

Happy
New Year

God's Country Tidings

Blackwater Baptist Church

www.blackwaterbaptist.org

January 2008

WINTER FEST 2008

There is no time of the year like the middle of February! What is often the coldest dreariest time of the winter won't be in 2008! Make plans to come and join us at 6:30 p.m., February 10-13 for great music and preaching. Music will include the guitar styling of Ronnie Jones, the blue grass gospels sounds of the Fentress Creek Band, the Chowan University Choir, and the upbeat praises of the Inspiration Brothers. Make plans to attend and bring your friends with you.

Don't miss this!

In Christ,

Pastor Greg

January: a Time of Commitment

January is a month of recommitment or resolution, a time for setting personal goals and objectives in the new year. Why not make a commitment to attend **Sunday School** this Sunday? Come on out! There's a class for everyone.

Are you a regular? Then you're encouraged to bring a new visitor.

Sunday School: It Really Is a Wonderful Life

Written by Keith Wilkinson

Every Christmas season, thousands of people watch once again the nostalgic movie "It's a Wonderful Life." The hero, George Bailey, faces economic ruin in a depression-era scene. Frustrated, George attempts suicide in an icy river. He is rescued by an angel who is trying to earn his wings. The angel takes George through the community to see what life in Bedford Falls would have been like had George never been born. What if, throughout history, there had been no Sunday School? What might have been the results? What if, right now, your church had no Bible study ministry? Would anyone miss it?

Just for fun (and perhaps in some seriousness), take a journey through your own Bedford Falls. See what might have happened had there been no Sunday School. Like George, you may be surprised at

the differences your life and ministry has made and is making in the lives of people.

My Personal Journey

My Bedford Falls is a small rural church that was started in a schoolhouse many years ago. Had there been no Sunday School, my church would never have been started in the first place. Without Sunday School there might have been no organized visitation effort to get my family and our neighbors enrolled and involved.

It is possible that no one would have invited my parents and my brothers and sisters to Bible study. Without Sunday School, I might not have learned about God or begun my journey with Him through Jesus Christ.

If my personal journey is typical, then we can celebrate that many people first learn about and begin their journey of faith because of Sunday School ministry.

Purpose

Continuing in our stops along this journey, it's possible to assume that without Sunday School the purpose of any church's ministry might be limited. Without evangelistic Bible study as the primary reason for having small groups, classes might evolve into groups that have no purpose. Soon such classes might substitute other things for a study of God's Word. They might become like social

clubs, or easily follow the whims of the most current religious fad. Organization and Fellowship Without Sunday School, there might have been no organizational stackpole around which to provide educational ministries in the church. Would members meet in one large group for worship and Bible study? Would we feel increasingly disconnected because we have no small group in which to express care for one another and have fellowship together?

If there were no Sunday School, would we struggle with our identity within the church? There might not be age-appropriate studies for preschoolers or children. Youth would have little group identity, making it even more difficult to keep teens involved in church. Adults would miss bonding with people they need and who have similar needs.

Life-Changing Bible Study

Without Sunday School, there might have been far less life-changing Bible study. Without small-group interaction, people might have been deprived of Bible study that relates to their unique needs. They would miss the opportunity to participate, to comment, to ask questions, and to share experiences and life needs; without these experiences, would Bible study have as much impact? There might have been no organized, systematic Bible study that ensures a good foundation for childhood and new believers, no plan to cover all sections of God's Word. Members would have missed the benefit of a balanced

curriculum of study that gives opportunity to explore the Old and New Testaments and that focuses uniquely on the life and ministry of Jesus.

Discipleship and Growth

Without Sunday School, where would discipleship growth be? New believers would not be able to connect regularly with a small group of believers for encouragement and spiritual development.

Had there been no Sunday School, I know I could not have grown as a believer. I would have missed that special Sunday School teacher in college; that construction worker/teacher who taught and modeled for me what it means to follow Christ; and the fellow Sunday School member who showed me what it means to minister to human need. Who would you have missed knowing had there been no Sunday School in your personal history?

