



Close to Home

Reflecting on our Advent Worship Theme

There is something about Christmas that seems to evoke a nostalgic idea of home. Reflect for a moment on (and perhaps sing aloud!) the lyrics of these classic Christmas songs:

I'll be home for Christmas; you can plan on me.
Please have snow and mistletoe and presents on the tree.
Christmas Eve will find me where the love light gleams
I'll be home for Christmas, if only in my dreams.

I'll Be Home for Christmas, composed by Walter Kent with lyrics by Kim Gannon,
first recorded by Bing Crosby in 1943

Oh there's no place like home for the holidays,
'Cause no matter how far away you roam,
If you want to be happy in a million ways,
For the holidays, you can't beat home, sweet home.

There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays, composed by Robert Allen with lyrics by
Al Stillman, popularized by Perry Como in 1954

These songs, as well as movies, greeting cards, commercials, along with our own expectations and (sometimes rose-colored) memories, portray Christmas at home as idyllic and wonderful. Of course, in these images, home usually means a big, happy family in a warm, cozy house. In reality, I think we would all admit that "home for Christmas" does not always equate with "happy in a million ways." Sometimes, even at Christmas, home includes stress, tension, grief, anger, disappointment, and even abuse. Home is not always sweet. Perhaps, when we long for the idea of home, what we are really longing for is peace.



image © A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

The season of Advent reminds us that Christmas is not just about happy moments around a Christmas tree; it is about light in the darkness, about a Savior born for a hurting world, about a God who comes near to us. Our Advent worship theme, Close to Home, "acknowledges the 'already but not yet' tension ...continued on p.3

Thankful for You

A Note from Welcome House Raleigh

To the Saints of FBC Pendleton,

Thank you! Here at Welcome House we are busy. This week alone, over 80 men, women, and children will arrive in Raleigh. We expect this pace to continue through December. We are busy BUT/AND we are ready. Your gift and your support are making a way for this ministry of hospitality to flourish. Thank you for helping us welcome our newest neighbors with grace, love, and peace. Thank you for your kindness and partnership in this grand adventure of welcome!

With Gratitude,
Amanda Atkin

Launched in 2015, Welcome House Raleigh (WHR) is a temporary housing ministry for refugees and immigrants who do not have a place to live upon arrival to the United States. Located in Raleigh, North Carolina, it is a safe home supported by a team of vetted volunteers who offer hospitality, settlement assistance and assimilation bridges into the local community. Our main goal at WHR is to share the love of God in Christ Jesus through the ministries of hospitality and friendship.

Welcome House Raleigh is a collaborative partnership between the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina (CBFNC), refugee agencies and partner churches, as well as individuals that provide a hospitality ministry to vulnerable neighbors in the Raleigh area. Since being established, WHR has served over 400 refugee and immigrant guests. Recently, FBCP sent a contribution from our Hands On Mission Fund to WHR in response to the crisis in Afghanistan and the need for increased resources for refugees.

Wreaths Across America Ceremony



Wreaths Across America, a group dedicated to remembering and honoring veterans, will hold a special ceremony at Old Stone Church Cemetery on **Saturday, December 18 at noon**. First Baptist Church of Pendleton has sponsored three wreaths for the event; wreaths will be placed on the graves of our country's fallen heroes. Volunteers are needed for the event, and all are welcome to attend the special ceremony. For more information, visit wreathsacrossamerica.org/SC0221.

Christmas Nativity Program

The Children and Youth will present a **Nativity Program on Sunday, December 12** during worship with music by the Sanctuary Choir. We hope you will plan to attend.

Children and Youth will have their final rehearsal Wednesday evening, Dec 1. Dress rehearsal will be Dec 8.

*Thank
you*

Church family,

Thank you so much to everyone who has visited me, brought me food, and prayed for me following my recent car wreck. I appreciate all your thoughtfulness so much!

Evelyn Simpson

Close to Home ...continued from p.1

of our faith: Emanuel is with us, and yet, God's promised day—our everlasting home—is not fully realized. It names our deep longing for God to come close to us." (Rev. Lisle Gwenn Garrity)

During this season of Advent, we light candles, we count days, and we wait. We prepare our hearts with hope, peace, joy, and love. We long for a world where all is right. We dream of home as we imagine home to be – a place of welcome, warmth, safety, and love. We strive to create this sense of home for ourselves and for others. We give, we share, and we work so that all may find their way home to a God who loves us, welcomes us, and goes to great lengths to come near to us, even so far as to be born as a baby in a manger. As we read in Acts 17:27, "God did this so that [we] would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us."

This Christmas, come home to church. Just like our own homes, church is not always the idyllic, stress-free Christmas card image. Church is a place, a space, and a people where we seek to encounter God. Among this community of grace, we are reminded of God's nearness. Come home to church, in person or online, and join us as we worship, celebrate, pray, study, feast, and grow – Close to Home.

Pastor Jennifer Rygg
11-30-21



Church Decorating

Thank you for helping us deck the halls! Our volunteers did a great job of decorating the church for Christmas after worship on Nov 28. Thank you to Kim Burgess for organizing and to all of our helpers!





First Baptist Church of Pendleton

351 South Broad Street
 PO Box 187
 Pendleton, SC 29670

fbcpendleton.org
 (864) 646-3913



DEACONS FLOCKS

for 2021 - 2022

Flock 01: A - Be	Wayne Patterson	(864) 710-8239
Flock 02: Bo - Cal	Bruce Blackmon	(864) 653-0228
Flock 03: Cap - Da	Randy Strickland	(864) 360-6071
Flock 04: De - Fa	Anna Leavitt	(864) 430-1814
Flock 05: Fi - Ha	Jane Massey	(864) 940-3156
Flock 06: He - J	Kim Burgess	(864) 940-6902
Flock 07: K - Me	Jan McCracken	(864) 934-4574
Flock 08: Mi - N	Jim Davis	(864) 207-0656
Flock 09: P - R	Pam Willoughby	(864) 940-5470
Flock 10: S - Ta	Skip Still	(864) 903-1576
Flock 11: Th - Y	Max Loyd	(864) 654-2399
Deacons & Spouses	Suzanne Morse	(864) 643-9909

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

9:00 am Coffee, Tea, & Conversation in the Fellowship Hall
9:30 am Sunday School
10:45 am Worship in the Sanctuary and on Facebook Live

We hope you can join us for in-person worship, but if you can't come or aren't ready to attend in person, worship will also be on Facebook Live using our live streaming system.

visit our website
fbcpendleton.org

PASTORAL EMERGENCY

Pastor Jennifer Rygg
864-760-7135

The Newsletter
 Published every two weeks.
 ©2021 First Baptist Church of Pendleton

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Jennifer Rygg · jennifer@fbcpendleton.org · mobile (864) 760-7135
Rev. Chris Cottingham · chris@fbcpendleton.org · mobile (864) 420-6221
Richard Reynolds Huss · organist@fbcpendleton.org · (864) 646-3913
Church Office / Joseph Reed · office@fbcpendleton.org · (864) 646-3913
Cindy Still · seniorfellowship@fbcpendleton.org · mobile (864) 324-6203
Becky Westmoreland · accounting@fbcpendleton.org · (864) 646-3913

CHURCH OFFICE
 (864) 646-3913