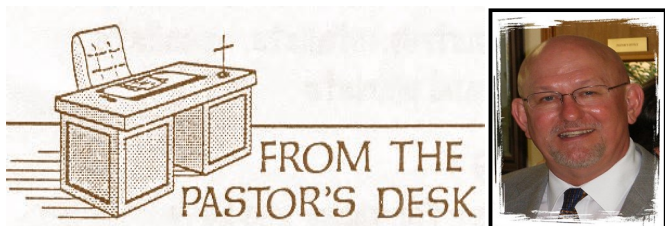


ECHOES *from the Valley*

January 2021

Volume 47, No. 1



Here we are, about to embark on a journey into a brand-new year, 2021! And although much remains the same (at this moment) it feels good to be beyond 2020! We've all felt, and are feeling, negative results of the most chaotic year most of us have ever experienced. We are isolated, separated, and somewhat disconnected.

We miss personal interaction with people we encounter in public as we conduct essential matters. And even though we are meeting (with appropriate measures in place) on Sunday mornings, it just isn't quite the same. We are tired of staying home so much, missing social functions, vacations, and routine pastimes that were such a part of "normal" living.

So, while we have remained relatively healthy, we each have suffered the fallout consequences of the pandemic. And then there are the social, political, and environmental upheavals that have combined to make 2020 an unforgettable year in our history.

Our church leadership, through careful study and planning, made some wise decisions early in 2020. The result is that we are able to provide in-person worship services for those who are comfortable with attending. Some are not

comfortable and that is completely understandable. The result is that our attendance is down, but our worship is solid, God honoring, and meeting the spiritual needs of our people.

God has been faithful during these difficult days, and our people have been as well. Our congregation has withstood difficulty with His help and leadership. I am glad to say that we currently are financially stable. Thank you for being faithful with your tithes and offerings. I'm also encouraged by those who are not attending in person, but never falter in their financial support of the church. Additionally, we are fortunate to have some non-members who are faithful with monetary support. The people and the friends of Valley Brook are amazing!

Who knows what lies ahead? We are cautiously optimistic as we look forward to an end to the pandemic and a measure of healing in our country. Yet as people of faith we can be fully confident that no matter what we face, God has an unfolding plan; one that includes us, and in the meantime, He is with us through any difficulty that comes our way.

Moving ahead, we know there will be joys and sorrows, arrivals and departures, challenges, and victories, as well as many surprises along the way. In the meantime, God continues to bless our church, keeping us stable.

What will 2021 look like? We will have to
(continued)

Valley Brook is a place of grace, where everybody is somebody and Jesus is Lord.

wait until December 31st to fully answer that question. But we can go forward, knowing that our journey is undertaken in the presence of God, and that we are prepared for the trip. We have been called to a mission, and that mission is to proclaim and live out the Good News brought to us in Jesus Christ.

May 2021 be a beneficial year for all! May love be obvious in our lives! May we live together with grace as our guide! May peace reign, with Christ ruling our hearts!

Philippians 3:13b-14 - *"But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."*

Happy New Year!

Pastor Mike

Attendance in December

| Week of: | A.M. Worship |
|----------|--------------|
| Dec. 6 | 36 |
| Dec. 13 | 35 |
| Dec. 20 | 38 |
| Dec. 27 | 29 |



With Deepest Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of Millie Whaley.



The Gospel Resounds

Many thanks to everyone who gave to the 2020 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. We know that God will use our gifts of \$609.00 to send and sustain our international missionaries as they share the gospel around the world. May God richly bless each of you for your generous contribution!



2021 Church Budget

The VBBC Stewardship Committee recommended, and the church approved, keeping the same budget we had in 2020. The following is a summary of our budget for the coming year:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Total Budget for 2021 | \$184,165.00 |
| Monthly Requirements | \$15,347.08 |
| Weekly Requirements | \$ 3,541.63 |

Remember, we have no parent organization, annuities, or endowments that provide funds. Meeting the expenses of the church is the collective responsibility of the membership.

We ask each family, or person, to pray about what God is asking you to contribute this coming year, and that you give faithfully and sacrificially so that Valley Brook may fulfill its mission and ministry.

Thank You!

We appreciate your kind expressions of love extended to us during the Christmas season. The many cards, well wishes, and the tangible expressions of appreciation helped to make the season even brighter. We thank you for all of these delightful gifts. You are a most wonderful group of friends.

- The Staff at Valley Brook



VALLEY BROOK BAPTIST CHURCH

January 2021

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---|--|---|-----|-----|----------|
| <p><u>Counters</u> - Terry Markert Marcia Mc Bride</p> | | | | | | |
| 3 Worship at 11:00 Inv. - Terry Markert | 4 B-day | 5 Election Day Voting Precinct 7:00 - 7:00 | 6 B-day Epiphany 7:00 LWST ?  | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 Worship at 11:00 Inv. - Luther Lord | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 Worship at 11:00 Inv. - Dan Warnock | 18 MLK, Jr. Day  | 19 7:30 VBENA Mtg. ? | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 B-day |
| 24 Worship at 11:00 Inv. - Becky Markert | 25 | 26 | 27 6:30 Druid Woods ? | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 Worship at 11:00 Inv. - Janet Roper | <p>Birthdays: Lynn Eddy 1/4 Lee McCool 1/6 Fred Guthrie 1/23</p> | | | | | |



How to Intentionally Plan for Rest

by Jordan W. on DaySpring.com

When it comes to taking care of yourself, you've probably heard some version of "You can't pour from an empty cup," and yet the world would have you believe that you can and somehow should! There's resources on how to feel better on less sleep, how to become a multi-tasker, how to get more done in less time, and the list goes on. The world tells us that if we aren't keeping up with those around us, we're behind, and that just isn't the case. The Lord created us both thoughtfully and purposefully – He created us to *need* rest and sleep and times where we are just sitting in the stillness of His presence. Don't let the world tell you otherwise.

Life can get busy and overwhelming – it's bound to happen to all of us eventually. But when we are intentional and thoughtful, constantly seeking the Lord and submitting our plans to Him rather than trying to do it all ourselves, we will often find that our cup is overflowing. **We can always find rest when we seek Him.**

"Commit your activities to the Lord, and He will establish your plans." - Proverbs 16:3

Quote of the Month

"Our greatest fear should not be of failure but of succeeding at things that don't really matter."

–Francis Chan



Monthly Financial Report

(December 2020)

Receipts - \$ _____

(December 2019)

Receipts - \$15,976.00

Expenses - \$15,567.00

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In the case of winter weather that would make attendance at a church event questionable, please use good sense in making the decision as to whether or not to get out. We do not want anyone to risk having an accident at any time. If you have not signed up for DeKalb County's CODE RED emergency notification system which has the ability to deliver voice, email, and text messages during emergency situations or disasters, we encourage you to do so.

