

Ferguson Avenue Baptist Church

10050 Ferguson Avenue Savannah, Georgia 31406

Where Christ Is Exalted and the Fellowship Is Exciting

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Announcements

New Year's Eve Game Night

Please join us Wednesday, **December 31**, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Activities will include, but not be limited to, a Cornhole Tournament and a Chili Cook-off! If you have any Cornhole Boards we can borrow, please bring them. Come for fellowship and fun!

Year End Gifts

If you want any more tithes and offerings on your 2025 giving report, they must be in the office before **January 1**, or postmarked by **December 31**. Thank you all for your generosity this and every year!

Office Closed New Year's Day

The Church Office will be closed Thursday, **January 1**.

No Old Savannah City Mission Lunch in January

The Old Savannah City Mission is on a break, and there will be no lunch served on **January 3**.

New Member's Class

James Bannerman defines the Church this way: "The Bible is a communication from God to the Church, telling them of truths and doctrines, through the right appreciation of which they may be fashioned into a spiritual society, with divinely authorized powers and ordinances and office bearers, - an outward and public witness for God on the earth, and an instrument for the edification of the people of Christ." Tom will be teaching a New Member's Class in January. If you are a new member, considering being a member, or would like to know how important membership is please attend the New Member's Class. We will meet in the gym 9:30-10:15 am for four weeks starting **January 4**.

Evening Worship January 4

During our Evening Worship Service on **January 4**, at 6:00 p.m., Kendra Stanford will present what is happening with her ministry in India. We also have a new deacon ordination. Plan to be here!

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship Micah 5:2-4 Pew Bible p. 779

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Greeting

(When singing begins, please make your way to your seats and sing along!)

Good Christian men, rejoice with heart and soul and voice; Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today! Man and beast before Him bow, and He is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Prayer of Praise

Hymn #98, bulletin p. 6

"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"

Prayer of General Confession Steve Posner Colossians 1:13-14 Pew Bible p. 983

Hymn #94, bulletin p. 7

"What Child Is This?"

Scripture Reading Romans 9:14-29 Everett Tarver Pew Bible pp. 945

Hymn, bulletin p. 8

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

Message Tom Keller

The Doctrine of Sanctification Adoption #9 Selected Scriptures

Hymn, bulletin p. 9

"Christmas Doxology"

A.M. Notes

The Doctrine of Sanctification Adoption #9 Selected Scriptures

II. Introduction

- a. Getting the Order of Salvation Correct
- b. Illustrated by the orphanage

II. Defining Sanctification

- a. Distinct from Justification but not Separated
- b. Similarities
- c. Differences

III. Distinctives of Sanctification

- a. Positional Sanctification: (Heb. 10:10, 14; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Col. 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 6:11)
- b. Progressive Sanctification: (Being, Heb. 2:11; Fruit unto, Rom. 6:22; Cleanse ourselves, 2 Cor. 7:1; Transformation, 2 Cor. 3:18; Renewal, Rom. 12;2; Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 4:16, Growth, 2 Peter 3:18; Eph. 4:15; Pruning, John 15; Washing, John 13:10; Mortification, Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5)
- c. Preconditions for Sanctification: (Dead to sin/ Alive to Christ, Rom. 6:1-11 and the struggle with sin, Rom. 7; Remaining sin, Rom. 6:12; Flesh and Spirit, Rom. 8:5-9; Deeds of the body/flesh, Rom 8:12; Put off/ Put on, Col. 3:9-10) We do not have reigning sin but we do have remaining sin.*
- d. Purpose of Sanctification: Nothing less than the elimination of all sin and complete conformation of the entire person to the image of God's dear Son.*

IV. Disciplines of Sanctification

- a. Personal Sanctification
- b. Corporate Sanctification

*Albert Martin

Continued from p. I

Wednesday Night Activities to Resume

Wednesday nights get back to normal beginning **January 7**! We'll have Salisbury Steak for supper at 5:30 p.m., Adventure Club at 6:20, Youth at 6:30, and Bible Study at 6:45.

New Women's Bible Study

This year, there will be one Women's Bible Study group. It's on the book of Hebrews, and they will meet Tuesday nights at 6:15 p.m., beginning Tuesday, **January 13**. With a few breaks, the study is set to run through **August 18**. There is a sign-up sheet in the hall. The church is printing the workbook and there is no cost. See Jessica Dimmitt or Emily Herb if you have questions.

