

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### The First Baptist Pulpit

- December 23:** Ray Austin  
**December 24:** Christmas Eve, Matt DuVall  
**December 30:** Frank Granger  
**January 6:** Dock Hollingsworth, Assistant Dean,  
 McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta, GA  
**January 13:** Dock Hollingsworth  
**January 20:** Dock Hollingsworth  
**January 27:** Ron Higdon, Interim Pastor,  
 First Baptist Church, Athens, GA

## UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2008

- CBF Youth Choir Festival: January 18-20  
 Active Parenting of Teens: January, 2008  
 Operation INASMUCH: March 1, 2008  
 Women's Bible Study: Early 2008



### A Note from the Shepherds....

The Shepherds of First Baptist Church would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the light of His love always shine on each of you.

### African-American Choral Ensemble 20-year Reunion Concert

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2008  
 Hodgson Concert Hall  
 7:30 p.m.  
 FREE—No Tickets Required

For more information, please contact Gregory Broughton at gbrought@uga.edu or 706-542-2793.

### Minister on Call Schedule

Each week one of our ministers is on call for emergency needs. Below is the schedule along with cell phone numbers. If you do not have this information readily available, you may call the church office which has the Minister on Call listed, along with the number, on the answering machine. Church number is 706-548-1359.

- December 23-26: Randy Brittain 706-705-1057  
 December 27-29: Frank Granger 706-207-2648  
 December 30-January 5: Frank Granger 706-207-2648

### Special Note:

#### Support for Courtney Gale Police Officer Serves as Security Officer for First Baptist Church

All of you are well aware of the police officer, Courtney Gale, who was wounded last week at Kroger. She remains in intensive care at St. Mary's Hospital here in Athens. In addition to her service as an Athens-Clarke County officer, she has been one of our security officers at First Baptist since 2003. The family has set up a means to provide information and updates about Courtney's condition at <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/sgtcourtneygale>. We have certainly included Courtney on our prayer list and ask that you do so as well. If you have questions and interest concerning opportunities to give material support, please contact Frank Granger, Minister of Education, or Arlene Wood, Financial Assistant, at the church, 706-548-1359.

## Reflections

Angels are everywhere during the Christmas season and, for most people, when it goes, so do they. These "messengers" (the literal meaning of the word *angel*) have special places in our Advent stories, but don't seem to have much to do with our everyday lives.

Biblically, we know only two angels by name: Gabriel and Michael. The rest remain anonymous beings who show up periodically in the lives of the super saints. Most believers don't believe they have very much to do with us ordinary people. We need to do a lot of rethinking on this subject, and this is a great time of the year to do it.

Psalm 91:11 reads: *For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your way* (NIV). There are not many verses of scripture that speak of guardian angels, but here is one. In the New Testament, there are two that correspond perfectly to this assurance from the psalmist.

Jesus makes a startling announcement in Matthew 18:10: *Beware that you don't despise a single one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven, their angels are always in the presence of my heavenly Father* (NLT). There is nothing to indicate that these guardian angels abandon their charges as they grow out of childhood. And, if you're like me, the older you get, the more you realize just how much you need a guardian angel. Well, you have one!

Perhaps an even more startling announcement is made by John in his letters to the seven churches in the book of Revelation. Each of the letters begins the same way: *To the angel of the church in Ephesus write...* (Rev. 2:1). These letters are written to the guardian angels of the churches. Not only do individuals have guardian angels, churches also have guardian angels.

My challenge to you is to live each day with the assurance that God has assigned a special guardian to us as individuals; he has assigned a special guardian to the body of believers known as First Baptist Church.

This business of angels is really a daily business of encouragement and hope as we live in a world full of challenges and opportunities.

Ron Higdon

## Christmas Eve

**Monday, December 24**  
 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service  
 of Candlelight, Communion and Baptism

Sermon by Matt DuVall

### WHAT'S FOR SUPPER...

No supper on  
 December 26 and January 2

## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



### SYMPATHY

The church extends their love and support to **Margaret and Dave Earnest and their family** in the loss of **Margaret's** mother, Marguerite Turner McKell of Starkville, MS, who passed away on December 4.

The church extends their love and support to **Bill and Donna Hopper and their family** in the loss of **Bill's** sister-in-law, Jessica Hopper of Waynesboro, GA, who passed away on December 10.

The church extends their love and support to **Johnny Patat and Carolyn Nunnally and their families** in the loss of their aunt, Montine Kuhlman, a former member of First Baptist, who passed away on December 11.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The FBC family welcomes its newest member, **Amanda Gerrett**. Amanda comes to us by Profession of Faith requesting Baptism. She is the granddaughter of **Virginia Gerrett** and the sister of **Shaun Gerrett**. Welcome **Amanda**.

The FBC family welcomes its newest member, **Robert Henderson**. **Robert** comes to us by Profession of Faith requesting Baptism. He is the son of **Al and Susan Henderson** and the brother of **Margaret Henderson**. Welcome **Robert**.

