



THE FORECASTER

Flint River Baptist Association † 568 Baptist Camp Rd † Griffin, GA 30223 † Phone: 770.227.0155 † Fax: 770.227.0625

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*“Look! The virgin will conceive a child!
She will give birth to a son, and they will
call him Emmanuel,
which means ‘God is with us.’”
Matthew 1:23*

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It's Christmas night. The house is quiet. Even the crackle is gone from the fireplace. Warm coals issue a lighthouse glow in the darkened den. Stockings hang empty on the mantle. The tree stands naked in the corner. Christmas cards, tinsel, and memories remind Christmas night of Christmas day.

It's Christmas night. What a day it has been! Spiced tea. Santa Claus. Cranberry sauce. “Thank you, so much.” “You shouldn't have!” “Grandma is on the phone.” Knee-deep wrapping paper. “It just fits.” Flashing cameras. It's Christmas night. The girls are in bed. Jenna dreams of her talking Big Bird and clutches her new purse. Andrea sleeps in her new Santa pajamas. It's Christmas night. The tree that only yesterday grew from soil made of gifts, again grows from the Christmas tree stand. Presents are now possessions. Wrapping paper is bagged and in the dumpsite. The dishes are washed and leftover turkey awaits next week's sandwiches.

It's Christmas night. The last of the carolers appeared on the ten o'clock news. The last of the apple pie was eaten by my brother-in-law. And the last of the Christmas albums have been stored away having dutifully performed their annual rendition of chestnuts, white Christmases, and red-nosed reindeer.

It's Christmas night. The midnight hour has chimed and I should be asleep, but I'm awake. I'm kept awake by one stunning thought. The world was different this week. It was temporarily transformed. The magical dust of Christmas glittered on the cheeks of humanity ever so briefly, reminding us of what is worth having and what we were intended to be. We forgot our compulsion with winning, wooing, and warring. We put away our ladders and ledgers, we hung up our stop watches and weapons. We stepped off our racetracks and roller coasters and looked outward toward the star of Bethlehem.

It's the season to be jolly because, more than at any other time, we think of Him. More than in any other season, His name is on our lips. And the result? For a few precious hours our heavenly yearnings intermesh and we become a chorus. A ragtag chorus of longshoremen, Boston lawyers, illegal immigrants, housewives, and a thousand other peculiar persons who are banking that Bethlehem's mystery is in reality, a reality. “Come and behold Him” we sing, stirring even the sleepest of shepherds and pointing them toward the Christ-child.

For a few precious hours, He is beheld. Christ the Lord. Those who pass the year without seeing Him, suddenly see Him. People who have been accustomed to using His name in vain, pause to use it in praise. Eyes, now free of the blinders of self, marvel at His majesty. All of a sudden He's everywhere. In the grin of the policeman as he drives his paddy wagon full of presents to the orphanage. In the twinkle in the eyes of the Taiwanese waiter as he tells of his upcoming Christmas trip to see his children. In the emotion of the father who is too thankful to finish the dinner table prayer. He's in the tears of the mother as she welcomes home her son from overseas. He's in the heart of the man who spent Christmas morning on skid row giving away cold baloney sandwiches and warm wishes. And he's in the solemn silence of the crowd of shopping mall shoppers as the elementary school chorus sings “Away in a Manger.” Emmanuel. He is with us. God came near.

It's Christmas night. In a few hours the cleanup will begin — lights will come down, trees will be thrown out. Size 36 will be exchanged for size 40, eggnog will be on sale for half-price. Soon life will be normal again. December's generosity will become January's payments and the magic will begin to fade. But for the moment, the magic is still in the air. Maybe that's why I'm still awake. I want to savor the spirit just a bit more. I want to pray that those who beheld Him today will look for Him next August. And I can't help but linger on one fanciful thought: if He can do so much with such timid prayers lamely offered in December, how much more could He do if we thought of Him every day?

Max Lucado

Loving God † Loving People

Empowering Churches † Equipping Leaders † Engaging the World

Just Thinkin’

A Son’s Tribute

On a day like this feelings are tender and memories are precious. Words seem to be but poor baskets when pressed into the service of honoring a well-lived life. How can 89 (plus) years of living be packaged into the span of only a few fleeting minutes? How can the hopes, and loves, and pains, and achievements, and disappointments, and dreams, and heartaches, and victories be adequately measured or appropriately chronicled in a funeral message?

