

The C R O S S T I E

A Child's Carol

The annual Nativity Pageant presented by the 5-year-old choir and beloved carols
sung by the Children Choristers
Sunday, December 3
6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

The Annual Peter Mayer Concert

Wednesday, December 6
6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary



Images of Christmas

Festive Songs of the Season in Four Suites by Ovid Young
Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra
Sunday, December 10
7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary



Carols of the Bells

Handbells & keyboards ring out joyous sounds of the season
Sanctuary Handbell Choir
Sunday, December 17
7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Festival Singers Present

Ottorino Respighi's Laud to the Nativity
Special guest performance by
Georgia Perimeter College Chamber Choir
Wednesday, December 20
7:00 p.m. in the Chapel



Get Ready for Christmas Around the World

1st - 5th Grades On December 10th and 17th
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Sunday School Hour
Promiseland Productions (Room 301)
Feliz Navidad!

A-Caroling We Go!

Sign up for a Special Family Caroling Event on December 13th
6:15 - 7:30 p.m. in Sanctuary Breezeway
(This will be in place of children's music and missions time)

Smoke Rise Morning Worship



December 3	Hope	8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
December 10	Peace	8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
December 17	Joy	11:00 a.m.
December 24	Love	11:00 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship



**Sunday, December 24
Sanctuary**

5:30 p.m. (Children's Service)
7:00 p.m.
11:00 p.m.



Prime Time

Regular Dinner Meeting
December 5

Finance Committee

Meets December 14
7:00 p.m. Room S223

Please pray for our mission team serving in Biloxi, Mississippi
December 7-10

Stewardship

Thank you to all who brought their commitment cards to the altar during the worship services on November 19. If you have not turned in your commitment card, please make this a matter of prayer. Take an inventory of your blessings and ask the Lord to help you use your time, talents and resources in ways that will make the world better through Smoke Rise Baptist Church.

Smoke Rise Elementary School Needs You!

Our church believes in being a good neighbor. Make a difference in a child's life right here in our own community.

- Read to a student or a group of students
- Help with homework assignments
- Become a regular helper with a Kindergarten, 1st or 2nd grade class. Teachers need help!
- Become a buddy to a child that needs more adult influence
- Men are needed to buddy with a boy or group of boys that are missing the male parent.

All of these volunteer activities and more can be structured to fit your schedule whether for an hour or several. To volunteer or for more information, please contact Kathy Dobbins at (770) 469-5856 or kdobbins@smokerisebaptist.org.

Stone Mountain Coop Needs: peanut butter, jelly, tuna fish, spaghetti sauce, pasta, juice and canned fruit.

Also needed....new or slightly used games, puzzles, and children's books to give to their clients.

Youth News

All Youth All Night Extravaganza

For: All Youth
When: Sunday night, December 31 (ALL NIGHT)
Cost: \$65 (include Malibu, Q-ZAR, Cosmic Bowling, snacks, and transportation)

Register NOW so we can make arrangements for transportation and BRING YOUR FRIENDS!!!

High School and Middle School Winter Retreat January 12-15, 2007

High School to Boone, North Carolina
Cost: \$300 (\$50 deposit required for registration)

Middle School to Gatlinburg, Tennessee
Cost: \$200 (\$50 deposit required for registration)

CHECK OUT THE YOUTH BOOTH FOR DETAILS

Smoke Rise Cookbook

By popular demand, the Smoke Rise Cookbook will be reprinted just in time for the Easter and Mother's Day seasons. If you know of a correction that needs to be made, contact Jeanie Duvall at 770-923-7117.

To reverse copies, call the church office at 770-469-5856.

We need your help!

... preparing candles before each service on Christmas Eve.
Please call the church off at 770-469-5856 to volunteer.

Faith & Issues

Sundays at 9:45 am in Room A125.

December 15 - Hollywood & Faith: "Hotel Rwanda" movie review and discussion

December 22 - Jesus on Leadership

December 29 - Jesus on Leadership

Deaths

We extend our sympathy to Dixie Tyson whose mother died; Marcella Howard whose mother died; and to Marinel Harris, Carole Mitchell and Sue Ellen Brannan whose husband and father died; Dr. and Mrs. Harris have been members here since 1979.

