

From the Pastor's Study...

I can still remember the excitement that as a small child would build on Christmas morning. Since my grandparents (father's side) didn't drive, he would have to go pick them up early that morning. As we had to wait for the adults to get situated around the tree so we could share that first discover of what Santa had left for us, my sisters and I would keep a wary eye on the car pulling in. All the time, until the parents and grandparents could get into place, the sense of expectation would become unbearable. When the



time came, it was awfully nice to find something we had really wanted was there; it was even better if we got something we didn't expect but fell in love with it. Sometimes what we didn't expect was even better than what we expected. What we expect these days is often something we didn't expect, and didn't wish for: nearly three years of Covid (and counting); political turmoil that never seems to end; "wars and

rumors of wars", as Jesus put it, in Ukraine and elsewhere; and in recent days, mass shootings, some of them very close to home in Charlottesville and Chesapeake. Our hearts are broken each time; it seems—we try to find out what's new, and only hear what sounds like old news.

But God has a way of flipping the script. Dina Donahue's story "Trouble At the Inn" is mentioned in the book we have read in book study this fall, A Long-Ago Birth in a Right-Now World, by Michael Brown. In Donahue's story the part of the innkeeper in the annual Christmas pageant is played by a child with special needs who has already been held back twice because of his cognitive

issues. They hope he can remember his lines and remembers his stage cues. They gave him the part of the innkeeper because the lines were few: "What do you want?" to Joseph request for a room, followed by, "Seek it elsewhere! The inn is filled." He gave his lines on cue, and as Joseph and Mary turn away, the script does indeed get flipped: Wally, the innkeeper, cried out, "Don't go…bring her back…you can have my room." He did it all with a smile.



All of us up to the point of that last line knew what to expect, that the Christ child and mother Mary would be forced into some squalid accommodations. Yet the story gets turned around to the delight of the onlookers that night. We pray for such a turnaround in real life, too. That's what Advent is about - watching, waiting, and hoping for the long-awaited moment when God will turn to the world and catch us all by surprise by saying, "All that old news, and what sounds like old news...it's gone now." Come, Lord Jesus.

Mickey

Christmas is coming.....



Samaritan's Purse Shoe Boxes - Thank you to Mary Virginia Polonsky for coordinating and to everyone who filled the shoe boxes this year. Seventy-four (74) were delivered to the Resource Center.

On the evening of November 27th, the church was decorated for the Advent season. Thank you to everyone who helped decorate, shared delicious cookies and hot cider, and joined in to sing carols of the season.





Next up.....

Tree Decorating and Caroling at Louisa Health and Rehabilitation Center (210 Elm Ave., Louisa) – On Friday, December 2nd at 9:00 a.m., please come and share some Christmas joy with the special people who reside at the center. You will be truly blessed as you bring joy and blessings to them. NOTE: Parking is a premium, so meet at the church at 8:30 am to carpool.

Christmas Families – We have adopted three (3) families from the Santa Council with a total of 10 children (Family 1 has 6 children).

There are still a few gift tags available in the church social hall. **Please remember one box/bag per tag.** We want to make sure all children have the same number of gifts. Place the tag on the wrapped gift for sorting purposes. A new tag will be provided so the kids don't know what's in the package. Feel free to include more than one item per package-- maybe a small toy, puzzle or treat in with the clothing.

We are also collecting food for the families. A turkey breast, ham and fruit will be provided. Dry and canned goods as well as treats will be collected from the congregation. We not only want to make sure the families have a nice Christmas meal, but additional full/partial meals for the season. If possible, purchase items in three's, one for each of the three families. Any additional food items for the family with 6 children (Family 1) would be appreciated.

Deliveries will be made to the families the week of December 19 (date and time will be decided later). **We'll need volunteers for the deliveries**.

Contact Coral Losinski, 571-366-9500 (cell), with any questions or concerns.

Joy at Christmas – The Christmas Joy outreach will meet on Tuesday, December 13th at 9:00 am at church to assemble the joy bags for shut-ins or someone who needs some joy in their life. We will distribute them following the meeting. POC's are Bunnie Wyckoff 202-286-8954 or Alana Frazier 703-282-2393.



