



SALEM
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
721 W. Main St. Salem, IL 62881

SFBC FAMILY NEWS

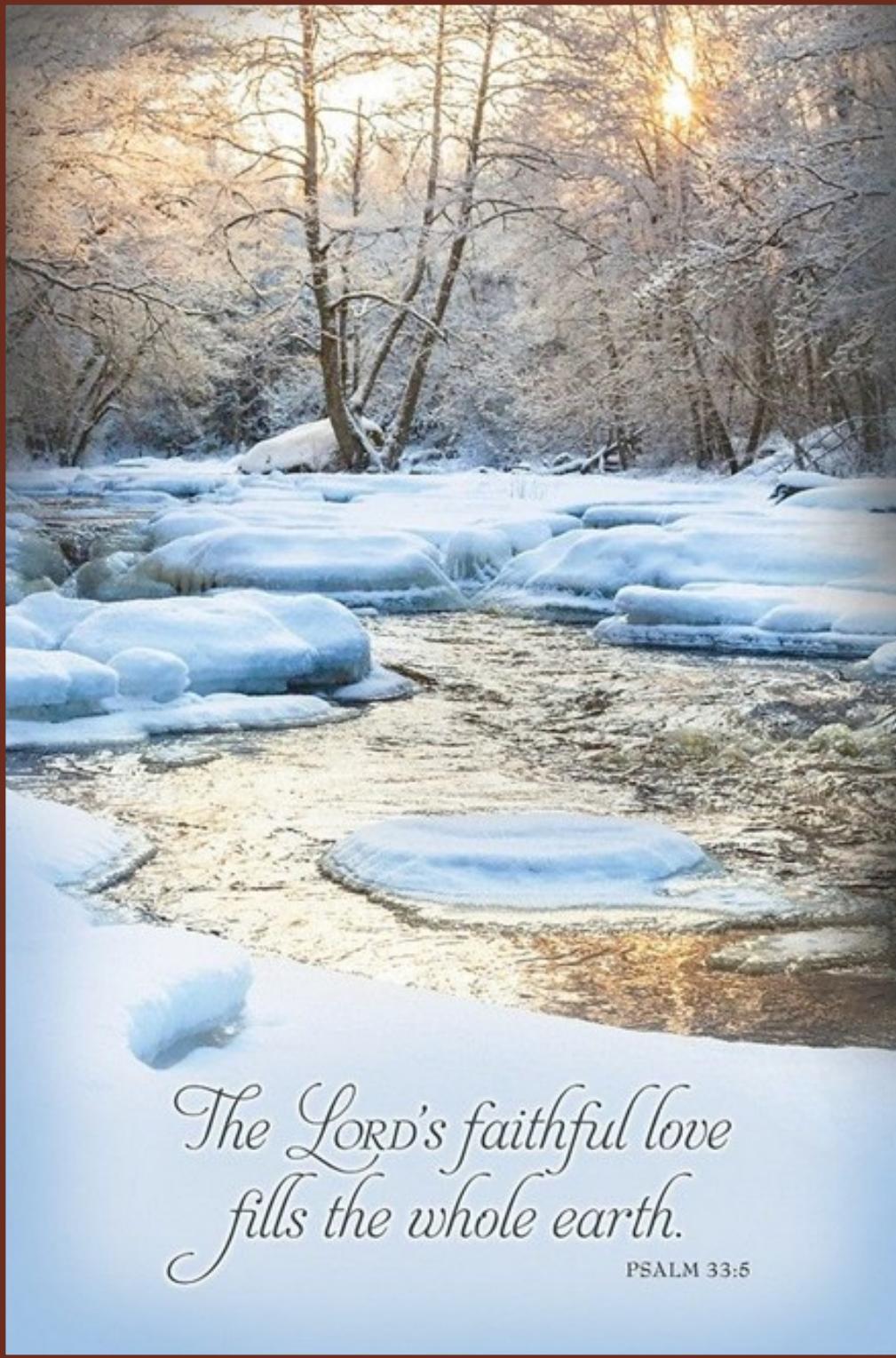
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January 2026

