



FIRST THINGS FIRST

First Baptist Church, Pontotoc, MS
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Associate Pastor

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Minister of Youth

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Volume 4 No. 11

Dr. Ken Hester, Pastor

November 2023

Parson to Person

Christmas music gently flows from my iPad speakers as I sit in a pool of sweat from a recent errand run. Aw, I can hear you now. "Christmas! We haven't even gotten through Halloween yet! That's just like you people of greed. We have to be thankful first!"

I've heard it all before. I must say that a love for Christmas doesn't mean I am not thankful. In my limited experience on this planet, thankfulness is never supposed to be a day, or a holiday. Thankfulness is to be a lifestyle.

Way before President George Washington issued a declaration for a day of Thanksgiving in 1789, the Psalmist instructed us to "Enter His gates with Thanksgiving" (Psalm 100:4). Hopefully, we don't wait for Thanksgiving to be thankful. I imagine that many of us begin our prayers with an expression of thanks.

This past Sunday, I really listened to the public prayers. One thing I heard over and over is, "Lord, I thank you for this day." Now, that phrase may be a cliché to get out of the way before the real praying starts, but I find it totally appropriate.

First of all, only the Lord can create a day. No one in the government can. Scientists can't create a day. I cannot create a day. You cannot create a day. Only the Lord can create a day. And He decided to create a day. As a matter of fact, Psalm 118:24 says, "This is the day the LORD has made." And then it continues to say, "let us rejoice and be glad in it." So, it seems that we are to be grateful/thankful/glad in the day He has made.

Truthfully, it can be hard to be thankful on some days. Some days, some memorable days, are not thankful days. Some of our days are days to tragedy, heartache, grief, loneliness, hurt and rage. There are some days that have created scars and left us with a load of baggage. There are some days we'd rather forget.

And that was that day. But today is this day. And if God has given us another day, then that means that He didn't give up on us on that very bad day. Whether we believe it or not, or want it or not, God believes in you enough to give you another day.

You get another day. You get another try. You get another morning of new mercies (Lamentations 3:22-23). Yes, this day has many challenges. But it is another God-ordained day. And God wants you to know Him on this day with everything you have going on in it.

I'm going to continue to try to embrace thankfulness all through the year, on every day, even the tough ones. So, to modify a Ben Rector song:

So, fill your plate and drink your tea
And fill your house with family
The kind of love a thousand miles can't wash away
And thank God for this Thanksgiving Day

Grateful,
Ken

P.S. When can we start playing Christmas music?



November 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Spaghetti, Green Beans, Corn, Rolls, Salad Bar	2	3 NATIONAL SANDWICH DAY	4
5 3:30pm Deacons Meeting	6 NATIONAL NACHOS DAY	7 5:00-7:00pm Youth Fundraiser at Seafood Junction	8 Ham/Turkey, Dressing, Yams, Green Bean Casserole, Salad Bar	9	10 NATIONAL VANILLA CUP CAKE DAY	11
12 Operation Christmas Child	13 NATIONAL HUG A MUSICIAN DAY	14	15 NO Family Night Meal	16 Feeding of the 5,000	17	18
19	20 12:00pm Senior Adult Luncheon	21	22 NO Family Night Meal	23 HAPPY  THANKSGIVING	24 OFFICE CLOSED	25
26 NATIONAL CAKE DAY	27	28 NATIONAL FRENCH TOAST DAY	29 Chkn Strips, Fries, Chips & Rotel Salad Bar	30 NATIONAL PERSONAL SPACE DAY		

Welcome to our new members...

