

THE TIDINGS

GOD'S MISSION FOR TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO LOVE HIM FULLY AND FOLLOW HIM FAITHFULLY.

The Pastor's Perspective

Dr. Reggie Bridges

“White Christmas,” “O Holy Night,” “Rocking Around the Christmas Tree,” “Winter Wonderland.” The music of the Christmas season is everywhere one turns. And personally, I love it! And what’s cool is that it can present itself in different ways . . . serious, reverent, traditional . . . or playful, upbeat, and joyful. Seriously, I do believe that I could listen to such music throughout the entire year. Of course, I especially enjoy the annual Sunday when our generational choirs/ensembles lead us in worship through a Christmas presentation. As with many other programs/events in 2020, we will not be able to celebrate with our full choirs, but we will still have a blessed time of worship through special musical emphases over the next couple of Sundays. In addition, I plan to begin a new sermon series which highlights the “**Sounds of Christmas**” in Scripture. Did you know that there are at least four songs/anthems that you find in the biblical infancy narratives? This coming Sunday, we will focus on “Mary’s Christmas Carol” in Luke 1:46-55. What a response of praise and submission! And what a “carol” for us to sing to Him as well!

While I continue to look forward to Sunday mornings, I am also eagerly anticipating our **Christmas Eve Candlelight services**. We do plan on meeting during that special time to worship our Savior in a powerful way. As you may have already heard, **we are offering two identical services—one at 4 p.m. and the other at 6 p.m.** This will allow us to better plan for social distancing, capacity, etc. We certainly do not plan to turn anyone away from these services, but I would ask you to help us by letting know which service that you and your family will attend. You can register the number of those who will be attending at ***eve.temple.life***. If for

some reason you cannot make it to either service, **we will be streaming the 6 p.m. service.**

I can’t close this article without also thanking you for your faithfulness in giving. Because you remain committed to supporting the ministry and mission of God and His church, we remain in a strong financial position as we approach the end of the year. I have no doubt that you will help us finish strong as you always do so that we can fully resource His work. And more than that, you have been generous to our international missions’ effort. Already, we have **collected over \$94,000 toward our \$160,000 goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.** Wow! What a start! Over the next few weeks, I’m sure that we will surpass that goal and undergird the work of our missionaries overseas—especially during these difficult days. If we have learned anything from this pandemic, it is that we are fragile, mortal creatures that need hope of something better. We need the love of Christ and the promise of eternity with Him! That is the only consolation for a world in darkness. And every penny of our Lottie Moon gifts goes to the international mission of promoting that hope in Jesus Christ. Again, thanks for what you have done already, and let’s continue to give generously.

How genuinely excited I am to study and worship with you through these days ahead! As we enjoy this Christmas season, we look forward to the fresh opportunities the new year will bring. Already, we have several kingdom-sized projects on the agenda for 2021, and I ask you to pray for the staff as we plan and prepare. But before we get to the new year (which can’t come too quickly for some of us), let’s rest in the Son of David as we celebrate the “Sounds of Christmas.” See you Sunday!

Minister of Community Engagement

George Lee

Holiday seasons present opportunities for our church to support our local missions partners in special ways. One of our local missions partners, Life Choices, is hosting the Life Tree project *throughout the month of December*. Life Choices is a Christian pro-life pregnancy resource center in our community. In addition to offering options for counseling to women and men who face pregnancy and abortion-related issues, Life Choices provides the opportunity for families to shop in the Hope Shoppe. The Hope Shoppe is stocked with many of the items parents need to care for their babies... from car seats to diapers...the Hope Shoppe has it all! The great part about the Hope Shoppe is that many of the items are donated by members of our community. The Life Tree project is a focused community effort to restock the Hope Shoppe. Here's how the Life Tree project works...churches, businesses, and other entities in our community put up Christmas trees and place Life Tree ornaments on them. Each ornament has an item listed on it that helps to take care of baby needs. **To be involved, simply pick up an ornament, purchase the item listed, and return both the item and ornament to the host church or business.** Items can also be brought directly to Life Choices (located at 606 Belue Lane). **Temple has three Life Trees this year:** one located **beside Guest Services**, another **across from the Missions Hub**, and the last **down the hall from the Gathering Space**. This year, there is also an option to contribute financially to support the Life Tree project. Contributions can be made by visiting loveliferuston.com. As we celebrate the birth of our Lord, may we remember that we are always blessed to be a blessing! Merry Christmas, church family!

