

**The
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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

Smoke Rise Morning Worship



December 17 Joy 11:00 a.m. — No 8:30 Service
December 24 Love 11:00 a.m. — No 8:30 Service
December 31 11:00 a.m. — No 8:30 Service

Christmas Eve Worship



Sunday, December 24
Sanctuary
5:30 p.m. (Children's Service)
7:00 p.m.
11:00 p.m.



The December 15, 2006
Newsletter of the
Smoke Rise Baptist Church



Holiday Breakfast

December 17 in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00

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

End-of-the-Year Reminder

In order to receive contribution credit for 2006, contributions must be received in the church office or postmarked by December 31, 2006.

For those of you contributing stock to the church, please notify Linda Cummings or Debbie Lloyd when you initiate the stock transfer.

Please do not file income taxes until you have received written confirmation from the church regarding your contributions.

The Meaning of Worship

Find out why we do what we do in worship: the elements that make up our worship service, following the seasons of the church year, and the meaning behind the colors that are displayed in the Sanctuary. Please visit our Website at www.smokrisebaptist.org and click on the "Worship" tab.

Office will be closed for the holidays on December 22 – 26.
We will be open again on December 27.

Our goal for Global Missions (CBF) and Lottie Moon (SBC) this Christmas is \$15,000. Your generosity will help mission work around the world. Please designate to which mission offering you wish to contribute on your check or offering envelope.

Faith & Issues

Sunday at 9:45 am; Room A125
January Bible Series

- 7 How the Bible was put together
- 14 How do we question the Bible?
- 21 How do we study the Bible?
- 28 The Lectionary: How it can be used for personal Bible study

Missions Opportunities

HONDURAS – SAN PEDRO BARRIO LA CRUZ

March 10-17

Trip Leaders: Page Fulgham / Deb Leamon
rpfulgham@bellsouth.net or dalor53@comcast.net
Construction, Medical, Children's Ministry

Cost: \$1,450

Deposit \$100 due January 14, 2007

APPALACHIA – MCDOWELL, KENTUCKY

June 16- 23

Trip Leader: Jenny Brannan
dickjennyb@comcast.net
GAP Center, VBS, Construction, Prayer Walking,

Cost: Approx. \$600

Deposit \$100 due March 1, 2007

KATRINA – BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI

Team Leaders: Jim Huston / Greg Everett

srbckatrinamission@comcast.net or geverett@wilwat.net
Construction, Disaster Recovery

Cost: \$75

Dates:

January 11 - 14

February 8 - 11

March 1 - 4

April 2 - 7

May 3 - 6

June 7 - 10

Births

Congratulations to Ryan and Kelly Jowers on the birth of a daughter, "Hannah Claire," born November 27. Grandparents are Ronnie and Kay Jowers; and, to Daniel and Sonya Duckett on the birth of a son, "Riley Dean," born December 3; grandparents are Larry and Shirley Duckett; uncle is Andrew; aunts are Linda Duckett and Ruth Braswell.

Deaths

We extend our sympathy to Jim Williamson whose mother died; Henry and Mary Wingate whose daughter died; Johnny Kirkland whose mother died; Fredolyn Stitt, Karen Stitt, and Susan Yenny, whose husband and father died; Jim Still, whose nephew died; George Davenport whose brother died; Gail Moulton whose son died; Joe and Terry Shields whose son died; Richard Perry whose brother died; Chris Swearngen whose grandfather died; Keith Pierce whose mother died; and Herb Terwilliger whose mother, Naomi, died. She had been a member since 1984.

Letter of Appreciation

Dear Friends at Smoke Rise Baptist,

Thank you so much for your care and support when my dad passed away.

Good friends are so important and your cards, visits and kind words helped so much.

Love,

Susan, Jerry and Amy Jobe

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.

From the Pastor

“Is Peace Really Possible?”

Luke 2:8-14; Mark 9:38-41; Matthew 5:9

(Below is an excerpt from Sunday’s sermon)

This morning we lit the candle of peace on the Advent wreath. We do so at a time our world is torn by violence and bloodshed. War is not a stranger to us as we had hoped it would be after the fall of Communism and the end of the Cold War. If anything, violence has escalated and the world is even a more dangerous place. This much I know, our jails and cemeteries are overcrowded.

