

WORSHIP

Sunday,
December 8, 2019

Second Sunday of Advent

10:30am in the Sanctuary

Family Dedication

Lula Whilden World Missions
Offering Bank Procession

Proclaimer: Jim Dant

Scripture: Luke 1:18-24

Sermon: Working from the Inside

Service Choirs: Vocare, Melody/
Harmony and Sanctuary Choirs with
Chamber Orchestra

Anthems: "Come, Thou Long
Expected Jesus" – MILLER; "Advent
Song" – BARNARD/BARNARD;
"Zechariah's Prayer" – LOVE

Soloist: Craig Price

Advent Decoration

The Sanctuary and church grounds are decorated for the season by members of the Flower Guild. The poinsettias are gifts from church members. Those dedications will be printed in future issues of The Branch.

If you would like to enhance our worship space by placing flowers for one of our services, please contact Kimberly Coates at kimberly.coates@firstbaptistgreenville.com or 233-2527 ext. 128.

From the Organist

Over the summer and fall, I have been working on my biggest composition project to date, and I am so excited to tell you about it in this week's post! Read more at <https://firstbaptistgreenville.com/the-organists-blog/>



Rustlings

BY JIM DANT

Several Christmases ago, a semi-chaotic crowd of dissimilarly musically trained individuals got together to bring us our inaugural *First on Main* concert. For weeks, the motley crew of musicians gathered in the Fellowship Hall selecting songs, transposing keys, learning chords, adapting arrangements, and learning to play together. The culmination of their efforts was presented on the NOMA Square stage outside the Hyatt Regency in downtown Greenville. When the evening concert had ended, the hundreds gathered looked at each other and affirmed—we need to do this again! And we did...

This year's *First on Main* concert will be anything but semi-chaotic, and it will not be the usual motley crew of musicians to whom you've become accustomed. This year, we are combining the outdoor excitement of NOMA Square with the beautifully trained talents of our Children's Choirs and making *First on Main* a night to remember.

Typically, our Children's Choirs present their Christmas program in our church Sanctuary on a Wednesday evening or Sunday afternoon. This year, however, their program will be shared on the stage at NOMA Square, Wednesday, December 11, at 6:00pm. Their gift of song will not only be enjoyed by our congregants who attend, but by a multitude of shoppers, tourists, and greater community members who happen to be downtown. Hot chocolate and/or coffee will be provided to all who gather, and it promises to be truly festive event.

I've already begun to enjoy the music of the season, but nothing sounds like Christmas quite like children's voices ringing out carols. I hope you'll join us as we celebrate the season and affirm the gifts of our children.

—Jim

Reminders

Wednesdays at First Activities
<https://firstbaptistgreenville.com/wednesday-night-supper/>
<https://firstbaptistgreenville.com/registration-pre-child-2019-2020/>

MinisTREE

Ornaments on Reception Desk Tree or
www.myregistry.com/giftlist/2019fbgministree

Return by December 15

Longest Night Service

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 6PM, CARPENTER CHAPEL

“Silence is God’s first language; everything else is a poor translation.”

—Thomas Keating

Sometimes in the midst of the loud and busy holiday season, we feel the silence and pain of our grief most deeply. If you are grieving any kind of loss in your life, I invite you to join us for the Longest Night Service on Sunday evening, December 15. Together, we will remember our losses by lighting candles, singing

hymns, reciting litanies, sharing communion, and hearing a reflection on the role of silence in grieving. We will be reminded of a God who loves us always, and in remembering, we pray to find hope for the year ahead. Childcare is provided. Come one, come all!

—Kendra

A Journey for Our Fourth and Fifth Graders

What happens when 23 fourth and fifth graders spend the weekend together at church? SO MUCH FUN!

Not only did we have a great time together, we learned a ton about what it means to be a modern day disciple of Christ.

Our weekend included field trips to hear the faith stories of four of our church members, a prayer rotation in which we learned 7 different ways to listen to and talk with God, a shopping trip downtown to purchase Thanksgiving decorations for IHN and for the Burmese family our church has adopted, and spending the night in the new library! We also enjoyed a scavenger hunt around our church building, “air baptisms” with Pastor Jim and a visit to the baptismal pool, and even shared communion together before bed.

It was a beautiful time together to learn about journeying with Christ our whole life long. I’m already looking forward to our Discipleship Retreat next fall!

—Becky



AYMC Pulse

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas around here. As I write this article, our wonderful workers are busy decorating the tree that adorns our lobby each year. The Christmas tree today is a common custom to most of us but have you ever thought about its origins? There are many connections to ancient traditions, but most scholars point to Germany as being the origin of the Christmas tree.

One of the earliest stories relating back to Germany is about Saint Boniface. In 722, he encountered some pagans who were about to sacrifice a child at the base of a huge oak tree. He cut down the tree to prevent the sacrifice and a

fir tree grew up at the base of the oak. He told everyone that this lovely evergreen, with its branches pointing to heaven, was a holy tree—the tree of the Christ child and a symbol of his promise of eternal life.

Another legend that has not been proved is that Martin Luther is responsible for the origin of the Christmas tree. This story says that one Christmas Eve, about the year 1500, he was walking through the snow-covered woods and was struck by the beauty of the snow glistened trees, shimmering in the moonlight. When he got home, he set up a small fir tree and shared the story with his children. He decorated the Christmas tree with small candles, which he lighted in honor of Christ's birth.

