

*He restores my soul:  
he leadeth me in the  
paths of righteousness  
for his name sake.  
Psalm 23:3*

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SALEM FIRST BAPTIST

## Pastor Dr. Andy DeWitt

Dear Church,

*Happy 2024!* I'm wondering where 2023 went. Growing up I recall my great uncles and aunts (grandparents, too) remarking on how fast time passes. I now understand what they meant. Time passes rapidly. My maternal grandmother often said, "The days are long but the weeks pass fast." Regardless, 2024 is all but here.

So, what will the New Year have in store? On the negative side lots and lots of political ads. But, seriously, what will the new year bring? Well, I don't know. Maybe good things; perhaps some things not so good. Regardless of what 2024 has, there are commitments that we can make that will insure that 2024 will be a great year.

First, we have a new statement that defines why we, as a church family, exists. Our vision (our target) is "*Being the church in Salem and to the nations.*" A congregation can be many things. It can be an audience. That is, a group of spectators watching others "do their thing." It's like going to a concert, or attending a ball game. Those in the audience watch—this is what they mainly do. Secondly, a congregation can be like participants at a party. There is excitement, there are people moving and having fun, and there is a lot of noise. However, "being the church" does not lend itself to merely watching. Involvement in the mission of the church is vital. Therefore, involvement is essential! In addition, "being the church" is not a quest to have fun. It must be more than that. Yet, we cannot experience "being the church" without understanding what the church is.

Our core values arise directly out of the Bible. The foundational commitments of "being the church" are first *devotion to the Bible's instruction*. This is growing more and more unique in churches today; however, we must believe and practice what the Bible instructs. This should be "without saying," unfortunately, this is not the case. Secondly, *devotion to fellowship*. We need each other and this fellowship referred to here is sharing in the lives of other believers in Christ. Next, in Acts 2:42, we discover the "being the church" is devotion *to the breaking of bread*. This can include eating together but it probably suggests that was Celebrate the Lord's Supper with reverence and respect. This ordinance calls for us to remember the sacrifice the Lord Jesus made for us on the cross. And fourthly, *devotion to prayers*. "Being the church" demands that we be a praying people. This, too, should be without saying." However, have you notice how hard it is to consistently pray? Satan and his army will do whatever they can to keep you from praying. Your phone will ring, your mind will wander, your TV or cell phone will steal your attention rather than pray.

Now, there are the strategies that are crucial in "being the church." Because of limited space in our newsletter, I will merely mention them here and return next month. These are the "actions" that must be carried out in order to "be the church." Each one has strong biblical support. These "actions" of a church are: *evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, ministry, and worship*. There are a lot of ministries we can devote our resources to, but the above serves as a filter enabling us to "be the church in Salem and beyond."

Happy New Year,

Andy

## Associate Pastor Christopher Spenner

Happy New Year! One of the most famous traditions of New Year's Day is the making of resolutions for the new year. Often it seems these resolutions rarely last a week, much less an entire year. If you look at gyms right after January 1st, you will notice a lot of people there that you don't usually see at gyms. However, by March or April, all of these people will have disappeared. Evidently their desire to get in shape or stay healthy was not as strong as their desire to stay in the position they started in. As Jesus famously said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

How do we make resolutions that will actually stick? The first thing we need to do is prayerfully consider what goals are actually attainable. It is impossible to run a marathon without any training. In the same way, we often have to start small and work our way up to our goals. Prayer goes a long way in starting off our resolutions. If we earnestly ask God for something that will accomplish His will He will give us the strength to accomplish it. Before you set out to accomplish that goal for God, pray earnestly about it and ensure it is something He wants you to do.

One resolution for our church to accomplish in 2024 is to be the church in Salem and to the nations. This is our vision statement for our church. How do we "be the church?" It starts with our own unity. We need to ensure we can all move in the same direction together to accomplish the same goals that the early church did. If we want to bring others to Christ and watch our church grow, it must start with an internal unity. We need to care for one another in love and work together to make everyone feel welcome. We

also need to work together in ministries that encourage people to come join us at church. Our Awana clubs are a great example of this kind of ministry. Sometimes we need to drop ministries that no longer work and try new strategies. Keep in mind, we do not want to create "gimmick" ministries, but we must work to meet the needs of the people we want to reach. Today's families are broken and hurting. The "nuclear family" is a bygone concept to today's culture. How can we reach all of the family and bring them together in Christ?