I believe this breaks God’s heart. I am confident that He wants “peace on earth goodwill toward men” as the angels declared the night Jesus was born.

Is peace really possible? If so, how will it be achieved? What will it take for people to live in harmony and quit hurting and killing one another? This question has been debated since Cain killed his brother, Abel. This morning, I do not presume to have finally found the answer, but I would like to add some ideas to the discussion.

I do not believe that peace will occur by asking God to destroy our enemies or praying that He will help us kill them. If this were true, it would have already happened. We have killed a lot of enemies and prayed a lot of prayers and we still live in a dangerous world. How will peace be achieved?

Peace will come when God’s people become the presence of Christ in a broken world, not only sharing their faith but also pursuing justice for all people, making a place at the table for everyone.

When we want for **all** children what we want for our own, peace will prevail. Peace will flourish where people work to provide for everyone pure drinking water, clean air, nutritious food, warm beds, adequate clothing, quality education, medical attention, good paying jobs and even fair ways of settling disputes. It is the absence of these basic elements needed to sustain life that leads to jealousy and violence.

Only when we become “God in the flesh” as Jesus did and tackle these crucial challenges will peace be realized in our war-torn world. Nothing less than the pursuit of justice mingled with generous compassion will usher in “peace on earth good will toward men.”

Make no mistake. Turning enemies into friends is hard work and will require a strong resolve, tenacity, passion, patience and sacrifice. Building bridges instead of walls will demand good listening skills, inviting others’ perspectives. Forming inclusive communities will require revisiting our priorities and methodologies to identify mistakes and make necessary changes. It will require elevating the conversation from slanderous slogans, worn-out clichés and 30 second sound bites to honest, meaningful, thought-provoking dialogue.

I’ll tell you what else it will require. It will demand that we cooperate with others that have the same lofty goals. This challenge cannot be accomplished on our own or working only with people that like us or are like us. It will require that we partner with all people that share this dream, regardless of their background or beliefs.

Last weekend, Rick Warren and the Saddleback Church in southern California hosted a two day summit on the global AIDS crisis in an effort to “serve the hurting like Jesus did.” Over sixty speakers were invited from a variety of countries with differing viewpoints. Days before the conference, some leaders in the evangelical movement voiced their opposition and announced they would not attend. They refused to be on the platform with those with whom they disagreed on moral issues, referring to some of the speakers as “the enemy.” Warren responded with this statement.

“Our goal has been to put people together who normally won’t even speak to each other. We do not expect all participants in the summit discussion to agree with each other. However, the HIV/AIDS pandemic cannot be fought by evangelicals or any group alone.”

Isn’t this what Jesus tried to teach his disciples? In one of our texts today, Mark shares a time when Jesus’ disciples came to him and told him they rebuked a man who was healing people because he was not one of them, not following them. You might have expected Jesus to commend them for their intolerance and to have said, “If anyone doesn’t affirm our creed or follow our methods, then you should berate them and tell them to stop.” Jesus did not do this, however. Instead, he said that anyone that was inspired and motivated by him to help others was helping him. Don’t discourage him. Recognize his Christ-like spirit and encourage him!

I like the way Phillip Yancey describes God’s movement among us. He sees God’s work like a flowing stream, from trickle to creek to river, more inclusive as it travels rather than restrictive. Far be it from us to keep it from expanding.

I have a good friend that often says, “I am for anyone that is trying to build a better world.” This generous man will partner with anyone that is using his or her time, talents, resources, influence and opportunities to make the world better. He has partnered with many people, some quite different from him, and has made a difference in the lives of so many.

I have studied Matthew 5:9 on many occasions and find no adjectives connected to the noun, peacemakers. Jesus did not say, “Blessed are the Jewish or Gentile peacemakers, black or white peacemakers, Republican or Democratic peacemakers, even Christian peacemakers.” There is no qualifier. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will become the children of God.” Surely we see how much God values peace and how inclusive this invitation is.

This fall, I was listening to a radio call-in show. The host and guest were criticizing another religion for promoting violence and ridiculing those that believed it. They blatantly supported their assumptions by quoting select passages from a holy book.

