

REST AND REVIVAL

A 13-Week Sunday Church School Teacher's Guide

First Baptist Church of Romulus, MI

Dates: September 6 – November 29, 2026

Target Audience: Multi-generational (Teenagers to Senior Adults) & Virtual Attendees via fbc-romulus.org

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This 13 week series encourages our congregation and online visitors to be mindful of the LORD's gifts of provision, protection, peace, restoration, and rest. We will regularly renew our faith in the LORD's promise of ultimate salvation—the eternal rest for our souls.

Meditative Verse for the Series (Recited Weekly):

"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'"—Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)

THE 45-MINUTE WEEKLY STRUCTURE

Teachers must adhere to the following schedule to ensure all aspects of the lesson are covered:

- **00–05 Mins | Opening:** Welcome, Opening Prayer, & Collective Recitation of Matthew 11:28-30.
- **05–25 Mins | Exposition:** Scriptural teaching, context, and multi-translation comparison.
- **25–40 Mins | Discussion:** Multi-generational and virtual application using provided questions.
- **40–45 Mins | Reflection:** Final thoughts and Closing Prayer.

PHASE 1: The Divine Foundation of Rest

Week 1: September 6, 2026 – The LORD's Command to Rest

Primary Verse: Genesis 2:1-3 & Exodus 20:8-11 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Mark 2:27 (NIV)

Translation Spotlight: The Amplified Bible (AMP) emphasizes Exodus 20:8 to "keep it holy [set apart for God's glory]," highlighting that rest is a spiritual boundary, not just physical inactivity.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Context:* Start at the very beginning. God did not rest on the seventh day because He was exhausted (Isaiah 40:28); He rested to establish a rhythm and a boundary for His creation.
 - *Teaching Point:* Rest is not a suggestion; it is a Commandment, placed alongside commands against murder and theft. When we refuse to rest, we are essentially telling God that our work is more important than His design.
 - *The Shift:* Jesus reminds us in Mark 2:27 that the Sabbath is a gift *for* us, not a burden placed *on* us. It is a weekly reminder that the world will continue spinning even if we stop working.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** In our fast-paced society (and on social media), why do we tend to treat rest as a reward we must earn rather than a gift and command from God?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Ask senior adults to share historical shifts in the pace of life. Ask teenagers to discuss the pressure of constant digital connection and "FOMO" (Fear Of Missing Out). Ensure online moderators ask this in the chat.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Challenge the class to choose a specific 24-hour block this week to "power down" and rest.

Week 2: September 13, 2026 – Rest as an Act of Trusting Provision

Primary Verse: Exodus 16:14-30 (NLT) (The Double Portion of Manna)

Cross-Reference: Philippians 4:19 (KJV)

Translation Spotlight: The Easy-to-Read Version (EASY) clarifies Exodus 16:29 simply: "The Lord has given you a day of rest." This helps younger audiences understand that God limits our work to expand our faith.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Context:* The Israelites were terrified of starving in the wilderness. God provided Manna but gave strict instructions: gather only what you need, except on the sixth day, when you gather double so you can rest on the seventh.
 - *Teaching Point:* Some Israelites tried to gather on the Sabbath anyway because they lacked trust. Choosing to rest is a declaration of faith. It says, "I trust God's provision on my day off more than my own hustle."
- **Discussion (15 mins):** How does choosing to step away from our daily labors or schoolwork to rest prove that we trust God's provision more than our own efforts?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Focus on how anxiety drives us to overwork. Choosing to rest proves we believe God can do more with our compliance than we can do with our striving.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Pray against financial and academic anxieties that keep the congregation striving instead of trusting.