Women of Light Ladies' Night Out

All women in the church are invited to have dinner together on Friday, **January 16**, at Jim 'n Nick's Barbecue at 7822 Abercorn Street, in front of Oglethorpe Mall. Sign up sheet coming, and you'll meet at the restaurant at 5:30 p.m.

Quarterly Members' Meeting

The first Quarterly Members' Meeting of the year is on the afternoon of Sunday, **January 18**. The time will be announced.

Old Savannah City Mission CHICKEN!

The free food from the Old Savannah City Mission is no longer available to us. It is with great gratitude to God for His undeserved mercy and grace that Tom was able to have this access for the last year or so. The food has been as free as God's grace, and we want to thank God for His many blessings. If you would like to share how God used the food to bless your family and others, please come Sunday evening, **January 18**, to our evening worship to celebrate how far and wide God blessed His people over the last 14 months. We should always remember to thank God for His undeserved mercy and grace.

Senior Saints' Lunch

The Senior Saints will have lunch together at Spanky's Southside on Tuesday, **January 20**. Sign the list in the hall and meet at the restaurant at 11:00 a.m.

Third Annual Pig Pickin'

Kelly and Dawn Stanford, Napoleon and Savannah Martin, and David Clark are going for a third annual Pig Pickin' (or, if you prefer, Pig Roast) on Saturday, **January 24**, starting at 1:00 p.m., at their farm, Low Country Soil, at 5702 GA Hwy. 57, Townsend, Georgia. It's a little earlier this year, but hopefully the weather will be nice, and there will not be any major road construction along I-95 going on. There will be hamburgers and hot dogs for those of you who would rather not eat something you have personally met. You can bring a side dish if you like, but you don't have to. All are welcome!



Pig Pickin'
Low Country Soil
Townsend
1:00 p.m.

Important Upcoming Events



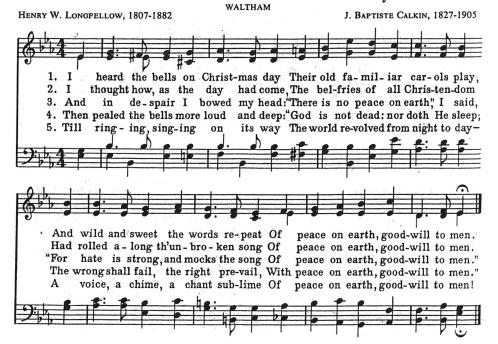
December:

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Deacons' Meeting

31	New Year's Eve Game Night	7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
January:		
1	New Year's Day: Office Closed	
4	Kendra Stanford sharing in Evening Worship	6:00 p.m.
4	Deacon Ordination during Evening Worship	6:00 p.m.
6	Elders' Meeting	7:00 p.m.
7	Wednesday Night activities resume	5:30 p.m.
13	Joy Class resumes	9:00 a.m.
13	Women's Bible Study begins	6:15 p.m.
13	Deacons' Meeting	7:00 p.m.
16	WOL Ladies' Night Out: Jim 'n Nick's, Abercorn	5:30 p.m.
18	Quarterly Members' Meeting	TBA
16-17	Deacons' Retreat	
20	Senior Saints Lunch: Spanky's Southside	11:00 a.m.
22-24	Founders' Conference for Pastors	
24	Pig Roast at Low Country Soil, Townsend	1:00 p.m.
31	Men's 5th Saturday Breakfast	7:15 a.m.
February:		
1	After Church Fellowship	7:00 p.m.
3	Elders' Meeting	7:00 p.m.
7	Lunch at Old Savannah City Mission: DeLoach family,	
	Kelly Zittrouer, Eleanor Bowden	11:00 a.m.
8	Senior Saints' Valentine Banquet	12:00 p.m.

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day



What Is the Gospel?

What is the gospel? I'll put it in a sentence.

The gospel is the news that Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, died for our sins and rose again, eternally triumphant over all his enemies, so that there is now no condemnation for those who believe, but only everlasting joy.

That's the gospel.

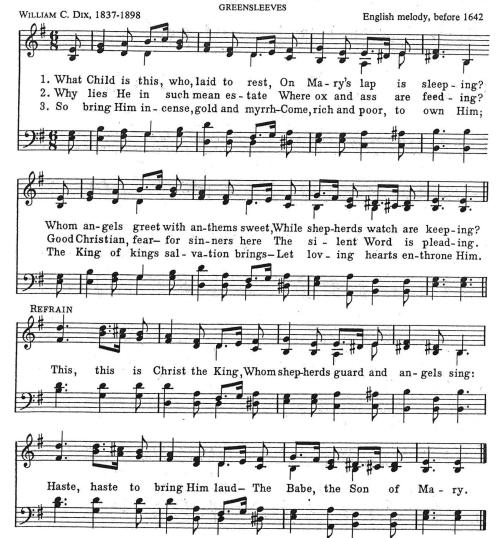
You Can't Outgrow the Gospel

You never, never, never outgrow your need for the gospel. Don't ever think of the gospel as, "That's the way you get saved, and then you get strong by leaving it and doing something else."