The **Pastor-led Book Study** that has been meeting on Sunday at noon will meet a final time this Sunday, December 4th. The book is *A Long-Ago Birth in a Right-Now World: Reflections about the Christmas Story in Our Age and Lives* by Michael B. Brown.

The **Women's Fellowship** is meeting for lunch on Thursday, December 15th at noon at the home of Anna Jones, 39 Deep Creek Circle, Bumpass. 540-207-6592.

The **Men's Breakfast** is planned for Saturday, December 17th at 10:00 am at the church. Come as you are and bring a friend. For questions, contact Mike Bridges, 540-748-2546.

The Wednesday Book Study will meet on December 14th, but not on December 28th.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – Join us at 6:00 pm to celebrate the coming birth of our Lord.

Christmas Day Service – Christmas falls on Sunday this year. There will be one combined service at 11:00 am.

Don't forget to order your Poinsettia(s) by December 11th to honor or remember someone special.

-	
Wea	are taking orders for Poinsettias beginning today.
	nk you to the Gainesville High School Cardinals Marching Band providing us with such beautiful plants.
Dea	dline: December 11 th , 2022
	Poinsettias cost \$8.00 each, checks made payable to Elk Creek Baptis rch and marked for Poinsettia Donation.
Give	en By:
Num	iber of Poinsettias
	In memory of
•	Or
	In Honor of
Add	itional Poinsettias:

And if ordering gifts from Amazon, AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support Elk Creek Baptist Church every time you shop, at no cost to you. You get the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the church. You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are all the same.

How to use AmazonSmile on a web browser:

- 1. Visit <u>smile.amazon.com</u>
- 2. Sign in with the same account you use for Amazon.com
- 3. Select your charity
- Start shopping! Remember to checkout at smile.amazon.com to generate donations for your chosen charity.
 Tip: Add a bookmark to make it easier to shop at smile.amazon.com.

How to use AmazonSmile using the Amazon app on your mobile phone:

- 1. Open the Amazon Shopping app
- 2. Navigate to the main menu (\equiv)
- 3. Tap on Settings and then select "AmazonSmile"
- 4. Select your charity and then follow the on-screen instructions to turn ON AmazonSmile in the mobile app
- 5. Once AmazonSmile has been activated in your app, future eligible app purchases will generate a donation for the charity you have selected.





The Sunday School teacher had her class draw a picture of the Jesus birth. Included in every picture was Mary and Joseph, the baby Jesus, the shepherds and some sheep, an angel or two, and the Three Wise Men with their camels and gifts. She was surprised that little Tommy included a fire truck instead of camels. "Why did you draw a fire truck in your picture?," she asked. Surprised that she would ask, he replied, "The Bible said the Wise Men came from 'afar'!"



Goings and Comings

Lake Anna Beautification Friends sponsored road clean ups have bagged a lot of trash in the last month. One last clean up for 2022 is scheduled for this Thursday, December 1st starting at 9:00 am. Meet at the church. Focusing on Pottiesville Road to the Bridge, and Pine Harbour towards Laurel Hill Baptist Church.



Wednesday Book Study meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, and is currently wrapping up *Hope for the Hurting* by Tony Evans



The **Women's Fellowship** gathered at the home of Jo and Jay Canova on November 17th and were treated to Jay's signature cooking.





Did you know.....

- Scholarships for Students. Virginia Baptist Foundation has changed its name to EverBless and is now receiving applications for scholarships for full-time students at accredited institutions who are members of a BGAV church with a minimum GPA of 3.0. online at http://everbless.org/scholarships/12/1/22-1/31/23
- The **RuraLove Thrift Store**, 587 Mica Road, is open to the public to purchase clothing and yard sale items on Wednesdays (year-round) and the first Saturday of the month April-November from 8- 12:30. Through contributions, donations and proceeds from purchases, assistance is provided to local families in crisis.



The meaning of the Advent wreath

• The **first candle**, known as the "Prophet's Candle," represents **hope**. The Old Testament prophets, particularly Isaiah, awaited the Messiah's approach with bated breath. Purple is a color that represents royalty, repentance, and fasting.