We live in a dying society where people are going more and more astray down the pathways of sin and death. The only way they can be reached is through personal witness. The Bible says in Romans 10:14, "How then are they to call on Him in whom they have not believed? How are they to believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?" The term "preacher" here is not simply referring to a pastor but to anyone spreading the Gospel message. This also does not mean that you must give a full and complete telling of the Gospel in every conversation but you should go into conversations with lost friends thinking about how to bring those ideas to the forefront.

Many people today are extremely uncomfortable with the church and what it represents. Some believe it holds no power in the world today and others believe they are too far gone to be forgiven by anyone. In both cases, they refuse to come to church and hear the life-changing words of God in His Word. It is good for us that the Bible never defines the church as a building. The early church in the Bible had no dedicated buildings. They would use their own houses to meet. There is no reason we cannot do the same today.

If you know someone who would never step foot inside a church building, invite them to your home for a Bible Study with some friends. They will still hear the words of the Bible and perhaps turn from their sins after being convicted by the Holy Spirit. Of course, the goal is still to get them to church so they can fellowship with other believers (assuming hopefully that they become believers) but sometimes it starts at home.

As we go into this new year, think and pray about how God would use the unique gifts He has given you to further the message of the Gospel and turn Salem into a place where the church of God thrives. With your help, this can be the best year the church has ever had. We have so many opportunities to reach the lost and dying in our community. Let's keep the resolution to reach them all year long.

# Women on Mission/Library

## Women on Mission

Our December meeting attendance was down some, but the fellowship and food was great! We filled Christmas gift bags for God's Warrior Class and gave them to the members during their Christmas party. A lot of ideas were shared of some possible local ministries.

We were reminded of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering Emphasis and our goal this year is \$13,000.

Also, a need to assist a family with Christmas gifts was shared and our ladies were given opportunity to help with this need.

It was decided to cancel our monthly meeting in January.

Wishing everyone a Blessed New Year!

Karen



Happy New Year, Church Family!

I would like to explain the Dewey Decimal System which we use in our library. Melvil Dewey organized/categorized books by their subjects and gave each subject a number heading.

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 000's - Generalities          | 500's - Natural Science and Math |
| 100's - Philosophy/Psychology | 600's - Technology               |
| 200's - Religion              | 700's - The Arts                 |
| 300's - Social Sciences       | 800's - Literature               |
| 400's - Language              | 900's - Geography and History    |



The call number is on the spine of each book and in the upper left hand corner of that book's author, title and subject cards in the card catalog. You can look up an author, title or subject, write its call number on a post-it note in the borrower's box; then go to the shelf to find your book on the shelves which are in numerical order from left to right. If you need help, you can check with Sharon or me.

I just finished reading an excellent book by John MacArthur! In Twelve Ordinary Men, he looks into the personality of each disciple. What an unusual group of common men Jesus chose for an uncommon calling!

One of my favorite parts was on page 34 when Mr. MacArthur was writing about Peter, the Rock.

"Jesus changed Simon's name, it appears because He wanted a nickname to be a perpetual reminder to him about who he should be. And from that point on, whatever Jesus called him, sent him a subtle message. If He called him Simon, He was signaling to him that he was acting like his old self. If He called him Rock, He was commending him for acting the way he ought to be acting."

While we don't know as much as we would like about each disciple, Mr. MacArthur reminds the reader that the vessel is not the issue... the Master is. And the Master still uses ordinary men like us! My prayer for all of us this year is that we are willing to listen to and be used by Him.

Happy Reading in 2024!

Dina



## Announcements/Thank You

### *The Lord Is With Me*

*The Lord is with me;  
He's always near  
To give me strength  
And ease my fear.*

*Though I may struggle  
And sometimes I fall  
He loves me completely  
In spite of it all.*

*The Lord is with me;  
I bask in His glow!  
His glory surrounds me  
His greatness I know.*

*By Carrie Braden*



Taking the  
Christmas  
Decorations  
down January,  
2nd at  
9:30AM.