721 West Main

Salem, IL 62881

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- *Up Coming Events*
- *Ministries*

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Salemfbc.com



SALEM FIRST BAPTIST

Pastor Dr. Andy DeWitt

Dear Church Family,

As we step into a new year together, I want to invite us to reflect on a simple yet powerful truth of our relationship with the Lord: **in Christ, we are always offered a fresh start.** The dawning of a new year reminds us that God is not finished with us. His mercies are new every morning, and His faithfulness never fails.

The apostle Paul writes, *“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come”* (2 Corinthians 5:17). This promise is not just for the moment of salvation—it is for every day we walk with Him. No matter what we carry from yesterday—failures, regrets, disappointments, or weariness—God invites us to begin again with Him.

A fresh start does not mean forgetting the past, but surrendering it to God. It means trusting Him to redeem what was broken and to guide us into faithful obedience. As Baptists, we believe in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a daily walk of repentance and faith, and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives and in our church.

As we move forward together, let us recommit ourselves:

- To seek God earnestly through prayer and His Word
- To love one another sincerely, bearing each other’s burdens
- To serve our community faithfully, sharing the hope of the Gospel
- To follow Christ boldly, wherever He leads

My hope and prayer is that this season will be marked by renewed faith, restored joy, and a deeper unity among us as the body of Christ. May we step forward with humility, courage, and hope—trusting that the God who began a good work in us will be faithful to complete it.

I conclude this with the Aaronic Blessing found in Numbers 6:24-26: *“The LORD bless you, and keep you; The LORD cause His face to shine on you; The LORD lift up His face to you, And give you peace.”*

Happy New year.

Andy

Associate Pastor Christopher Spenner

As we go into a new year, we should take a moment to appreciate all that we have seen God do in 2025. Whether you thought the last year was filled more with good or with bad, we have seen once again that God is able to accomplish great things through all sorts of circumstances.

The new year also brings opportunities to look at what we can do better this year. What ministries should we be giving more attention? What groups do we need to reach with the Gospel? How can you personally serve the Lord this year in a way that you have not served before?

Our faith is all about the “new.” Perhaps you received some new items for Christmas that replaced old and worn out things. Certainly the hope is that these new items will work far better than what you owned previously. The Bible speaks in a similar way to our new selves in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 says, “Therefore from now on we recognize no one by the flesh; even though we have known Christ by the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” If we are in Christ, we are a new creation, separate from who we used to be in the flesh before we knew God.

What if you have been a Christian for a very long time? Perhaps even for the majority of your life? It can be difficult to feel the “freshness” of being a new creation after such a long time. You may have noticed sin habits that have developed and think that you are no better off than before you were a Christian. In such cases, it is easy to feel a sense of defeat and despair. But do not give in to this feeling. 2 Corinthians 4:16 states, “Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer person is decaying, yet our inner person is being renewed day by day.” Renewal is a constant process that is always available. Even if this year marks many years since you accepted Christ, God can make you as new as you were when you first believed.

Begin the new year by praying earnestly about what God would have you do for Him this year. Even if you think you are past your prime or not yet mature enough to do real work for His kingdom, He still has a place for you. Together, we can make 2026 a great year for spreading the Gospel all throughout our community.

Library

Storm, written by Jim Cymbala, has the subtitle of Hearing Jesus for the Times We Live In. What could be more appropriate for our lives today? The author believes the church in America is in the middle of a powerful storm. Many of us are aware that our culture is becoming increasingly hostile to Biblical Christianity and the churches' vital signs are weakening. Like a storm surge that accompanies a major hurricane, powerful forces have come together to create a surge that is threatening the health of the church.

