



BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

PLANNING AHEAD

December 5

Tifton's Hometown Holiday

December 7

Pearl Harbor Day

December 7-11 & 14-16

Santa's Helpers Sorting/Packing

December 17

Santa's Helpers Distribution Day

December 21—January 1

Mell Office Closed

December 25

Merry Christmas

January 1

Happy New Year

January 17

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

January 18

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Mell Office Closed

January 24

Baptist Men's Day

Feb-

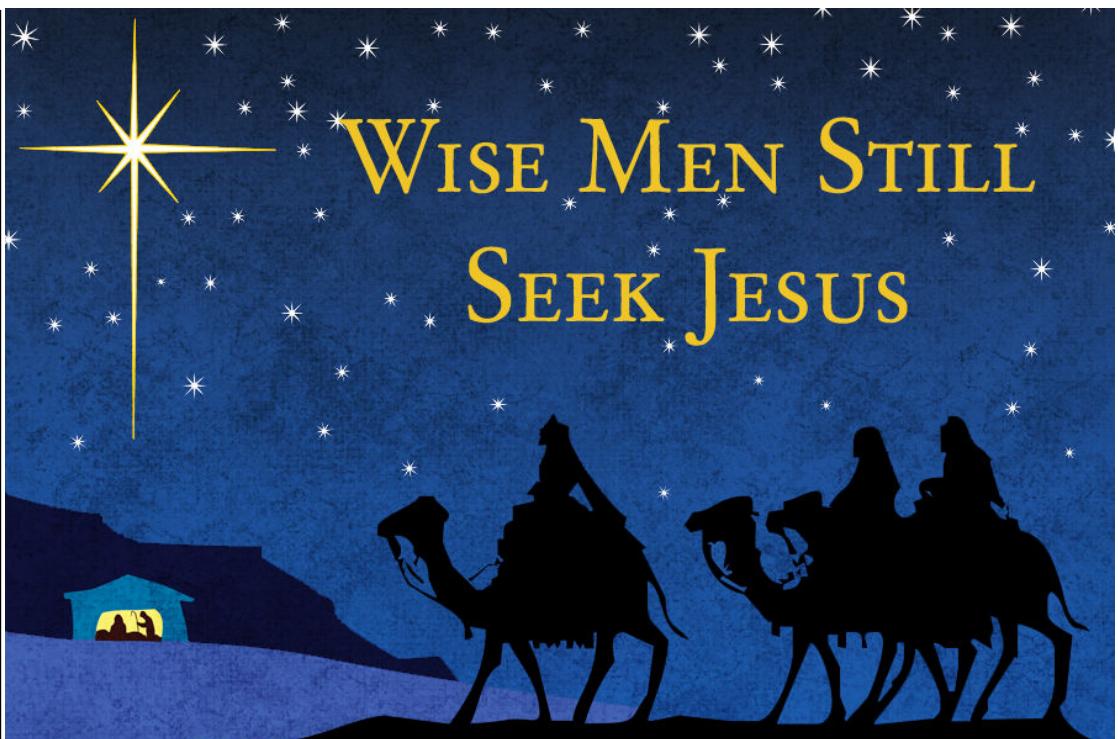
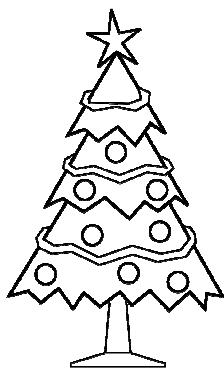
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After Jesus had been born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who was born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

(Matthew 2:1-2)

The Mell Baptist Association exists to Encourage the Pastors, Strengthen the Churches, and to Build the Kingdom, for the Glory of God. Established 1886.

Highlights

Jason Jones, Associational Missionary

God came down. He laid His external manifestation of glory aside to pitch his tent among us. God on the throne sent God is the flesh to be born of a virgin in a feed trough. He was given a body made a little lower than the angels. However that body was not desirable above others, in fact He was despised, rejected, and maligned. He took on the form of a bondservant, not demanding special treatment, although He was truly The King. The only hints of such truth came through the angelic announcement to shepherds and the beautiful star of Bethlehem.