In accordance with IRS regulations, **contributions for 2020** must physically be in the church's possession **OR** postmarked by **Thursday, December 31**. **ALL** contributions submitted on Friday, January 1, 2021, will appear on 2021 contribution statements.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

December 23 (Wednesday)
All activities are canceled.

December 24, 25, & 28 (Thursday, Friday, Monday)
Church Offices Closed for Christmas Holidays

December 27 (Sunday)
9 a.m. Combined Worship | Lord's Supper
Sunday School is canceled.

December 30 (Wednesday)
All activities are canceled.

January 1 (Friday)
Church Offices Closed for New Year's Day

A thank you card has been received from...
Shane, Carmen, Katie, & Jack Echols; Charlie Mills
(Located on the bulletin board in the Library window)

Princess & Warrior Weekend for Grades 6-12
January 15-18, 2021
At Southland Christian Camp

Deadline to sign up: Wednesday, December 15, 2020
Cost: \$190 includes food, transportation, shirt, & lodging

Sign up at: PWW.templebcstudents.org

For any question, contact: John or Emma, 255-6184



CHRISTMAS
Celebration
— SUNDAYS —
DECEMBER 13 & 20
JOIN US DURING MORNING WORSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS MUSIC
AS WE CELEBRATE CHRIST'S BIRTH!
LEARN MORE AT EVENTS.TEMPLE.LIFE

The flowers in the Sanctuary are poinsettias purchased by members of the Temple family in memory of or in honor of loved ones.

UPWARD
SPORTS

Basketball & Cheerleading!

Volunteers Needed: Referees, Greeters,
and Half-time Devotion Leaders

Contact: Family Life Center (255-6184) or Emma (emma@temple.life)

Congratulations to:

Logan and Lauren Blackwell on the birth of their son, **Bentley James**. Proud grandparents are Richard and Donna Hood and great-grandparents are Ben and Marilyn Gullatt; Rodney and Beverly Johnson on the birth of their great-granddaughter, **Caroline Jo Ann Dial**.



TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH
RESURRECTION
MEN'S RETREAT

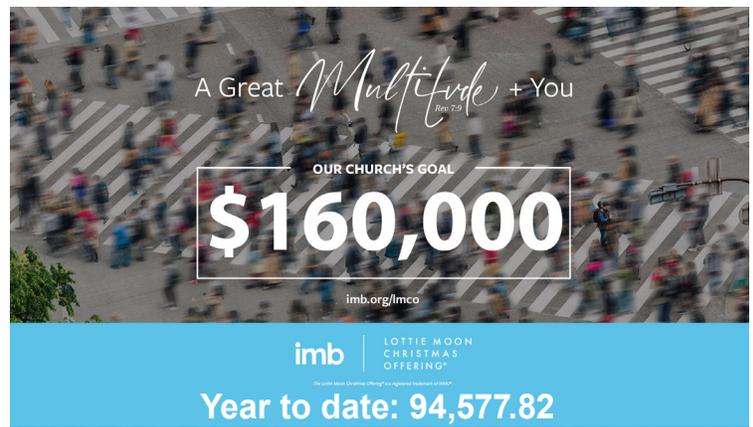
FEBRUARY 4-6
CAMP CANEY | \$160

A POWERFUL 3-DAY EXPERIENCE
FILLED WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO INVEST IN
YOUR FAITH AND BUILD BROTHERHOOD
WITH OTHER MEN.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT [EVENTS.TEMPLE.LIFE](https://events.temple.life)



the family of **Cecil Taylor**, grandmother of Dr. Bobby (Jenny) Ensminger, great-grandmother of Lauren, Jack, & Julianna Ensminger; the family of **Walker "Windy" Denham**, grandfather of Geoff (Rachel) Deason, great-grandfather of Alyssa Deason; the family of **Mary Prewitt Bowen-Miller**, mother of Carole (Kevin) Witten, grandmother of Taylor and Gavin Witten.