PHASE 2: Rest in the Midst of the Storm (Peace & Protection)

Week 3: September 20, 2026 – Finding Rest in Green Pastures

Primary Verse: Psalm 23:46 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: John 10:11 (ESV)

Translation Spotlight: Compare the NLT's "He lets me rest" to the King James Version (KJV) "He maketh me to lie down." Sometimes God must strategically halt our schedules to protect us from exhaustion.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* Sheep are easily frightened and will only lie down if they feel entirely safe from predators, bugs, and friction within the flock. The Good Shepherd creates the conditions required for true rest.
 - *The Hard Truth:* Sometimes we refuse to rest, so the Lord "maketh" us lie down through sickness, closed doors, or forced pauses. This is His grace preventing our burnout.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** Verse 3 talks about renewing/restoring our souls. What area of your life right now (mental, emotional, or spiritual) feels the most depleted, and how can you surrender it to the Good Shepherd?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Create an open space for virtual text -chat participants and physical attendees to confess burnout. Emphasize that the Shepherd leads; we must choose to follow.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Remind the class that green pastures are found by following the Shepherd, not by forging our own paths.

Week 4: September 27, 2026 – The Secret Place of Protection

Primary Verse: Psalm 91:14 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Proverbs 18:10 (NIV)

Translation Spotlight: The English Standard Version (ESV) uses "will abide in the shadow of the Almighty." Abiding denotes permanent residency, not a temporary visit during a crisis.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* Rest is deeply tied to our sense of safety. Psalm 91 promises protection, but the prerequisite is found in verse 1: we must *dwell* in the shelter of the Most High.
 - *Application:* We cannot expect the benefits of God's sanctuary if we only treat Him like an emergency room.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** What is the difference between visiting God only when things go

wrong versus "living" or "abiding" in His protective presence daily?

- *Teacher Prompt:* Visiting is transactional; abiding is relational. True rest is found when we remain close to God even when life is stable.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Pray for a shift from "transactional" faith to "relational" faith.

Week 5: October 4, 2026 – Peace that Outsmarts Our Circumstances

Primary Verse: Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Isaiah 26:3 (KJV)

Translation Spotlight: The Amplified Bible (AMP) states this peace will "guard and garrison your hearts and minds." It acts like a military security force over our thoughts.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* Paul wrote this while imprisoned, proving that God's peace is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of God within the trouble. The antidote to anxiety is prayer wrapped in thanksgiving.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** How can we practice trading our anxious prayers for prayers of thanksgiving, especially when facing unpredictable family, school, or health situations?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Guide the class to see thankfulness as a perspective shifter. It reminds us of God's past faithfulness, which secures our current peace.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Have the class silently name one current anxiety and internally trade it for one thing they are thankful for.

PHASE 3: The Source of Revival (The Persona of Jesus Christ)

Week 6: October 11, 2026 – The Invitation from the Master

Primary Verse: Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT) (*Series Meditative Verse*)

Cross-Reference: Jeremiah 31:25 (ESV)

Translation Spotlight: Compare NLT's "let me teach you" to KJV's "learn of me." Jesus doesn't just offer an abstract concept of rest; He *is* the rest.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* A "yoke" was a heavy wooden harness fitted over the shoulders of oxen. The Pharisees placed heavy religious yokes on the people (rules, legalism). Jesus offers a yoke that is "easy" (well-fitting) and light. He invites us into partnership, where He carries the heaviest part of the load.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** What are the heavy "yokes" or burdens (expectations, past mistakes, grief) that you are carrying today that Jesus is asking you to trade for His light burden?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Acknowledge generational differences —teens may carry peer

expectations; seniors may carry physical frailties or loss. Jesus uniquely fits every individual yoke perfectly.

- **Reflection (5 mins):** Re-read the series verse aloud as a unified class, focusing on the words "I will give you rest."

Week 7: October 18, 2026 – Sleeping Through the Storm

Primary Verse: Mark 4:35-41 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Psalm 4:8 (NIV)

Translation Spotlight: The Easy-to-Read Version (EASY) notes Jesus was "sleeping with his head on a pillow." It highlights His perfect internal rest despite external chaos.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* The disciples were experienced fishermen; if they were panicked, the storm was truly deadly. Yet, Jesus was asleep. Why? Because He knew the Father's will was for them to reach the other side. Peace is not found in a calm sea, but in the presence of the Savior in your boat.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** The disciples asked, "Don't you care that we are going to drown?" When challenges arise, how do we prevent fear from distorting our view of God's love for us?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Recognize that silence from God does not mean absence from God. He is in the boat with us; therefore, the boat cannot sink.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Pray for those currently experiencing "storms" in their health, finances, or families.