Hundreds of songs, myriads of pages of theology, billions of sermons preached attempting to capture the wonder of this great truth. If we truly could see the glory of God prior to the incarnation, we would be utterly stupefied at the magnitude of it. Squeezing "Godness", all His being, the hands that measured the stars and cast them upon the velvet blackness of the expanse He created, into the frailty of a human body is incomprehensible as we reflect on the infinitude of Christ.

The "how'd He do that" is not as important as the "why'd He do that?" He came to seek and to save, to gather the sheep, to raise up a bride, to forgive sin, and to bear our suffering. He came to die in our place. He came to bear our wrath. He came become the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He came to die, so that you may have life. The gospel is the reason for the incarnation.

What news! What great news! As we approach Christmas and Thanksgiving gratitude should flow for all our blessings, but I think we should refocus on the gospel. Let's take 30 days and find something that we can be thankful for related to the gospel. We have lost our wonder and awe of the gospel! The love of God displayed...the wrath of God satisfied...the beauty of God glorified...the grace of God magnified. Meditate on the gospel, ask God to reveal it afresh to you. Let it fuel everything you do, from travel with family, relationships to spouses, to how we love one another as we are loved, to Santa's Helpers, and then share that gospel with others.

I am so thankful for the gospel. I am thankful for the Mell Association and for the cooperative spirit you exemplify. I want to say a huge thank you to all of you who came to our annual meeting this year. What a wonderful time of celebrating the glorification of our Savior through the coming together of the churches of our area to worship together. We had over 400 people there, a spectacular music and choir worship experience, a great message, and a \$3000 offering for Santa's Helpers. I know it was different, but all the feedback that I received was extremely positive! Most of all, I believe that Christ was exalted in the worship of His church.

I hope that all your holiday events, ministries, feasts, trips, and fellowships strengthen your church, reach the

Wanted: Church Pianist

New River Baptist Church, Tifton is in need of a pianist. The position is a Sunday only position – Sunday morning worship service and Sunday afternoon church choir rehearsal. The position requires someone with music reading abilities. Most music is in the easy to medium difficulty range.

If interested, please contact the Minister of Music – Mr. Leslie Gilbert: Phone the church at 229-386-2693 or 229-669-6796. You will probably have to leave a message

"Why should we not ... do something that will prove that we are really in earnest in claiming to be followers of him who, though he was rich, for our sake became poor?"

Lottie Moon, Sept. 15, 1887, Tungchow



The International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has established a goal of \$175 Million. And because you give, IMB helps churches send missionaries to the Billions who have yet to hear.

2015 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

Useful Links:

Southern Baptist Convention
<http://www.sbc.net/>

North American Mission Board
<http://www.namb.net/>

International Mission Board
<http://www.imb.org/>

Georgia Baptist Convention
<https://gabaptist.org/>

Mell Baptist Association

CELEBRATIONS

December

Birthdays

- 14 Stacy Ring
- 21 Steve Tucker
- 23 Nerily Lopez

Wedding Anniversaries

- 12 Rev. and Mrs. Chad Hall

Church Anniversaries

- 28 Les Gilbert/New River 2002

January

Birthdays

- 2 Dana Hughes
- 15 John Hughes
- 18 Dan Eidson

Wedding Anniversaries

- 6 Rev. and Mrs. Bill Hughes
- 8 Rev. and Mrs. Parker Hulsey

Church Anniversaries

- 3 Benji Rowland/Journey 2010
- 4 Brian Broome/Northside 2009

Food Pantry

2015

- December Victory

Churches can reserve a month in 2016.

Call 229-386-0865

Or email mellbapt@friendlycity.net

2016

- January Liberty
- February First Baptist, Tifton
- June Chula

To quote Paul Harvey; “**and now, the rest of the story.**”

The excitement of Christmas takes weeks to build to a crescendo...and then it's over. Life gets back to normal and many people suffer from the “Post-Christmas Blues.” Think what it was like for Mary and Joseph. For weeks, we hear sermons about the events leading up to, and including, the birth of Jesus. But, when was the last time you heard a sermon about what happened AFTER Christmas?

