

From Our Pastor

As we come to the Christmas season it is always a blessing to refresh in our hearts and minds the birth of Christ, but we must remember that Jesus was alive before He was ever born. This was not the beginning of His existence and this was not the beginning of His earthly existence. John 1:1 states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”. The word “was” suggests a continuous state. The “Word” was therefore in existence before time and before creation. He has existed in the past, He exists in the present and will exist in the future. Jesus has always been, and He will always be. John 17:5 states, . . . “and now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was”.

In a sermon I read recently, it was stated that, “The word pre-existence is defined as existence in a former state or previous to something else, specifically: existence of the soul before its union with the body. The assertion with Christ is that He existed prior to the incarnation as the Son, being fully God Himself. His pre-existence is a historic position throughout Christian history, to include the early church. It has been standard teaching in historic Christology that the Son, existed before the incarnation. Our Lord is the “logos” (The logos is Jesus, the Word made flesh) of God in the sense that He is the total concept of God seen through a human medium. His existence is the incarnate Christ. Incarnate means *to clothe with flesh* or *to embody with flesh*. Jesus never originated because he has always been.”

Why is it important to have this understanding of Him? Because sad to say, our world looks at Him as the Republican Jesus, who is against tax increases and activist judges, is for family values and owning fire-arms. Or the Democratic Jesus, who is against Wall Street and Wal-Mart, for reducing our carbon footprint and printing money. Or He is the Therapist Jesus, who helps us cope with life’s problems, heals our past, tells us how valuable we are and not to be so hard on ourselves. Or He is the Starbucks Jesus, who drinks fair trade coffee, loves spiritual conversations, drives a hybrid, and goes to film festivals. Or He is the Touchdown Jesus, who helps athletes run faster and jump higher than non-Christians and determines the outcomes of Super Bowls. They don’t see Him as the true, holy Son of God.

Jesus had such an unusual appearance to come and dwell among men. Herbert Lockyer says, “From the past eternity, Jesus was the Son of God before, in time, He became the Son of Mary. In His former mode of existence, He had been so rich but for man’s sake He became poor.” Does not His pre-existence create questions in our heart and mind? Does it not create some what of a mystique about the babe of the manger? He was not just another baby, but He was the God-man made in the image and likeness of God. *God in shoe leather*, so to speak. Lockyer also states that, “Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God. It was in Him that the full nature of God chose to live and through Him, God planned to reconcile mankind to Himself.”

Philippians 2:6-8 in the Phillips Translation states, “He, who had always been God by nature, did not cling to His prerogatives as God’s equal, but stripped Himself of all privileges by consenting to become a slave by nature and being born as a mortal man. And having become man, He humbled Himself by living a life of utter obedience, even to the extent of dying, and the death He died was the death of a common criminal.”

All this to prove out His great love for you and me. Remember it is not just another baby, but it is God taking on the form of man that He might save mankind from the penalty of his sin. Someone stated, “The divine life can only be manifested to man by taking on the form of a man.”

The *world* was from the beginning, but the *Word* was in existence before the beginning.

Merry Christmas to all!!

Bro. Terry

2020 Lottie Moon Offering: Update

As a church, you have set a pledge goal of \$13,822.00, for the 2020 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. As of November 1, 2020, the church has collected **\$12,289.82***.



*Figure includes \$1,000 donation made in 2019 designated for 2020 Lottie Moon.

The Mission of the Manger

2020 Lottie Moon Goal

\$13,822.00

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. — Matthew 28:19-20



December Birthdays

1 Brenda Collins	19 James Lumpkins, Jr.
5 Cam Moore	Sydney Scarce
6 Sierra McDaniel	21 Tara St. John Harper
8 Logan Mills	Samantha L. Hedrick
9 Michael Bryant	Michelle Paciello
10 Tim Hayes	23 Dawn Aaron
Tiffany Smith Moore	24 Cathy Moore
11 Pat Hensley	Hailey Moore
14 Sonja Gregory	25 Traci Nuckols
David Matherly	Mary Showalter
Dale McFaddin	28 Will Nuckols
17 Lillian Paciello	30 Adam Burgess
Kent Bishop	Makayla Lewis

I would to thank all of you that gave towards our Pastors appreciation gift. That was so kind of you to remember us in that way. We appreciate your faithfulness and support during these pandemic days. You have blessed us more than you will ever know. May God richly bless you during this Christmas season and thanks again for your generosity and expressions of appreciation. We love you!!!

Pastor Terry & Holly

Thanks to everyone for your many, many prayers, cards and acts of kindness. We are so very blessed to have friends like you. Prayer is POWERFUL!

With Love,

Terry & Rita Martin



Join us for our Sunday Night Zoom Meetings from 5:30-6:00 p.m. You can find us here: [https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75059499897?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/75059499897?pwd=NENLaTRVWGtzRHFHUmxdUxRWGFOUT09)
 pwd=NENLaTRVWGtzRHFHUmxdUxRWGFOUT09 on Sunday, December 6, 13, and 20. The meeting ID is: 750 5949 9897 and the passcode is: hbc20. These sessions will feature special messages from our talented Sunday School teachers.