Half of the young people who have been raised in the church have left it, political issues have created profound divisions among believers, biblical literacy is waning, churches are shrinking, and pastors are fleeing the pastorate at a rate of 1500 per month. Yet most of America's churches are asleep, not even aware of the problems within the church itself.

Storm is for every Christian who is concerned about the challenges that face believers today. Jim Cymbala uses powerful stories of people who have been transformed by Jesus Christ to give encouragement and hope to Christians — reminding them that a life surrendered to Christ in the midst of a church transformed by His presence can never be defeated.

Though we may be living in the midst of a powerful storm, Christ is at work in His church reforming, revitalizing, and renewing it so that we can not only survive the storm, but flourish in the days ahead.

The catalog number is 243/Cym, which can be found in the second section of books from the south end of the library. The books are in numerical order. Let me know if you need help finding it!

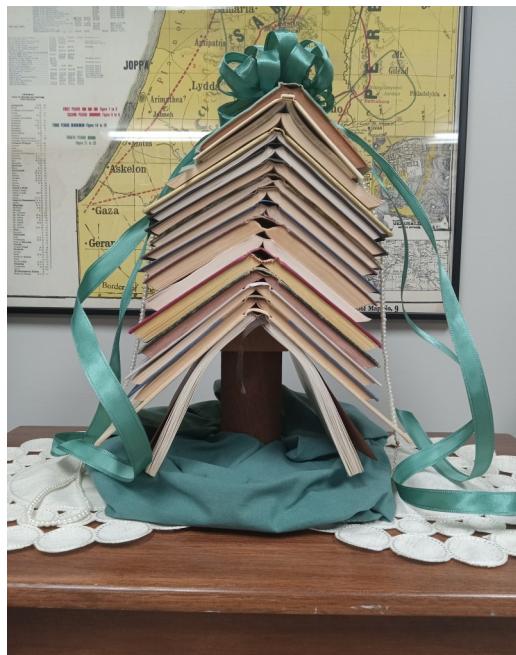
I encourage you all to check out a book or two so you will be ready if we have snowfall that keeps us inside for a bit this month! Just a reminder that we have some excellent books! The newest ones include Answers in Genesis books (Ken Ham) for children.

Happy New Year!
Dina



*Just in case you
didn't get to check
out the beautiful
Christmas Tree in
the Library!*

*Thank you Dina
for your hard
work!*



Reports & Thank you



The trustees met on December 2, 2025 for their monthly meeting. The last item of business was to elect new officers for 2026. The officers are Dallas Bundy, Chairman; Mike Pugh, Vice-chairman; Emil Nattier II, Secretary; Bus Committee, Myron Lloyd; Kitchen Committee, Debbie Dodd; Decorating Committee, Mary Alice Dice with Myron Lloyd as a helper and members-at-large, Dale Helpingstine and Susan Wieldt. I want to personally thank Debbie Pugh and Ronnie Donoho for their three years serving as trustees.

One of the items of business addressed at the meeting was the need to keep hallways, foyers, entrances, and exits to outside doors free from all items which would hinder a quick exit in case of an emergency, such as fire, earthquake, or other disastrous event. It is easy to use these locations as places to store things, and some can be used for such a purpose, but make sure objects are not placed in such a way as to prevent a quick exit. We appreciate everyone's consideration and help in this matter.

During the last month, new soap dispensers were installed in restrooms, nursery, kitchen, and janitor's closet. Soap could be purchased at a lower price with a new company. A panic button is to be installed on the second floor. Some new hearing aids were purchased to replace some old ones. Fire extinguishers have been inspected. A game table in the children's department has also been repaired.