If you've already put up your Christmas tree or will in the days

ahead, I hope you will think about all of the many traditions surrounding it, not just these two, and how they always seem to point to the Christ's birth and the promise of eternal life.

—Mittie



The Lula Whilden World Missions Offering is a significant way First Baptist Greenville supports the incredible ministry of our affiliates—Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina, and Alliance of Baptists. Formerly known as our Global Missions offering, we renamed the offering in 2011 as a way to reinvigorate our giving to these missions affiliates and to honor an early member of First Baptist, Miss Lula

Whilden. After graduating from Greenville Female College in 1870 and while a member of First Baptist, Miss Whilden was appointed the first single career missionary by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. (For those of you who were raised Baptist, you may be surprised to hear she preceded Lottie Moon by a full year in China.) Though she endured hardships and faced numerous dangers, Miss Whilden courageously and lovingly served the people of Canton, China, from 1872-1914. She truly embodied missions and the love of Christ for the human soul.

This year's Lula Whilden offering goal is \$125,000, and receipts as of November 22 are \$59,990. Please remember to include this important offering in your giving plans. We are looking forward to our children's bank return during worship on December 8 and the special offering collection at the Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols on December 22. On average, about 30% of the First Baptist Greenville congregation makes a donation. Just think what we could do if all members made a contribution—no amount is too small to be put towards these worthy causes!

—Ryan Dennis, Lula Whilden Task Force

For Your Calendar!

- 12/1-15 MinisTREE Gift Donations to Benefit Local Families Online or Reception Area
- 12/4 *Wednesdays at First* Activities
3:00-7:00pm Youth Christmas Decorating Party and Senior Tree (AYMC Terrace Level)
- 12/6 **10:30am** First Friday Lunch and More: Kendra Plating and Ryland Brown (Fellowship Hall)
7:00pm Chicora Voices Holiday Concert—ticketed event (Sanctuary)
- 12/8 **9:30am** Joint Advent Sunday School “Global Advent Traditions”—Mali with Robin and Trevor Barton (Fellowship Hall)
10:30am Second Sunday of Advent
 Lula Whilden Bank Return Family Dedication
 Jim Dant, Proclaimer
 Melody/Harmony Choir, Vocare, Sanctuary Choir, and Instrumentalists
11:30am Lunch for Visitors (Fellowship Hall)
11:30am-2:30pm Children’s Caroling and Cocoa

LIVING GENEROUSLY

Financial Needs as of 11/30
 \$2,440,381

Receipts as of 11/22
 \$2,170,561

Lula Whilden World Missions Offering 2019 Goal: \$125,000

Receipts as of 11/22
 \$59,990

Pastoral Care

On Call Nights and Weekends

December 2-8
Kyle Matthews
 551-0829 (m)

December 9-15
Frank Smith
 268-3890 (h)

If you are unable to reach this minister at the above number, please call the Church Office, 864-233-2527, and leave a message by pressing the number “199” for “Pastoral Care Emergencies.”

Wednesday Supper

Required reservations for the meal must be made by noon on the Monday prior by visiting the church website or calling the church office. Permanent reservations for the 2019-2020 year are available. Serving lines open 4:45-6:00pm.

December 4

Adult: Chicken Pot Pie, Rice, Fried Apples, Salad, Dessert

Child: Mac and Cheese, Veggies and Dip, Fresh Fruit, Cookies

December 11

There is no Wednesday night supper this week. Join us at NOMA Square for *First on Main* at 6:00pm.

Wednesdays at First Schedule

Exceptions and details noted in calendar.

3:00-6:00pm	Youth Hang Time and Supper
4:45-6:00pm	Supper Serving Lines Open
5:30-6:15pm	Children’s Missions
6:00-7:00pm	Youth Bible Study
6:15-7:00pm	Children’s Choirs
	MidWeek Fellowship
7:00-8:30pm	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Care List as of 11/25/2019

Hospitals

St. Francis—Downtown: Rosalind Tedards

St. Francis—Eastside: John Braeunig

Rehab

Roger C. Peace: Kathy Sharp

Recently Discharged

Autumn Madonna

Sympathy to...

Dorothea Thomasson and family in the death of her sister.

Julie Treu and family in the death of her father.

Need a Ride to a Medical Appointment?

The Medical Appointment Transportation Committee offers rides for members to and from medical appointments. Requests made a week in advance will be appreciated. Those in need of this service may contact Committee Chair Mary Rankin at rankinma@yahoo.com or 630-2894.

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THE BRANCH (USPS No. 597060) is published weekly January thru December (except one week in July and December). Periodicals postage paid at Greenville, SC 29602. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BRANCH, 847 Cleveland Street Greenville, SC 29601. (Phone 864-233-2527). Kimberly Coates, Editor.

Vol. LX December 2, 2019 No. 47

Follow us on Livestream!

All of our worship services are broadcast live online and may be viewed from anywhere on the planet using this link:

<https://livestream.com/fbcgreenvillesc>

While there, click the “follow” button to receive notifications for new events.

Radio Broadcast

Please tune in to 91.9FM or 92.9FM on Sunday morning to listen to the worship service. If you have an HD radio, you may tune in to 89.3-HD4. We are no longer broadcasting on AM660. You may still visit our website (<https://firstbaptistgreenville.com/worship/>) for links to listen as well as watch our worship services.



Save the Date—March 7, 2020

It is one great day of ministry by the church to its neighbors in need!