



## 'Healing comes by asking questions'

A message from Dan Clemens:  
Beloved, I came across this song, and it spoke to my heart. Jesus IS the HOPE of Christmas, and every day of our lives! Read on:

### The Hope of Christmas

By Matthew West

Take me back to eight years old  
The little church on a dead-end road  
With a candle flicker in one hand and dad's  
hand in the other  
Take me back to Silent Night  
My heart was full and the world was right  
Cause right now the world looks nothing like  
those innocent Decembers  
These days peace on earth is hard to find  
And I need you to remind me one more time

You're still the hope of Christmas  
You're still the light when the world looks dark  
You're still the hope of Christmas  
And You're still the hope of my heart

Watch the snowflakes falling down  
Like a blanket on this town  
For a moment we can hardly see the pain this  
year has brought us  
May the sick find healing's touch

May hatred's fight be won with love  
And may every heart make room for you the One  
who came to save us

You're still the hope of Christmas  
You're still the light when the world looks dark  
You're still the hope of Christmas  
And You're still the hope of my heart

I bowed my head to pray tonight  
Felt my little girl by my side  
She slipped her tiny hand in mine  
And we both talked to You  
And it took me back to eight years old  
My daddy's hand and a story told  
About Heaven's love in a manger low  
And a promise that's still true

You're still the hope of Christmas  
You're still the light when the world looks dark  
You're still the hope of Christmas  
And You're still the hope of my heart

~

We have been through some rough times as individuals, as families and friends, and as a church family. There are many unanswered questions and misunderstood emotions and motives.

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## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

**6 p.m. Dec. 24, 2023**

The Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve is a First Baptist tradition. There will be carols, scripture reading and a devotional. No communion, no offering. We will close the service with "Silent Night" and have a candle lighting.



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What just happened? Why? How could this happen? We may not have all of the answers, but I believe that healing comes by asking questions, being honest and telling the whole truth.

In the coming days and months there will be opportunities to share and learn, and then to put the confusion in the past behind us and move forward to the vision God is calling us toward. We will be having church family conversations. We will be offering group studies focused on Baptist Identity, First Baptist history, and affiliations with groups outside the local congregation. We need to understand who we are at our core and how we got here to move forward in clear understanding of our ministry and mission.

God is calling us to a future He has planned for FBC Hamilton. Patiently and prayerfully, we will be that "light on the hill with a heart for the community" we are called to be.

Jesus is our hope this Christmas!

Pastor Dan



**Bible books of the month**

Dec. 2023 ..... Isaiah  
Jan. 2024 ..... Romans



**Nursery/Toddlers Sunday School,  
9 a.m.**

Marsha Helton, Pam Childs

**Nursery/Toddlers, 10:30 a.m.**

12-3 Marsha Helton, Cheryl Motzer  
12-10 Marsha Helton, Maddie Spurlock, Lilly Gibson  
12-17 Marsha Helton, Cheryl Motzer  
12-24 Marsha Helton  
12-31 Marsha Helton, Cheryl Motzer

**Children's Sunday School & Children's  
Church, 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.**

12-3 Nancy Whipple  
12-10 Debby Gibson  
12-17 Jill O'Hara  
12-24 TBD  
12-31 Nancy Whipple

**Choir rehearsals**

7:30 p.m. Wednesdays  
in the sanctuary





### Upcoming performance

Holiday Pops  
7:30 p.m. Dec. 9  
Miami University Hamilton,  
Parrish Auditorium

Online: [butlerphil.org/events](http://butlerphil.org/events)



### Berean Sunday School Class Christmas Party is Dec. 8

The Berean Class that meets Sunday mornings in Room 200 will celebrate Christmas with a party at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 8. The event requires reservations. The cost is \$20 payable to class member Jill O'Hara.

The party will be in Room 200 and those who attend are asked to bring a \$10 new gift marked for the appropriate gender.

Anyone who is willing to decorate a table for this event is asked to speak with Tonja Randall.

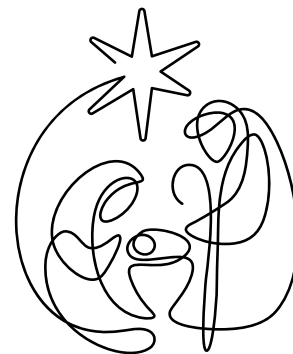


### 'How did we get here?'

After the Sunday, Dec. 10 worship service there will be a quick business meeting to vote on new board members for 2024. Following that, our Transition Council will speak to inform our membership on, "How did we get here?"

This is an information session about the state of our church and recent events that led to the staff resigning. We move forward with great hope that our church stays firm and we'll discuss what happened and any look at our future.

Please plan to stick around for this important meeting.