Dallas Bundy
Chairman of the Trustees

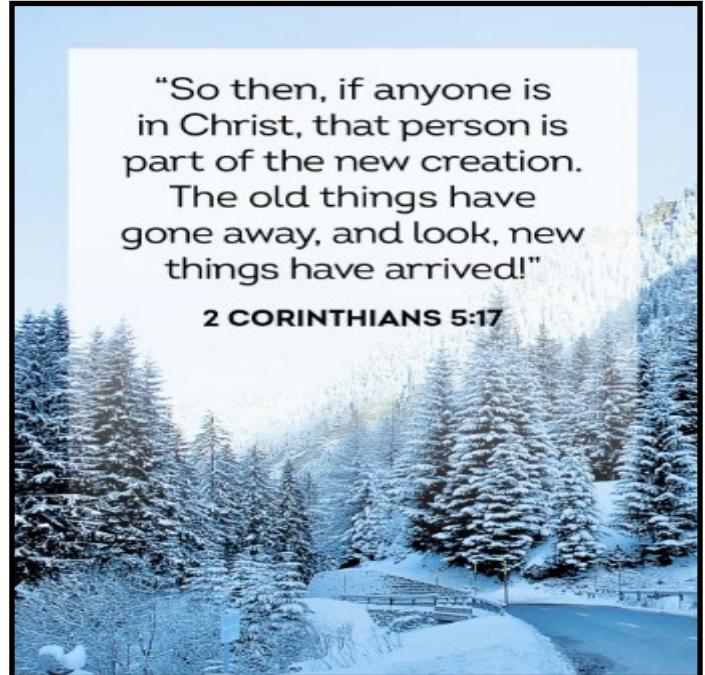
We would like to express our gratitude for all the prayers and calls we received during Gerald's hospital stay and while he is recovering. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful and loving church family. Gerald is doing really well.

*With love,
Gerald & Joan
Purcell*



"So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived!"

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17





| DATE | GREETER | ON CALL | SECURITY |
|------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| January 04 | Greg Strother | Gary Watson | Dallas Bundy |
| January 11 | Mike Pugh | Myron Lloyd | Jon Wieldt |
| January 18 | Steve Smith | Tom Reed | Dale Helpingstine |
| January 25 | Gerald Purcell | Greg Strother | Ronnie Donoho |



| DATE | TEACHER | ASSISTANT |
|------------|--------------------|----------------|
| January 04 | Melissa Spenner | Deric Rice |
| January 11 | Dina Reed | Debbie Pugh |
| January 18 | Melissa Spenner | Deric Rice |
| January 25 | Annette Hardcastle | Connie Seymour |



| Nursery Volunteers (Call the church office if you would like to serve) | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Worship #1 | Worship #2 | |
| January 04 | Pat Hampton | Gary Hampton |
| January 11 | Reha Lloyd | Paula Strother |
| January 18 | Dina Reed | Annette Hardcastle |
| January 25 | Janet Smith | Sheri Peradotti |



| DATE | VOLUNTEER | PIANIST |
|------------|--------------|----------------|
| January 04 | Ken Smith | Kathy King |
| January 11 | Ken Smith | Lynette Wiedle |
| January 18 | Ken Smith | Judy Bundy |
| January 25 | Karen Watson | Lynette Wiedle |



**Centralia Manor - 1910 E McCord St.
Faye Wood #206**

Dear Church Family,

It's hard to believe that 2025 has come and gone so quickly. It has been a busy and exciting year and 2026 promises to be so as well. I have been blessed to serve as chairman of the deacons this past year because we have a great group of men serving our church as deacons and I appreciate all the help and support they gave me as we endeavored to serve our church. Not only the deacons, but our wives also, as they do so much to support everything we do. Thank you all so much.

Our annual Deacons, Pastors, Wives and Widows Christmas dinner is also the time that we elect a new chairman and vice-chairman for the new year. I am happy to announce that Ronnie Donoho will be the new chairman, and Steve Smith will be the new vice-chairman for 2026. I know that they will do an excellent job, so please let them know how much you appreciate their service.

As we begin the New Year, please be looking for ways you too can serve our church. We all have different talents and gifts and it takes all of us working together to make our church function as God intends. We have two wonderful pastors who need our support and love as well. Don't forget to tell them how much you appreciate them whenever you get the chance.

