



December


NEWSLETTER 2024

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First Baptist Church in Hope Valley
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The Hope Valley First Baptist Church family makes followers of Christ and worships God through prayer, fellowship, service and the study of the Holy Bible, testifying to the glory of His Name.



Pastor's Note

When You Don't Feel Like Gathering For Worship

I recently traveled out of state for a short time and while away I thought about the next Bell Tower article on the subject of worship and how to best address the difficult topic of not worshipping with other believers.

This is a sticky issue because whenever it's raised people immediately think they are being judged. While this may occasionally be the reason some people bring up the subject, it's not the reason I'm raising it. My purpose is much simpler and a lot more biblical, it's to "consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

So how does one go about "stimulating" and "encouraging" in a way that results in others considering how to grow in love and do good deeds?

While I was away, an article popped up in my email box entitled, "6 Things to Do When You Don't Feel Like Going to Church." It was written by Dr. Quentin B. Falkena, the pastor of Cornerstone Christian Church in Medford, Oregon. After reading the article I realized Pastor Falkena has done a far better job than I could to "speak the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15), regarding this touchy topic.

So while I enjoy writing my own articles, this month I want to share the words of Pastor Falkena. I would invite you to "consider" his words.

"6 Things to Do When You Don't Feel Like Going to Church."

Early in my ministry, I visited an elderly man in a retirement home whose body and mind had been steadily declining. As a result, he had not been to worship for some time. When I found him, he was sitting alone, rocking back and forth, repeatedly uttering the words, "Take me to church." I was struck that in his condition, the deepest desire of his heart was to worship God in the assembly of His people.

That man died not long after, and I had the opportunity to speak at his memorial service. I told those who had gathered there that God had answered his request. He had been taken to church—not a Sunday worship service, but rather that great assembly (church) of God's people gathered around the throne (Heb. 12:22).

I share the account above because it touches on two crucial aspects of Christian worship. First, this man presents a model of deep personal desire to attend the weekly gathering of God's people for worship. This is something that we all can strive to cultivate. Second, it touches on the reality that when we gather for worship with a local congregation, by God's Spirit, we join with that great assembly in the heavenly places. By the blood of Christ, we enter the presence of God. We will first look at what happens when we come to worship. Then we will consider how to cultivate the desire and practice of weekly worship.

When Christians go to church, we do not merely gather in a local setting. In these earthly assemblies, we are lifted by God's Spirit to His heavenly presence. The great privilege of every Christian, because of our Great High Priest, is to come to the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22) and enter the heavenly Holy of Holies to "offer up a sacrifice of praise . . . the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name" (Heb. 13:15). Understanding this staggering spiritual reality transforms the way we think and how we feel about worship.

We also see throughout the New Testament that the early church gathered for worship on the Lord's Day (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Heb. 10:25). These are joyful scenes as Christians hear God's Word, rejoice in the deliverance from sin, give praise to God in song and prayer for His wondrous works in Christ Jesus, and serve others in love. We are called to continue this weekly practice of gathering for worship on the Lord's Day.

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So, if you are working through feelings of not wanting to go to church, it is important to examine your heart and motives. Humbly bring this to the Lord in prayer: Why do I not feel like going to church? The answer to this question could be a serious spiritual matter or reflect competing priorities that result from the complexities of life.

Sometimes our own sin can keep us from wanting to worship. If this is the case, confess your sin and find the freedom and assurance of forgiveness in Jesus. If perhaps it is the sin of a brother or sister in Christ, lovingly confront him or her and seek reconciliation (Matt. 18:15). If you find that you are not in awe of God, meditate on His attributes until you can ask with the prophet, Who is like God? (Mic. 7:18). If you find worship boring, ponder the spiritual realities highlighted above and discover why your church worships the way it does.

Schedules that are too full, even full of good things, can also be a sinful reason to skip regular worship. If worship is the most important thing to which God calls us—for His glory, for our own good, and for the blessing of others—then we need to cultivate the conviction and discipline to clear the calendar and make worship our highest priority.

There may be other obstacles you face when considering weekly worship. Some of these include the realities and challenges of different stages of life: discipling little children, difficult college studies, demanding work schedules, and debilitating health issues. You might think staying home would be more restful. But in fact, it is Jesus who offers true rest (Matt. 11:28–30). Come to Him and find rest for your soul.