The FBC family welcomes its newest member, **Jim Barrow, III**. **Jim** comes to us by Profession of Faith requesting Baptism. He is the son of **Jim and Sallyanne Barrow, Jr.** and the brother of **Samuel Barrow**. Welcome **Jim**.

The FBC family welcomes its newest members, **Amanda and Aaron Ward**. **Amanda** and **Aaron** come to us by Profession of Faith requesting Baptism. They are the children of **Preston and Terry Ward**. Welcome **Amanda** and **Aaron**.

## OUR CHURCH AT WORK

### CO-DEACONS OF THE WEEK

- December 23-29:** Mark Sanders, Becky Snow  
**December 30-January 5:** Amy Young, Fred Young  
**January 6-12:** Charles Adams, Randan Ashmore  
**January 13-19:** Wayne Rogers, Kim Rogers

### FELLOWSHIP TEAM FOR DECEMBER

J. Don Edwards, Jim Ebert,  
 Ed Dempsey, Joyce Gravely

### FELLOWSHIP TEAM FOR JANUARY

Wanda Grogan, Daniel Haygood,  
 Bill Horton, John Knowlton

The Personnel Committee is pleased to announce the appointment of Valerie Hardy as FBC Children's Minister beginning January 2, 2008. In this part-time position, Valerie will focus on children and their families, ages birth through 5th grade. Reverend Hardy was ordained by St. John's Baptist Church, Charlotte, North Carolina and has served churches in Kansas, Kentucky, and North Carolina, as Minister to Youth. She holds a Master of Religious Education from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and MDV credit work with McAfee School of Theology in pursuit of her credentials for hospital-based chaplain services. Ms. Valerie, as she will be known to the children, states: "I have known about FBC for many years and look forward to joining you. I appreciate so much the energy and commitment of the parents and others who have provided creative and caring ministries during an interim time." Valerie lives in Loganville and comes to us as a member and deacon of Northside Baptist Church.

### We Welcome Valerie Hardy as Children's Minister ~Begins in January~



**Adult Continuing Christian Education  
Wednesday Evening Colloquium  
January 2008  
6:00-7:00 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall**

**January 9, 2008**

**Choosing a Calendar to Live By**, Frank Granger, Minister of Education, First Baptist Church, Athens, GA

**January 16, 2008**

**The Perfect Storm: Acts 27**, Anna Carter Florence, Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA

**January 23, 2008**

**The Letter of James**, Bryan Whitfield, Instructor, Roberts Department of Christianity, Mercer University, Macon, GA

**January 30, 2008**

**The Book of Job**, Nancy deClaiss-Walford, Associate Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages, McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta, GA

**Coming in January  
Active Parenting of Teens  
Sunday Evenings  
6:00-8:00 p.m.**

This multi-week parenting course will begin on January 13 and will be led by Frank Granger.

The Active Parenting of Teens is an interactive program which helps parents understand developmental changes in teens' behavior, communicate effectively with teens, prevent and handle drug and alcohol use, discipline while teaching responsibility, encourage toward better behavior, and explore and encourage nonviolent conflict resolution inside the home and out. Materials cost is \$15.00. Registrations for the course are being received. Please register through the church office at 706-548-1359, or online at [www.firstbaptistathens.org/parenting](http://www.firstbaptistathens.org/parenting).

**Schedule for Sessions:**

- Session 1: January 13
- Session 2: January 27
- Session 3: February 10
- Session 4: February 17
- Session 5: February 24
- Session 6: March 2

**Women's Bible Study in Winter 2008**

Paula Hooper will be leading a special Bible study for women in Winter of 2008. Registration will begin soon, along with dates and details.

**55+ and First Baptist Church Day in Atlanta**

Please go by or call the church office at 706-548-1359 and sign up for a day in Atlanta. We will visit and tour The Chick-Fil-A Headquarters, have lunch at a Chick-Fil-A, tour the New World of Coke, and then travel to Blue Willow Inn at Social Circle for dinner (supper if you prefer). The cost for the trip is \$65 dollars per person. This includes meals, tours, tips, gratuity, and bus fare. The date for the trip is April 17, 2008.

The deadline to sign up is Wednesday, March 5, 2008, so that tickets can be purchased and the bus trip can be finalized. The trip is for First Baptist members and a friend if you invite one to go with you. There are only 35 spaces available on a first sign up basis. If you have questions, please call Joe Clark, 706-549-3808.