Week 8: October 25, 2026 – Solitude and Spiritual Realignment

Primary Verse: Luke 5:15-16 & Mark 6:30-32 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Isaiah 30:15 (ESV)

Translation Spotlight: NIV uses "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." If the sinless Savior required regular periods of isolation to recharge, it is a vital necessity for us.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* Jesus was constantly in demand. Yet, He regularly walked away from the crowds to pray. He understood that you cannot pour out to others if you are spiritually empty. Solitude is the breeding ground for revival.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** For both our in-person members and virtual viewers streaming online, what practical boundaries can we set this week to "withdraw" from noise and spend quiet time with the LORD?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Solicit actionable steps from the class (e.g., turning off phones for 30 minutes, waking up 15 minutes before the household, taking a silent walk).
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Spend 2 minutes of actual, uninterrupted silence in the classroom

before the final prayer.

PHASE 4: Restoration & Spiritual Revival

Week 9: November 1, 2026 – Reviving the Dry Bones

Primary Verse: Ezekiel 37:1-14 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Psalm 85:6 (KJV)

Translation Spotlight: The Amplified Bible (AMP) highlights the "breath of life" entering the dry bones. Revival is entirely a work of God's Holy Spirit breathing into dead situations.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* God asks Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?" God commands Ezekiel to prophesy (speak the Word) over what looks completely hopeless. True revival starts with aligning our words with God's Word over our dead situations.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** What parts of our church community or personal spiritual walks feel like "dry bones" right now, and how can we actively pray for a revival of God's breath?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Look at areas of complacency, dwindling passion, or routine worship. Hope is restored when we remember no situation is too dead for God's breath.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Pray a bold prayer for Holy Spirit revival within First Baptist Church of Romulus.

Week 10: November 8, 2026 – Restoring the Joy of Salvation

Primary Verse: Psalm 51:10-13 & Galatians 6:1 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: 1 John 1:9 (NIV)

Translation Spotlight: KJV reads "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit." True restoration returns the joy that sin or distraction stole away.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* David wrote this after his profound moral failure. He didn't just ask for forgiveness; he asked for his *joy* back. Sin exhausts us. Repentance brings rest and restores our spiritual joy. Once restored, verse 13 says we can then teach others God's ways.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** Why is maintaining the "joy of our salvation" so critical when we are trying to witness to visitors and our online audience?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Joy is magnetic. When the world sees believers who possess an unshakeable joy despite life's struggles, it makes the Gospel message compelling. Grumpy Christians do not attract the lost.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Ask participants to silently examine their hearts for any unconfessed burdens they need to release to regain their joy.

Week 11: November 15, 2026 – Waiting on the LORD for Renewed Strength

Primary Verse: Isaiah 40:28-31 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Psalm 27:14 (KJV)

Translation Spotlight: Compare NLT's "trust in the Lord" to ESV's "they who wait for the Lord." Scriptural waiting is not passive stalling; it is expectant, active anticipation.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* Even youths grow tired and weary. Human strength has a limit. But those who "wait" (like a waiter attentively serving a table, or a person expectantly waiting for a train) receive a divine exchange: they trade their limited exhaustion for God's limitless power.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** How does active waiting on God transform our weariness into a strength that allows us to "soar on wings like eagles"?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Waiting shifts our focus from our limited energy onto God's limitless power. Eagles don't flap their wings to soar; they catch the wind currents. We must catch the current of the Holy Spirit.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Pray for those who are currently in a "waiting season" to not lose heart.