Finally, I want to encourage you to work through the short list below. I hope it will help you develop a deeper desire for weekly worship, anticipating the spiritual realities and blessings of worshiping in God's presence:

1. Pray that God would open the eyes of your heart so that you might know the hope and riches that are yours in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:18).
2. Pray that God would fill you with songs of praise and thanksgiving as you meditate on the great things He has done (Eph. 5:19–20; 1 Peter 2:9).
3. Listen carefully to the Word of God as it is read and proclaimed. Respond in faith to His promises and in obedience to His commands (Col. 3:16).
4. Participate in the public prayers by praying along and bringing those prayers to the Lord through the week (Eph. 6:18).
5. Receive the sacraments with faith and thanksgiving (Luke 22:19–20).
6. Find fellow believers whom you can encourage and serve after worship (Heb. 10:24).

Pastor Jim

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year



Sending warm, heartfelt wishes from our FBHV family to yours.



Monday — December 2, 2024
6:00 PM — Trustees

Sunday — December 8, 2024
5 PM — Women's Meeting before the
"Cookies, Carols, and Cocoa"

Tuesday — December 10, 2024
6:00 PM — Deacons
6:30 PM — Christian Ed.

Wednesday — December 11, 2024
10:00 AM — Nichols Board

Thursday — December 19, 2024
10:00 AM — Missions



7 – Anita Gregory
13 – James McLaughlin
15 – Amanda Tassias
28 – Shirley Soares



"Cookies, Carols and Cocoa"

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 at 6 PM
ALL WELCOME!

There will be community
singing and prayer time in
the sanctuary.
Fellowship and snacks will
follow in the hall.

First Baptist Church
in Hope Valley
1059 Main Street
Hope Valley, RI



First Baptist Church in Hope Valley

Christmas Events

DEC.
8
6 PM

"COOKIES, CAROLS AND COCOA"

There will be community singing and prayer
time in the sanctuary.
Fellowship and snacks will follow in the hall.

DEC.
14
4-6 PM

"ANNUAL HOPKINTON HOLIDAY STROLL"

Stop by and enjoy the luminaries and listen
to Christmas carols while having a hot
cocoa.

DEC.
20
5-6 PM

"BLUE CHRISTMAS"

Is a service of worship designed for
people suffering with pain, loss, isolation
and grief in the Advent season.

DEC.
21/22
3/6 PM

"CHRISTMAS CANTATA"

SATURDAY

3 PM – Seventh Day Baptist Church – Ashaway

6 PM – Seventh Day Baptist Church – Pawcatuck

SUNDAY

4 PM – Central Baptist Church – Westerly

DEC.
24
6:30 PM

"CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE"

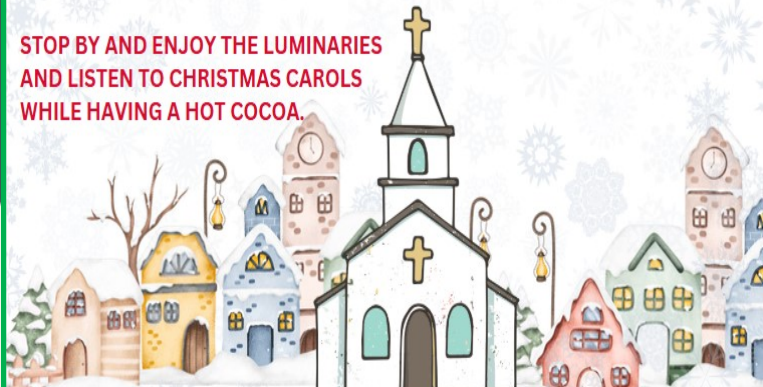
ANNUAL HOPKINTON *Holiday Stroll*



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14
4:00 - 6:00 PM

First Baptist Church in Hope Valley
1059 Main Street, Hope Valley

STOP BY AND ENJOY THE LUMINARIES
AND LISTEN TO CHRISTMAS CAROLS
WHILE HAVING A HOT COCOA.



A "BLUE CHRISTMAS" SERVICE FOR THOSE WHO GRIEVE. THR. DEC. 20, 2024, 5:00-6:00 p.m.



Why should someone
attend a "Blue Christmas"
worship service?

Many of us are acquainted
with the paradox of the
Advent and Christmas
seasons – a time when we
are supposed to celebrate
hope, love, joy, and peace,
and yet a time that can also be full of sadness and grief. *Blue Christmas* services offer special recognition of the struggles
that many people face during this season. Its somber tone
also testifies to the often overlooked struggles of Mary,
Joseph, and Jesus. By attending this service of remembrance
and worship you can acknowledge the struggles we all face
in a safe place of rest, comfort, and healing.