Ministry

Where would caring ministry be without Sunday School? When we face life's crises, who would be there to minister and care for us? While writing this article, I was reminded yet again of that dimension of Sunday School ministry. My men's Bible study class met for breakfast at a nearby restaurant. It provided an opportunity for us to encourage one of our members whose wife had recently died of cancer. We provided time for him to talk about his experience. We gave him some books to read.

Local and Global Outreach

Without Sunday School, local and

global outreach would suffer.

Through Sunday School visitation teams, women and men are visiting neighbors and meeting people who live in the community. Through mission teams Sunday School members reach around the world. Through travel and the Internet, members of today's Bible study groups are connecting worldwide.

Accountability

Think of Sunday School in terms of accountability. Without it we would lack a good mechanism to keep up with one another and to encourage one another to good works (see Heb. 10:24).

Do I matter to anyone? some people wonder. In functioning Bible study groups everyone matters. We express interest and support in times of crises. We celebrate together ordinary experiences of daily life.

Without a Bible study group, who would go with me on my spiritual journey? Who would call to ask, "How are you doing?" Who would be concerned about how things are going for me in my work and personal life?

Does Sunday School Make a Difference?

Like George Bailey when he regained his senses and saw Bedford Falls in a new light, I feel exuberant about today's Sunday School. Sunday School really is a wonderful life and ministry with which to be involved!

Keith Wilkinson is retired State Sunday School Director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

WINTERFEST 2008

FEBRUARY 10-13

6:30 pm

LIVE MUSIC EVERY NIGHT:

Feb 10 - Ronnie Jones

Feb 11 - Fentress Creek Band

Feb 12 - Chowan University Choir

Feb 13 - Inspiration Brothers

**MUSIC BEGINS at
6:30 pm NIGHTLY**

**FEATURING
PASTOR RICKY BISHOP
of EDENTON, NC**

**BLACKWATER BAPTIST CHURCH
BLACKWATERBAPTIST.ORG**

Congratulations Graduates

Jena Leigh Williams:

Bachelor's Degree
Old Dominion University

Andrea Dale Scott:

Bachelor's Degree
Old Dominion University

Ashley Kovacs Boyett:

Master's Degree
Averett University



SBCV & VBMB

Make plans to come out and meet representatives from the two Baptist state conventions. Hear and learn what each state convention believes and represents and how they utilize the offerings entrusted to them to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Eddie Heath of the Virginia Baptist Missions Board plans to be here Sunday, February 24th at 6:30 pm with an inclement weather back up date of March 2. Don Cokes of the Southern Baptist Convention of



www.sbcv.org



www.vbmb.org

Virginia will be here Sunday, March 9th or 16th at 6:30 pm. Both gentlemen will share what each state convention is doing and answer any questions you might have. Watch the bulletin and our website for more information.

With Sympathy

Our condolences to the family and friends of Leroy Jensen who passed away in December.

Centennial Jenny McClain Circle

Our December meeting was held at the home of Irene Frost with five members present. The meeting included a delicious dessert and exchanging of gifts.

In December, we supported the Christmas boxes for Operation Christmas Child, made a donation to the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, and sent cards and food to shut-ins.

Our next meeting will be January 8th at the home of Chrystal Frost. New members are welcome!



Next Business Meeting

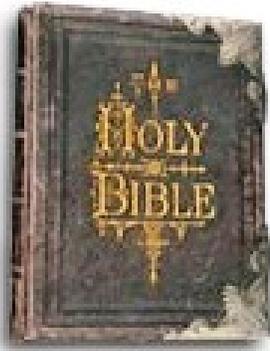
Jan 27, 2008
Fellowship meal @ 6 pm
Meeting @ 6:30 pm

The JOURNEY A MISSION TRIP OPPORTUNITY IS COMING! ARE YOU READY?

Acts 1:8, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere (NLT)



SUPER BOWL SUNDAY SCHOOL

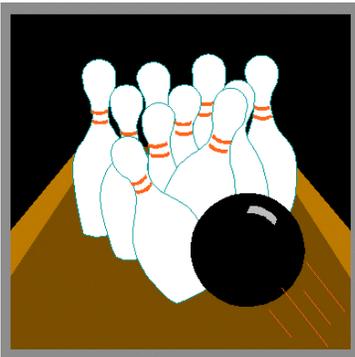


COMING FEBRUARY 3RD.

