

## Thoughts From Doug

The second week of Advent; hard to believe. Advent is the season in the Church year when we focus on waiting with expectancy. Waiting for God to act in ways both anticipated and unanticipated. Waiting for reassurances that Christ is among us (Emmanuel, “God with Us”) in this particular season of our lives. While we readily affirm with our mouths that we know God is with us, we must confess that there are times when, in our hearts, we are not so certain. And instead of living into Advent—instead of experiencing the waiting; wrestling with the questions; honestly admitting our struggles, learning about our growing edges to that we might more faithfully deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow Jesus—we pretend everything is normal and say that God will take care of it. And while that is not the worst thing we could do, we have missed an opportunity for spiritual growth.

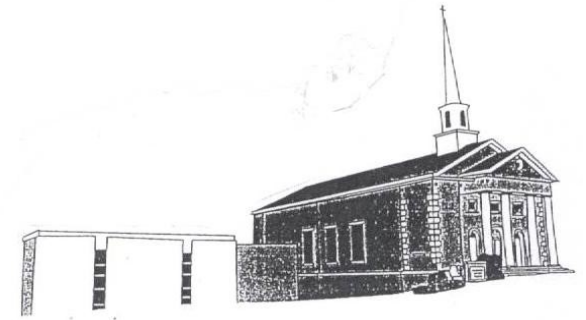
If ever there were a year when we had the opportunity to collectively learn about waiting with expectancy and looking for God in the midst of a mess—it has been 2020. It seems like every day I hear people infer that 2020 has been the most forgettable year of their lives—that nothing can be redeemed from it. However, as people of faith, we should have a different outlook. We whose faith is centered on one who suffered, died, and was raised should be people who honestly and authentically live into the messiness of life. When we live through such times, holding onto Christ with one hand and holding onto others with the other hand, we will find that our faithfulness and commitment during the mess has served to fortify us for the present and the future. We will find that we have gained a new perspective filled with new priorities. Old habits and attitudes and values that we once thought were so important, or simply held because they brought comfort and certainty, we now realize were not the best way for a disciple of Christ to invest her life and energy. We have learned that we can’t have two masters—even if one of the masters is us.

Perhaps you have heard a recurring phrase in the first two Candle Lighting readings from Sunday worship at Hardwick Baptist: “Company is coming.” This is important for us to say this Advent. For many of us, Christmas is not complete without the expectation that company is coming: that beloved family and friends will be with us to celebrate, eat and “love on.” In 2020, that hope will not be realized, because we will all be safer if company doesn’t come this year. And while that is sad, we need to live into our sadness and ask God to deepen us in needed ways. Maybe we will cherish loved ones more next Christmas because we forsook family traditions this year. Maybe we will empathize more with people who live every Christmas with no company to host or visit. Maybe we will look for God in a forsaken feeding trough in an “unimportant” place instead of the places we have determined are holy.

If we do that—we will certainly have redeemed 2020. And God will have brought further redemption among us. May it be so.

The **HBC Food Pantry** served 28 households, 75 individuals and 6 new applicants from the parking lot Tuesday, December 8th. Special thanks to our dedicated volunteers who served in spite of the extremely cold weather.

# Hardwick Herald



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December 9, 2020

## Christmas Eve Service

At their December meeting, the deacons decided that we would best show love for each other and ourselves by not having an in-person Christmas Eve service. Instead we will be preparing a recorded Christmas Eve service. The service will be a mixture of Christmas hymns recorded from the sanctuary; Hardwick members recording themselves at home, reading a traditional Christmas Eve Scripture lesson; and a brief devotion, concluding with Communion that you will share with your own bread and cup at home. Along with the Bible readings, Hardwick members will be asked to share on the video a favorite family Christmas tradition and a meaningful ornament from their tree. This will add a personal component to the service, since we will not physically be together. The video will be posted to the church Facebook page on Christmas Eve for you to watch with your family at your convenience.

### Prayer List

Glenn Abbey	Rider Hill
Henry/Vivian Andrews	Kenny Huff
James Armstrong	Martha Huff
Mack Atchison	Jim Jennings
Kenneth Babb	Joyce Johnson
Anne Bayne	Michael/Sharon Lord
Joyce Blizzard	Nell Maddox
Scott Blizzard	Jeff McMullen
Braddy Family	Marcus McMullen
Josephine Davis	Marlene Peavy
Eugenia English	Jayne Rourke
Sandra English	Bonnie Stafford
Sharon Ezell	Brenda Tollison
Marguerite Folendore	Laise Townsend
	Ben/Jackie Watson

**In Military Service:** Rudy Webb

**All Healthcare Workers, Teachers, school support staff and students.**

### Wednesday Night Program For Children & Youth

We continue to monitor all updates on the COVID-19 pandemic and pray for the safety and well-being of all the children and youth we minister to with the hope to resume soon.