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CHRISTMAS *Cantata*

Featuring "AGNUS DEI" AND SELECTIONS
FROM "MANGER SUITE"

Dec. 21

3PM / 6 PM

3 PM

SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST CHURCH
8 CHURCH ST, ASHAWAY, RI 02804

6 PM

PAWCATUCK SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST CHURCH
120 MAIN ST, WESTERLY, RI 02891

Dec. 22

4PM

4 PM

CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
16 ELM ST, WESTERLY, RI 02891



Let's gather together for an unforgettable night of Christmas music and joy!

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, January 26, 2025
12:30 PM

The annual meeting of First Baptist
Church in Hope Valley will be held
on Sunday, January 26, 2025, at
12:30 PM, after church as stated in
the by-laws. Please bring a bag of
lunch. Annual Reports should be
e-mailed to
fbhvsecretary@verizon.net or
brought to the church office no
later than Monday, January 20th.

Hi everyone,

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your partnership throughout the years as the secretary of First Baptist Church in Hope Valley. These seven years have been a journey filled with incredible friendships.

As I step into a new chapter of my career, I carry your love, prayers, and unwavering support with me. Thankfully, I will continue to see you regularly on Sundays as an active member of this church.

Thank you once again, and may God bless us all!

To God be the glory!

Maria Gill/Church Secretary

Signing off on Dec. 6, 2024

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NASB)

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God.

12.24.2024 | 6:30 PM

Christmas Eve Service

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOPE VALLEY
1059 MAIN STREET
HOPE VALLEY, RI 02832

Thank you, Rob Roeleveld, for putting the
new parsonage storm doors.



Christmas FOOD DRIVE

All non-perishable food items are needed, but here is a list of our most requested items for Christmas:

- Peanut Butter • Canned Protein (such as tuna or chicken)
- Cereal • "Meals-in-a-Can," such as Ravioli, Beef Stew, etc. • Canned Fruit
- Tomato product • Canned ham or cooked ham • Canned Green Beans
- Canned Yams • Bag of Marshmallows • Brown Sugar • Canned Corn
- Canned Cranberry Sauce • Boxed or Bagged Stuffing Mix

Food Collection: 2nd Sunday of every month.

Donate non-perishable food items, check for expiration dates. Cash offerings are made to First Baptist, mark "New Hope Food Pantry" in the memo line.

JOIN THE COOKIE CLUB!

YOU CAN SIGN UP
ON THE CLIPBOARD
IN THE KITCHEN TO
BRING TREATS,
EITHER HOMEMADE
OR STORE-BOUGHT,
UNTIL THE END OF
DECEMBER.



FBHV.org

SHOWING

**TUESDAYS
AT 7 PM**

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS
WILL BE PROVIDED
(WATER AND POPCORN)

One episode per week, followed
by a brief discussion.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOPE VALLEY
1059 MAIN STREET, HOPE VALLEY, RI
401-539-7553



DEACONS

Ministers of Mercy

YOU CAN DROP YOUR CASH
DONATION IN THE DEACON'S BOX
BY AN ENTRANCE TO HELP
FULFILL THE MINISTRY OF
HELPING OTHERS.



BIBLE STUDY ON EXODUS

You will need a Bible and a copy of the Seven
Steps for Bible Study Handout and meeting
schedule available in the church sanctuary.



EVERY MONDAY | 7:00 PM | PARLOR

JOIN NOW

FALL/WINTER CLASS
WITH PASTOR JAMES MENZIES

9:00 AM & 7:00 PM

"UNITY OF THE SCRIPTURES"

- ▶ INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
OF THE ENTIRE BIBLE
- ▶ STUDY OF GOD'S GREAT WORK OF
SALVATION IN HUMAN HISTORY

No textbook is necessary,
only a bible and a notebook.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN HOPE VALLEY
1059 MAIN ST., HOPE VALLEY, RI 02832



FBHV.org



1059 Main Street, Hope Valley, RI



Children's Corner

Devotional: What Christmas Really Means

Children's Devotion about what Christmas really means

Read: Luke 2:6-18 (NLT)

Christmas has taken on so many other things over the years. We have the story of Santa. We have the gift giving. These things aren't bad in themselves, as the gift giving started with the Wise Men. But it can take away from the real meaning of Christmas.

