



Our vision at New Hope Baptist Church is:
to be a multiethnic family of faith,
united by God's grace,
remaining faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ,
growing in obedience to God's Word,
and
sharing the Gospel with a distinctive witness in word and deed.

December 2018... the Contact ... Vol. XL Issue 12

Rev. Jason Smith, Pastor

John 1:14, *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

As Christmas approaches, we are encouraged once again to remember the reason for the season. Unfortunately, even if we manage to avoid the materialism and commercialism of the cultural celebration of Christmas, many believers are still unaware of the central significance of the holiday. When thinking about the significance of Christmas, many believers think first of the virgin birth. Church cantatas or programs often focus primarily on the virgin birth. Historically, Fundamentalism, a movement within Christianity during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, raised belief in the virgin birth to one of the five fundamentals of the Christian faith; meaning that if a person rejected the virgin birth, they were rejecting Christianity all-together. Looking back, it is easy to see why Fundamentalists took a strong stance on the virgin birth. Fundamentalism was a response to the rise of theological liberalism. In academic circles where higher criticism of the Bible was embraced, there was a growing opposition against the inspiration of Scripture. One of the first areas of biblical conviction that was dismissed was belief in the virgin birth.

Yet, at the same time, it is surprising how little the NT teaches about the virgin birth. Only the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke mention it and Luke does not give much attention to it. There may be a few places that allude to the virgin birth, such as Galatians 4:4, but there is no direct reference to the virgin birth beyond the two birth narratives. As the doctrine of Christology is developed in the NT, there are more theologically significant teachings regarding the Lord Jesus Christ than his virgin birth. Belief in the virgin birth is important since Scripture teaches it, if only in two places. If a person rejects a clear teaching of Scripture in one place, it will logically lead him or her to question the rest of Scripture. So, it can be said that belief in the virgin birth is more of a reflection of a person's conviction concerning the inspiration of Scripture than it is necessarily a reflection of a person's understanding of the doctrine of Christology.

Why is this important? When celebrating Christmas, if we stop at the virgin birth, our celebration is incomplete and we have failed to remember the true meaning of Christmas. Truly celebrating Christmas is beholding the beauty of the incarnation; that the eternal Son of God became human. In our right desire to honor the Lord Jesus, sometimes we focus solely on his deity that we fail to appreciate his humanity. But because the Lord Jesus temporarily set aside the glories of heaven to become a man (Phil. 2:7), he now acts as the one and only mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5). In his humanity, Jesus experienced afflictions and adversity. He was aware of poverty, hunger and tiredness. He suffered betrayal, loneliness and temptations. And so, we have a Savior who can sympathize with our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15). At Christmas, we celebrate that Jesus was made like us in every way so that he could act as our merciful and faithful high priest, making propitiation for our sins (Heb. 2:17). The virgin birth is important as the manner or method in which the Heavenly Father sent his Son into the world, but the incarnation, that Jesus is fully God and Man, is essential to all that it means to be Christian. To deny the incarnation is to deny Christianity. I pray that the Heavenly Father will open our eyes this Christmas to see the full beauty of Jesus Christ and to appreciate more fully the incarnation. I pray that we will live according to the stunning example of humanity that the incarnation provides.

In Him

Pastor Jason

JOY TO THE WORLD THE LORD HAS COME

When we think of Christmas, we think of giving. Christ came to give up his life for us. He shared His time and gave His life to allow us to spend eternity with Him. What better way to honor Him than reading about His life and sharing that love with others?

I challenge you this holiday season to cuddle up with a child and share Jesus. Just picture it, a cup of hot chocolate, a peppermint candy cane and time reading about Jesus to create a memory and stimulate a young mind. Yes, we have a lot to do in the holiday season but none more important than spending time with a loved one and reading to them or teaching them about Jesus and what truly knowing Him means. This gift to a child is the greatest gift you can offer, some of your time and the love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Library is full of books for old and young. Visit the New Hope Library, offer up suggestions. Knowledge is a gift that continues to give. The knowledge of God is your greatest blessing and a calling to pursue Christ's love to be abundant in your own life.

We do not have to hold fast to giving only at Christmas. God's message is that each day provides an opportunity to love and share the gospel. There is no greater gift we can give than the love of Christ to our fellow man. Joy to the world the Lord has come!

Elaine Isaacson

New Hope Library / Book Study

*NHBC on mission for the Lord....***Senior Adult Class Christmas Luncheon**

Saturday, December 8th – 2:00 p.m.
Jimmy's Restaurant in Mint Hill

Please be sure to sign up by December 2nd.