• The **second candle**, dubbed "Bethlehem's Candle," symbolizes **faith**. Micah predicted that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem, the same city where King David was born. The purple color of the second candle represents the preparation for the coming

monarch.

- The **third candle**, known as the "Shepherd's Candle," represents **joy**. The shepherds were overjoyed when the angels declared that Jesus had also come for ordinary, inconsequential people like them. The color rose is associated with pleasure in the liturgy. This candle is pink in hue to symbolize pleasure and happiness.
- The **fourth candle**, known as the "Angel's Candle," symbolizes **peace**. The angels declared that Jesus had come to bring peace—to reacquaint mankind with God and one another. Purple is also used to symbolize the climax of love in the Messiah.
- The **fifth candle** (optional) symbolizes **light and purity** and is known as "Christ's candle." On Christmas Day, it is lit and put in the center. This candle is pure white to symbolize triumph and pure brightness.



Volunteer Opportunities

- Food providers for Sunday morning fellowship after the 8:30 service. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall, or call Coral Losinski, 571-366-9500, or Bunnie Wyckoff, 202-286-8954, for more information.
- Wednesday Book Study Snack and Study Leader(s) to facilitate discussion of the current book on specific Wednesdays. Contact Tony Wilson, 540-748-1159, wilsontony540@gmail.com, for more details.
- **The ECBC Woodchucks** who provide firewood to families in need can always use an extra pair of hands. If you have any questions about this ministry or would like to get involved, contact Rick Perks, 301-704-2743.
- **RuraLove Ministry,** an outreach of Goshen Association, welcomes volunteers. Contact the Ministry Center for more information, 540-894-8440. (Or Coral Losinski, 571-366-9500)
- Young Life of Louisa can always use your help. Contact Susan and Dane Swenson, 703-863-9972, <u>susanswenson466@gmail.com</u>.

Mission Opportunities through Baptist Goshen Association (BGAV)

- Four-Part Mission Team to Armenia set for August 2023. The Goshen Missions Committee is in the process of planning a Mission Trip to Sisian, Armenia for the dates of August 17-29, 2023. The Team will be working with one of our three church planters, Pastor Vardan and his wife Lusine. We are planning to have four parts to the team: part 1 will be working with children and youth in a Vacation Bible School setting; part 2 will be made up of ladies who will have classes for the local women while the VBS is going on; part 3 will be made up of pastors/ teachers to hold classes for the pastors in the area and doing some outreach around our construction project; and the fourth part will be the construction team to work on a project TBD. The cost of the trip is estimated at \$1800-2000 depending on the cost of airline tickets. Additional funds would be needed for any souvenirs or shopping. The team will be staying in a hotel. There are no special shots required for entry into the country. You will need a current passport. If you would like more information or are interested in being on one of the four parts of this team, please contact the Goshen Ministry Center at 540.894.8440. Please pray the Lord would build this team and Goshen people would be receptive to His calling.
- **Disaster Response Baby Boxes** Part of the BGAV's new disaster response program for supply distribution, Goshen is collecting supplies to fill 240 baby boxes so families can have the essentials to care for their baby during a crisis. This is a brand new idea and Goshen is the first to put together these needed supplies. Plans are to pack boxes in the spring (depending on donations) to be prepared for hurricane season 2023. The boxes (will be provided) are to contain: a tube of Desitin (4 -ounce), 1 pacifier (in packaging), 1 bottle (8-ounce in packaging), 1 blanket, 1 sm. box of disposable diaper sacks or 4 gal trash bags, 3 packs of unscented wipes (50-100 count each), 2 packs of name brand diapers (25-35 depending on size). For any questions, contact the Goshen Ministry Center and Tammy will return your call. 540-894-8440.
- Hope for Appalachia (http://hfavateam.com) make "Hope Boxes" for students age 4-18 to be given out with salvation message at schools in Kentucky in the spring and fall. Needs: Hats & Mittens (due by October 1st yearly). Also, fleece blankets (new-if making, should be two 1 1/2 yard pieces tied), clean current style prom dresses (new or used), and Hope Boxes (all due by Feb. 1st each year). See website for more info on any of the above ministries or how you could be a mission team.
- **Mission Stitchers** All are invited on Sat, December 10th, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m at the Goshen Ministry Center, 587 Mica Rd, Mineral. Bring a lunch or about \$10 for lunch. Bring your machine and tools or fabric scissors to cut out the patterns. Needs: Flannel by the yard (new), flannel bed sheets and pillowcases (new or gently used), 100% cotton quilt batting or 80% cotton/20% polyester quilt batting, cotton pillowcases (new or used-no stains, no microfiber), cotton fabric by the yard (new), girls underwear sizes 14, 16 & 18 (new), modern white wedding dresses (gently used). For more information on this ministry contact Terry Graham, 540-661-6268 or email mrsjrg@aol.com.
- ***Old prescription eye glasses and men's neckties** being collected for a missionary in Guatemala.
- *Old prescription bottles and non-prescription bottles (aspirin, vitamins, etc.) for Doctor's Without Boarders. Note: Bottles should be rinsed and labels removed.

