



Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God... this is your true and proper worship.

Romans 12:1

A beautiful candlelight service is a highlight of our Advent Season

A SOUP-ER COLLABORATION

On **Sunday, January 11**, following worship, several groups within our church are doing something meaningful together. Across generations—from third graders to senior adults—we're gathering to serve our community and live out the Gospel in a tangible way.

What's Happening

Kingdom Kids (3rd-5th grade), the Circle of Faith, Men's Circles, and Illumination Youth Ministry are partnering to assemble dry potato soup mixes that will stock our blessing box out front. These packages will go directly to families in our community facing food insecurity—a program our churches have been championing to meet real needs with real love.

It's simple, meaningful work. No special skills required. Just willing hands and a heart to serve.

Why This Matters

Food insecurity isn't an abstract problem—it's our neighbors struggling to put meals on the table. When we assemble these soup kits, we're not just packaging ingredients. We're saying, "You matter. Your dignity matters. God sees you and so do we."

And here's the beautiful part: we're doing it together. Our children and students learning alongside adults. Men working shoulder-to-shoulder with women. Different circles united by a common purpose. That's what the body of Christ looks like.

(continued on next page)

Upcoming Schedule Sundays

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| 9:30 a.m. | Sunday School |
| 10:30 a.m. | Worship |
| 3:00 p.m. | Graceful Praise Rehearsal* |
| 3:30 p.m. | Girl Scouts* |
| 4:00 p.m. | Handbell Rehearsal |
| 5:00 p.m. | Illumination Student Ministry |

* Does not meet each week; see leaders for details

Wednesdays

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| 2:30 p.m. | Afterschool Program* |
| 5:15 p.m. | Wednesday Night Supper* |
| | Children's Choirs* |
| 6:15 p.m. | Prayer/Bible Study* |
| 7:00 p.m. | Adult Choir Rehearsal |

* Full midweek schedule resumes January 14

Special Events

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Jan. 10, 9:50 a.m. | JS Historical Society Tours |
| Jan. 11, 11:30 a.m. | Feeding the Hungry |
| Jan. 24, 8:00 a.m. | Circles Men's Ministry Breakfast |



A VIEW FROM MAIN STREET

by Jeff Allen
Pastor
jeff@fbcmoutholly.org

Starting this month, we're launching a conversation series that tackles the deepest questions many of us wrestle with. It is titled **REAL: Authentic Faith in a Complex World**. If you've ever wondered whether faith is rational, if Jesus is who He claimed to be, or why God allows suffering—this conversation is for you.

Over seven weeks, we'll examine some of the toughest theological questions. We'll ask: Is faith even rational? Who is Jesus really? Why doesn't faith fix everything? And most importantly, how do we live authentic faith in a complex world?

“Come as you are. Bring your doubts. Meet Jesus in the midst of them.”

Each week builds toward Jesus—not as an abstract idea, but as the living Word through whom we encounter God and find salvation. We'll examine Scripture deeply, engage with real objections and



doubts, and discover what faith looks like when it's both intellectually honest and spiritually transformative.

Whether you're a lifelong Christian, new to faith, or still sorting out what you believe, there's a place for you. We'll even provide small group discussion guides so you can explore these themes with others, ask questions safely, and apply these truths to life.

This isn't a series of easy answers. It's an invitation to think deeply, question honestly, and encounter Jesus in a way that might change how you see the world and yourself.

from the Front Page

Here is how to join us:

When: January 11,
11:30 AM – 2:00 PM
What: Assembling soup mix
for our blessing box
Who: Anyone from Kingdom
Kids (3rd-5th grade), the
Circle of Faith, Men's
Circles, and
Illumination Youth
Ministry
Lunch: Provided

We do ask you **register** for this free event to make sure we have enough food. Register through the **Realm app** or use this link/QR code:



Ministry Spotlight

Transportation Ministry Team

The **Transportation Ministry Team** quietly makes our many church and ministries possible—and **it's time to celebrate them.**

Our Jubilant Seniors describe the team as “invaluable,” giving them opportunities to visit places they otherwise couldn't, with buses that are clean, dependable, and driven by courteous, caring volunteers. Our children's and youth ministries also rely on this team week after week to keep buses ready and students safely transported to and from every activity.

If you have a heart to serve by driving or helping with maintenance and logistics, we'd love for you to consider joining this vital ministry.