No! We are strengthened by God through the gospel every day, till the day we drop.

You never outgrow the need to preach to yourself the gospel.

John Piper



Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Traditional Polish Carol Third verse Michael Lining



Christmas Doxology



Articles

The clash of civilizations on Bondi Beach: We are at war, and it's time we admit what's at stake By Al Mohler

The murderous and premeditated attack started at 6:45 p.m. this past Sunday, with two gunmen, now known to be a father and son, unleashing horror at the start of Sydney's "Hanukkah by the Sea," an annual event that had just begun on the city's famous Bondi Beach. At least 15 people were killed, and several remain in critical condition. Victims ranged in age from 10 to 87—and included at least one Holocaust survivor.

Australian authorities soon reported that the shooters were a Pakistani father and son and stated the obvious—that this was a targeted act of anti-Semitic hatred and mass murder. The Australian government later said that Islamic State flags had been found in the suspects' car. Australia's prime minster, Anthony Albanese, declared: "This is a targeted attack on Jewish Australians on the first day of Hanukkah, which should be a day of joy. An attack on Jewish Australians is an attack on every Australian."

The prime minister said the right words of moral solidarity, but his comment did not make the true nature of the attack quite obvious. This was not just a targeted terrorist attack on Jewish Australians, though it surely was that. It was also a dagger thrust in the heart of Western civilization. Freedom of assembly means nothing if citizens are too afraid to assemble.

The pattern is all too clear. Just consider attacks on Christmas markets in Germany—with new arrests for conspiracy to commit further attacks announced just in recent days. The death toll mounts as the attacks in Western nations multiply.

The murderous shooting on the campus of Brown University in the United States happened in a classroom where a Jewish scholar was professor. Coincidence?

There are two undeniable patterns here. The first is the pattern of anti-Semitic violence. The second is the larger pattern of terror tied to immigration and Islam.

Some people will recoil at the suggestion that immigration and Islamic terrorism have anything to do with these attacks, but the facts are plain to see. Western civilization now faces a direct threat to both liberty and civilizational survival, and denial is not a strategy. It is a form of self-induced delirium.

First, consider the crisis of immigration, and in some nations that means both legal and illegal immigration. At the beginning of this century, 23% of Australia's population was immigrants. Last year, that count had risen to almost 32%—meaning that nearly one third of the nation's current population consists of immigrants.

Nation by nation, the numbers (acknowledged and unacknowledged) are less important than the fact that millions upon millions of those who have arrived in Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia have come from radically differ-

ent cultures with different worldviews and conceptions of citizenship. Western nations understand citizenship to be a shared project marked by a commitment to the nation. It is now clear and undeniable that millions of recent immigrants have no intention of assimilating into their new host cultures.

This emerges in news stories, often with the truth about immigration denied or submerged. Just consider the news about millions of dollars of fraud through government programs in Minnesota, largely within the Somali immigrant community. The story is surely bigger than immigration, but immigration is clearly part of the story.

Any doubts about the fact that the West faces an existential crisis in the form of immigration should be dispelled by a quick look at the quarters of Paris now effectively taken over by Muslim immigrants of several generations. Look at what happened after former German chancellor Angela Merkel opened the nation to unprecedented immigration and largely opened its borders. Look at what is happening now in nations like Sweden or see how the political landscape has been changed in Britain.

Every nation owes it citizens a responsible immigration policy. And it is not racism to argue that any sane nation's immigration policy is premised upon the newcomers' commitment to join the national project, and not to subvert it. One way or another, every enduring nation adopts an immigration policy consistent with its values and its national interest. To fail at either task represents national disaster. An immigration policy right for America, for example, would uphold American values and require newcomers to join in support of the American project, the perpetuation and enrichment of the American future, consistent with American values and identity.

To be blunt, the only alternative to this is the dissolution of the nation, the subverting of our national interest, and the abdication of national responsibility. For too many years, America's own uncontrolled borders have been, not only a way for rightful immigrants to join the American dream, but for felons and miscreants and worse (even international terror suspects) to enter the nation. The number of people illegally crossing the border has decreased, especially under the Trump administration, but our laws remain a mess. At present, our own broken immigration laws make a mockery of our national interest and our national responsibility.