PHASE 5: The Ultimate Gift - Eternal Salvation & Soul Rest

Week 12: November 22, 2026 – The Promised Dwelling Place

Primary Verse: John 14:1-6 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Revelation 21:34 (NIV)

Translation Spotlight: Compare KJV's "In my Father's house are many mansions" with NLT's "many rooms." The emphasis is not on real estate, but on unlimited space and eternal belonging in the presence of God.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* Jesus told His disciples not to let their hearts be troubled because He was preparing a place for them. The ultimate rest is the security of our salvation. Knowing our final destination is secure allows us to endure the temporary turbulence of this life.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** How does keeping our eyes fixed on our permanent home in eternity bring ultimate peace and rest to our temporary troubles on Earth?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* It provides an eternal perspective. Our current trials are fleeting compared to the weight of glory and rest that awaits us forever.

- **Reflection (5 mins):** Express deep gratitude to Jesus (The Way, The Truth, and The Life) for securing our eternal home.

Week 13: November 29, 2026 – The Unbroken Fellowship and Eternal Sabbath

Primary Verse: Hebrews 4:1-11 & Revelation 22:1-5 (NLT)

Cross-Reference: Matthew 25:21 (ESV)

Translation Spotlight: The Amplified Bible (AMP) explicitly describes this in Hebrews 4:9 as a "Sabbath rest [a state of heavenly rest] for the people of God." It signifies the ultimate fulfillment of Genesis 2.

- **Exposition Notes (20 mins):**
 - *Teaching Point:* The physical Sabbath we practice now is just a shadow of the eternal Sabbath to come. In Revelation, we see the end of the story: no more night, no more curse, unbroken fellowship with God. Our souls will finally be perfectly at rest in His presence.
- **Discussion (15 mins):** As we close out this 13-week journey on "Rest and Revival," how has your definition of rest evolved from physical sleep to the security of your eternal soul in Christ?
 - *Teacher Prompt:* Summarize the series. Physical rest handles daily fatigue, but the salvation of our souls solves our eternal restlessness. True revival is living daily in that secure reality.
- **Reflection (5 mins):** Final series prayer, thanking God for His provision, protection, peace, restoration, and ultimate rest.

BEST PRACTICES FOR HYBRID TEACHING (In-Person & Online)

- **Acknowledge the Camera:** Look directly at the camera at least once every 5 minutes to ensure virtual attendees feel seen.
- **Utilize Live Moderators:** Assign a digital team member to paste the *Translation Spotlight* verses straight into your live-streaming chat so online viewers can read along seamlessly.
- **Inclusive Prompting:** Frame your discussion questions with specific shout-outs (e.g., "For our teenagers in the sanctuary and those typing in the chat online, how does this apply to school stress? Now, for our seniors...").

Celebrating Christmas: A Sunday Church School Series Teacher Guide

First Baptist Church of Romulus, MI Dates: December 6, 13, 20, and 27, 2026

Duration: 45 Minutes per lesson

Series Overview & Instructor Guidelines

Welcome to the "Celebrating Christmas" series! Over the next four weeks, we will guide our students through a thoughtful exploration of how we, as a church family, observe the arrival of Christ.

This series is unique. We will briefly acknowledge the historical realities of December 25th and the blending of early Christian traditions with winter festivals. However, our primary goal is to pivot away from secular commercialism and toward the biblical model of honoring Jesus. Since the New Testament does not mandate a yearly birthday celebration, we will look to the shepherds, the wise men, and the teachings of the Apostles to discover our true calling: presenting ourselves to Him in daily worship and using our spiritual gifts to serve one another.

How to Use This Guide:

- **The Verse for Meditation:** Matthew 2:11 serves as our anchor text for all four weeks. Repetition builds familiarity and depth. Encourage students to memorize this verse by the end of the month.
- **Time Management:** Each lesson is designed for 45 minutes. The suggested time blocks are flexible—feel free to adjust based on the flow of your class discussion.
- **Facilitating Discussion:** Your role is to guide, not lecture. Use the provided questions to spark conversation. Allow for silence if students need time to think.
- **The Goal:** The overarching objective is to move students from viewing Christmas as an annual, stressful event to a daily, lifelong practice of presenting themselves and their gifts to Christ.

