

Blackwater Baptist Church

2020 - A Year Like No Other!

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As We Move Forward...



I am so very pleased with how you have patiently endured and remained faithful over the past fourteen months of COVID. Together, we adjusted as quickly as necessary to stay within the guidelines of the medical community and

the state government. The parking lot worship, Facebook live streaming, regathering in the sanctuary with social distancing and masks; you folks took it well and we heard very few complaints. Thank you!

Now we enter a fresh, new phase for Blackwater Baptist Church. We are close to calling a Youth Director who will bring great enthusiasm and direction to our teens and children ministries. Our worship service will be a little different with offering boxes at the doors rather than plates passed between us. Communion, for now, will be celebrated each month with the sealed packages we have grown accustomed to using during the COVID months. We are making some minor improvements to our worship music to engage our spirits with God more intimately.

Above all, we are determined to acknowledge and celebrate God's work among us and to seek His will in each of our business meetings. He has brought us through this time of trial, and we will honor Him by giving glory to His wonderful name.

Thank you. And let's pray for His favor as we move forward!

January

- We were just finishing group photos for a new church directory.
- Our little Mission Friends were busy learning about Jesus.
- The Souper Bowl Bible Trivia contest was a super fun time of fierce competition between the Sunday School classes.



February

- Gift cards and goodies were shared with the staff of Creeds Elementary School. The many thank you cards BBC received are still on the bulletin board since hardly anyone saw them!
- Our winter Blood Drive was held on February 26.



March

- By March 5 we thought we might be in trouble. Ashley Boyett posted "Worship While You Wash" for inspiration.



- Then we had to cancel...



- March 15 was declared a National Day of Prayer and we started praying for all the first responders as the world began shutting down.



At that time Pastor Lynn became a video personality and we eagerly awaited his weekly messages of hope and Jesus' love.

We want to thank the sound guys Rob & Kevin, for keeping our worship service sound going!

- It was strange to see our lovely sanctuary empty of our church family on Sunday mornings!
- Because we couldn't meet in person the BBC Facebook group began on March 18 so we could keep in touch easier.



April

- By April 4, the governor was encouraging drive-in services. We started holding outdoor services on Easter Sunday with the Praise Team singing "Sweetly Broken" from the back of a trailer parked at the front door. The sound



was off, the wind was a-blowing, but God was being glorified! There were a lot of cars parked in rows on both sides of the church listening through their car radios as well as on Facebook.

- Remember the Bike project sponsored by the Bridge Network? They were going to be donated to the police to



give to children in disadvantaged neighborhoods. We were in the midst of collecting when everything shut down. BBC had a lot of donated bikes and helmets from our generous people, but by April everything was on hold. The Creamers stored 20 bicycles until donation in October!

- In mid-April, the new home-grown church directories were emailed, and snail mailed to everyone. No one had anticipated this delay and apparently, there would be no going back to church for a long time to come!

May

- Pastor Lynn kept preaching from indoors. On Mother's Day we had another outdoor service from the back of Craig's trailer.
- By the end of May services moved to the south

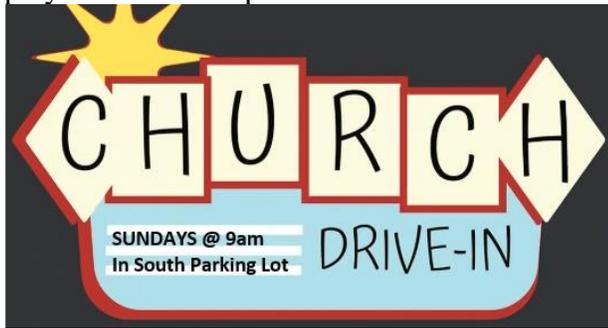


parking lot. Rob & Kevin started out with a few



technical items to get our sound, but eventually moved the entire sound system –microphones, the sound boards, music stands, wires and plugs, the

keyboard, and furniture from the sanctuary to the Youth Hall. What a job! On most Sundays you'd find Rob, Kevin, Pastor Lynn, Linda, Hollie, and Laurie at church way before worship started to prepare everything. Mike was a great help and Emma was always on point with her cellphone, making the live-stream video show up on Facebook. This "team" began saying a prayer right before worship for things to go according to God's plan and for His glory. They still gather to pray before worship each week!



receiving much applause, they heard the honks of car horns by parking lot attendees and were even saluted by siren blasts from the fire station.

July

- By now the Praise Team was used to singing curbside in the parking lot!



- Annual volunteer forms for the impending new church year were given out. Much thanks to everyone who said they'd take on a job. We are one blessed church!
- Pastor Lynn's pulpit was now located at the side porch with an umbrella to keep the sun at bay. Just about every Sunday was Casual Sunday!



August

- The weather kept getting hotter. Folks still met in the parking lot at 9:00am to visit distantly with neighbors and hear of weekly events. They walked around before and after service, chatting through car windows with those who stayed put. Things actually took on a festive air as they made the best of things. They enjoyed hearing a song and receiving God's word. God's people will still worship Him, no matter what the circumstances! It was rather nice to worship outside and hear the songbirds singing at the same time!
- On August 16 we had an indoor business meeting with masks on and social distancing. There were just enough people attending for a quorum vote for the new year! For many it was the first time they had been in our beautiful church in five months! It felt good to be there. For the first time, the meeting was also available via Zoom.