Their lives didn't get back to normal. If anything, their lives were being turned upside down. After the wise men visited and presented their 3 gifts (gold, frankincense, and myrrh), Joseph had a dream. An angel appeared and tells Joseph to flee to Egypt, because Herod is going to try to find the child and kill Him. (Matthew 2:13)

Joseph didn't waste any time. Verse 14 says he rose that night, packed up the family, and left. Think about what this meant for Joseph. He and Mary had traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem expecting to stay for only a few days and then return. Their families were back in Nazareth. They hadn't brought a wagon, loaded with furniture, valuables, and furnishings. Joseph had a carpenter shop in Nazareth; what would happen to it? In the middle of the night, God said “Go!”. Joseph didn't argue with God. He didn't ask for “Plan B”. He just obeyed.

When God calls, He provides; AMEN? God wouldn't have told Mary and Joseph to go to Egypt, and then say, “Good Luck!”. They would need money to live on while in Egypt and God provided this through the gifts of the Wise Men.

After King Herod's death, Joseph had another dream and the angel told Joseph it was time to go back home. God had protected them, and now they could return to Israel.

What can we learn from this story? The safest place to be is in God's will, to go where He tells you to go. You can always feel safe when you are living in God's will. That's not to say bad things cannot or will not happen to you. But, know that God is in charge. Everything that happened in the Christmas story was planned out by God. You can see His hand in the story every step of the way.

Maybe you will experience the “Post-Christmas Blues.” When Christmas is over, life's routines begin anew and the excitement of

The Mell Baptist Association Newsletter will not be published in January. As a reminder, the Mell office will be closed the last two weeks in December. We will reopen on January 4th.

NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

If a church or ministry wishes to share upcoming events or activities in the newsletter, please email the information to mellbapt@friendlycity.net before the 20th of the month preceding the month you want your announcement printed. I will also include



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sabsp4hm@gmail.com

Men's Ministry

If you would like to host one of the quarterly events during 2016, please contact this office.

Feb—May—Aug—Nov
Open Open TyTy Open

It has been suggested the Men's Ministry events be changed to two times yearly. What are your thoughts? Let us know.

BCM NEWS

This past week we talked about giving your "stuff" to God. This is all your worries, concerns, hurts and pains. It was a very practical and moving session with a student leading. At the end they were told to come up for prayer, if they wished. Also, if they wanted they could place their cards with their cares and worries at the foot of the cross we had placed in the room. Several students have come in this past week and prayed over these concerns and needs. As I prayed over some of their issues, it broke my heart. Some of these students struggle with things that people twice their age should not have to struggle with. Several have put low self worth as their main struggle. Oh, if only they could just grasp the height, the depth, and the width of God's love for them. Please pray that as they dig into the Word of God that they begin to realize that God loves them and has a plan for their lives. Please pray for me and the leadership as we plan next semester using their heart cries as a basis for our lessons.

As soon as finals are over we will begin our TIFTON mission trip. We will be working with several non-profit groups, doing some witnessing training, and planning drama and seminars we can present next semester in churches and with youth groups. If you would like for us to come to your church some Sunday night, please let us know. We would love the opportunity. You have done so much for us, we would love the opportunity to give back to you.

Ladies, as always the food was awesome this semester! The group I call the "lunch bunch" is especially grateful! I can't thank you for the times I have sat down at lunch with a student and had them pour their heart out over a hot plate of leftovers. Your meals make this place seem like a home away from home for these students. Thank you for your sacrificial

Jan 25 Brookfield
Feb 1 Victory
Feb 8 Lenox
Feb 15 BCM
Feb 22 Oak Grove
Feb 29 Crossview
Mar 7 Zion Hope
Mar 21 First Baptist Tifton
Mar 28 Eastside
Apr 4 Northside
Apr 11 New River
Apr 18 Crossview

Winter Suppers

Baptist Collegiate Ministries (BCM), formerly known as BSU (Baptist Student Union), is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention, however, we welcome everyone to join us. BCM is a great way to make friends, have fun, learn about Christ, and get involved at ABAC.



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