Lesson 1: December 6 – Out of the Darkness, Into the Light

Verse for Meditation:

"They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." — Matthew 2:11 (NLT)

Objective: To understand the historical origins of December 25th and how early Christians repurposed pagan winter solstice festivals to instead celebrate Jesus as the "Light of the World."

Lesson Outline (45 Minutes)

1. Opening (5 mins)

- **Welcome & Prayer:** Welcome the class and open with a brief prayer asking God to open our hearts to the true meaning of His arrival.
- **Meditation Verse:** Read Matthew 2:11 aloud together.

2. Historical Context (15 mins)

- *Instructor Note: Approach this section factually, assuring students that knowing the history doesn't diminish our faith, but empowers it.*
- **The Date:** Discuss the reality that December 25th was very likely not Jesus' actual birthday. (Shepherds would not typically have their flocks in the fields in the dead of winter).
- **Pagan Origins:** Briefly explain pagan winter festivals (like Saturnalia in Rome or Yule in Northern Europe). These focused on the winter solstice—the darkest time of the year—and celebrated the eventual return of the sun with feasting and gift exchanges.
- **The Early Church's Strategy:** Explain that the early Church chose not to isolate themselves. Instead, they cleverly reclaimed this cultural moment. When the pagan world celebrated the return of the *sun*, Christians celebrated the arrival of the *Son* of God, who brought spiritual light to a dark world (Reference *John 8:12*).

3. Biblical Connection (15 mins)

- **Re-read Matthew 2:11.**
- **Focus on the Wise Men:** Notice how the Wise Men didn't celebrate a "holiday"—they celebrated a person. Their focus was entirely on Jesus. They didn't exchange gifts with one another; they brought reverence and tangible treasures directly to Him.

4. Discussion & Application (10 mins)

- *Ask the Class:* How can we reclaim the cultural, commercialized "Christmas season" today to point back to the Light of the World?
 - *(Prompt them to think of practical actions: how they spend their money, how they interact with stressed retail workers, family traditions they might start or stop, etc.)*
- **Closing Prayer:** Pray for the strength to be a light during this season.

Lesson 2: December 13 – The First Celebrants: Bowing Down

Verse for Meditation:

"They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." — Matthew 2:11 (NLT)

Objective: To examine the only recorded biblical "celebrations" of Christ's birth—those of the shepherds and the wise men—focusing on their immediate response of awe, seeking, and worship.

Lesson Outline (45 Minutes)

1. Opening (5 mins)

- **Welcome & Prayer:** Welcome the class back. Pray for a heart of worship.
- **Meditation Verse:** Recite Matthew 2:11 together. Ask if anyone has memorized it yet!

2. Scripture Exploration (15 mins)

- **The Shepherds (Read Luke 2:15-20):**
 - Discuss their reaction. They were terrified, then hurried to find Jesus.
 - *Key Point:* They brought no physical gifts. They gave the gift of their presence, their testimony (telling others what they saw), and their praise.
- **The Wise Men (Revisit Matthew 2:1-11):**
 - *Key Point:* They traveled a great distance, bringing immense wealth and physical submission ("bowed down").

3. The Heart of the Celebration (10 mins)

- **Contrast with Modern Christmas:** Discuss how modern holidays are often characterized by stress, debt, and rushing.
- **The Biblical Response:** The biblical response to the Incarnation is profoundly simple: drop what we are doing, seek Him, and offer what we have. This is true whether we are like the shepherds (bringing poverty and praise) or the wise men (bringing wealth and resources).

4. Discussion & Application (15 mins)

- *Ask the Class:* Between the Shepherds and the Wise Men, whose response do you relate to more right now in your spiritual journey? (*Are they feeling empty-handed but full of praise, or do they feel they have resources to offer?*)
- *Ask the Class:* What does it look like to practically "bow down" amidst the busyness of the holiday season? (*Encourage specific examples: making time for daily prayer, prioritizing worship over a holiday party, finding quiet moments.*)
- **Closing Prayer:** Pray that the class will find moments to "bow down" this week.