A person that was a proponent of this religion called in and said he did not share their interpretation of the texts and said that his religion, like Christianity, called for justice, mercy and peace. I was so in hopes that the host would say, “I am glad to hear you say this. How can we help you get your message out to others? How can you help us get our message out to your friends? Let’s find ways to work together.”

Instead, they cut his microphone off and picked up where they left off. They began quoting texts from his bible that called for violence, criticizing the caller for being naive and ignorant.

How sad I thought. No wonder our world is torn apart by violence and bloodshed. How we need to learn the lesson Jesus taught the disciples about partnering with anyone that is trying to make the world better.

“Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God.” Who were the peacemakers in this radio conversation?

Are you a peacemaker? Will you make the decision today to be one? Our world is crying out for peacemakers. It desperately needs people that will be honest, fair, trustworthy, compassionate and sensitive to the needs of all people. It needs people that will join hearts and hands with all that share this dream. Will you be one?

Until Sunday,

Bob

Special Thanks from the Children's Department

The Children's Department would like to express our gratitude to the teachers on Sunday Mornings who give their time and talents and serve so faithfully each week.

To those who participated in grades 1-5 Sunday School Rotation

Lois Jernigan	Dorothy Swindle	Amy Allison	Christine Peredney
Jane Cummins	Brenda Brantly	Kay Rossman	Dennis Goforth
Lynn Dodson	Bill Rossman	Cindy Childs	Cindi McComsey
Wanda Hewitt	Dena Fleming	Susan Ray	Faye Harris
Bob Ray	Margaret-Anne Prohitt		

Thank you also to the parents who rotate in and out as shepherds. We appreciate you!

Preschool Sunday School Teachers:

Dot Morris	June Anne Wheeler	Andrea & Tripp Smith	Joyce Lovern
Jerry Turner	Greg Davis	Beverly McCallum	

We would also like to extend our appreciation to all those individuals who helped make the Children's Thanksgiving program and Appalachian Mission project a success. The toys have been delivered to the GAP in Kentucky and we had an overwhelming response to this project. Thank you to the parents who painted sets, and special thanks to the Wednesday night mission leaders for all their hard work and especially for the time they give each week.

Sarah Martin	Debra Blake	Laura Smith	Shanna Brown
Claire Crenshaw	Mitzi Ethridge	Gretchen Childs	Charlie Ray
Carol Garner	Davida Greene	Laura Harris	Katie Whittle
Katie Ray	Kathy Parker		

A very special thank you to those gentlemen who always help with audio and visual needs: Bill Blanton, Ralph Huston for filming the G-Force news crew video, Adrian Clift and Mike Reynolds for helping with the audio during the program.

A very special and heart felt thank you to Mrs. Marsha Winston who hand made 200 Chrismon ornaments for the Children's Christmas Eve 2006 service. These angels are truly beautiful and are destined to become treasured heirlooms for the Smoke Rise families. (Marsha, you are an angel!)

To all those who help serve with hearts and hands I wish for you peace and happiness the whole year through. Have a blessed Christmas.

Kellie Denton, Interim Children's Minister

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

As of November 30, 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
<u>INCOME</u>		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$2,098,638.41	\$2,291,663.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	<u>55,217.19</u>	<u>24,750.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,153,855.60	\$2,316,413.00
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,780,472.20	\$1,882,940.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – WORSHIP	21,787.98	34,000.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – EDUCATION	92,922.30	131,410.00
TOTAL MISSIONS	185,347.86	186,932.00
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	69,916.52	69,462.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	<u>13,920.96</u>	<u>13,962.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,164,367.82	\$2,318,706.00
MORTGAGE BALANCE:	\$ 472,438.36	

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	+2,542,132.31
Expenses	<u>-2,754,552.45</u>
Cash Balance	\$ (182,420.14)
SRBC Loan	\$ 182,420.14



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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



**Somehow not only for Christmas
But all the long year through,
The joy that you give to others
Is the joy that comes back to you.
And the more you spend in blessing
The poor and lonely and sad,
The more of your heart's possessing
Returns to make you glad
— John Greenleaf Whittier**