Finally, we face the fact that the threat from Islam is real. The reality is that the vast majority of Muslims around the world, quite consistent with their own convictions, do not want to join the civilizational project of the West, including the national project of the United States. Just in case you wonder, they say this out loud. Islam does not sit easily where Islam does not dominate, and that fits the pattern of the Islamic worldview. Consider this: We are constantly told of liberal Islamic figures in the United States as indicative of Muslims becoming part of the American dream, and some do, of course. But just think of New York City's incoming mayor, Zohran Mamdani. The mayor-elect can openly make his case in America's largest city. It's less likely that he could safely make the same case, presenting as a Muslim man but acknowledging his liberal views on LGBTQ issues, for example, on the street in Pakistan.

At the present, an honest national conversation about these things seems almost impossible. Meanwhile, the headlines mount and the tragedies continue. Our hearts go out to the people of Australia, and particularly to its Jewish community. This news story will soon disappear from the headlines. The problem, however, will not disappear on its own. �

56 and Still Learning: The Hard Truths That Finally Made Me a Man

By Virgil Walker

I am the firstborn son of Clarence and Mary Walker. Before I knew anything about life, I had already been given the first gift: they chose to have me. That decision, simple and sacred, set my entire story in motion.

I'm grateful for a father who stayed. A man who didn't vanish when things got hard. A man who worked, endured, and taught me by example that life does not bend to your feelings. He showed me that hard work pays off, that staying married to one woman matters more than the world admits, that nobody cares about your excuses, that being a Walker meant victimhood was not an option.

I'm grateful for a mother who fed my mind. She gave me books, ideas, and curiosity. She created space for learning and discovery. She wanted more for us than what life handed her, and she pushed us toward what could be, not what was.

I'm grateful for my life. My wife. My children. Every part of the story God has written.

This year has been a paradox. 2025 carried some of the lowest valleys I have walked through: personal challenges, unexpected fallout, private questions about what the next chapter might be. Yet the same year delivered some of the greatest opportunities I have ever been entrusted with. I would never have predicted any of it. Only God can turn a year that began in chaos into a year overflowing with clarity and provision.

As I prepare to take another trip around the sun on November 29, my 56th birthday, I do so with gratitude and anticipation. These days ahead will not all be easy. They will not all be happy. But none of them will be wasted. And none will be filled with the kind of sorrow that crushes a man's spirit. The anchor is steady: every day, no matter its weight, will be filled with the joy that only Christ can give.

This year taught me something I should have learned decades ago. Life is short. Life is fragile. And none of it is guaranteed. Scripture tells us to number our days, not drift through them. Use the time you have. Steward it. Refuse to waste it.

Turning 56 has forced me to look back with honesty, to repent where I was wrong, and to see clearly the difference between youthful arrogance and a seasoned gratitude. These are not generic lessons. They are the realities that shaped me. They are the truths God used to break me, rebuild me, and point me toward something stronger than ambition and more enduring than emotion.

Below are the truths I wish I had learned sooner, the ones that left scars, the ones I hope spare someone else the wasted years I cannot get back.

1. Excuses are slow poison

My father said it without saying a word. <u>Life is hard for everyone</u>, but excuses make it harder. Every time I blamed circumstances, I surrendered ground God expected me to stand on.

2. Discipline shapes the man you become

Not the man you pretend to be, but the man your wife sees, your children follow, and your friends trust. Discipline is not punishment. It is freedom.

3. Laziness disguises itself as spirituality

<u>I once called my inaction "waiting on God." In reality, I was just waiting.</u> God moves when His people move. Praying is not an excuse to avoid obedience.

4. Emotional chaos destroys your witness

I have lived long enough to see this up close. When feelings rule, everything suffers. Your home. Your leadership. Your walk with Christ. Self-control is not optional; it is commanded.

5. Sexual sin trains you to fail everywhere else

Porn teaches a man to lie, hide, and accept fantasy while real life collapses around <u>him</u>. It hollows out a man's soul until he cannot lead himself, much less anyone else.

6. Comfort is a trap

Comfort praises you, feeds you, and buries you. Every major turn in my life came when comfort died and responsibility took its place.

7. Your family sees the real you

Not the platform you built or the content you produce. They see your integrity, your tone, your character. <u>Children do not follow charisma</u>. <u>They follow consistency</u>.

