We tend to scurry back toward the things we like and avoid uncomfortable circumstances the same way we would avoid being in a blizzard without a coat.

But just think: was God’s purpose for us to live our entire lives within comfort zones? What does the life of Jesus demonstrate to us about being comfortable? Could it be that God has a greater purpose for those times when we feel the most vulnerable and exposed? Could it be that the challenging times are the ones during which God knows we will grow the most? Are there enough rhetorical questions in this paragraph?

Even a casual reading of the life of Jesus will show that His life was anything but comfortable. There is a lot He could have done to make it more comfortable if He had so desired. But He chose the difficult path and the confrontations and the demanding ministry schedule because that was His purpose for being here. Ultimately, He would choose to cooperate with God the Father in the most UN-comfortable endeavor possible: taking upon Himself the sins of the world and suffering horribly as the Romans crucified Him – and dying emotionally as His Father turned His face away from Jesus. Yet now it is possible for us to have forgiveness and eternal life because Jesus gave His life for us and chose both to live and to die outside of His comfort zone.

Having said all this... I am not in favor of being a spiritual cowboy, running out and putting ourselves in difficult situations just because we want to show God we are willing to suffer. No, there is only one type of sacrifice that is pleasing to God — the kind that results from obedience to Him. This involves the challenges that He intentionally leads us toward or allows in our lives. We don’t need to go out looking for things we dislike or that make us uncomfortable in order to impress God.

With a strategy like that, we will overextend ourselves and just get exhausted instead of growing. On the other hand, let’s be ready when God nudges us and opens our eyes to an opportunity for ministry right in front of us and whispers to our hearts, “Go for it!”

James holds up a mirror to his reader several times in his short letter. He describes a person in a given situation and effectively says, “Check it out... is this you? Well, if so, you need to acknowledge God’s truth and obey Him.” In the example shown in our passage, we see that a believer doesn’t need to wait for instruction about whether or not to help someone in need – we already know God’s will on that particular matter. We may just need some clarification about the best way to go about doing it. James challenges us to live true to what we already know to be the will of God. And we can find out plenty just by opening up the Word of God.

The times of life in which you will grow the fastest are those you spend outside of your comfort zone. These times of challenge and growth are the ones that will best allow you to become the person God desires you to be, fulfilling His purposes in this world. And the greatest satisfaction you can gain during your time on earth is the satisfaction that results from doing the will of God, whether it is in or out of your comfort zone.

Walking with You, *Andy*



WEEK OF PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

December 4–11, 2022



Every day, 157,690 people enter eternity without the hope of Jesus. Please join us as we observe the Week of Prayer for International Missions, where Southern Baptists pray for IMB missionaries, their ministries and the unreached people and places they serve.

We pray for missions around the world
<https://www.imb.org/pray/week-of-prayer/>

LEGACY PLANNING DINNER - January 15, 2023, 5:00 pm
Guest Speaker: Bill Gruenewald, President
Tennessee Baptist Foundation

Greetings, Walker Baptist Church Family!



Like many of you, I have started my Christmas baking in preparation for the holiday season. I am reminded of how I developed an interest in baking bread many years ago. One of my main inspirations was Peter Reinhart, who wrote several in-depth cookbooks on baking history, recipes, and techniques. What really drew me to his writing was the parallels he made between his philosophies on baking and Christian principles. As I’ve been making some of my holiday favorites, I’ve been reflecting on the lessons I learned from Peter Reinhart along with some Scriptures that have been on my mind.

Most bread is comprised of only four ingredients: flour, water, salt, and yeast. However, there is a LOT of variation in those four ingredients, particularly in the flour and the yeast. Different types of flour are used throughout the world, mainly correlating to the grains grown in a particular region. Likewise, yeast is a fungus that exists in various strains. This is especially true in a sourdough, which is made from the native yeast in the air. Because of this, the flavor of the bread changes depending on where you are. This variation in ingredients is compounded by other factors like ingredient ratios, environmental differences, and technical skills, and something that started out as simple suddenly becomes complicated.

Psalm 119:130 NIV says “The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.” Each of us is a variation of the “ingredients” that comprise what it is to be created in God’s image. The variance within us is caused by cultural differences, unique sets of circumstances, and many other factors, but ultimately it is those same basic components that make us who we are. This simplicity can be deceptive, however, because it is only through following God’s “recipe” that He reveals to us through His Word and prayer that we become something radically different and much greater than our initial raw ingredients.

As you work on pouring your own raw ingredients into recipes (both literally and figuratively) in the coming days, there are some exciting music-related items to mark on your calendar. These include our church’s Christmas program during the service on Sunday, December 11th; church-wide caroling on Wednesday night, December 14th; a Christmas Eve candlelight service the evening of Saturday, December 24th; and The Common Bond Quartet out of Kentucky leading our morning worship on Sunday, January 8th. I pray that each of these experiences, as well as others with your church, friends, and family, will help you to have a blessed Christmastime as you rejoice in the gift of Jesus Christ that God has given to you.