Stone Mountain Co-op has bricks available to honor or remember a special person and help complete their prayer garden walkway. A donation of \$35 will purchase a brick. Pick up a brochure in the upper breezeway or call Angie at the co-op at 770-879-5977. Smoke Rise has been asked to man the food pantry for the month of December on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Please contact Becky Seay at 770-381-6865 to volunteer.

Notes from the Pastor

Christmas Programs

I can hardly believe it is time to talk about Christmas and the New Year, but it is. Church leaders have been planning our Christmas programs for months and their preparation is deeply appreciated. Their hard work will help us celebrate the birth of our Lord and usher us into the presence of God. This is why I want you to mark each program on your calendar and make it a priority during this busy season. Being together during the holidays will strengthen our faith and fellowship. I look forward to seeing you many times in the coming weeks.

Peter Mayer Concert

This concert has become an annual event at Smoke Rise and I look forward to it each year. How fortunate we are to have these select musicians from Jimmy Buffett's band kick-off the Christmas season for us. Every year, this ensemble travels during Advent to present Christmas concerts in some of America's major cities. Their tour begins here.

Peter Mayer is a "missionary kid" that grew up playing Christmas music with his family on the mission field. He enjoys sharing his faith and talent with others in this special way. I have grown to appreciate his humility and sincerity down through the years. He has a kind and gentle spirit along with an immeasurable amount of talent.

Invite friends and family members to join you on Wednesday, December 6 at 6:30 in the sanctuary. As a matter of fact, invite them to accompany you to the fellowship hall prior to the concert for the regular Wednesday evening meal prepared by Lou and her fine staff. This is a great time to introduce your friends to other Smoke Rise members.

Sanctuary Renovation

The replacement of the ceiling and walls in the sanctuary has gone extremely well. I appreciate the workers that have made it possible for us to be in the sanctuary for every service. We have even had four or five funerals they have had to work around and have been very patient.

I can already tell a difference in the acoustics when the choir sings. The hard surfaces on the ceiling and walls make for a better sound and livelier room.

I suspect the workers will be finished in a few more days. This is all that we have planned to do at this time. I would love to replace the carpet with a combination of carpet and a hard surface that would enhance the acoustics even more. Hopefully we will be able to do this next year if funds become available. Currently, we do not have the money to replace the flooring. It is twenty years old and showing its age. If you are interested in helping us do this, please contact me.

2007 Commitment Cards

Have you turned in your commitment card for 2007? Let me remind you to do so if you have not. Taking an inventory of your blessings and seeking God's will for the way you use your time, talents and resources are vital elements of discipleship. Specifically, deciding ahead of time how much God would have you give each

year to the church is a good discipline to develop. This helps us to define our priorities and keep us focused upon those values we hold dear as Christians: compassion, generosity, integrity, humility, cooperation, love and faith.

Doing this also helps church leaders plan ministries and programs for the coming year. Without your faithful and sacrificial support, they will be limited in what they can do to make our community and world better. Encourage them to dream bold dreams and set lofty goals through your deep level of commitment. This is not a time for churches to be timid or shy. Too much is at stake. Help us go places we've never gone and do things we've never done through your generosity. Fill out a commitment card and place it in the offering plate or mail it to the office.

Sermon Excerpt

Last Sunday I preached about the healing of blind Bartimaeus recorded in Mark 10:46-52. While traveling in a caravan with others to Jerusalem to observe Passover, Jesus heard Bartimaeus calling out for help. Those around him tried to silence him, but Jesus called for him. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "I want to see," Bartimaeus replied. Jesus granted his wish and out of profound gratitude, Bartimaeus followed him.

What does this miracle story teach us about discipleship? For me, the lessons revolve around building community. **It is the responsibility of Jesus' followers to make sure that no one is left behind.** In God's kingdom, community embraces everyone.

We have grown accustomed to hearing the education slogan, "No child left behind." Spiritually this needs to be expanded to, "No person left behind." I don't think there is a clearer message in Mark's gospel.

Repeatedly, Mark told his readers about Jesus reaching out to those that society ignored, the Gerasene demoniac, the Syrophenician woman, the blind man at Bethsaida and even little children. Bartimaeus was another example of Jesus' inclusiveness and should serve as a reminder to us to leave no person behind.

