

FIRST *Connections*

The Monthly Magazine of Nashville First Baptist Church



December 2018



Frank and to the Point

Dr. Frank R. Lewis, senior pastor

Dear Church,

Let's make December 2018 Discernment Month.

Wouldn't that be a switch! With nearly 100 things to do this month including Christmas parties, shopping, decorating, traveling, squeezing in special times of worship, volunteering for special events at church, who has time to stop long enough to hear the whisper of God—let alone discern what His will is for yourself, and for those in your community of faith? Well, that's exactly what I'm encouraging you to do. This December, I'm inviting you to participate in a dedicated time of prayer for discernment.

In the book *Spread the Word: 12 Christian Leaders on Church Growth*, David Platt, former International Mission Board president and current senior pastor of McClain Bible Church, shares about discerning God's will. Many Western Christians worry about how to discern God's will for their lives. Platt points to a simple answer: obedience.

"While the Bible doesn't give us specific direction when it comes to who to marry or where to go to college, when we're walking in obedience to His revealed will, He will be faithful to lead. He wants His will to be accomplished in our lives, and He has given us His Word and His Spirit to guide us and to lead us. Instead we can ask, 'Lord, how can I most effectively make disciples of all nations today?' That's a prayer God has promised to answer. When we're praying that, and we're abiding in His Word, we don't have to wonder at the end of the day if we've found God's will—we're already walking in it."

When I am facing a decision in my life, there are a few things I try to do.

1) Be still and know that He is God. (Psalm 46) When the way is unclear, I have discovered that it is more beneficial to use the time of uncertainty to lean deeper into worship. By affirming the things I know to be true about God, God generally gives guidance and direction.

2) Pray God's Word. You never pray outside God's will when you pray God's Word. The Psalms help by providing words when my words are hard to form. That's also true of Paul's prayers to the churches. (Ephesians 1 is a good example.)

3) Do the things I already know are God's will. Gather with God's people in worship. Tithe. Witness to others who don't know Christ. Dig deeper into personal Bible study. Confess and turn from sin. Reconcile with a brother or sister in Christ. I think this is what David Platt is referring to when he says to practice obedience. I've discovered that God has no obligation whatsoever to give me discernment or direction if I have ignored the direction He has already provided in other areas of my life. Obedience is never optional for the Christ-follower.

As I preach our December sermon series on the *Whispers of Christ the Lord* in the Old Testament, I cannot think of a more important spiritual practice than for our congregation to develop a heightened sensitivity to the will of God with all of the challenges that lie ahead of us in 2019. Such a commitment will cultivate an atmosphere where Spiritual Awakening may take place. And why wouldn't it? God's people practicing obedience, getting into the Word, spending time on our knees, learning to wait on God to move—it could make for the best December ever!

Blessings on you this month as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!



Join Us for Advent!

Christmas at First

Sunday, December 2 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

Bring your friends and family as we experience *Christmas at First* on Sunday, December 2, featuring our Children's, Youth, and Sanctuary Choirs along with the Sanctuary Orchestra. Glorious music of the season will be employed to powerfully convey that Jesus has come to save the world. Warm your heart with the wonder of Christmas as we celebrate *Christmas at First!*

Christmas with Denver and the Mile High Orchestra

Sunday, December 9 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

Celebrate a joyous night of Christmas worship and praise as we welcome Denver and the Mile High Orchestra to Nashville First Baptist Church, Sunday, December 9. This Dove Award winning instrumental ensemble blends the unique sounds of jazz, big band, pop, and Latin stylings to share the Hope of Christ with the world. Denver and the Mile High Orchestra wowed all of America, as they made the finale of the FOX-TV "American Idol" spin-off, "The Next Great American Band." They have garnered spirited audience accolades from Greece to Hollywood, having played the Summer Olympics in Athens, and the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Their 12 albums have provided comfort, joy, and inspiration to delighted listeners of all ages, worldwide. Join us for an extraordinary evening of worship, praise, fun, and celebration featuring music of the season with Denver and the Mile High Orchestra.