### **First Baptist Youth**

7-12 grades  
Led by JD & Becky Simpson  
and Natalie Lakes

9 a.m. Sundays  
6 p.m. Wednesdays  
in Room 100, the youth room

### **First Baptist Kids**

Pre-K-6 grades  
Jill O'Hara has been volunteering,  
and we welcome any other  
volunteers and helpers

9 a.m. Sundays  
6:30 p.m. Wednesdays  
in the Children's Worship Center  
on the bottom level  
(Rm. 107)



### **Keys and key codes**

Keys to the outside of First Baptist Church Hamilton have changed. If you are someone designated as a keyholder and don't yet have a new one, please see Mandy Gambrell in the church office or Larry Bowling, both of whom will serve as trustees in 2024. Keys to any inside doors still work.

There has been no change to security system key codes for those who are members of FBC Hamilton. A reminder to also tightly pull any doors as you exit. Thank you for your help in keeping our building secure.

### **Sunday School & Groups**

#### **9 A.M. Sundays**

Nursery/Toddlers – Room 206  
Children Pre-K – 6th grade – Room  
103/104  
Youth 7th – 12th grade – Room 112  
Berean Adult Bible Fellowship – Room  
200  
WINGS, Women In God's Service –  
Room 205

#### **Wednesday groups**

##### **6 P.M.**

First Baptist Youth, grades 7-12 – Room  
100  
Adult Prayer & Bible Study – Room 200

##### **6:30 P.M.**

First Baptist Kids, Pre-K through 6th  
Room 107



### **Thelma Stanger birthday celebration**

The church is invited to an open-house style gathering in honor of Thelma Stanger turning 90 years old!

**11 a.m.-3 p.m. Jan. 7, 2024**  
in the FBC Family Center

Light food to be served



## Operation North End Pole

Join Hamilton's North End residents for Operation North End Pole from noon-2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16 and visit with Santa. Children of all ages are welcome.

Don't forget to stop in the store and get your ticket for the Christmas drawing before Santa draws the winning ticket.

More online: [facebook.com/events/1415503382702871](https://facebook.com/events/1415503382702871)

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## How to apply for a Hamilton Hometown Heroes banner

The Hometown Hero Banner program is a collaborative effort between the City of Hamilton, the Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, the Hamilton Community Foundation, and the Hamilton Veterans Hall of Fame.

Until March 31, 2024, people can submit applications to purchase a banner that will feature a picture of the person who served (or is serving), their rank and branch of the military.

The banners will hang from Memorial Day to Veteran's Day on Main Street and B Street in Hamilton. To get more info, email [hamiltonhometownheroesbanner@gmail.com](mailto:hamiltonhometownheroesbanner@gmail.com) or call (513) 403-2225. Apply online:

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgzGwHxqHXzkkpllhvfPVVRzLqzDv>



## Illuminate Hamilton on Dec. 9

As part of Holly Jolly Hamilton, experience the enchantment that is Illuminate Hamilton 5-9 p.m. Sat., Dec. 9. Downtown Hamilton will come alive with lights!

Enjoy a spectacular laser light show illuminating our iconic buildings. Businesses will extend their hours.



## Hamilton neighborhood luminaries event

The Washington neighborhood in Hamilton has its second-annual Light up the Loop! 6-8 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 10. This is a glowing night full of luminaries, Santa, hot chocolate, and carolers.

To participate, begin at any street listed and enjoy a stroll including Christmas light displays and other 'special' treats along the way. If it rains, the event will be postponed to Dec. 17. Everyone is welcome!

Tabor Lane  
Thall Drive  
Bridgeport Drive  
Tatum Lane  
Winslow Drive  
Cathedral Lane  
Alexander Drive  
NW Washington Boulevard  
Cleveland Avenue



## 'Twas the Night Before Jesus Came

'Twas the night before Jesus came and all through the house  
Not a creature was praying, not one in the house.  
Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care  
In hopes that Jesus would not come there.  
The children were dressing to crawl into bed,  
Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head.  
And Mom in her rocker with baby on her lap  
Was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.  
When out of the East there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang to my feet to see what was The matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash!  
When what to my wondering eyes should appear  
But angels proclaiming that Jesus was here.  
With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray  
I knew in a moment this must be The Day!  
The light of His face made me cover my head  
It was Jesus! Returning just like He had said.  
And though I possessed worldly wisdom and wealth  
I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.  
In the Book of Life which He held in His Hand  
Was written the name of every saved man.  
He spoke not a word as He searched for my name;  
When He said "It's not here" My head hung in shame!  
The people whose names had been written with love  
He gathered to take to His Father above.  
With those who were ready He rose without a sound  
While all the rest were left standing around.  
I fell to my knees, but it was too late;  
I had waited too long and this sealed my fate.  
I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight;  
Oh, if only I had been ready tonight.  
In the words of this poem the meaning is clear;  
The coming of Jesus is drawing near.  
There's only one life and when comes the last call  
We'll find that the Bible was true after ALL!

Source unknown (Variously attributed  
to Randy Story, Stormy Gale, Lou Pinter, and Audrey Patricia Woolverton)