A Great *Multitude* + You

OUR CHURCH'S GOAL

\$160,000

imb.org/lmco

imb | LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Year to date: **94,577.82**



Christmas Eve
**CANDLELIGHT
CELEBRATION**

DECEMBER 24 | 4 P.M. & 6 P.M.
IN THE SANCTUARY

REGISTER TODAY AT [EVE.TEMPLE.LIFE](https://eve.temple.life)

From The Minister of Pastoral Care

Dale Oden

As you are well aware, holidays and special events have been different since March of this year. Family gatherings have been limited or non-existent. I turned 80 in May, we had our 50th Anniversary in June, our oldest grandson graduated from Ruston High, and all but two of our family members' birthdays have occurred since the pandemic started. So there have not been many group gatherings for our family.

But there is one constant that has remained throughout these past several months. God is still on His throne and is still in control! I am grateful that we can feel His presence each day. We can read His Word and be encouraged. We can gather for worship and be blessed. I am so thankful to be a part of the family of God and to be a part of the fellowship of believers here at Temple Baptist Church.

Even though we have not had the number of people present in our services (and we understand why some cannot be here), God is still moving. People have made professions of faith and joined our church, and we can praise God for that. Our members continue to be faithful and generous in giving so we can do ministry here and around the world! Can you believe that Temple folks gave over half of our \$160,000 goal for international missions in the March for Missions last Sunday? Praise the Lord!

Sadel and I are so blessed to be here in Ruston and at Temple Baptist Church. We pray that you and your families will have a wonderful Christmas and a great 2021.

How can we help? Our staff is here to serve. You can contact them by calling the Church Office (255-3745)!

We are navigating unprecedented times, but we believe our God is still in control and can use us to share the Gospel in creative and powerful ways!

Church family, we LOVE you and are here to serve you!

5:17 PRAYER
LUKE 5:17

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Label here

Phone: (318) 255-3745 • Fax: (318) 255-0134
Website: temple.life

Week-at-a-Glance

Sunday, December 13

9 a.m. - Blended Worship (Sanctuary); livestream at *live.temple.life*
(Blended Worship); *the gathering* Worship (GS);
Sunday School for all ages
10:30 a.m. - *the gathering* Worship (Sanctuary); livestream at
live.temple.life (*the gathering* Worship); Sunday School for all ages
5 p.m. - The Springs Worship (Outside at The Springs)

Tuesday, December 15

10 a.m. - Senior Adult Bible Study (Sanctuary)

Wednesday, December 16

5:45 p.m. - Junior High Worship (Youth Rm)
6 p.m. - Prayer Meeting/Bible Study (Sanctuary); livestream at
live.temple.life
6:30 p.m. - Temple College Freshman Bible Study (GS)

7 p.m. - Senior High Worship (Youth Rm)

Thursday, December 17

2 p.m. - GriefShare (Rm 76)

Vision:

To become authentic, loving followers of Jesus,
who are experiencing life transformation through God's Word,
For the purpose of impacting our world.



TEMPLE
BAPTIST CHURCH

COME GATHER AROUND THE WORD

Core Values:

Authoritative Truth • Strengthening Worship
Authentic Community • Intentional Transformation
Hands-On Missions • Relational Evangelism
Compassionate Servanthood

Broadcast Hours: Sundays: 9 a.m. Channel 11 (KAQY); 9 and 10:30 a.m. livestream (*live.temple.life*)

Family Life Center Hours: Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.; Wednesday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Friday: 8 a.m.-1 p.m.