Lesson 3: December 20 – The Missing Command: Presenting Ourselves

Verse for Meditation:

"They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." — Matthew 2:11 (NLT)

Objective: To address the profound truth that the Bible gives no instruction to throw Jesus a birthday party, but rather commands us to offer our whole lives as a continual act of worship.

Lesson Outline (45 Minutes)

1. Opening (5 mins)

- **Welcome & Prayer:** Welcome the class. Pray for understanding of God's true desires for our lives.
- **Meditation Verse:** Recite Matthew 2:11 together.

2. The Theological Pivot (15 mins)

- **The Challenge:** Ask the class: *Why didn't Jesus, Paul, or Peter ever tell the early church to celebrate Christmas?* (Let them guess or discuss briefly).
- **The Answer:** Because God isn't looking for an annual festival; He is looking for our lives. The New Testament focuses on the cross, the resurrection, and our daily walk with Him, rather than His birthdate.
- **The Call to Worship (Read Romans 12:1):**
 - Connect this to our meditation verse. The Wise Men opened their physical treasure chests; Paul calls us to open our hearts and present our very *bodies* as living sacrifices. This is true, spiritual worship.

3. Discussion & Group Discovery (15 mins)

- **Ask the Class:** How does realizing that Christmas is not a "biblically mandated" holiday free us from the legalism and stress of the season? (*This should be a freeing discussion! We don't HAVE to have the perfect tree or the most gifts to be "good Christians."*)
- **Ask the Class:** What "treasure" inside of you is God asking you to present to Him this year? (*This could be a talent, a struggle they need to surrender, their time, or their finances*).

4. Takeaway & Prayer (10 mins)

- **Summary:** Emphasize that the absolute highest form of celebrating Jesus is giving Him our daily obedience.
- **Closing Prayer:** Ask God to help each student present themselves as a living sacrifice.

Lesson 4: December 27 – The Ultimate Gift Exchange: Serving One Another

Verse for Meditation:

"They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." — Matthew 2:11 (NLT)

Objective: To conclude the series and the year by showing that we best honor Christ's arrival by using our God-given spiritual gifts to bless His body (the Church), as taught by the Apostles.

Lesson Outline (45 Minutes)

1. Opening (5 mins)

- **Welcome & Prayer:** Welcome the class for the final lesson of the year! Pray for a strong finish to the series.
- **Meditation Verse:** One final recitation of Matthew 2:11.

2. The Apostolic Standard for Gifting (15 mins)

- **The True Gift Exchange:** We exchange gifts on Christmas day, but God gave us spiritual gifts to exchange with one another *year-round*.
- **Scripture Reading (Read 1 Peter 4:10 and Romans 12:6-8):** Discuss how these verses outline that our gifts are meant to serve others, not just benefit ourselves.
- **Connecting Service to Christ (Read Matthew 25:40):** Jesus said, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Therefore, giving our time, talents, and gifts to the church community is, in fact, giving directly to Christ.

3. Looking Forward to the New Year (15 mins)

- **Transitioning to 2027:** The "Christmas Season" is over, but the work of the Church continues.
- **Vision Casting:** Ask the class to imagine: How will First Baptist Church of Romulus function in 2027 if *everyone* in this room opens their "treasure chests" (spiritual gifts) for the benefit of the church family? What could we accomplish together?

4. Discussion & Application (10 mins)

- **Ask the Class:** What is one specific spiritual gift, talent, or resource you have that you can commit to sharing with this church family in the coming year? (*Encourage them to be specific: volunteering for the youth group, joining the choir, helping with building maintenance, praying for the sick, etc.*)
- **Closing Prayer & Benediction:** Pray a blessing over the class as they enter the New Year, asking God to empower them to use their gifts for His glory.