We hope that you'll join us for these sessions. If you have any questions about these Zoom meetings, please see Heather Lankford.



Congratulations Hollywood! This year we set a goal for 100 shoeboxes. We collected 167 boxes! Thank you for your continued support of this ministry! Look back here in 2021 for more information about shoeboxes and ways to help with our shoebox ministry!



As we are enjoying the Christmas season, it is often easy for us to forget that there are members of our community who are struggling. This year more than ever, many members of our community are struggling with food insecurity and financial hardship.



Join us as we help pack boxes of food at our local food bank to help brighten the Christmases of families who would otherwise face hunger. We will be packing boxes at the Pittsylvania County Food Distribution Center at 402 Chaney Lane, in Gretna at 6:00 pm on December 14.



On December 24 at 5:30 p.m. we will be holding a Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. This service will feature a celebration of Jesus' birth, song, and Scripture. Join us for this special time of the remembrance of the greatest gift that the world has ever received.

From Our Associate Pastor of Music

"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

There is a great deal that we do not know concerning the birth of Jesus the Christ. We do not know exactly what year He was born...we can make an educated guess of sometime around 5 BC. We do not know on what specific time of the year He was born; some say spring, others the fall. We do not know on exactly what spot in Bethlehem He was born, although there is a modern day church that claims to occupy that very location.

But there are some very important things which we do know. We do know He was born of a virgin. We do know His being born in Bethlehem was a result of God's sovereign influence on the most powerful ruler in the world at the time. We do know He was placed in a feed trough right after He was born. We do know that His birth forever changed the world.

We also know that His birth demonstrated that He was worthy of worship. Just a little baby born to simple parents in the lowliest of circumstances, the birth of Jesus the Christ drew worshippers from all walks of life, and even from out of this world.

1) The Heavens Worship. In Luke chapter 2 we read the account of the announcement of the birth of Christ the Lord. This proclamation was delivered by an angel. And while an angelic declaration of birth was a big deal in and of itself, this one went above and beyond. The sole messenger was joined by "a multitude of the heavenly host" (2:13, ESV).

Imagine being present in the audience for that birth announcement. (Note that the angels did not "sing;" they were "saying 'Glory to God in the highest...'" (2:13-14)) The birth of Jesus the Christ was so important that God dispatched a heavenly welcoming committee to express worship of this tiny baby and ensure that the word knew He was worthy.

2) The Lowliest Worship. After the angels departed, their audience immediately went down to Bethlehem from the hills where they had been watching sheep (2:15-16). Although these shepherds were tasked with raising the sheep which would ultimately be offered as the blood sacrifice in the temple, they were still considered lowly and unclean. Their job was hard and thankless, and they were looked down on by most everyone.

Imagine how they must have felt being the first to hear the good news of the birth of the Christ child. They left their flocks and went to worship at the bedside of the Promised One. Then, as the first post-birth evangelists, "they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child" (2:17) Not content with keeping it to themselves, they spread their worship to anyone who would listen to the truth that Messiah had come.

3) The Mightiest Worship. The wise men have been represented in many different ways. Scripture gives us very little information about them, except that they came "from the east...to Jerusalem" (Matthew 2:1). The Greek word *magi* indicates they were likely learned scholars from an empire such as Persia. This is supported by their reliance on heavenly signs for indication of the coming of Messiah. Some scholars have suggested that these were intellectual descendants of Daniel, who was one of the wisest scholars in the east in his time.

Although they arrived as much as two years after His birth, these powerful and likely rich men "fell down and worshipped" the boy Jesus (2:11). They presented Him with lavish gifts fit for a king. What a sight it must have been when they entered the simple home of a carpenter and his wife to worship their little toddler, Jesus the Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

From the lowliest, to the mightiest, to the angelic, the Christ child was worthy of worship. He is no less worthy today, having lived a sinless life, died a cruel death, and risen again to conquer death and hell. As we enter into this time of Advent and Christmas, let us remember that babe in a manger, worthy of our worship and praise.

In Christ Alone,

Hal



In Remembrance and Honor

The Poinsettias used to decorate our sanctuary this Christmas were donated
in memory or in honor of the following people:

In Loving Memory Of

Robert M. Reynolds and Pauline
Reynolds

Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Easley Jr.

Billie Louise Pierce
Louise Yeatts

Mr. Randy Collins and
Mrs. Edna Collins

Rev. Robert Jennings
Clide and Charlotte St. John

Ray Moschler

In Honor Of

Betty Jennings

Granny Ruth

Grace Scheeser, Stanley Moschler &
Family, Paul Moschler & Family

Drake, Elizabeth, Mallory, and Mary Bella

Generously Donated By

Steve and Brenda Reynolds

Chuck Easley

Pam Anderson

Brenda and Melody Collins

Pastor Terry and Holly St. John

Helen Moschler

Generously Donated By

Pastor Terry and Holly St. John

Steve, Michelle, Aaron and Lilly
Paciello

Helen Moschler

Chuck Easley

HOLLYWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

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