

NATIVITY NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2017



Pastor's Ponderings

I am shocked and dismayed by recent events that have taken place in American society. In my lifetime at least, I've never witnessed the ease with which people become so aggressive with their worldview. Certainly, differences have always been present but so has a measure of self-restraint and common decency. Unfortunately, respecting the basic humanity of others is becoming increasingly rare. Blaming the current or past political administration seems a bit too convenient. After all, those people didn't elect themselves. The media bear much responsibility for what we see and hear but it's simplistic to place all the blame on them. For the most part, they simply report what is happening. Something deeper is going on in our society but to understand it we need some historical context that began with the Enlightenment. The Modern period produced marvelous advances for western society. Our world has truly never been the same and I mean that in a good way. This progress, however, came with a cost. Humans often placed ultimate confidence in their abilities to solve all the world's problems. No need for God as truth was easily discoverable by observation and experimentation. Society shaping worldviews were built upon the supremacy of human ability with Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia serving as the two most notorious examples of Enlightenment thinking run amuck. In reaction, people began to radically question all claims of absolute truth in an effort to avoid the mistakes of the past. Suspicion of any person or group claiming absolute truth became the norm. Consequently, legitimacy was given to every person and every group's "narrative." Philosophically, we call this post-modernism. As with all thought patterns, post-modernism is a mixture of good and bad. Suspicion of certain people claiming to know what's best for everybody is good and post-modernism helps us in this regard. The down side of post-modernism is radical relativity. It is difficult to critique the truthfulness of a worldview if every worldview is legitimate. I argue that this is where we find ourselves today. Truth is reduced to "your truth." This is the reason groups look at the same facts and talk past each other, both equally convinced their group is correct. And why not; what standard of truth can be used to judge? It's not hard to see the problems this creates. Determining proper behavior and proper values is elusive when everything is relative. Sadly, people trapped in relativism revert to tribalism and brute force to establish the "truth" of their worldview. Bullying, shaming, and even physical violence are common methods to make others submit. God forbid we Christians get caught up in that chaos. So we find ourselves in a unique place in society. With the post-modernist we affirm that Jesus Christ alone is the savior,

not people either individually or collectively. Thus, we are suspicious of every group and movement promising to be “right.” No person or group is absolutely right and some are worse than others. Against the post-modernist we Christians know that there is absolute truth and that not every narrative is legitimate. Therefore, we can avoid the trap of relativism by pointing to God’s word of law and gospel as absolute truth that judges every narrative. We should do both with a spirit of humility and patience. “Speak the truth in love,” is what the Bible counsels. By doing so we will be the preserving salt and the illuminating light Jesus commands in a society that desperately needs it.

Peace
Scott



FOOD DRIVE MONTHLY COLLECTION

The need for food at Rankin County Human Resource Agency never ends. Instead of keeping a pantry here at the church, we have found it works better to take our collections to this agency and refer any requests that we get to them.

Remember to bring your donations of non-perishable goods to the church by the last Sunday of each month (except those months with five Sundays when we collect for the Center for Violence Prevention).



ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR

Unique crafts from Mississippi and around the world will be featured at the eighteenth annual Brandon Craft Fair, Saturday, October 14th from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Local artists from Central Mississippi will share their works both inside and across the shady grounds. Unusual hand-crafted items in the past have included jewelry, tatting, paintings, wreaths, doll clothes, stained glass, yard and bottle art, scarves, memo boards, wood crafts, pumpkins, home canned goods and crochet.

Crafts by artists from countries such as Bangladesh, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Israel, Peru, Kenya, Chile, Vietnam, Cameroon, Ghana, Mexico and the Philippines will represent the international community. Introduced nine years ago, these fair trade items have been a highlight of the fair ever since. Home decoration and desk items, baskets, scarves, Christmas ornaments, nativity scenes, children's toys, games, puzzle boxes, bracelets, jewelry, musical instruments and purses are some of the offerings. Many new items along with some popular favorites will be available.

Gathered by SERRV, each purchase from the international collection enables artisans in developing countries to earn a fair income from their work and build a better life for themselves and their families. All items are selected especially for the Brandon fair by local committee members.

Admission is free. All proceeds go to benefit community outreach ministries including Harbor House, The Center for Violence Prevention (assistance for abused women and children), Rankin County Human Resource Agency, Hope House, Grace House, Habitat for Humanity, Stewpot and the Mississippi Firefighters Memorial Burn Association's camp for young burn victims.