I have come to believe the best eulogies, the most accurate words of worth and praise are written not in the newspaper or spoken in a funeral service, but written upon the lives and in the hearts of those with whom we share life. In this place, upon your life and mine, in your heart and mine, in your memory and mine are the testimonies of a life that blessed others and honored God.

As you would expect, in recent days I have meandered through the memories of my own heart and mind, looking here, looking there, pausing to relive some precious past event from childhood or wondering what was going through Dad’s mind when he faced one situation or another. Much about him I will never know. Much about him will remain a mystery and that is as it should be, partly because the Bible reminds us that life itself is a mystery. Much of life is simply between our God and ourselves.

I am glad, however to tell you a couple of things that are not mysteries...that are sources of comfort and pride for me...some things that were always obvious...some things that were deep inside of D. D. Clark that worked their way out to touch those of us who knew him and were loved by him.

Somewhere near his 17th birthday Dad joined the Marine Corps to add his efforts to countless other young men who willingly took up arms to defeat the despots of Germany and Japan in World War II. Did he see it on a recruitment poster? Did the clerk at the draft board utter the words? Did some drill instructor stand in the face of a young Alabama boy and yell the unfamiliar words? I don’t know. I don’t know when he first heard it. I don’t know when it became more than a motto. I don’t know when or where the words transformed themselves into a firmly heart-held belief. Somewhere one day, however, the Marine Corps motto was embraced by Duane Clark and became an integral part of who he was. “Semper Fi,” someone told him, meant “Always faithful.”

“Always faithful.” More than a motto. “Always faithful.” More than just words. “Always faithful.” That is an apt description of the life my Dad chose to live.

Across the promise given to the love of his life 65 years ago, the words, “Always faithful” can be written. Across the strenuous and tenuous years of maintaining relationships with growing and grown children trying to establish their own lives and find their own way, the words, “Always faithful” can be carved. Across the face of his work-resume can be stamped, “Always faithful.”

Though my heart is heavy and though tears seem to flow freely today, there is real peace in my soul. Dad took care of the business of life as he lived. There were no postponements, no delays, nothing held over until another day, nothing left dangling or incomplete. He knew this day was coming, so he lived with eternity in mind.

On Thursday, November 3rd, Dad slipped out of his earthly body and in the twinkling of an eye he arrived at Home. Today’s grief is tempered with the knowledge that Dad has not been lost or will never be seen again or is in some strange place. He is at Home. Home with loved parents, grandparents, and sisters. Home with people whom he

has loved and who loved him...family, friends, coworkers. People with whom he joined hands and efforts to serve the Lord, strengthen many a church, build many an edifice to the glory of God. Persons whom he respected, with whom he studied God’s word, and with whom he worshipped.

There is an old Stamps-Baxter song that has comforted my heart as it has filled my awareness since Dad headed Home last Thursday. In typical southern Appalachian style the tune gets hoisted and the words get sung:

*There will be a happy meeting in heaven I know,
When we see the many loved ones we’ve known here below,
Gather on the blessed hilltops with hearts all aglow,
That will be a glad reunion day.
There within the holy city we’ll sing and rejoice,
Praising Christ the blessed Savior with heart and with voice,
Tell Him how we love Him and made Him our choice,
That will be a glad reunion day.
When we live a million years in that wonderful place,
Basking in the love of Jesus, beholding His face,
It will seem but just a moment of praising His grace,
That will be a glad reunion day.
Glad day, a wonderful day,
Glad day, a glorious day;
There with the holy angels and loved ones to stay,
That will be a glad reunion day.*

The Apostle Paul said it this way, “...we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven” (2 Cor. 5:1-2).

Out on a tombstone there is engraved the date of Dad’s birth. Added to it will be the date of his Homegoing. I’m glad the small dash that will separate those two eventful dates will not be all there is to the life of this faithful man. I’m glad that when I stand where he will be buried, my heart will be thankful he is not there. That small plot of ground will embrace his body for a season, but Dad, in the twinkling of an eye last Thursday woke up at Home.

I don’t know what he is doing right now. If God needed a little rewiring done in one of the mansions, Dad has probably already finished it. If the Lord needed a little help gathering the tomatoes, Dad probably grinned from ear to ear as he delivered the largest red tomato Heaven ever saw. If the angels needed an extra singer in the choir...no. Cancel that...I don’t want to go too far here.

