



The Baptist Bulletin

December 2019

The Cost of Christmas

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Jim Flesch—Dec 31

surgery

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According to a Gallop study of 2018, American adults planned to spend \$885.00 per person for Christmas. When lined up with the U.S. Census Bureau's study that showed the average American family of 2018 consisted of 3.17 people, the cost for immediate family members in the average household for Christmas would have been \$2,805.45. According to Sentier Research the average American household of 2018 brought in \$5,181.25 per month. The cost of \$2,805.45 per family does not include gifts for others, food, decorations, and the time spend doing all of this shopping. Christmas has a heavy financial cost. Let's be honest, it is easy to get lost in the shopping, trying to find the perfect gift for each person, and attempting to make everyone in the family happy.

But the financial cost was never the intent of Christmas. Christmas trees beautifully decorated, lights precisely hung, and gifts wrapped in beautiful paper were also never the purpose of Jesus coming to this world. Each of the Gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) and the Apostle Paul explain clearly why Jesus came to earth. Reading each account paints a beautiful picture. For the brevity of this article's sake, let's look at the most well-known verse in the Bible. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16, ESV). Jesus came to earth to save those who willingly trust that He is the Savior of this world.

The wreaths, trees, decorations, gifts, and yard displays are nice, but they are not the Gospel. Christmas is about Jesus coming to this world to live the life that we cannot live, to die the death that we deserve to die, to redeem us and restore us to a right and good relationship with our Father in heaven. The Gospel is the hope, purpose, and point of Christmas.

As we celebrate Christmas this year, let's focus on the Gospel. Each gift we give, each decoration we hang, each gathering we go to, let the Gospel reign as the heart of Christmas. For the true cost of Christmas was the life of our Messiah, Jesus Christ. A life that He willingly, purposefully gave in our stead. That is a cost we cannot pay for on our own or ever repay. That is the true gift of Christmas.

Missionaries of the Month—Doug & Stephanie Lewis

Dear Friends at First Baptist Church:

Greetings from Banyo Cameroon. We live on the outskirts of a town of about 40,000 people. We are close enough to hear the call to prayer from the loudspeakers on the mosques in town, which start each day just before 5 AM. We are back from a trip seven hours to the west of here where we visited many neighbors from Takui. The people we visited have all been displaced by the unrest in the Takui area, some lost everything but the clothes on their backs. It was an emotional trip seeing our friends again, and them telling us their stories. Pray for them as they live in town and cities - in places they never imagined they would be. Pray that the Gospel will do it's work in their lives.

It is dry season now, and cattle are on the move to lower elevations and places where there is more grass as the grass here dries up. It is a time of dust, sun, and hunger for animals that survive on forage. Pray for good relationships with animal owners in this area, and others involved in animal health.



Thanks for your prayers, support, and encouragement. Merry Christmas to all of you from Cameroon!

Christmas Care for the Persecuted - FBC Mission Project

Discriminated against, denied education, and sometimes even separated from their parents, children are often the most defenseless victims of Christian persecution.

VOM Australia's Christmas Care project will ensure many children in restricted nations will receive a gift this Christmas.

Each child will receive a children's Bible, school supplies and other items, tailored to their specific country.

The Mission Commission is offering you the opportunity to participate in sponsoring these backpacks the year . **A special offering will be received on Sunday, December 8th.** If you want to contribute to the project, please make your checks payable to FBC and put Mission Project in the memo. \$30 purchases one backpack.



Birthdays ~ ~ ~

- Dec 15 Amy Fleer
- Dec 19 Marla Fattig
- Dec 19 Kim Crisman
- Dec 20 Jody Nelson
- Dec 23 Phila Young
- Dec 26 Leon Vogel
- Dec 27 Clayton Sitorius

Anniversaries ~ ~ ~

- Harvey & Betty Wing Dec 17
- Clayton & Karen Sitorius Dec 28

Financial Report ~ ~ ~

Budget for the Year: \$139,156.96
 Fiscal Year ended 2/28/20
 Offerings Received for 9 months:
 \$103,514.25
 Expenditures Paid for 9 months:
 \$ 86,194.53

Nursery ~ ~ ~

- Dec 1 Jenelle Larson & Elijah Urman
- Dec 8 Joyce Sabin & Isaiah Urman
- Dec 15 Marsha Weeks & Hallie Miller
- Dec 22 Alisa & Rebecca Crown
- Dec 29 Cor Peterson & Elijah Urman

Volunteers are needed—contact the church office.

Greeters ~ ~ ~

- Dec 1 North: Jim Flesch
South: Joyce Sabin
- Dec 8 North: Marsha Weeks
South: Virginia Hudson
- Dec 15 North: Karen Conley & Jenelle Larson
South: Doris Nelson
- Dec 22 North: Harvey Wing
South: Willard & Marjorie Kuhlman
- Dec 29 North: Clayton & Karen Sitorius
South: Leon Vogel

Volunteers are needed—contact the church office.



All Church Caroling December 15th

FBC is responsible for the nursing home services on this date, so our first stop to carol is Hilltop Estates at 3:30 p.m. followed by Stone Hearth at 4:15 p.m. We will then proceed to the homes of our shut-ins and serenade them with our carols before heading to the church for the rest of the evening's festivities.

**Soup Supper / Gift Exchange
 December 15th—5:30 p.m.**

Bring a pot of soup, a plate of sandwiches or some holiday treats to share together following the caroling.

After we eat the adults will enjoy our traditional gift exchange game.

Bring a \$5 wrapped gift to join in the fun.

Don't let needing a ride keep you away, we will gladly come get you!





1002 Ave C
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MONTHLY SCHEDULE

- Dec 1 Christian Ed meeting—12:10 pm
- Dec 3 Management Finance - 7:00 pm
- Dec 5 Women's Council—1:30 pm
- Dec 5 Women's Christmas Party—6:30
- Dec 10 Elder Board—7 pm
- Dec 15 Nursing Homes/Caroling—3:30
- Dec 15 Soup Supper / Adult Party—5:30
- Dec 22 Children's Program - morning
- Dec 24 Candlelight Service—5:30 pm

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

- Monday Ladies Bible Studies
6:00 pm (Through Dec 16)
- Tuesday **9:30 am** MOPS (1st & 3rd Tues.)
1:00 pm Moms in Prayer
- Wednesday **6:30 pm** Awana Sparks
- Thursday **6:00 am** Men's Breakfast Study
(Comfort Suites)

Women's Christmas Party—Thursday, Dec 5th at 6:30 p.m.



Invite your friends to join us for an evening of fun, food and a Christmas devotional. Sign up by Dec. 1st, with guests names too. Need a ride? Contact Marsha at 529-1105 or Kim at 529-2418

Sock Exchange: Buy a pair of garishly colored/patterned socks and stuff them with an assortment of small items/treats. Tie them together with a bow and bring to the party!