Carol-Candlelight Celebration

Sunday, December 16 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

The Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra will present a *Carol-Candlelight Celebration* on Sunday, December 16. They will share majestic music of the season which will draw you afresh to the manger as we worship together the Christ of Christmas. Exquisite arrangements of familiar carols, along with extraordinary holiday classics, such as "Star Carol," "In the Bleak Midwinter," "Sussex Carol," and "O Come, Emmanuel" will thrill your heart with the joyous sounds of Christmas.

*Please use these Ministry through Music events as evangelistic/ outreach opportunities by inviting your family, friends, neighbors, and associates to worship our Savior, Jesus Christ!
Joy to the World! The Lord is come!*

December Staff Anniversaries

1: Shannon Meadors (2009) – 9 years

Welcome to Our New Members!

Jonathan Higdon (*not pictured*)

We Make It Easy to Give

For your ease, whether in town or out of town, you can contribute to the Lord's Work through Nashville First Baptist Church:

- Give online with your smart phone: NashvilleFirst.org.
- Schedule an electronic contribution as frequently as you like using bank draft.
- Mail a check, or place it in your Bible study or worship offering.
- Contribute cash in your own sealed envelope.



On the Cover

Cameron Dodd is Joseph and Lauren and Bentley Lewis are Mary and Baby Jesus in the 2017 Nashville Christmas Parade.

Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24

5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

8:00 p.m. | Chapel

Join us at Nashville First Baptist for our Christmas Eve Worship Services—Carols, Candles, and Communion. The 5:00 p.m. service features soloists and great carols of the season. The 8:00 p.m. service features music of the season with a contemporary flair. Bring your family and friends for these special times of worship designed to draw us closer to the Christ of Christmas.

Who Is Leading Our Students?

by Hallie Caddy



Some of our most formative years are seen as the teen years. We discover exactly who we are, and what we want to represent to the world. Hence, we need guidance, understanding, and role models who not only define what it means to be a Christian citizen of the world, but who will serve as forgiving role models, demonstrating the truth of life and the grace of a loving Savior. Morgan Smith at Nashville First Baptist is one such role model; she has chosen to direct her heart of servitude toward the care and upbringing of ninth and tenth grade girls.

A long-time Tennessean, Morgan and her then soon-to-be husband Nathan joined First Baptist in 2016 in response to what they felt was God's calling on their lives. Even as a fulltime nurse, Morgan knows it's important to take the time to share her love, giving to her church community. She has prioritized the time she spends with the girls, fitting it into her understandably full schedule. However, Morgan approaches her time of service with humility, supporting the entire Youth Department and its amazing leaders. She has an energetic desire to give back. "As a leader, I believe I have an important role in guiding these girls. I pray that they feel the love of Christ, and the love from AP [Anne Peyton Baker], Kat [Hedden], myself, and others around them on a daily basis. I feel like it's important for me to realize that my actions are in the spotlight, and I hope I have been and continue to be a good example for them. I also hope they know our small group is a safe place to grow, share, and learn with each other," she immediately notes.



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– Morgan Smith

As for the girls themselves, Morgan relishes her time with them, admitting that her favorite part of community with this age group is “Their energy for sure! It’s so nice to have a set time each week for me to step back and listen to what’s going on in their lives. From hearing about their upcoming tests, to the next band practice or soccer game—it’s all so entertaining and takes me back to my own high school days.”

Morgan recognizes the challenges this age group is facing, as they try to navigate the uncharted waters of high school life. She helps these students recognize that Christ intentionally plants people in their lives to help them in their spiritual and secular journeys. This understanding is vital at any age, but especially when you are just figuring out how to make the right choices to bridge those worlds. Morgan wants them to know: “It’s okay to make mistakes. Christ loves us the same as He did yesterday, today, and tomorrow. I want them to know they don’t have to prove themselves to Christ, or others, for that matter. I want them to value themselves and love themselves for who they are. I want them to ultimately choose to live their lives out by serving Christ and choosing Him first.” With the love of Christ shining through her heart and actions, there is no question that the Youth of Nashville First Baptist are in wonderful and capable hands.

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High School Girls Small Group Leaders

9th and 10th Grade Girls

Anne Peyton Baker
Kat Hedden
Morgan Smith

11th and 12th Grade Girls

Natalie Owen
Becca Wildsmith
Sarah Wilkinson

Sweet Sleep Volunteers Win Award

NFBC members, Sam Talley and Frank Leebern, were awarded the Sweet Sleep Madeline Metcalf Volunteer of the Year award at the Night of a Thousand Dreams dinner. The men planned, organized, cut lumber, and directed construction of many beds for local formerly homeless children. Congratulations to Sam and Frank!