*Note: Donations may be left in the box in the Fellowship Hall.

DATES TO REMEMBER

December

- 1st Road Clean Up, 9:00 am
- 2nd Louisa Health Care Center Caroling and Tree Decorating. 9:00 am
- 4th Pastor's Book Study, final session
- 10th Mission Stitchers, 9:00 2:00 pm (Goshen Assoc.)
- 14th Book Study. 6:45 8:00 pm at the church
- 15th Women's Fellowship, noon at Anna Jones' house
- 17th Men's Breakfast, 10:00 am at the church
- 18th Deadline for Christmas Families donations (gifts and food)
- 20th Deadline for articles for the newsletter
- 24th Christmas Eve Service 5:00 pm
- 25th Christmas Day, combined service at 11:00 am
- 28th Book Study. Cancelled on this date.

January

- TBD Women's Fellowship
- 1st New Year's Day, combined service at 11:00 am
- 8th Deacon's Meeting
- 11th Book Study. 6:45 8:00 pm, at the church. New book Sessions with Corinthians
- 15th Quarterly Business Meeting 1st Quarter
- 16th Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 19th ECBC 2nd Annual Blood Drive, 12:00 6:00 pm
- 20th Deadline for articles for the newsletter
- 22nd Ordination of Deacons
- 25th Book Study. 6:45 8:00 pm



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSERIES

December

Mary Faccone	4
Sandra & Tony Wilson	4
Katie Dick	10
	. •
Michael DiFranco	10
Butch Weaver	11
Ronda Reeves-Long & Bill Long	11
Jean Brannon	18
Jean & Dan Brannon	18
Phillip Mason	18
Catherine Brown	19
Phillip Brown	19
Kim Brown	21
Grace Grecco	22
Cecilia Hoffman	23
Grayson Hoffman	23
Cecilia & Peter Hoffman	28

January

Linda Wilson Robin Bass	5 6
Kristin Barmoy	6
Wayne Webb	7
Veronica Schnippel	7
Lee Morrell	7
Sarah Tyler	11
Christina Vaughan	13
James Duerson	14
Karen Wood	19
Andrew Lunsford	21
Tony Wilson	24
Cindy Bock	29



Families in crisis, The people of Ukraine, Adam Northcraft, Barclay Seale, Samantha Nolan, Caroline Lorenzon, Carolyn Brown, Frank Hammond, Terri Myers, Michael Ward, Nick Murphy, Marie Snyder, John Murphy, Betty Jones, Kim Ridley, Chris Ashwood, Don Iwanicki, Ronnie Robertson, John Pixley, Ray Hart, Ludlow Gaines, Doug & Ellen Hewitt, Daniel Roberson,

Hilda Jarvis, Judy Anderson, Matt Smith, Rick Clore, Joyce Myers, Krista Seltzer, Cheyenne Bungay, Linda & Phil Mason, Robert Rodecap, Laurie Gunther, John Pescatori, John Fuggett, Rosalyn Cooke, Christiana Lewis, Greg Laurent, Cindy & Lee Morrell, Diane Eakin, Carl Peterson,

Brenda Proffitt, Jacob Reeves, Della Wynn, Jerry & Emma Kay Talley, Mark Robertson, Ruth Cramer, Mike Fleck, Tim McIlhaney, Butch Weaver, Erin Robertson Weekley, Mya Thompson, Lyla Christie, Dennis McFarlane, Doug McFarlane, Alfred Sletton, Catherine Proffitt.