In Christ,

Troy Guttormson



December 4	Linda Garnette, Mary Stinson	January 1	Chris & Kelley Wheeler
December 11	Pam Johnson, Janice Vaughan	January 8	Sandy Godwin, Austin Godwin
December 18	Emily Sanders, Kay LaFever	January 15	Alexandria Austin, Louise Austin
December 25	No Services	January 22	Jennifer Leonard, Kody Leonard
NURSERY VOLUNTEERS		January 29	Kay LaFever, Kate Lee

CHURCHWIDE FUNDRAISER BREAKFAST FOR LOTTIE MOON OFFERING



8:00 AM, DECEMBER 11, 2022

FELLOWSHIP HALL



SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES MEET AT
REGULARLY SCHEDULED TIME



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11
10:15 AM

*Includes: Children, Youth,
Sanctuary Choir, a Duet,
and a Solo.*

FAMILY CHRISTMAS
CAROLING

Wednesday, December 14
6:00 pm



Everyone is invited
Hot chocolate & cookies will
be served after caroling.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY (SHE-SHED)

During the month of December, we will take an in-depth look at the lives of those involved in the Christmas story which will culminate in our Christmas party on December 21st with a fresh look at the scriptures in their historical and cultural context.

Beginning in January, we will journey through Genesis to Revelation stringing together the pearls of this timeless and transformational story of God and His people.

Jennifer

LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING



DECEMBER, 2022
OUR GOAL — \$3200



The Missions and Outreach Team will collect socks during the month of January for those who are experiencing homelessness. All donations received will go to Home Street Home Ministries to be passed out in the camps that they visit. Please bring a pair (or 10) of warm socks during the month of January. A collection box will be placed in the hallway outside the sanctuary for your donations.



AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2
12-6 pm

Registration is available but not required at redcrossblood.org. Search for WMBC
A \$10 Amazon gift card will be emailed to donors.



“Our annual upcoming deacon / staff meal and fellowship will be a luncheon and we will be especially honoring all inactive/former deacons ... Date, time and menu will be announced as soon as possible and transportation will be made available if needed ... We encourage all deacons to RSVP to Tom Massey or any deacon as soon as you can so we can coordinate with Marti ... Our heartfelt thank you to all who have served so graciously and sacrificially over the years.” Shalom, Bill

DEACON OF THE WEEK

December 4	Bill Reitmeyer	CALL	January 1	Wally Whidby
December 11	Bobby Hargrove	CHURCH	January 8	Ed Madden
December 18	Doug Leonard	OFFICE	January 15	Tom Massey
December 25	Chris Wheeler	FOR	January 22	Bill Reitmeyer
		CONTACT	January 29	Bobby Hargrove
		INFORMATION		

“Donations for staff bonuses are being collected through December 14th and will be given to our staff on Sunday morning the 18th ... You may give your donation to Ed Madden, place it in the offering plate or make it online ... Thank you for supporting our wonderful staff.”
The Deacons



SUNDAY SCHEDULE		STAFF	
Sunday School	9:00 AM	Chuck McElhannon	Pastor
		Andy Wolverton	Associate Pastor
Worship (live and on YouTube)	10:15 AM	Wally Whidby	Youth Minister
(Nursery available)		Troy Guttormson	Worship Leader
WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE		CONTACT INFORMATION	
See Calendars		Church Telephone	615-794-7000
		<u>Emails</u>	
		Church	ask@walkerbc.org
		Chuck	chuck@walkerbc.org
		Andy	andy@walkerbc.org
		Wally	wally@walkerbc.org
		Troy	troy@walkerbc.org
Social Media Links			
https://www.walkerbc.org			
https://www.facebook.com/wbcfranklin/			
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJVlu3AI5oqidRnJMY03Ssw			

December 2022

REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:15 AM WORSHIP SERVICE
(live and online)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE—thru December 21 Fellowship Dinner 5:30-6:00 Kids’ Missions & Music 6:00-7:30 Youth Fish Tank 6:00-7:30 Adult Bible Study 6:30-7:30 Adult Choir 7:30-8:30				1	2 Freda Joslin Greg Olchowej   Blood Drive	3 Everett Whidby 
4 Pam Maples 	5 1:00 pm Prayer Time	6	7	8	9	10
WEEK OF PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS						
11 LOTTIE MOON BREAKFAST 	12 Natalee Perkins 	13	14 	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Louise Austin 	22	23 Ann Norwood 	24 
	26Jerry Wolverton 	27	28 NO EVENING ACTIVITIES	29	30	31

January 2023

REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL
10:15 AM WORSHIP SERVICE
(live and online)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Shirley Newell 	2	3	4 Nick Lunn 	5 Austin Godwin 	6 Debra Mangrum Sherry Sanders Donna Williams 	7
8 Trish Richards  Common Bond Quartet in morning service	9 1:00 pm Prayer Time	10	11	12	13 Annabelle Stelter 	14
 5:00 pm Dinner and Legacy Planning	16 	17 Lori Chunn 	18	19	20	21
22 4pm All-Teams Mtg 5pm Ministry Update	23 Glenn Gatlin  1:00 pm Prayer Time	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31			WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE Fellowship Dinner 5:30-6:00 Kids' Missions & Music 6:00-7:30 Youth Fish Tank 6:00-7:30 Adult Bible Study 6:30-7:30 Adult Choir 7:30-8:30	