



ELK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

January-February 2019

From the Pastor's Study...

A new year is upon us—yet again! That's sometimes the way I feel about the turning of the calendar to a new year. January launches the two months of Epiphany, the season when we remember the appearance of the baby Jesus, often remembered first through stories of both scholars and shepherds taking note of the series of odd events taking place in Bethlehem. Yet the calendar's turn is a melancholy one for me: one more time, try to help people see that God himself appears in our midst. One, more, time....

It often feels like a losing battle. After two thousand years, I wonder if God feels that way, too. Could it be we're in the same boat? After all, I've only been around for a fraction of that time, and it feels like a daunting task to me. Might he be even more weary than this country preacher?

Even for the average churchgoer, it's easy to become jaded. Each Sunday, year after year, we pray for things to be different, but usually we don't hear about things changing much; the litany of hatred, poverty, and abuse seems an unbroken record.

Our culture doesn't help much. Things come so easily. I didn't need to learn that much math to get by in school, partly because I was around when calculators and computers came along. We've raised a generation now that can find not just the square root of 166 (12.88 and change, if you're wondering), or for finding that the French term for "How's it going?" is "Comment allez-vous?" All they need to do is tap a few times on their phones and, thanks to the Internet, they can know all things (or so they believe).

So, honestly, are you looking for an insight? Long ago Isaiah begged people to see what God was doing all around them. "*Shine, arise; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.*" [60:1] The promises to generations abused by invaders long ago were to be fulfilled by people, not sitting around waiting for God to come and do things for them, or to send his word for them to act. Isaiah begins this vital passage with verbs ("*Shine, arise...*"), not passive words, *but words of action*. No more should we wait upon God to reveal his goodness, or to make his kingdom manifest. Instead, rise up, see his goodness become manifest...yet again.

If you don't take the season all that seriously, fine. But the next time you wonder if God is doing anything at all, just don't expect much in the way of insight. If you do take it seriously, go out and find his goodness at work. One thing's for sure: If we wait back for him to come to us, we may not see much goodness at all.

And if that's true, next New Year's, don't blame him.

Mickey

DATES TO REMEMBER

January

9th and 23rd	Book Study - at the church - 7:00 p.m.
10th	Women's Card Ministry - 9:00 a.m. at the church
13th	Quarterly Business Meeting following the 11:00 a.m. service. All are invited.

February

03rd	Communion Sunday held in the Sanctuary
07th	Women's Card Ministry - 9:00 a.m. at the church
13th and 27th	Book Study - at the church - 7:00 p.m.
16th	Valentine's Dinner - 4:00 p.m. All are invited. Cost to be determined at a later date.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

January

Schnippel, Veronica	07
Morrell, Lee	07
Webb, Wayne	07

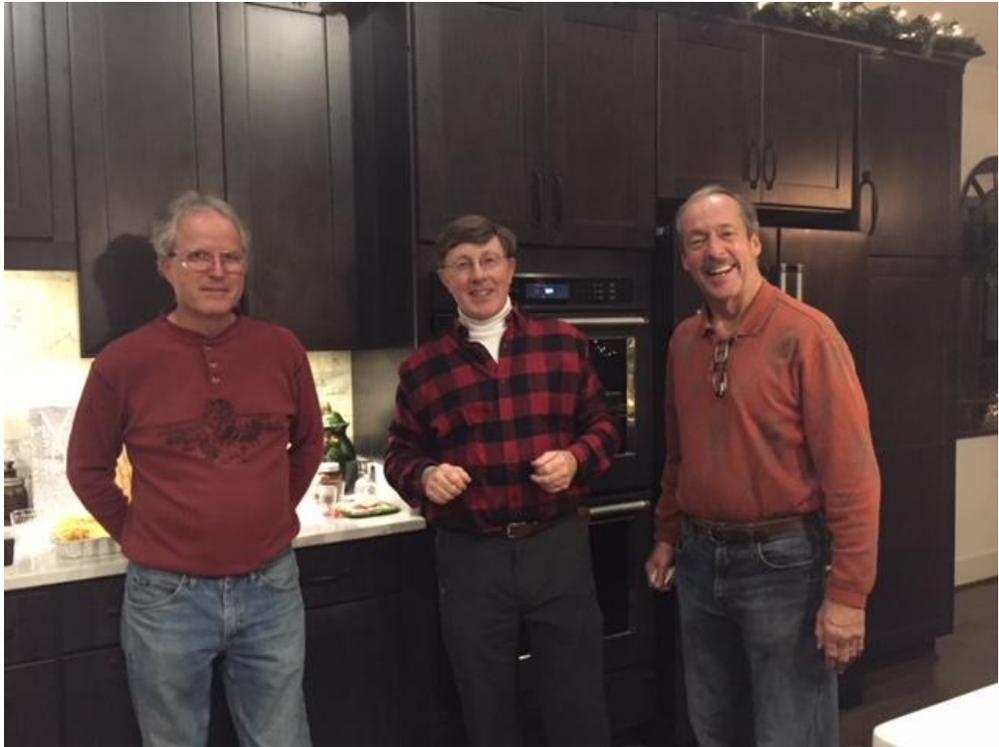
Rachel & Todd Tressler	08
Duerson, James	14
Rapp, John	18
Wood, Karen	19
Sherred, John & Margaret	20
Lunsford, Andrew	21
Wilson, Tony	24
Morrell, Lee & Cindy	27
Chewning, Mary Frances	29

February

Croce, Larry	01
Lunsford, Adam	03
Smith, Maguire	04
Keene, Bobby & Linda	13
Wyckoff, Bunnie	16
Rose, Connie	22
Frazier, Wayne	26
Jenkins, Woody & Penny	28

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE AT THE FRAZIER'S





DECORATING AND SINGING AT LOUISA NURSING HOME









BOOK STUDY CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE JONE'S







DECORATING AT THE CHURCH







CHRISTMAS SERVICE AND RECEPTION





Prayer Ministry

If you know someone who is in need of prayers or a visit from our Prayer Partners, please let me know. Alana 703-282-2393 wr.frazier@verizon.net

Elk Creek Book Study

We have started a new book study titled "Sinners in the hands of a loving God" by Brian Zahnd. Join us at 7:00 p.m. in the Reception Hall at the church as we continue this study on the 2nd Wednesday and 4th Wednesday of each month, one chapter each session. If you would like to join us and purchase a book, please contact Tony Wilson at 540-748-1159.

Together in Christ.

Alana Frazier