I don’t know what Dad is doing right now. My guess is he has already hugged a lot of people. My guess is he has already visited with long-ago buddies and friends and loved ones. My guess is he has already been embraced by some folk he only knew by name because he had discovered them in God’s Word. My guess is that he has already worshipped a while at the feet of Jesus. My guess is he has already heard “Well done, son. You were always faithful in small things, now you can help me with the big things.”

From Dad I learned that faith and faithfulness make a difference. I have been an eyewitness to the difference in life and death that faith and faithfulness makes. Because of this man of faith and faithfulness, I too look forward to that...

*Glad day, a wonderful day,
Glad day, a glorious day;
There with the holy angels and loved ones to stay,
That will be a glad reunion day.*

Semper Fi, Daddy. Semper Fi.

Charles Clark



Benefit Fund for Jimmy Hammett

Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. 1 John 3:18

A special account has been set up at FNB located on the Zebulon square for Jimmy and Judy Hammett.

Jimmy has had a series of serious medical problems and is in the middle of a fight for his life. Treating Jimmy's cancer is complicated because of previous kidney transplants. The costs of cobra insurance premiums, meds, doctor and hospital bills and travel to and from Emory are enormous, and at this time help is needed for everyday living expenses.

Please mail a donation to FNB Bank, P.O. Drawer F, Griffin, Ga. 30224. Make your check out to James Hammett and be sure to put Benefit Fund on your check. Jimmy has spent his life ministering to those in need and helping others. Please take this opportunity to receive a blessing by being a blessing to the Hammetts. For further information you may call Debby Gilliam at 770 584-7551, Terri Ison at 770 468-0019, Amy Jackson at 678 572-3720, Penny Hampton at 770 853-0632 or Valerie Perkins.

Tis the season to share the love of Jesus Christ. This is an opportunity to be the feet and hands of Jesus. Please give.

NEWS FROM CHURCHES

First Baptist Orchard Hill is looking for a bi-vocational or part time music director. Must be able to lead a choir and praise group. Blended service with traditional hymns and modern hymns. Contact Pastor Nelson Grist 770-228-3939 or email at orchardhill@bellsouth.net

New Mercy Baptist Church would like to thank everyone for supporting the referendum for us to purchase our property. The referendum passed by an overwhelming margin--82.95% voted in favor of the sale. We also need a 15-25 passenger bus/van to be donated or sold at a reasonable amount. Please contact us at (770)227-2422.

FBC Zebulon will present its annual Christmas musical program on Sunday evening, Dec 11 at 5:00 PM. The choir and various soloists will reprise Christmas classics as well as new Christmas music. FBC/Zebulon will offer a Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion on Dec 24 at 5:00 PM. They will gather for one worship service on Christmas Day at 10:00 AM.

December Birthdays: 16th Charles Killingsworth, E.Griffin
23rd Kenneth Burk, Midway
26th Frank Winfrey, Faith
30th Tom Summers, Carver Rd.

Liberty Hill Baptist On Oct 29th, we held our annual Fall Festival we used the FEET trailer from the FRBA and we set up a tent and offered a "Sturgis/Daytona" type 3-minute story to all who attended. 84 people came through the tent, 31 prayed to receive Christ! We are following up with the locals and helping to find a Church for those out of state. One-on-one evangelism still works!

Liberty Hill Baptist 6:00PM Sundays-- **Regeneration**, a church service that's different. Place of refuge, time a renewal, source of refreshment. Join us Sunday nights to honor and worship God in a refreshing way!

Harp's Crossing At Hollonville Thanks to all who prayed and encouraged us with our Harvest Festival and Community Kickoff. We loved on and served over 400 people! Some returned for Community worship the next day followed by lunch on the grounds. We were able to talk to a lot of these families and get to know them a little bit. Several have been back on Sunday's to worship with us, some of which are looking for a church home. Above all we are praying they connect to God. I would like to encourage all pastors to join in the lunch and fellowship time each month. It's a great time to fellowship, laugh, and of course eat and hear what God is doing. If you are interested please check out the Forecaster calendar for the next date.