**EVENTS BOX  
December 23-January 6**

12/23	No First Worship	
12/23	Coffee, Cocoa and Carols - Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM
12/23	Classic Worship - Sanctuary	11:00 AM
12/23	Sunday School at Denney Towers	2:30 PM
12/24	Christmas Eve - Office Closed	
12/24	Christmas Eve Candlelight and Communion Service - Sanctuary	5:30 PM
12/25	Office Closed for Christmas Holiday	
12/26	Office Closed for Christmas Holiday - No Wednesday Activities	
12/27	Office Re-opens	
12/30	No First Worship	
12/30	Coffee and Fellowship - Fellowship Hall	10:00 AM
12/30	Classic Worship - Sanctuary	11:00 AM
12/30	Sunday School at Denney Towers	2:30 PM
12/31	Newsletter Deadline	12:00 Noon
1/1	New Year's Day - Office Closed	
1/2	No Wednesday Activities	
1/6	First Worship - Fellowship Hall	
1/6	Sunday School and Bible Study	
1/6	Classic Worship - Sanctuary	
1/6	Sunday School at Denney Towers	
1/6	Youth Choir Rehearsal	5:15 PM
1/6	Youth Activities - Youth Area	6:00 PM

**ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKS**

Our 2007 Advent-Christmas-Epiphany Devotional Books are available in the Branyon and Fanning Foyers. We encourage you to pick up one of these to use as you make your daily journey to Christmas Day.

Periodicals  
POSTAGE PAID  
Athens, Ga. 30601

FIRST BAPTIST NEWS  
(USPS 193-040)  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
355 Pulaski Street  
Athens, Georgia 30601-2860  
706-548-1359

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Ministers**

**Frank Granger**  
Minister of Education

**Randy Brittain**  
Minister of Music

**Anne Brittain**  
Organist/Music Associate

**Jon Appleton**  
Pastor Emeritus

**Matt DuVall**  
Minister of Youth/Young Adults

[www.firstbaptistathens.org](http://www.firstbaptistathens.org)

FIRST BAPTIST NEWS (USPS 193-040) is published bi-weekly at no charge by First Baptist Church, 355 Pulaski St., Athens, GA 30601-2860. Periodicals postage paid at Athens, GA POSTMASTER: Send address changes to FIRST BAPTIST NEWS, 355 Pulaski St., Athens, GA 30601-2860.

VOL. LI December 22, 2007 No. 25



**Christmas Eve  
Service**

**Candlelight, Communion  
and Baptism**

*Monday, December 24, 5:30 p.m.  
Sermon by Matt DuVall*



**Merry Christmas  
from the Staff**

*Judy Donna  
Arlene  
Coco Freddie Huey  
Quelyn Matt  
Randy Anne Frank*

## MISSIONS

### Global Missions Offering for Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Continues!!

This is how we support our missionaries and mission work all over the world. Our FBC goal for the year is \$13,000!! Please give generously from your heart. Remember all the monies collected at our Christmas Eve service go towards our Global Missions Offering.

### Operation InAsMuch

Operation Inasmuch is scheduled for Saturday, March 1, and we're hoping for an even GREATER participation this year. Please contact Marla VanDyck for InAsMuch project requests and leadership ASAP at mtvandycck@gmail.com. A Missions Committee member has volunteered to assist each FBC project and report needs on a monthly basis to help with staffing, transportation, communication, or anything else. Please help us help your project by e-mailing Reeves Carter at reeves1204@bellsouth.net or your committee liaison.

### Doing Missions in Our Community January 2008

#### Food Bank

January 8-9	B & P Class
January 22-23	B & P Class
February 12-13	Senior Adult Committee
February 26-27	Senior Adult Committee

#### Our Daily Bread

January 10	Staff
February 14	Joe Callaway Class

***More canned goods are needed  
for the food Christmas tree.***

## KID'S CORNER



### 2008 Children's Ministry Calendar

**March 1-2** Joyful Singers travel to FBC-Greenville, SC  
**July 17-20** Passport Kids Camp (3rd-6th graders,  
Crossville, TN)

*Mark these dates and look for more to come!!*

## YOUTH HAPPENINGS

### Sundays:

10:00 a.m. Bible Study in Youth Area—Bring your Bible!  
5:15 p.m. Youth Choir—F316  
6:00-8:00 p.m. Youth Gathering in Youth Area—Bring \$2.00

### Wednesdays:

6:00-8:00 p.m. in the Youth Area

## FINANCIAL & ATTENDANCE REPORT

Weekly Needs:	\$ 22,360.85
RECEIVED:	
Week of December 2	27,734.86
Week of December 9	40,659.36
Week of December 16	43,746.43

### Year-to-Date November 30, 2007:

Needed	\$1,065,867.00
Received	871,650.90
Expenses	959,926.40
Balance	(88,272.50)

## ATTENDANCE

December 9	December 16
11:00 Worship: 350	9:00 Worship: 50
	11:00 Worship: 267

## PLEDGE UPDATE

We have received pledges through December 17 as follows:  
\$652,529.86 by 135 Family Giving Units  
55.60% of the 2008 Budget  
Please remember to turn in your pledge cards.

## SPECIAL REMINDER

In this busy holiday time, please remember our 2007 budget. We need to collect about \$200,000 this month to cover our costs for the year. The Finance Committee would like to begin 2008 on a good note, and to do that we need to cover our expenses for 2007. For tax purposes, your contributions need to be in the church office by December 31 or postmarked by that date in order to receive contribution credit in 2007. If you plan to give securities, please remember that the turn-around time for selling securities and the receipt of checks being processed by brokers takes approximately two weeks. The Finance Office would need those documents now in order to be processed by December 31.

Thank you,  
Fred Young, Finance Committee Chair

*Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year*