

December, 2022

From the Elders



A thankful pastor....

Many of you don't know this, but November 18 was my three-year anniversary as the Senior Pastor at Faith Bible Fellowship Church. And as I looked back on and reminisced about all that God has done over the past three years at this church, I realized that I have so much to be thankful for.

Things like elders who are men of high character, deacons who are selfless servants, and a worship team who love to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Things like, life groups that fellowship together, Bible studies that try to discern God's Word together, and a youth group who genuinely seems to love one another.

And finally, things like, members of old who are steadfastly committed to this church body, new members who are excited to build up this church body, and the new visitors each week who get to see the powerful testimony of the love of Jesus Christ manifested within this church body.

Press on.

–Pastor Wes Bunting

Christmas at Faith



- ✦ December 2– Tree Lighting, 6–9 PM
- ✦ December 18– Fellowship Meal, 12 PM
- ✦ December 24: Christmas Eve Service, 7 PM
- ✦ December 25: Christmas Morning Service, 10:30 AM

Please invite family and friends as we celebrate this joyous season!

Coming Up



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| 2– Tree Lighting, 6–9 PM | 17– Parents' Night Out, 6–9 PM |
| 4– Life Group, 5 PM | 18– Fellowship Meal, 12 PM |
| 6– Life Group, 5 PM | 20– Life Group Christmas Party,
5 PM |
| 7– Prayer, 11 AM | 21– Prayer, 11 AM |
| 9– Youth Group, 7–9 PM | 23– Youth Group Christmas Party,
7–9 PM |
| 10– Ladies' Group, 9:30 AM | 24– Christmas Eve Service, 7 PM |
| 12– Life Group, 5 PM | 25– Christmas Service, 10:30 AM |
| Youth Small Group, 6:30–8 PM | 28– Prayer, 11 AM |
| 13– Ladies' Group, 10 AM | |
| Women's Bible Study* | |
| 14– Prayer, 11 AM | |

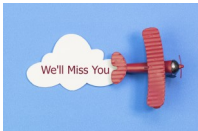
**meal at 5 PM; study starts at 6 PM*

Announcements



- ◆ **Parents' Night Out**– Parents, take advantage of this great opportunity to do some Christmas shopping or take some time to relax! The youth will watch your children on Saturday, December 17, from 6–9 PM at the church for a donation to help finance their upcoming trip to the Sno-Glo youth retreat. Plan now for your evening out!
- ◆ **December Fellowship Meal**– This month's fellowship meal will take place after the service on Sunday, December 18. Instead of being served potluck-style, the church will have the event catered. Please join us for a time of holiday fellowship with your church family.
- ◆ **Business Listing**– Do you have a small business or skill that could bless our church family? The pastors will be providing bulletin board space for you to share this information. Contact Pastor Ricardo if you would like to participate or find out more.
- ◆ **Sno-Glo**– Youth, mark your calendars for an awesome time away at the annual Sno-Glo retreat! You'll get to spend time with other youth from Bible Fellowship churches, sitting under Biblical teaching and having fun together. The dates are January 20–21, 2023. See Pastor Ricardo if you have questions or want more information. Don't miss it!

Goodbye to the Chauzas



The original meaning of the word “goodbye” is “God be with you.” It is with this sentiment in mind that we bid farewell to Lorraine and Rebecca Chauza, who will be moving to Lothian, Maryland, on December 12. The Chauzas came to Faith Bible Fellowship around 6 years ago. Lorraine's husband Bert served an elder until his passing, and Rebecca has been a familiar face in the sound booth and on the worship team. We will miss Lorraine and Rebecca but wish them God's best as they move into a new chapter in their lives.

Pilgrim's Progress



On Saturday, November 12, we hosted our second annual Pilgrim's Progress Outdoor Adventure Event. It was a huge success! We had a wonderful turnout with 84 kids in attendance and over 175 people in all. We had over 30 volunteers, all beautifully carrying out their jobs to deliver the gospel to those in attendance. The event was such a testament to God's grace and how He empowers the body of Christ to carry out His plans.

This year we added three new obstacles for a total of eight obstacles, all of which correlated with the trials that Christian faced in Bunyan's allegorical tale, *Pilgrim's Progress*. The event was truly a fun, physically challenging team effort that painted a picture of the gospel and what a believer faces in their journey to the celestial city.

-Kris Young



Meet the Mahlstedts



Hello, we are Bob and Carolyn Mahlstedt. The Lord has blessed us with 30 years of marriage. We have three adult children, two of whom are married. We have three granddaughters, two of whom are newborn identical twin girls! We also have a sweet kitty named Bagel.