### Proposed 2021 Budget

Copies of the Proposed 2021 Budget have been e-mailed to e-mail members' list and hard copies are available in the church office if you would like one. Please review and e-mail your response to [hbcfinance1912@gmail.com](mailto:hbcfinance1912@gmail.com) or call the church office at 478-452-1612. If you call after hours, leave a message on the answering machine with your name and response. Deadline for response is December 3, 2020. Call Miles Whipple with questions.

Annual Budget 2020.....	\$28,729.67
Needed Per Week to Meet Budget.....	\$ 5,533.27
Contributions Dec 06, 2020.....	\$ 2,747/50
Total Budget Contributions through Dec. 06, 2020.....	\$171,094.20
Total Budget Expenses through Dec .06, 2020 .....	\$189,940.14.
Payroll Protection Program Loan May 1, 2020.....	\$ 18,685.00



### Prayer Meeting/ Bible Study

You are invited to join Doug in a Zoom Prayer Meeting/Bible Discussion each Wednesday at 7:00 P.M. Bible passage for December 16 is Luke 1:26-38, "Faithful to Send Jesus". We will not have Prayer Meeting Dec. 23 or 30.

### Scripture Readings for December 20

**Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26**  
**2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16**  
**Romans 16:25-27**  
**Luke 1:26-38**

### Sunday Evening Prayer

You are invited to join the Pastor in a special time of Prayer during the five Sundays of Christmas at 8:30 P.M. via Zoom. We will share prayers together and incorporate time for personal prayer concerns, whether silent or aloud. We expect this to last about 45 minute. Remaining dates will be December 13, December 20, December 27, and January 3. The link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84795712518>

### 2021 Offering Envelopes

You may pick up your 2021 Offering Envelopes in the vestibule at in-person worship or in the Church Office any morning, Monday through Friday if you are in the vicinity. If you will call ahead, we will bring them out to you.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Dec 14: Dana Rodgers  
 Dec 15: Lindsey Hornsby  
 Dec 16: Karen Brooks  
 Dec 17: John Webb, Kelly Whipple,  
 Dec.18: Pat Williams

### Virtual Sunday School Access

- **Online:** (<https://meet.google.com>). Click *Enter* or link and enter code for class.  
[meet.google.com/cdi-ibdd-vrx](https://meet.google.com/cdi-ibdd-vrx)
- **Smartphone app:** Go to the App store and download the *Google Meet* App Follow instruction for set up. Open and click *enter code* (same as above).

**Bible passage for December 13, 2020:**  
**Isaiah 37:14-20, 30-35**

### Questions:

- Share about a time when you needed someone else to help you. What made you turn to that person for help?
- When you pray, do you believe God will hear your request? Do you ask God for your own needs first? Do you stop and think about how your own needs and desires fit with a life that should be characterized by a love for God over self?
- Was there ever a hopeless moment in your life when you knew only God could deliver you? How did your hope in God help you get through it? How do you see God's hand at work when you look back at that event now?
- When you pray about the burdens and concerns in your life, do you ever stop and think how God's answer to your prayers might glorify Him and make him known to others? What elements in your walk of faith testify to others that God is the only living God and he is fully trustworthy?

### Calendar

#### Sunday, December 13th

9:00 A.M. . . . . Virtual Sunday School  
 11:00 A.M.....Morning Worship  
 In-person worship in Sanctuary  
 (Live streamed for those who don't feel comfortable in a crowd setting yet.)  
 8:30 P.M..... Evening Prayer  
 (Via Zoom)

#### Wednesday, December 16th:

7:00 P.M.....Bible Study via Zoom

#### Deacon of the Week,

December 13, 2020, Marilyn Skinner



Your faithfulness in continuing to give during these uncertain times is so important. We hope it won't be long before we can get back to full time in-person ministry at HBC, but in the meantime your support is crucial as we monitor pandemic conditions and prepare for that time. You may support HBC by giving online, by mail and by placing your offerings in the offering plates as you enter or depart in-person worship.

### Lottie Moon Offering For International Missions

Every church regardless of its size or resources, has a part to play in reaching every nation with the gospel. And the nations are waiting. 100% of the proceeds from the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering provide missionaries the services they need to live among the unreached people they serve. The Great Commission cannot be fulfilled by a single church but could be fulfilled by the sacrifice, cooperative mission and prayers of all SBC churches.

**Lottie Moon Offering  
 Received to Date: \$100.00**

**Check out the HBC Website  
[www.hardwickbaptist.org](http://www.hardwickbaptist.org)**