8. Men need correction

Weak men avoid brothers who tell them the truth. Strong men seek them. <u>If your circle never challenges you, you do not have a circle. You have an audience.</u>

9. Submission is not oppression

Christ submitted. He did not lose dignity when He did it. Neither do we. Obedience is not weakness. <u>It is strength directed toward righteousness</u>.

10. Time is not unlimited

You do not have forever. Turning 56 reminded me that the sand in the hourglass does not pause. Eternity is not a distant idea. It is a looming reality.

As I step into this next year of life, I do so with clearer eyes and a steadier heart. I want to live in such a way that when my children, and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren look back, they find a man who repented quickly, loved deeply, worked honestly, and followed Christ faithfully.

If the Lord grants me more years, I want them to count.

And if He decides 56 is the beginning of my final chapters, I want to finish with courage, conviction, and gratitude for every step He gave me. •

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Missionary of the Week

David & Natalie Holsten MAF - Nampa, Idaho

Kalimantan Trip Part One

In October, we returned to our MAF base in Tarakan, Kalimantan, with a team from MAF's Marketing and Communications departments—two videographers and two writers (Natalie being one of them). Our goal was to visit our staff and capture videos and stories that we can share with MAF supporters.

It was very special to go back together and connect with many dear Indonesian friends, including neighbors, church friends, MAF employees, and Orpa —our beloved helper who lived with us for eight years. Orpa is now a wife and mom of three kids and serves as the youth leader at her church.





A highlight of the trip was a flight to Maratua, an island south of Tarakan inhabited by about 4,000 people. They're part of an unreached people group, and the purpose of our flight was to take a ministry team there to do community outreach. Heading the ministry team was our friend Pastor Frans, who was one of our early language tutors when we lived in Tarakan. He has a passion for

sharing the love of Jesus with others, and it was fun to watch him interact with people.

We also visited the small clinic on the island, which is staffed by a doctor and nurse team. They shared with us their frustration of needing to transport critical medical patients to better care, but the four-hour boat ride is often dangerous or even impossible in heavy seas. MAF hopes to soon begin offering medevac services to this island, providing a safe 40-minute flight option for those needing care at a hospital.

Prayer & Praise

- Praise the Lord for a wonderful trip back to Indonesia.
- Pray for the Maratua outreach and medevac service.
- Praise the Lord for new staff who are currently raising support.
- Pray for the startup of the Nigeria program.
- Praise the Lord for a recent visit with all our kids.
- Pray for peace in Haiti and other volatile locations.

David & Natalie Holsten

Nursery December 28 Babies:

Jay & Lisa Rowe
Toddlers:

Sona Bailey, Charlotte Denney

Preschoolers:

Jimmy & Tammy Kicklighter

Nursery January 4 Babies:

Carolyn Blanton, Jan DeLoach, Kayla Duero **Toddlers:**

Cindy Dimmitt, Rebekah Helmick

Preschoolers:

Rachel Beatty, Amy Keller

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If you have any questions concerning the message from today, or are interested in obtaining information about church membership, please see any of the pastors after the service, drop a note in the offering plate indicating your desire to talk with a pastor, or call the church office.



Video and audio recordings of the messages are available for listening or downloading from

www.fabchurch.com/sermons



Today

Coffee Fellowship9:00 a.m.Sunday School9:30 a.m.Morning Worship10:30 a.m.

Wednesday

New Year's Eve Game Night and Chili Cook-Off 7:00 p.m.

Thursday

New Year's Day: Office Closed

Hearing assistance devices for services in the sanctuary are available on request at the sound booth.

Lockup Deacons for December: Rick Zittrouer, Reggie Brown
Lockup Deacons for January: Bill Bailey, Dennis Brittingham

Sunday School Classes and Descriptions

Adult

The Law of Moses:

Survey of 613 Laws Fellowship Hall: Bob Dimmitt

Romans video series:

W. Robert Godfrey, Ligonier Youth House: Steve Posner Union with Christ Gym Overhang: Tom Keller

Children and Students

Babies Room 3: Kay Stanford, Saundra Bridges Toddlers Room 24: Donna Martin, Deborah Focht Pre-K Room 25: Dustin & Emily Herb K. 1st and 2nd Grade Room 28: John & Pam Humphrey Room 202: Ric Zittrouer, Richie Mills 3rd-6th Grade Boys 3rd-6th Grade Girls Room 204: Mary Ann Fowler, Amy Horton Youth Guys & Girls Room 206: Bobby DeLoach, Shawn Champion,

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