We have been blessed, for the last two and a half years, to be doing a weekly livestream Bible study/worship time on Facebook. We have friends who have come alongside us in this ministry to pray with us, post the worship lyrics on the livestream, and also hold us accountable.

In this new season of "empty nesting," we thoroughly enjoy extra time with our granddaughters, nice quiet dinners together, an occasional sporting event, and the beach, whenever possible! Our favorite local beach is Assateague Island.

We are truly in awe of the Lord's faithfulness in our lives. (We love to talk about the Lord and His goodness and mercy in our lives with anyone!) We do not take being part of the body of Christ for granted and are grateful to be here with you all. We have been attending Faith Bible Fellowship for close to four months. We look forward to getting to know our brothers and sisters in Christ! May the peace of Christ be with you!

Life Group News



The **Tuesday Night** life group meets at the church under the leadership of Pastor Ricardo. They generally meet on the first and fourth weeks of each month, as the Women's Bible Study meets on the second Tuesday and the Men's Bible Study meets on the fourth Tuesday. Every Tuesday evening begins with a family meal at 5:00, followed by either life group or Bible study, depending on the week.

Like many of the other life groups, the Tuesday group has been walking through *The Holiness of God* video series by R. C. Sproul. On the last Tuesday in November, the group met for a "Friendsgiving." After a traditional Thanksgiving meal (yes, a second one!), they spent the evening enjoying each other's company. They're looking forward to growing in grace as they continue to do life together in the coming new year.

Ministry Highlights



You've probably enjoyed at least one Fellowship Meal here at Faith, but have you ever wondered who sets everything up and cleans up after it's all over? This is just one of the amazing feats accomplished by the Hospitality Ministry. This dedicated team of servants organizes and staffs the monthly fellowship meal as a way to demonstrate love and care to the body of Christ.

The hospitality ministry serves our body in other ways, too. They organize meals for those in need, send flowers to those who need encouragement, and coordinate any other church-hosted event requiring hospitality. If you know of a person or family who could benefit from their ministry, or if you would like to serve in this ministry, please contact Amy Fuhrmann.

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." – Galatians 6:10

From Church Extension Ministries



During the month of November, we were blessed with a visit from David Gundrum, director of Church Extension Ministries. As you may recall, Church Extension Ministries focuses on planting new Bible Fellowship churches, helping them develop until they become fully self-supporting. Please read this update concerning their December giving project.

Every year during the month of December, Church Extension holds its second major fund raiser, Christmas Gift Month. Incorporated with Christmas Gift Month, we have a “Matching Gift” challenge. We have several donors who provide a total of \$50,000.00 if we can raise at least 100 gifts of \$500.00 or more. Please pray for this matching gift to be confirmed this week. We are still in need of one donor to provide \$5,000 to \$10,000 for the matching gift. However, we are moving ahead with all the preparations for the matching gift and trusting God to provide this last matching gift donor.

The Christmas Gift Month fundraiser is very important. We first use this money to catch up our budget (currently we are behind in budget by \$25,000.) We then use the funds to make sure our Planters that have deficits in their support are fully paid for the year. (Current deficits total \$70,000.) Finally, we use the funds to open the New Year with a needed cash flow to pay the planters and work with the needs of the plants. (We will be helping those church plants who need new facilities and those graduating in 2023.)

Our goal this year is higher than in years past. This year we are asking the Lord to provide \$200,000.00 through our churches and partners. We realize this is going to be a challenge in light of the current economy; however, we know that the Lord wants us to reach people with the Gospel and plant churches that will make disciples. This Mission is a vital Kingdom building work for the Lord, and we trust He will bless.

Will you please pray for Christmas Gift Month and pray that the Lord will help us reach our goal? Will you help us with your gift? Thank you, and many blessings.

Missionary Moment



Christmas on the mission field can be very different from celebrations in the States. This is the perfect time to offer up prayers for our missionaries related to the holiday season. This year, please pray that God will bless them in the following areas:

- ◆ Opportunities for outreach as they share the meaning behind their cultural celebrations
- ◆ Comfort for those separated from their extended families
- ◆ Refreshment in the gospel as they reflect on the true meaning of Christmas
- ◆ Joy as they reflect on all that God has done in and through them during this past year

Help Wanted



The newsletter team needs you! If you're attending a church event, please consider sending in a brief report and/or sharing your photos. If you serve in a ministry or attend a life group, we'd love to hear about how the Lord is moving among you. If you're new to the church, please consider being featured in an upcoming newsletter. Finally, if you have any good ideas for articles, please let us know. Contact Jean Soyke anytime you have something to share!