January Birthdays: 22nd. Randall Harris

CHURCH CLASSIFIEDS

<p><u>LISBON BAPTIST CHURCH</u></p> <p>Is in need of a Full time Pastor</p> <p>Resumes may be sent to Mike Bower % Lisbon Baptist Church 1662 Hwy 85 South Fayetteville, GA 30215</p>	<p><u>WILDWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH</u></p> <p>Looking for a bi-vocational Pastor.</p> <p>Please send resumes to Harold Betsill 950 County Line Church Rd. Griffin, GA 30223-5513</p>	<p><u>McINTOSH BAPTIST CHURCH</u></p> <p>is seeking part-time Minister of Music and Pianist.</p> <p>Call Pastor Rick Whitlock at 770-957-8809, or Sandy at 770-227-0698, or mail resume to 2222 W. McIntosh Rd., Griffin, GA 30223.</p>	<p><u>CARVER ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH</u></p> <p>Is seeking a Full Time youth pastor.</p> <p>Send your resume to: Carver Road Baptist Church 334 Carver Rd Griffin, GA 30224-3943</p>	<p><u>FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ORCHARD HILL</u></p> <p>Is seeking part-time or bi-vocational music director.</p> <p>Contact Pastor Nelson Grist 770-228-3939 or email at orchardhill@bellsouth.net</p>
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December



- 6 World Mission Banquet Mt Gilead 6:30 PM
- 12 Pastor's Luncheon @ Ryan's—Chris Teasley Devotional Leader
- 20 Christmas Ministry Project (Children and Youth)
- 25 Happy Birthday, Jesus
- 26 Office Closed for Christmas. Will reopen Jan 2, 2012

Let the spirit of love gently fill our hearts and homes. In this loveliest of seasons may you find many reasons for happiness.



- 2 Office reopens 8:30 AM
- 9 Pastor's Luncheon
- 17 KVF Meeting John Cecil's Office 1:00PM

Christmas Ministry Project

When: December 20, 2011
Where Ga Baptist Children's Home, Meansville Campus
Time: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM



Transportation provided, Leave from Crestview Baptist Church Parking Lot at 9:00 AM & return to Crestview around 5:00 PM

The first part of the day we will be wrapping Christmas presents for the residents of the home.

Then lunch – provided by FRBA WMU Leadership Team

The last part of the day we will be operating the "Santa's Workshop" for the residents so they can buy presents to give.

This is a children's (girls and boys) event but youth and adults are encouraged to come and help.

Reservations are needed for transportation and lunch. Contact Linda Roy, RBA WMU/WEM Children's Coordinator, @ 404-775-4500 or johnnie_carter@bellsouth.net by December 15th.

God gave us the gift of a Christ Child at Christmas. Because God gave to us we should love to give to others; this event will help children realize the real reason for giving.

Please know of my sincerest thanks for your love and kind gestures at the Homegoing of my dad. Your prayers and encouragement have been great sources of grace during these days.
 Love to you in Christ, Charles Clark

World Mission Banquet



Mt. Gilead Baptist Church
 Tuesday, December 6, 2011
 6:30 PM Cost: \$5.00

YOU'RE INVITED

Also bring socks or a new or gently used coat (all sizes). They will be given to the homeless and other persons in need. Join members of the Flint River Association for good food, great music and a missionary speaker from Asia.

To keep the cost at \$5.00, payment is requested at time of the reservation.
To make reservations send \$5.00 to Flint River Baptist Association, 568 Baptist Camp RD. Griffin, GA 30223 by December 1st.
 Make check payable to: FRBA World Mission Banquet
 For more information you may contact FRBA @ 770-227-0155 or Joyce Bradley 770-584-7501 email:joycebradley4@bellsouth.net.

Super Seniors



11:30 AM—1:00 PM
The 2nd Monday of Each Month

Oak Hill Baptist Church
 100 Lakeside Rd.
 Griffin, GA 30224
 770-227-5974

11:30 AM Luncheon—only \$5.00
 Great entertainment and fellowship
 Wonderful door prizes
 Open to all!

www.oakhillbaptist.org



Flint River Baptist Association
 568 Baptist Camp Road
 Griffin, GA 30223-5722

«Encoded 65 Character String»

- «Human Readable»
- «FirstName» «LastName»
- «Business»
- «Street Address»
- «City» «State» «Zip+4+2»