Prayers answered! After a prolonged stay in the NICU, congratulations to Phoebe, Martin & Jackson Koenig on the homecoming of their newest family member, Jason Patrick Koenig, born November 10th.

Congratulations to Linda Mason who is now cancer free and begins her next phase of getting new bone marrow. Prayers continue for her complete recovery.





Looking Ahead....

New Book Study starting in January – The Wednesday night book study will be discussing Session with Corinthians, by Michael D. McCullar. Everyone is responsible to order their own hard cover, paperback or Kindle copy. Recommend you let folks know that they can buy the book online at the Helwys website. Copy and paste this URL to go directly to the order page –

https://www.helwys.com/sh-books/sessions-with-corinthians/

Or call directly to order - 478-757-0564. If you need assistance, please contact Peter Hoffman, 540-454-1949.

Ordination of Deacons – Several months ago, the church elected three (3) new deacons who will officially accept their positions of leadership at an ordination service scheduled for Sunday, January 22nd. Mark your calendar for this special service and plan to join this celebration of commitment.



Sign Up Now for our 2nd Elk Creek Blood Drive: January 19th, 12:00 to 6:00 pm

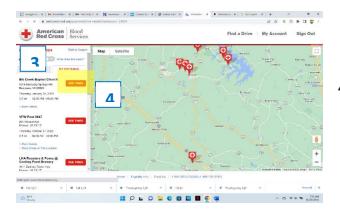
We're fast approaching our second Elk Creek Blood Drive. So far six (6) people have signed up; but, we need a minimum of 30. Please sign up and pass the word to friends and neighbors to donate. We had a fantastic 31 units donated at our last drive, with 49% of donations being first time donors. We would like to surpass that number, if possible.

Note: If you are a regular donor, there is a 60 day wait time between donations so please plan accordingly.

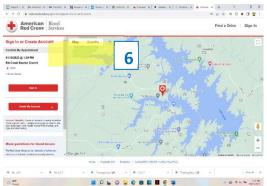
If you have questions, need assistance, or want information regarding platelet donation, contact Beth Larson at u2skyhag@gmail.com

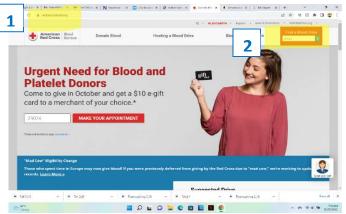
STEPS for signing up:

- 1. Go to redcrossblood.org
- 2. Enter 23024 in "find a blood drive". Click blue arrow
- 3. Select "By Distance" tab

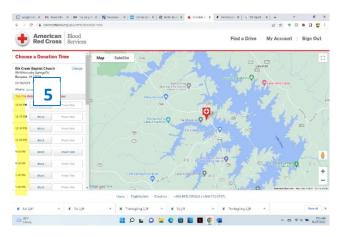


5. Choose your time. "Blood" is a traditional donation. "Power Red" is similar to a whole blood donation, except a special machine is used to allow you to safely donate two units of red blood cells during one donation while returning your plasma and platelets to you. It





4. Select "See Times" next to Elk Creek Baptist Church



takes about 30 minutes longer than a normal donation.

6. Then you either sign in, or create an account if you haven't done this before. The steps are straight forward.

By special request, printed below are the words to the song written by Gerry Wyckoff for his daughter's baptism many years ago and shared with the church on Sunday, November 27th.

Praising Jesus

Shattered lives surrender, to the healer and mender. Come defeated, mistreated, Trust the One who's loved you forever.