Sign up sheet located on the table in the vestibule.

JOY December Fellowship

Due to such a busy schedule and over booking, we will not travel to McAdenville on Saturday, December 8th to see the lights. We will gather together again in January for our soup cook-off. Start getting your ingredients ready!

Calendar of Events**Standing Weekly Schedule**

Sunday	
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship	11:00 a.m.
Monday	
Book Study	6:30 p.m.
Tuesday	
H4K (Children's' Ministry)	6:30 p.m.
Wednesday	
Adult Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Friday	
Open Gym	6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Monthly Schedule

12/1	Clothes Closet/Food Pantry	10 a.m.
12/2	Choir Practice	5:00 p.m.
12/8	Men's Breakfast	8:00 a.m.
12/9	Christmas Cantata Deacon's Meeting	4:00 p.m.
12/15	Clothes Closet/Food Pantry	10 a.m.
12/23	Candlelight Service	4:00 p.m.

Birthdays for December

12/14	Linda Norton
12/16	Jane Allen
12/28	Wanda Hartis Erin Black
12/29	Frank Norton

Christmas Giving Opportunities

1 - Instead of poinsettias this Christmas, the Flower Team Members are asking folks to give an offering to the church – marked for the Food Pantry. Each flower this year would have cost us \$5.00 each. You may give your donation to the Food Pantry in memory of a family member or in honor of someone special. You will find a form in the December 2nd bulletin– make a list of your memorials/honorariums and place in the offering plate. The list will be located in the December 23rd bulletin. Make sure you mark your envelop **FP**

2 – The Children's Ministry Team is asking instead of the Angel Tree for the bus kids, they are asking for donations – mark your envelope **H4K** and they will do the shopping for you. How easy is that? This may be the only Christmas gift they get. Let's make it special for them.

What a wonderful way to say 'Happy Birthday, Jesus'!

'Love has come'

Adult Choir Christmas Cantata will be presented on Sunday, December 9th during the AM service. Invite your family and friends to join us for this special day.

**Christmas Candlelight Service**

Sunday Evening, December 23rd – 4:00 PM

BIRTHDAY FOR JESUS

A HOT CIDER/DESSERT FELLOWSHIP WILL TAKE PLACE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE. DON'T FORGET YOUR BIRTHDAY GIFT TO JESUS BY GIVING TO THE FOOD PANTRY



Thank you

The family of Reverend William "Bill" Edward Saylor acknowledges with deep appreciation your kind expression of sympathy. Dear Friends, thank you so very much for all your love, concern and your prayers during this time of sadness, yet rejoicing, for Bill is healed and with the Lord. Thank you for the beautiful peace lily you sent. How nice of you to honor Bill in such a lovely way. May God bless you for your kindness
Betty Saylor & Family

We have H4K that tells you this is NHBC's – Hope for Kids

We now have another group that you can identify with - H4F - Hope for Families This covers our Clothing Closet and Food Pantry Ministry. Giving hope to families by providing clothes and food. Unless you have been in a situation where you are not sure where the food you eat or the clothes you wear come from then you can not totally understand the hurt in peoples hearts when they have to look in their child's eye and say 'we have no food' or 'stay warm however you can because we can't afford a warm coat'. On November 3rd, as we were serving people in need, a man came with a van loaded with clothes. You see, last year we were privileged to serve he and his wife because they were in need. This year, because God has richly blessed them and they were able to get back on their feet, the wife was determined to give back to the clothing closet and not Goodwill or Salvation Army. She insisted that her husband bring the clothes to us. How do they say it - 'And the beat goes on'! NHBC is truly blessed by being a blessing. We can't stop now!!!

Volunteers

Nursery	Date	Deacons
Leah Jordan Erin Black	12/2	Gerald Freeman Dan Crawford
Diane Yandle Christine Smith	12/9	Jim Hartis Laney Emanuel
Linda Norton Carolyn Davis	12/16	Don Jordan Jeff Smith
Teresa Dixon Jack Smith	12/23	Gerald Freeman Dan Crawford
Leah Jordan Erin Black	12/30	Jim Hartis Laney Emanuel



Merry Christmas

I would like to take this little corner of the Contact to say 'thank you' for allowing me such a wonderful schedule to serve you and to care for my Gene. May you and your family have a wonderful Christmas Season.

*Love Carolyn
Your Secretary*