Lastly, I want to thank everyone who contributed food for the Deacons Christmas baskets. We were able to fill 14 boxes and deliver them to nine families on Wednesday, December 17th. We have already heard from some of those families expressing how much the gifts were needed and appreciated.

Let us all work together in 2026 to make Salem First Baptist Church a church that people will feel welcome and choose to come and worship the Lord with us.

Happy New Year!
Dale Helpingstine, Chairman of the Deacons





January 04. . . . Welcome Back (Pizza & Ice Cream Sundae)

January 11 Regular Club (Chili & hot dogs with dessert)

January 18 Crazy Socks (Chicken Noodle Soup, Chicken Nuggets & Cookie)

January 25 Kids on Mission (collecting kids hats & gloves) (Potato Soup, Pizza Rolls with dessert)

(Menu)



Save the date!

Women's
Inductive Bible Study
2 Samuel

begins January 15, 2026
9 a.m. and 6 p.m.
Salem First Baptist Church



January

PAGE 9

2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---------|--|---|--------|----------|
| | | | | 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR | 2 | 3 |
| 4 5-7PM Awana | 5 | 6 | 7 5:30PM Youth Study 6PM Bible Study Praise Team Rehearsal Mission J Kids | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 5-7PM Awana | 12 Food Pantry 1:30PM @ Grace Methodist | 13 | 14 5:30PM Youth Study 6PM Bible Study Praise Team Rehearsal Mission J Kids 7PM Deacon's Mtg. | 15 Women's Inductive Bible Study Orientation 9AM or 6PM | 16 | 17 |
| 18 5-7PM Awana 7PM Business Mtg. | 19 | 20 | 21 5:30PM Youth Study 6PM Bible Study Praise Team Rehearsal Mission J Kids | 22 Women's Inductive Bible Study 9AM or 6PM | 23 | 24 |
| 25 5-7PM Awana | 26 | 27 | 28 2PM High Point 5:30PM Youth Study 6PM Bible Study Praise Team Rehearsal Mission J Kids | 29 Women's Inductive Bible Study 9AM or 6PM | 30 | 31 |

Karletta Gray
Adam Savin
Allysa Buerster
Abriella Sum
David Salliotte
Angie Scott
Lynn Kincaid
Richard Daniels
Paula Hays
Elias Quandt
Paisley Dial
Candace Howard
Nathan Helm

Jan. 02
Jan. 02
Jan. 05
Jan. 09
Jan. 13
Jan. 14
Jan. 15
Jan. 16
Jan. 16
Jan. 16
Jan. 17
Jan. 17
Jan. 19



Karen Watson
Mary Lois Hawkins
Andrea Hays
Shanda Word-Runkle
Anne Coates
Annette Hardcastle
Tonya Huffhine
Bonnie Livesay
Dawna Meador
Marjorie Shanafelt
Tessa Bookhout
Ronnie Donoho
Avery Runkle

Jan. 21
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Jan. 30



Phone: 618-548-4060
Website: Salemfbc.com
Facebook: [Salem First Baptist Church](https://www.facebook.com/SalemFirstBaptistChurch)



Our Vision
***“Being the Church in Salem
and Beyond”***

A photograph of a snowy winter landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, snow-covered evergreen tree. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow. The background shows more snow-covered trees under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds.

Office Hours

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

**The Office will be closed
on January 01 & 2nd for
New Year's!**

Happy New Year

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.

For YouTube:



Wednesday Evening

5:30—6PM Media Center Open

5:30PM Youth Bible Study

6:00 PM Adult Bible Study

Mission Journey Kids

Praise Team Rehearsal

Sunday

8:30—9:20 AM Café Agape

9:00—9:30 AM Media Center Open

9:30 AM Life Groups for All Ages

10:45 AM Morning Worship

5:00-7:00 PM Awana