The baked goods area will again need to be well stocked with homemade breads, pies, fudge, cakes and cookies. Please get out your cookbooks and be planning your contribution to this popular area. Volunteers will also be needed to help set up, help during the show and, especially, clean up. Our young people will also need help manning the food booth.



September & October Birthdays

Anniversaries

Kathy Peters	9/11
Cameron Kirby	9/12
Stephen Braatz	9/18
Meredith Burgess	9/20
Ellie Halverson	9/27
Haley Templeton	9/29
Wade Caldwell	9/30
Sandy Bettiga	10/05
Carol Bergum	10/10
Dorothy Moore	10/13
Rick Kirby	10/13
Lydia Weisser	10/14
Jan Behringer	10/19
Sue Caldwell	10/24
Savannah Stevens	10/26

Bud & Lydia Weisser	9/05
Jim & Pat Moulds	9/07
John & Pat Schnell	9/16
Hack & Sylvia Walston	9/22
Rick & Pamela Kirby	9/27
Mitch & Dorothy Leavell	10/07
Bart & Sandy Bettiga	10/21
Ned & Barb Balsley	10/23

If you wish to participate, please look for the sign-up sheet on the table in the narthex and provide your birthday and/or anniversary **month & day only** by your name so we can **wish you a Happy Day!**

Happy Birthday & Anniversary to All !!!!



Nativity Prayer List

Please pray for: Florence Phillips, John Schnell, Pat Schnell, Swayze Tankersley, Roland Tyler and John Kratochvil



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- September 3 8:00 & 10:30 AM Services with Holy Communion
9:15 Adult Bible Study
Service of Healing & Anointing with Oil immediately
following 10:30 service
- September 6 Noon Bible Study
- September 10 8:00 & 10:30 AM Services with Holy Communion
9:15 AM Youth Sunday School & Adult Bible Study
Social Ministry Meeting following 10:30 Service
- September 13 Noon Bible Study
- September 17 8:00 & 10:30 AM Services with Holy Communion
9:15 AM Youth Sunday School & Adult Bible Study
- September 20 Noon Bible Study
- September 24 8:00 & 10:30 AM Services with Holy Communion
9:15 AM Youth Sunday School & Adult Bible Study
Food Pantry donations due
- September 25 7:00 PM Church Council
- September 27 Noon Bible Study

****October 14th 9AM – 3 PM Annual Craft Fair and Bake Sale****

NLC September, 2017 Volunteer List – 10:30 Service

September 3

Greeters – Ann Starr
 Ambassador – L. Templeton
 Ushers – Bettiga family
 Lector – Keith Anderson
 Comm. Asst. – Keith Anderson
 Nursery – Marcia Weaver
 Counters – Keith Anderson/Norma Swanson
 Acolyte – Matthew Templeton
 Altar Care – Joe & Renate Hunt

September 17

Greeters – Mitch Leavell
 Ambassador – Meade Entrekin
 Ushers – Hunt Family
 Lector – John Halverson
 Comm. Asst. – John Halverson
 Nursery – Sue Caldwell
 Counters – Lynn & Matthew Templeton
 Acolyte – Katie Mae Rials
 Altar Care – Joe & Renate Hunt

September 10

Greeter – Lynn Templeton
 Ambassador – Linda Tucker
 Ushers – K. Anderson /T. Templeton
 Lector – Joe Hunt
 Comm. Asst. – Joe Hunt
 Nursery – Hannah Poole
 Counters – Renate Hunt/Sue Caldwell
 Acolyte – Wade Caldwell
 Altar Care – Joe & Renate Hunt

September 24

Greeter – Lynn Templeton
 Ambassador – Mitch Leavell
 Ushers – Hack Walston/Cindy Braatz
 Lector – Mitch Leavell
 Comm. Asst. – Mitch Leavell
 Nursery – Lynn Templeton
 Counters – Boyde Bergum/Mitch Leavell
 Acolyte – Dane Stevens
 Altar Care – Joe & Renate Hunt

If you cannot serve on the dates shown, please try to swap with someone and let the office know of the change. Thanks.

Treasurer's July Report of Budget(Operating)Expenses*

	<u>Planned Expense*</u>	<u>Actual Paid Expense*</u>	<u>Actual Offerings*</u>	<u>Actual Difference</u>
July, 2017	13,277	12,319	13,448	+ 1,129
June, 2016	13,439	13,297	9,099	- 4,198
YTD, 2017	92,937	90,445	61,615	- 15,382
YTD, 2016	94,071	90,099	69,317	- 11,683