### *"My Holy Spirit"*

*Speaking to me  
Guiding me  
Through each day  
What more can I say*

*You know my needs  
Which are many  
This being your reason  
For sharing with me  
Your Holy Spirit*

*I thank you for such  
Love and caring  
Without you  
I could not make it*

*You make me strong when I am weak*

*By Bev Smith*



*Happy* NEW YEAR

*You crown the year with Your goodness,  
And Your paths drip with abundance.*

PSALM 65:11



DATE	GREETER	ON CALL	SECURITY
January 07	Greg Strother	Gary Watson	Dallas Bundy
January 14	Mike Pugh	Myron Lloyd	Jon Wieldt
January 21	Steve Smith	Tom Reed	Dale Helpingstine
January 28	Gerald Purcell	Greg Strother	Ronnie Donoho



DATE	TEACHER	LESSONS
January 07	Deanna Buerster	Candy—Taffy
January 14	Deanna Buerster	Candy—Jawbreaker
January 21	Deanna Buerster	Candy—Hard Candy
January 28	Deanna Buerster	NOCC—

**Nursery Volunteers**  
(Call the church office if you would like to serve)



January 07	Andrea Hays
January 14	Reha Lloyd
January 21	Annette Hardcastle
January 28	Sheri Peradotti



DATE	VOLUNTEER	PIANIST
January 07	Ken Smith	Kathy King
January 14	Mark Tabor	Lynette Wiedle
January 21	Karen Watson	Judy Bundy
January 28	Mark Tabor	Lynette Wiedle

**MANOR AT SALEM WOODS - 441 HOTZE RD, SALEM:**  
Faye Wood #204

**Twin Willows—1600 N Broadway:**  
Donna Shoemaker

**Helia Health Care Center—1201 Hawthorn Rd.**  
Melody Webb

**Centralia Manor - 1910 E McCord St.**  
Barbara Phillips #103

**Odin Health and Rehab Center— 300 Green St.**  
Suzanne Pollard

**Heritage Woods—2049 E. McCord, Centralia**  
Carrie Braden



Happy New Year, Church Family!

Have you made your New Year's resolutions? May I suggest a few that will help us all grow our faith and mature in Christ?

1. Reading our Bible daily...not just reading a devotional, but reading God's Word.
2. Spending quiet time with God...too often we talk to Him, but forget to listen.  
I read a quote the other day - "It's hard to hear God's voice when you already decided what you want Him to say."
3. Make church attendance a priority. Not just Sundays, but Wednesday evenings are a true blessing. It is an informal setting where we can ask questions of Pastor Andy.
4. Attend Sunday School. Small groups are where we get to know one another and learn their joys, needs or struggles. We can pray for them. We build friendships in Sunday School.
5. Encourage one another in our Christian walk. We all have trials that we don't share. Just a smile might brighten someone's day who is having trouble putting one foot in front of the other. In John 13:35, Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." That's pretty plain and easy to understand.
6. Look for ways to serve in our church. The nursery is growing and needs more volunteers. What a great thing! Ute and Carletta do a fantastic job, but with more babies and children, they need more help! That is just one area, but I'm sure there are others.
7. Read more books. Dina says we have so many great books that are sitting on the library shelves that need to be read! Mrs. Sharon had it well-stocked!

Praying God blesses Salem FBC abundantly in 2024,

Tom Reed



## **Bryce Nattier Sharing about their Ministry on Sunday, January 28 at 7PM.**

Bryce and Natasha (Murry) Nattier serve at Hopital de l'Espérance (Hospital of Hope) in Mango, Togo, Africa. Bryce is a general surgeon which often extends into orthopedic surgeries for many broken bones from motorcycle wrecks – their dominant form of transportation. Natasha serves as a nurse practitioner who focuses on women's health issues. Patients are from 4 countries; some of the patients walk from neighboring Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Nigeria. Each patient is explained the story of Jesus and His being the Way of true Salvation. The hospital staff also holds services in village churches with the aid of native chaplains who work at the hospital. A village for which they had been praying recently invited Bryce and Natasha to begin holding church services in their village. A couple from the village had received medical treatment at the Hospital of Hope.

Bryce and Natasha have served in Mango since 2017 and have six children who keep life extremely interesting! Elliahana – 17, Andrew – 15, Sofia – 13, Ahnilyse – 10, Me'lyna – 5, and Josiah – 3. Their updates can be found at [nattiers.blogspot.com](http://nattiers.blogspot.com). Bryce was raised in Flora and is the nephew of Emil and Lois Nattier and Tom and Dina Reed. Our church supports the Nattiers with \$75 a month.