This story clearly reminds us that it is the responsibility of believers to respond to those in need, not try to hide them. Hearing pleas for help that others try to silence is the essence of our faith. Rather than being annoyed by those that cry out for help, we should be upset by the actions of those that silence them. It is the responsibility of the church to be the voice for the voiceless and an advocate for the powerless.

Look carefully at 10:49. The word "call" is used three times. "Jesus stopped and said, 'Call him.' So they called to the blind man, 'Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you'."

Surely you see the significance of Mark using this word three times. It is the duty of the church to call outsiders to the forefront to make their needs known so they can receive help. If we don't do it, who will? I fear no one will.

"Lord, help us to be a voice for the voiceless and an advocate for the powerless. Enable us to stop in the name of love, especially during this busy season, so that no one will be left behind."

Until Sunday,
Bob

Letters of Appreciation



Dear Church Family,

During the past three months of John's illness, I have been overwhelmed with the care and concern given to me, Karen, Susan, Megan and Chris. At John's death, we were lifted up because of the prayers of God's faithful.

There are no words to adequately express how very much we appreciate every act of love and kindness. For those who said a prayer, for those who sent a card; for those who called; for each smile of sympathy, I am grateful. Thank you for being the true Body of Christ, revealing His love through your own.

Fredolyn Stitt

To our Smoke Rise Family and especially our beloved Agape Sunday School class,

We didn't know there were so many ways for loving friends to say: "We're sorry;" "We care about you;" "We support you." We are certain you have found them all.

And, we didn't know there were so many beautiful cards out there that say: "A rose has bloomed in heaven;" "May the Lord hold you in His loving arms;" "Snapshots taken with the heart are never lost;" "May it help to know that others care." We are sure you have found the cards with the most beautiful messages picked just for us.

We hear you; we thank you and we love you.

Mary and Hank Wingate

December 17 — Churchwide Holiday Breakfast – 9:00 a.m.
 December 24 — 11:00 a.m. service only due to the evening Christmas Eve services at 5:30, 7:00 & 11:00 p.m.. (No 8:30 a.m. service or Sunday School)
 December 31 – No 8:30 a.m. service. Join us for Sunday School and the 11:00 a.m. worship.

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

As of November 22, 2006

Four hundred twenty families have pledged \$2,089,351.00 to date for the 2006 Budget.

	YEAR TO DATE (THIS YEAR)	BUDGET TO DATE
INCOME		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$2,046,181.11	\$2,291,663.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	<u>53,992.94</u>	<u>24,750.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,100,174.05	\$2,316,413.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,703,868.84	\$1,882,940.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – WORSHIP	22,322.98	34,000.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – EDUCATION	87,822.77	131,410.00
TOTAL MISSIONS	171,405.17	186,932.00
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	68,212.20	69,462.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	<u>13,470.96</u>	<u>13,962.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,067,102.92	\$2,318,706.00
MORTGAGE BALANCE:	\$ 485,913.87	

FAITH, FAMILY & FUTURE CAMPAIGN:

Four hundred forty-nine families have pledged \$2,689,784.00 to the Faith, Family & Future Campaign.

Funds designated by Finance Comm	\$ 30,000.00
Contributions	+2,539,076.81
Expenses	<u>-2,754,605.27</u>
Cash Balance	\$ (185,528.46)
SRBC Loan	\$ 195,408.07



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OUR STAFF

Church Office: 770-469-5856

Robert F. Browning, D. Min.	Pastor
Linda Cummings	Interim Administrator/Senior Adults
Kathy Dobbins	Minister of Adult Education/Outreach
Danny Vancil	Minister of Music
E. Ernest Forrester, Jr.	Minister of Youth
Kellie Denton	Interim Minister to Children
Tim W. Adcox	Minister of Recreation/Missions
Amanda Burton	Nursery Director
Truett Gannon, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus

Smoke Rise Counseling Center
Affiliate of Care and Counseling Center of Georgia
770-469-6547

Gloria White, M. Div., LCSW

Counselor

Check Out SRBC on the Web
 at www.smokerisebaptist.org.

Find up-to-date information and announcements
 about opportunities
 to give, grow, worship and serve
 at Smoke Rise.
 You can read *The CrossTie* on the Web
 on Thursdays
 before it is mailed on Fridays.