Lend a Helping Hand: Sunday Night Hosts Needed

Once again, we are hosting Room in the Inn. If your department or class has not yet signed up to host, please contact Lauryn Moody at Laurynbmoody@gmail.com to choose a Sunday night. This ministry runs through March, so many helping hands are needed!



CDC: Safety First

Metro Nashville Police recently instructed our Child Development Center kids on safety.

The Christmas Post Office
December 2 – January 6 | Sanctuary Foyer

Throughout December, church members can send Christmas cards to each other through the Royal Ambassador's Christmas Post Office. It's easy! Just place the cards you want to send in the "mailbox" along with your donation to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. The RAs suggest that you donate the amount you would have spent on postage to this important mission offering. Our RA boys and leaders will sort the cards by last name for pick-up. Please stop by the post office each Sunday to check the mailbox. Even if you do not choose to send cards through the RA Post Office, cards may be sent to you!

Country Christmas Brunch
Friday, December 7 | 10:00 a.m. | Room 150 | \$8

Plan to join us as we begin the holiday season, with Christmas songs shared by Sam Sanders and Lisa Spencer. We will enjoy a special time of storytelling by Dr. Lena Watkins, a friend and colleague of Dr. Greg Patterson. Our meal will be prepared by Angie Poore, food service director, and her team. The menu: eggs, bacon, hash brown casserole, grits, gravy, fruit, juice, and coffee.



Christmas at First
Sunday, December 2 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

Christmas with Denver and the Mile High Orchestra
Sunday, December 9 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary



CHRISTMAS WITH DENVER & THE MILE HIGH ORCHESTRA!
Sunday, December 9 • 5:00 p.m.
blending jazz, big band, and pop stylings to share the Hope of Christ
Nashville First Baptist Church
615.664.6000 • NashvilleFirst.org

TubaChristmas
Tuesday, December 11
11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. | Sanctuary

For the 32nd year in Nashville, there will be more than 100 tubas playing Christmas carols! Admission and parking are free. Both performances are 45 minutes. Spend your lunch hour with us, and sing along!



Carol-Candlelight Celebration
Sunday, December 16
5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

Business Meeting
Wednesday, December 19 | 6:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall

Christmas Eve Services
Monday, December 24
5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary
8:00 p.m. | Chapel

Church Offices Closed
Monday, December 24
Tuesday, December 25

Silent Week
December 26
No Evening Activities



GAs Serve for Lottie Moon
December 12
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

On Wednesday night, December 12, our girls in Grades 1 – 6 will serve during Midweek Dinner. All tips they receive for bussing tables and refilling glasses will go to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. Please help them reach their goal of \$400!

First Kids Cookies & Caroling
December 19 | 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Preschool 4 – Grade 6
Room 150

Prekinders to preteens are invited to join Mrs. Shannon and their First Kids leaders for a sweet night on mission! Make sure to wear your most festive attire because we're hitting the road to spread some Christmas cheer! Contact: Shannon Meadors, Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org

Stay Connected To Your Church!

 [Facebook.com/FirstBaptistNashville](https://www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistNashville)

 [Twitter.com/FBCNashville](https://twitter.com/FBCNashville)

 [Instagram.com/NashvilleFirst](https://www.instagram.com/NashvilleFirst)

 [Flickr.com/FirstBaptistNashville](https://www.flickr.com/FirstBaptistNashville)



NASHVILLE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

108 SEVENTH AVE SOUTH
NASHVILLE, TN 37203

Imagine if your kids NEVER KNEW DEBT!

Register before and after worship in December.



momentum

Registration Begins Nov. 25
Classes begin in January

Imagine if your kids

NEVER KNEW DEBT.

Like Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, MOMENTUM can help you take control of your money, plan for your future, and transform your life.

Plan now! Classes run January 6 – March 10, Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. If it's more convenient, or you need a make-up class, MOMENTUM will also meet Wednesday evenings at 5:45 p.m.

Go to NashvilleFirst.org/Momentum for more information.

Contact:

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