The verse in a poem serves the writer. A branch owes its life to the vine. In each hides the heart of its author, revealed in its fruit or by rhyme. Our lives are composed by one master, like music to honor His name. How sad to report, mine often falls short, Yet in God's gentle way He'll forgive when I stray.

I just don't want to stop praising Jesus, I'll keep right on once this song's over. I just don't want to stop praising Him. The songs people bring to Jesus our King, He'll change and arrange and give back a new song fit for heaven.

If my life's a song for my Savior, I want Him to like what He hears. I hope the new theme He gave me, points others to Him through the years. So when I get proud or selfish, I'll think of the branch and the vine. And life without end, I can share with a friend. If it's in God's plan, they'll soon understand why:

I just don't want to stop praising Jesus, I'll keep right on once this song's over. I just don't want to stop praising Him. The lives that we bring, like songs to our King,

Come fractured in pieces but Jesus repairs them for heaven.

How often we hear that God loves us, And though, praise God it's true, How can God who's both just and all-knowing, ignore the wrong that we do? For heaven, I need God's forgiveness, But His pardon comes at a price. That debt has been paid; My sins have been laid, At the foot of a cross, Imagine the cost, that's why:

I just don't want to stop praising Jesus, I'll keep right on once this song's over. I just don't want to stop praising Him. Our hearts that we bring, failed dreams with their sting, Though broken in two, He'll return them like new fixed for heaven.

This song on its own can't deliver, the message that God would intend. The Holy Spirit must waken, our hunger for God deep within. If you've never made Christ your Savior, thank God that you're hearing this song. It must not be ignored, with Jesus as Lord, We're spared by God's grace, when we meet face to face, 'til then:

I just don't want to stop praising Jesus, I'll keep right on once this song's over. I just don't want to stop praising Him. Shattered lives surrender, to the healer and mender. Come defeated, mistreated, Trust the One who's loved you forever.

I just don't want to stop Praising Jesus.

POTLUCK!! Asked what kind of pie she had made, the woman replied, "Oh it's jes' pie." But, it's my favorite, and who knew such a sweet pie contains vinegar and cornmeal.

Classic Chess Pie

Pie Crust 1/2 (15-ounce) package refrigerated pie crusts

Pie Crust 1/2 (15-ounce) package re Pie weights or dried beans Aluminum foil 2 cups sugar 2 tablespoons cornmeal 1 tablespoon flour 1/4 teaspoon salt 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted 1/4 cup milk 1 tablespoon white vinegar 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract 4 large eggs, lightly beaten Powdered sugar, for garnish



- 1. **Bake Pie Crust:** Fit piecrust in a 9according to package directions; fold edges under, and crimp. Line pastry with aluminum foil. Fill with dried beans or pie weights and bake at 425°F for 4 to 5 minutes. Remove weights and foil; bake 2 more minutes or until golden. Cool.
- 2. **Make Pie**: Stir together sugar, cornmeal, flour, salt, melted butter, milk, white vinegar, and vanilla extract until blended. Add eggs, and stir well before pouring into piecrust.
- 3. Bake at 350°F for 50 to 55 minutes, shielding edges with aluminum foil after 10 minutes to prevent excessive browning. Cool completely on a wire rack. If desired, garnish with powdered sugar.

Chef's Notes Variation: Coconut Chess Pie: Prepare filling as directed above; stir in 1 cup toasted flaked coconut before pouring into piecrust. Bake as directed above.



STAY TUNED (IN)....

- If your contact information changes, please remember to notify the church. Send changes to your address, phone number and/or email address to Mindy Ward, <u>dm3ward@gmail.com</u>, 301-335-8315, so we can update our directory.
- If you cannot come in person, tune into the 11:00 am service on Mixlr app. Download the app on your mobile phone or computer, select "Listen" and search for ECBC-5916.
- Visit our website elkcreekbaptistchurchva.org and like us on Facebook page.
- Need access to our secure online directory? Email the webmaster, web@elkcreekbaptistchurchva.org, for access to the secure directory.
- Check out the Goshen Baptist Association website www.goshenassociation.com

Hope is standing in the dark looking at the light. – The Christmas Train (Hallmark)

Together in Christ, Mindy Ward and Beth Larson