June

- On June 14 under God's blue sky, we celebrated our graduates: Brooklyn Cortazzo, Christen Davis, Eryn Graves, Emma Hardaway, Trey Howley, and Paige Riddle. They proudly marched



forward in their caps and gowns and shared how the people of BBC had influenced their lives. They let us in on their plans for the future. BBC was (and is) so proud of them! In addition to



- In late August, the BBC Prayer Warriors group started on Facebook. The five members have had lots of prayer requests during 2020. (Anyone with a heart to pray is invited to join)!



September

- The new church year began with little fanfare. Folks had volunteered for jobs like always, but little could be done by until the church reopened. That's not to say that the Church Council and Deacons were slack in their duties. They met virtually through Zoom meetings to discuss the life of the church, keeping abreast of state Covid orders, planning when and how to reopen, as well as preparing plans to hire a Youth Director as soon as possible once church was open. Thank you to Pastor Lynn, Don Arth, Doug & Ashley Boyett, Craig & Susan Creamer, Linda Jordan, Kevin Rowell, Jeremy & Hollie Schratwieser, and Curtis Shirley for continuing to work so hard behind the scenes!

- BBC members were blessed to participate in Communion again for the first time in many months. Prior to the service individual



containers of packaged bread and juice were passed out to those in cars and those indoors. These little cups were sometimes a challenge but oh, what a heart-felt moment it was to have Communion again!

- On September 13 we had a good old-fashioned Baptism in the parking lot. We watched as Genevieve and Ann were dunked in an extra-large tub of (according to Pastor Lynn at the time) very cold water. It was a wonderful moment in our church history!



October

- As the weather got colder the parking lot stayed full. Pastor Lynn's pulpit moved into the youth hall.
- Missions continued despite Covid and Christmas backpacks were collected. Not knowing what result to



expect BBC surprised itself once again with 17 backpacks. Ashley and the boys delivered them to the collection point.

- We had wanted to have the outdoor Trunk or Treat even though the Festival part was cancelled. It just didn't pan out. T-or-T was cancelled because of bad weather.

November

- BBC finally opened the doors again for a Thanksgiving service! Every other pew was blocked off with pretty red ribbons and everyone had to wear a mask and no hugs, but at last it was open! Singing was not allowed in the congregation but there was a lot of humming!

December

- Sadly, there were none of the usual Christmas events. No Christmas card mail or poinsettia orders. No kids' play or parties. The church was sparse of congregants as Pastor Lynn brought us his message "*God Always Keeps His Promises*" on the Sunday before Christmas. Many folks were listening in their cars or watching online.
- BBC has reached twice as many people than usual by being online this year.



- BBC was beautifully decorated for the Christmas holiday by the Schratwieser family. Thank you so much! It was a great way to end a chaotic year!



Our 2020 Visiting Ministers:

- Rev. Tom Thomasson
- Phillip Wyman
- Rev. Mark Custalow
- Rev. Paul Martin
- Dr. David Wallace
- Dr. Sandy Martin
- Rev. Joe Newman
- Rev. Kevin Newman

2020 New Church Members:

- Dick Golladay
- Jackie Golladay
- Genevieve Cortazzo
- Ann Kennedy

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2020 Condolences to

- James & Susie Kovacs for the loss of her father in February.
- Randy & Lynne Dozier for the loss of her uncle in October.
- Angela Gregory for the loss of her husband in October.
- Doug & Ashley Boyett for the loss of his grandmother in December.
- Kevin & Lynn Rowell for the loss of his father in December.

Heavenly Graduates

- Joe Loan – passed February 18, 2020
- Billy Hoenig – passed June 3, 2020
- Ruth Gregory – passed September 12, 2020
- Gary Gregory – passed October 26, 2020

Things in The Works:

- The Red Cross Blood Mobile will come to BBC on June 23 from 2:00-7:00pm.
- A picnic to celebrate mask-free/distance-free worship again!
- Work on a new sign in front of the church should start soon.
- Vacation Bible School will soon be able to open!
- Volunteer forms will be out in July ahead of our August annual business meeting.
- The process has finally begun to find a new Youth Director!



Shout out to Craig Creamer's for his continued dedication to work behind the scenes during the past year, including maintenance of an exceptionally large empty building, helping with weekly sound equipment set up, donating his trailer for early services, and procuring the baptism tank. Thanks for keeping BBC looking great too!

Your Deacons

(A – D)	Don Arth	757-421-0620
(E – J)	Craig Creamer (Chm)	757-777-6434
(K – O)	Kevin Rowell	757-416-4537
(P – Sg)	Jeremy Schratwieser	252-435-2605
(Sh – Z)	Curtis Shirley	757-620-1556

We've been through a lot together, but we stuck together, no matter what. That's what families do! Isn't it wonderful to be part of this Family of God?

I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God,
 I've been washed in the fountain,
 cleansed by His blood!
 Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
 For I'm part of the family,
 The Family of God

***More People Following Jesus
 Together in His Love***