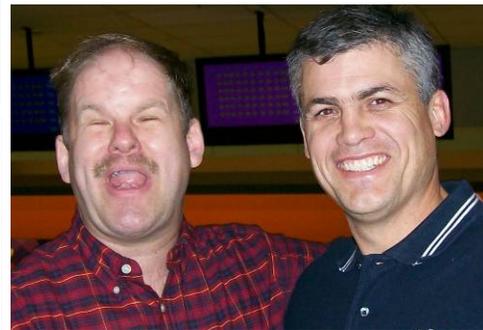
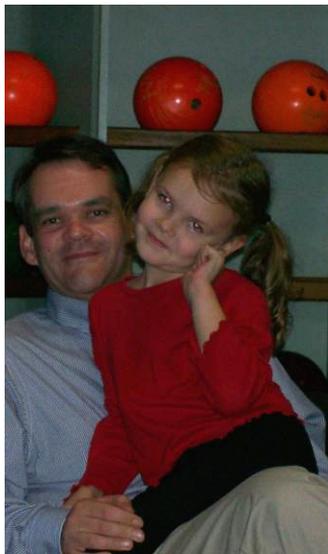
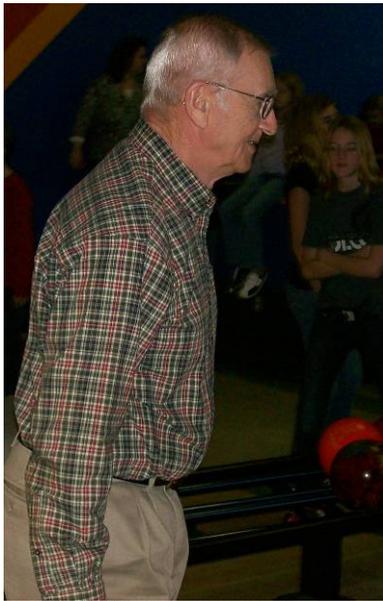
**ARE YOU READY TO ELEVATE
YOUR GAME?**

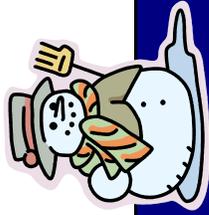
**Watch for upcoming
dates for the
following activities**





We had a ball at our recent bowling outing!





January 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Pete Dozier Ella Silverthorne Greg & Gaye Hammer	2 Lana Murphy Natalie Carey Nathaniel Carey	3 Shane Horsley	4	5 Laura Tebault
6 Services: 8:45 & 11 am Sunday School: 10 am	7	8 Parker Hammer Judy Scott	9 Praise Team, 7 pm	10 Austin & Alice Savage Archie & Ella Silverthorne	11	12
13 Services: 8:45 & 11 am Sunday School: 10 am Sunday School Teacher's Mtg & Training Session: 6:30 pm	14 Lindsey Frazier	15 Richard & Connie Dailey	16 Praise Team, 7 pm	17 Jean Siebert	18 Susan Parsons Cathy Sales	19 Fred Barcroft Ralph Frost Joan Hoening Suzanne Whitehurst
20 Services: 8:45 & 11 am Sunday School: 10 am	21 Royce & Nancy Leary	22 Earl Walker	23 Praise Team, 7 pm Diane Horsley Ronnie Parsons Joyce Sherman Randolph Whitehurst	24	25	26
27 Services: 8:45 & 11 am Sunday School: 10 am Business Meeting: fellowship meal @ 6 pm, meeting @ 6:30 pm NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE Gary & Susan (Highsmith) Barbee	28 Billy Shirley	29	30 Praise Team, 7 pm	31 John Swan		Upcoming Dates: February 10-13: WinterFest 2008

**IDENTIFICATION
STATEMENT**

**God's Country Tidings
Newsletter**

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www.blackwaterbaptist.org

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Blackwater Baptist Church

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Blackwater Baptist Church
6000 Blackwater Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23457