VITAL SIGNS

Sunday, October 1, 2023

Sunday School Total.....465
 First Day Worship.....306 (20)
 11:00am Worship.....141 (12)
 Total.....447 (32)

Sunday, October 8, 2023

Sunday School Total.....340
 First Day Worship.....216 (26)
 11:00am Worship.....137 (13)
 Total.....353 (39)

Sunday, October 15, 2023

Sunday School Total.....427
 First Day Worship.....295 (27)
 11:00am Worship.....179 (17)
 Total.....474 (44)

Sunday, October 22, 2023

Sunday School Total.....482
 First Day Worship.....337 (0)
 11:00am Worship.....158 (21)
 Total.....495 (21)

Sunday, October 29, 2023

Sunday School Total.....572
 First Day Worship.....427 (19)
 11:00am Worship.....171 (13)
 Total.....598 (32)

OCTOBER 2023 BUSINESS MTNG

Budget YTD.....\$1,065,506.88
 Received YTD.....\$873,403.02

Senior Adults

Senior Adult Luncheon
 on Monday, November 20
 at 12:00pm
 in the Fellowship Hall.
 Bring a side dish and join us!



Kristen Pittman



David Payne



Mike Hand



Sheffield Anthony



Brent, Dana,
 Kaden &
 Kelsey
 Spears



Mac Cook



Luke Blanchard



Aiden Harris



11:00am USHERS
 for NOVEMBER 2023
 (* indicates prayer door)

November 5

*Jerry Bell, Dee Atkins,
 Joe Austin, Mike Bowen,
 Freddie Bridgeman, Rick Burgett

November 12

*Richie Chrestman, Phillip Cox,
 Roger Gentry, David Helms,
 Wally Henry, Rickey Hill

November 19

*Mark Crenshaw, Ben Howard,
 Jay Hughes, Rickey Littlejohn,
 Matt Koon, Brayden Lunn

November 26

*David Ray, Carey McMullen,
 Steve Montgomery, Justin Moss,
 Jay Reeder, Pete Reeder

**If you are unable to fulfill your
 duty as usher, please find
 someone to take your place.

**DEACONS ON CALL
 for NOVEMBER 2023**

November 5

Glenn Gillen
 Howard Hill
 Kevin Morrow

November 12

Scott Hatcher
 Chase Jefcoat
 Ellis Reeder

November 19

Benjamin Hill
 Kevin Koehler
 Jody Stringer

November 26

George Rutledge
 Eddy Taylor
 Jerry Robbins



First Baptist Church
 31 W. Washington Street
 Pontotoc, MS 38863

NOVEMBER 2023

BUILDING THE KINGDOM WIDE AND DEEP



Sun, November 12, 2023

If you would like to pack an O.C.C. box, we have boxes available in the church office. All boxes will be taken to West Heights (a drop-off site) by Wed, Nov. 15

Our church office will close at 12pm on Wed, Nov. 22 and remain closed thru Fri, Nov. 24 for Thanksgiving.

BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST

Sun, November 26 at 7:00am in the Fellowship Hall.



DEACONS MEETING

Sun, Nov. 5 at 3:30pm in the FH.

This will be a budget vote and monthly meeting combined.



REMINDER...

There will be NO FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER on Nov. 15 or Nov. 22. Supper will resume on Nov. 29

YOUTH FUNDRAISER

Tuesday, Nov. 7 at Seafood Junction!

Let us prepare your dinner! Tickets are \$12 and can be purchased by any youth or in the church office.

Plates include cold boiled shrimp, chicken or fish, fries, hushpuppies, slaw, dessert & drink.

All proceeds go towards summer camp expenses.

*100% of all tips go towards expenses too.



**FEEDING OF THE 5,000
 Thursday, November 16**

We need volunteers to make homemade desserts (individually wrapped), and sweet potato casseroles (recipe & pans are in the church office and potatoes are under the pavilion), deliver meals to homes, volunteer time to help prepare the food, and monetary donations to help with the cost.

Sign up sheets are in the church office

Here's a few dates in December to put in your calendar-

Sun, Dec. 3 at 5:00pm

'Hanging of the Green'

(new/newer members are asked to participate in decorating our Sanctuary for the Christmas season)

Sun, Dec. 10 at 5:00pm

'Children's Christmas Program'

(All children's choirs sing in the Sanctuary)

Sun, Dec. 17 at 11:00am

'Sanctuary Choir Cantata'

(Our sanctuary choir presents their Christmas music)

Sun, Dec. 24 at 5:00pm

'Christmas Eve Candlelight Service'

(Join us in the Sanctuary for one of our favorite services of the year)