- January 07 . . . Pizza & Ice Cream Sundae
- January 14. . . . Regular Club
- January 21 . . . Crazy Hair Night
- January 28 . . . Pajama Night /Toothbrush Collection



## AWANA CHRISTMAS NARRATIVE



### Voices: Hearing God In a World of Impostors

#### **Women's Inductive Bible Study**

Register Today!

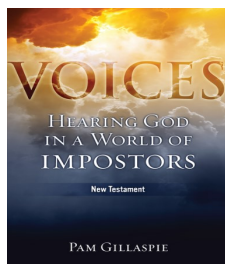
Class Info:

Thursdays, 9-11AM or 6-8PM

January 25—March 14

For more information

812-595-0903



Orientation and book pickup

January 18: 9-10 or 6-7

Pay for your book at pickup.



# JANUARY

**2024**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 9:30 AM—Taking down Christmas decorations.	3 6PM Bible Study Youth Study Mission Journey Kids Praise Team Rehearsal	4	5	6
7 4PM Church Council 5PM Awana Club	8 Prayer Meeting 6AM	9	10 6PM Bible Study Youth Study Mission Journey Kids Praise Team Rehearsal 7PM Deacon's Mtg.	11	12	13
14 Leadership Team 4PM 5PM Awana Club	15	16	17 6PM Bible Study Youth Study Mission Journey Kids Praise Team Rehearsal	18 Women's Inductive Bible Study Orientation 9-10AM or 6-7PM	19	20
21 5PM Awana Club	22	23	24 2 PM Manor @ Salem Woods 6PM Bible Study Youth Study Mission Journey Kids Praise Team Rehearsal	25 Women's Inductive Bible Study 9-10AM or 6-7PM	26	27
28 5PM Awana Club 7PM Bryce Nattier	29 Red Cross Blood Drive 1-5PM	30	31 6PM Bible Study Youth Study Mission Journey Kids Praise Team Rehearsal	<p><b>“Being the Church in Salem and to the nations”</b></p>		

Karletta Gray  
Adam Savin  
Shalonda Welford  
Allysa Buerster  
Abriella Sum  
Harry Word  
Amber Purcell  
David Salliotte  
Lynn Kincaid  
Richard Daniels  
Paula Hays  
Elias Quandt  
Candance Howard  
Nathan Helm  
Stephanie Hauck

January 02  
January 02  
January 04  
January 05  
January 09  
January 10  
January 12  
January 13  
January 15  
January 16  
January 16  
January 16  
January 17  
January 19  
January 20



Karen Watson  
Mary Lois Hawkins  
Carrie Braden  
Alexandria Duffy  
Andrea Hays  
Shanda Word-Runkle  
Anne Coates  
Annette Hardcastle  
Donna Shoemaker  
Tonya Huffhine  
Rich Garden  
Ken Collier  
Ronnie Donoho  
Avery Runkle

January 21  
January 22  
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January 30  
January 30  
January 30



**SALEM**  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Phone: 618-548-4060  
Website: Salemfbcc.com  
Facebook: Salem First Baptist Church



**OUR VISION**  
**“BEING THE CHURCH IN SALEM**  
**TO THE NATIONS”**

Join Us . . .  
Sundays  
8:30 –9:20 AM  
In the  
Fellowship Hall  
  
We serve bagels with  
cream cheese, donuts,  
fresh fruit, coffee, juice  
and milk.

**Office Hours**  
**Monday—Thursday**  
**9:00 to 4:00**  
**Closed 12:00 to 1:00**  
**for lunch**  
**Friday 9:00—12:00**



I am with you,  
says the Lord.  
—Haggai 2:4

**Wednesday Evening**

5:30—6PM Media Center Open  
6:00 PM Adult Bible Study  
Youth Bible Study  
Praise Team Rehearsal  
Mission Journey Kids

**Sunday Morning**

8:30—9:20 AM Café Agape - Donuts & Coffee  
9:00—9:30 AM Media Center Open  
9:30 AM Life Groups for All Ages  
10:45 AM Morning Worship  
5:00 PM Awana Club