What is Christmas all about?

What happened that first Christmas?

Why do we celebrate it?

As we read here, Jesus, the Saviour of the world, was born. He came as a baby, then grew to be a man who gave His life for you and me, so we could live with Him forever when we die. We celebrate His birth because of our faith in Him, and His birth was the beginning of a life-changing event-the cross.

So, let us celebrate Jesus' birthday together, and remember why He came.

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The meaning of Christmas has always been Jesus,
No other story will do,
His birth is what we all celebrate,
God's gift for me and you.

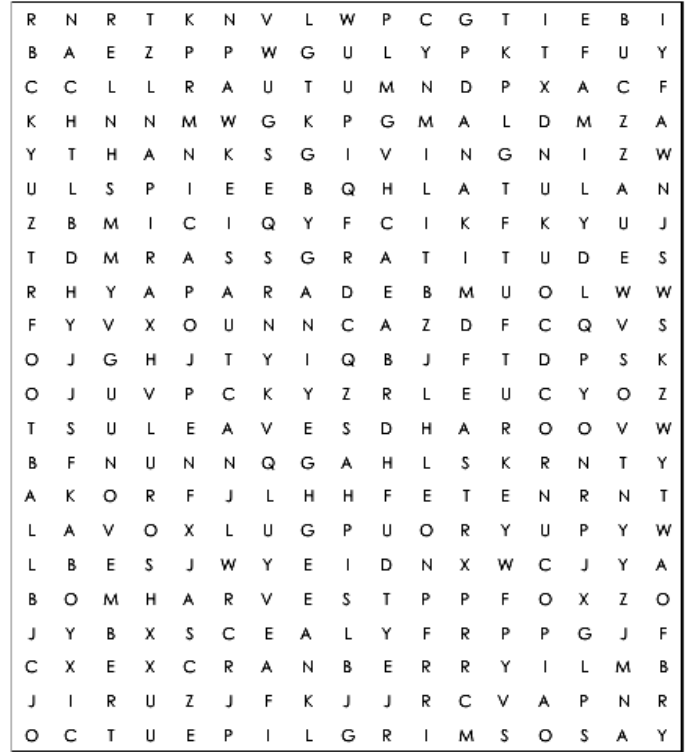
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For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and
the government shall be upon his shoulder, and
his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- **Isaiah 9:6** (ESV)



November Word Search



NOVEMBER	FAMILY	FOOTBALL
THANKSGIVING	HARVEST	CRANBERRY
TURKEY	AUTUMN	CORNUCOPIA
PILGRIMS	FEAST	PARADE
GRATITUDE	LEAVES	PIE

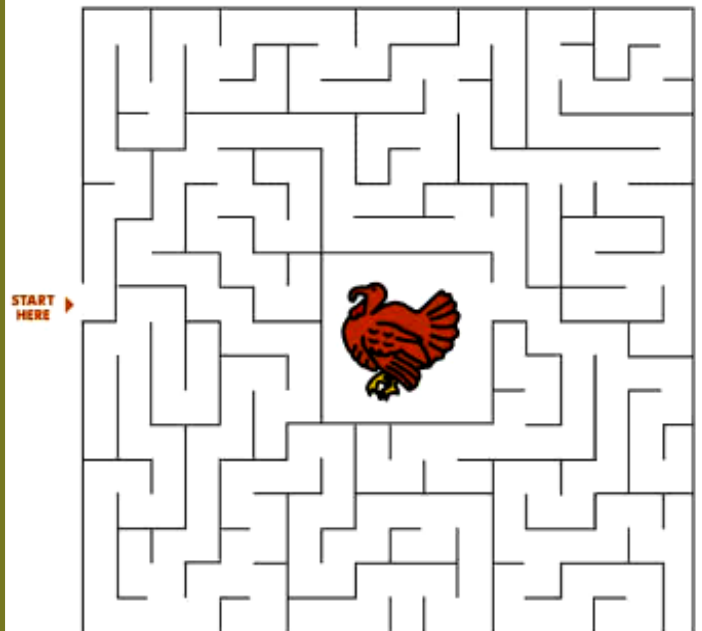


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THANKSGIVING MAZE

Find your way through the maze to reach the turkey in the center.

Happy Thanksgiving!



DOWNLOAD MORE FREE PRINTABLES AT WWW.PJSANDPAIN.COM



*Ladies
Ministry*

Thank you, ladies, for making the soup and bread to support the Missions programs!

