

10:45 am Worship Service

December 14, 2025

SERMON "Anticipating Joy: Preparing the Way for the Lord"
Luke 1:57-66

Rev. Dr. Jana Stoner

FAB Staff

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**Fifth Avenue
Baptist Church**
LIFE AMONG THE COLUMNS

1135 Fifth Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
Change Service Requested

Along the Journey...

Many people have the idea that when church membership and attendance increase, it is a sign of a successful church. Conversely, when the numbers go down, the church must be failing. Sometimes, when churches have lost some members, a certain level of paralysis affects the congregation due to a fear of failure.

It is easy to get swallowed up in that kind of thinking about churches. We live in a consumer-driven society, where many of us are evaluated by how much more we can do. Make more sales, manufacture more widgets, promote more students, or save the company more money, and, ultimately, earn more profits. Why shouldn't a church be evaluated like everything else?

The problem, of course, is that God has never been running a popularity contest. Jesus emphasized more than once that the way to eternal life was through a "narrow gate" [Matthew 7:13-14].

Do we as a population typically choose what is best for us? We watch television far more than we read books or participate in a healthy activity. When we watch television, we are far more likely to watch some mindless drivel rather than to watch an educational program on PBS or the Discovery Channel. The most prominent health problem in the country is obesity, which can be caused by our love for fast food and our lack of a balanced diet and regular exercise. We are more likely to credit card-charge ourselves into debt rather than to save ahead of time and pay in cash. We spend WAY too much time on our phones.

So, what makes us think that when we choose our houses of worship that we suddenly become so wise? Maybe the local mega-church is growing because the Holy Spirit is blessing everything they do. Then, again, maybe they are just the McDonald's of churches—lots of sales, but a steady diet of it is bad for your health. And maybe a small church is like a PBS show in the broad television spectrum—great quality, but people don't know what they are missing.

As Fifth Avenue continues through this transition period, let us remember that we are attempting to be faithful to God, not to be successful or to validate our existence as a church.

~ Dr. Tim Moore



Fifth Avenue Baptist Church

LIFE AMONG THE COLUMNS

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Worship God wholeheartedly. Love one another unconditionally. Help people meet Jesus.
Help each other become more like Jesus. Love our hurting world.



End of Year Giving

"Donors must deliver checks on or by Dec. 31, 2025, in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2025. Checks placed in the church offering during the first worship service in 2026 will not qualify for a charitable contribution deduction in 2025, even if the check is predated to 2025 or written in 2025. However, checks written, mailed, and postmarked in 2025 will be deductible in 2025, though they may not be received by a church until 2026."

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Mail slots are located in the Fifth Avenue Chapel entry door & the lower 12th Street entry door.

Checks can be delivered via the mail slot when the office is closed. Those dropped in after Dec. 31 will be counted as 2026.

Online contributions, regardless of date made, will be deductible if contribution is processed and in a church bank account in 2025. The processing can take several days, so submit your contribution earlier if wanting to deduct in 2025. If writing a check for more than one fund, please write separate checks for each gift.

FIFTH AVENUE BAPTIST youth

Come Join Us!

For sign-ups & info, please visit fifthavenuebaptist.org/ministries/youth

YOUTH COFFEE SHOP

JOIN US IN THE FAB LAB FOR A
CUP OF COFFEE PREPARED BY
OUR YOUTH!



✦ **Breakfast at
the Manger**

December 21st | 9:30 am

Join us in the Fellowship Hall
for breakfast, a craft, and
the story of the birth of Jesus.



LIFE AMONG THE COLUMNS

CALENDAR | Dec 14–20

Sunday, December 14

8:30 M&M Meeting (CR)
9:30 Sunday Morning Bible Studies
10:45 Worship & Live Stream
12:00 CMC Meeting (Worship Room)

Monday, December 15

9:00 Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 17

No Evening Activities

7:00 Cantata Dress Rehearsal

Thursday, December 18

7:00 Christmas Cantata (Sanctuary)

PRAYER CONCERNS

Gay Bird
Christy Bird
Judy Booth
Nell Brumfield
Burke Family
John & Jill Chapman
Sandy Collins, sister of Bud Harbour
Sally Cyrus
Felix Daniels
Bill Denman
Carolyn Dickens
Natalie Swann Dodge, great niece of Jack Lively
David Elmore
Beverly Gaskin, friend of Gerry Smith
Martha Hagan
Allison Hall
Anne Jameson, niece of Mary Madsen
Janet Jarrell

Linda Lawrence
Mary Lee Leslie
Julie Lively, daughter of Jack & Jackie Lively
Kim Lively-Smith, daughter of Jack & Jackie Lively
Suzanne Nieman, friend of Jerrie Hussell
Cindy Perry, niece of Mary Madsen
Steve Perry, nephew of Mary Madsen
Jeanine Price
Bill Ransbottom
Allen Reasons
Justin Reynolds, nephew of Janet Jarrell
Larry Shannon, friend of Janet Jarrell
Ryan Sharp, nephew of Jackie Ballard & cousin of Scott Ballard
Patti & Mike Shaver Sr.
Barbara Sheils
Jack, Becky & Haley Stephenson, friends of Martha Hagan
Lenora Sutphin
Sherry Waggoner

If you or someone you have added to the Columns Prayer list can be removed, please call or email the church office.

Ministry Action Budget: December 7, 2025

Envelopes	20,091.92
Online	2,690.00
Total	22,781.92
Given To Date	775,520.84
MAB Expenses To Date	873,725.02
Overage/(Shortage)	(98,204.18)

Designated Funds

RMMO	475.00
Food Baskets	500.00
Total Designated Funds	975.00
Designated Gifts To Date	16,300.20

Our Christian Love & Sympathy

To the family of Shirley Dudley whose sister-in-law, Alice Fricke passed away earlier this week.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS!

Dec

- 14** Ruth Dolin, Zachary Tarter
- 15** Virginia Crawford, Cindy Taylor, Katherine Allgood
- 17** Robert Wilmlink
- 18** Natalie Sheils, Teresa Giles, Heidi Taylor
- 19** Gay Bird
- 20** Art McCallister

PECANS ARE HERE!

PICKUP IN THE PARLOR
CONTACT GINA FINLEY FOR
AVAILABILITY OF ANY EXTRAS

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

Wednesday, Dec. 24
9 pm | Sanctuary

M&M monthly meeting

Sunday, December 14 | 8:30 am
COUNCIL ROOM