To our team members - **David Wrenn, Jimmy Little, and Phillip Elting** - and our amazing volunteer drivers:
thank you for every mile and every quiet act of faithfulness.





TELLING STORIES

by Tori Freeman
Minister of Youth and Children
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The amount of questions that my four (almost five) year old asks every day is impressive. On the one hand, he is genuinely curious about many things. On the other, I am convinced he just enjoys saying "Mommy... Why...?"

There's a children's book written by Kari Anne Holt titled, "I wonder". It goes along asking questions that most children would naturally ask... Do tires, ever get tired? Is cereal afraid of the spoon? Do sandwiches get mad when you bite them? The book concludes with "I wonder why I wonder so much?" The author's answer is, "Because you are wonderful."

God created us to wonder. To think outside of the box. To ask the hard questions, to search for real answers.

As we begin the new year, I challenge you to keep asking questions, keep searching for the answers, let your curiosity be what drives you.

I pray that you learn more about your faith by asking real, deep, hard questions, and truly searching for the answers God provides.

// I wonder why I wonder so much... because you are wonderful.
Kari Anne Holt

"At present you need to live the question. Perhaps you will gradually, without even noticing it, find yourself experiencing the answer, some distant day."

-Rainer Maria Rilke



MUSIC NOTES

by Cole Freeman
Minister of Music
cole@fbcmontholly.org

The basic building block of all music is tension and resolution, or more poetically, question and answer. Every song you hear on the radio or even sing out of the hymnal is built from two simple chords: the V and the I. The V is often open-ended, curious, seeking an ending. The I is always complete, authentic, and final.

As we enter into a new year, many of us have questions. We are full of excitement and motivation, but maybe with a hint of trepidation. We don't know how 2026 will turn out exactly, despite our best intentions. Our only hope is to seek out the complete, authentic finality of Christ. In Him, all of our questions will be answered.



**// Joy to the Earth, the Savior reigns;
Our mortal songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, //
Repeat the sounding joy!**

SOUPeR Bowl Lunch



Save The Date

Illumination Youth Group is hosting the 2nd Annual SOUPeR bowl lunch on Sunday, February 8th, 2026 following worship.

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



January OCC Item BRING TOOTHBRUSHES

Note - No need for toothpaste.
We can't include it in the shoebox.
GOAL: 600 (2 PER SHOEBOX)

Looking for an easy option? Visit Amazon and type Operation Christmas Child toothbrushes in the search bar—you'll find great choices!

Drop in OCC Bin at The Gathering Place. Please keep in the original packaging to ensure cleanliness and easy packing. Thank you!

Kay Macintosh: 980-253-7180
kaymacintosh@hotmail.com



Historical Societies Tour Saturday, January 10 9:50 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

The Jubilant Seniors will enjoy tours of the Mt. Holly and Belmont Historical Societies, followed by lunch at Taxco

Questions? Please see Jacquely Denison, Randy McLean, Linda Smith, Nancy Wrenn or Pam Surratt.



Altar Flowers Ministry Opportunity

2026 Altar Flowers

The 2026 Flower Chart is now posted outside the sanctuary. If you would like to provide flowers for a church service, please add your name and the desired date to the chart. Thank you for providing flowers and supporting this ministry.

CIRCLES Men's Ministry

Breakfast Gathering Saturday, January 24 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Hall

Come for fellowship, learn more and share the journey. Open to all - bring a friend. Hosted by FBC's 3 Circles

Questions? Ask Randy McLean, Aubrey Horton, Mark Hudome, Carson Dean or Matt Williamson

Donations

In Memory of Jane Collins to the Circle of Faith Ministry

In Memory of Martha Jean McFarland by Millie Hunsucker to the Library Fund

In Honor of the FBC Deacon Families to the General Fund by Reeves and Peggy McGlohon

In Sympathy

The family of Mary Jane Hinkle, on the death of her sister, Martha Jean McFarland

The family of Phillip Elting, on the death of his father, John Elting.

November Finances Update

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| November Receipts | \$63,444 |
| November Expenses | \$33,490 |
| Receipts YTD | \$555,075 |
| Actual Expenses YTD | \$496,485 |
| Budgeted Expenses YTD | \$549,894 |
| Annual Budget | \$599,884 |



First Baptist Church of Mount Holly



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Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Friday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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