

Mountain Brook Baptist Church

Monthly Guide

“Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room”

One of the more poignant parts of the Christmas story, of which there are many, is that which tells us that when Mary and Joseph had finally made it to Bethlehem from Nazareth in Galilee, “there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7). Thus Jesus was born in a corn-crib manger in the place where animals were kept because everything else in the little town of Bethlehem was already taken.

That in itself is something of a harbinger for our day when Jesus is unfortunately still being crowded out. In spite of the commercial appeal of Christmas and holiday decorations adorning virtually every lawn, people have not yet fully embraced the Christ Child. While everyone admires Jesus, only a few actually are prepared to follow Him.

Over the course of the Advent season, which is a time of preparation, we will consider the theological implications of making room for Jesus by looking at the popular Christmas carol “Joy to the World.” Because we often learn our beliefs more by what we sing than what we hear, I think this is a good way for us to make ready for the celebration of Jesus’ first coming, while also noting the importance of readying ourselves for His second coming.

By now you know the symbolism behind each of the Advent candles. As we move into Advent, we’ll look at how the four candles of Advent—hope, peace, joy, and love—respectively illumine important aspects of the famous carol’s message. Then, when Christmas comes, we will have made sure that Jesus has at least one heart with sufficient room for Him to enter. Once that happens in your heart, you will have every reason to celebrate a Christmas like none you’ve known before.

Sunday, December 1 | Hope

“Let Earth Receive Her King” • 1 Peter 1:3-9

Big Idea: We are born into a living hope through our devotion to Christ as we receive the end result of our faith, which is the salvation of our souls.

Sunday, December 8 | Peace

“Let Men Their Songs Employ” • Psalm 96:1-10

Big Idea: We can lift our voices in peaceful praise to God for how in Christ the world is firmly established and all people will be judged with equity.

Sunday, December 15 | Joy

“No More Let Sins and Sorrows Grow” • 1 John 2:1-2

Big Idea: We rejoice in the confidence that Jesus is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and furthermore the sins of the world.

Sunday, December 22 | Love

“He Rules the World with Truth and Grace” • Revelation 11:15

Big Idea: Advent points to the day in God’s future when love will have finally conquered all.

Sunday, December 24 | Christmas Eve

“Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room” • Luke 2:7

Big Idea: The call of Christmas is to make room in our hearts for the Holy Infant at whose birth there was none.

Sunday, December 29

“How to Secure Your Heart’s Desire” • Psalm 20:4

Big Idea: The first step to beginning a new year with Christ is to align our wants and plans in life with His.



Dr. Doug Dortch

SENIOR MINISTER

December Worship Opportunities

December marks our observation of the Advent and Christmas seasons. As we look back and prepare to celebrate Christ's birth, His first Advent, we also look ahead in expectation waiting for His return, His second Advent. Celebrations to herald Christ's coming are announced through special services this month. Take note of these special events and bring your family and friends to experience the hopeful worship of the Lord at this time of year.

“Hanging of the Green”—First Sunday of Advent Traditional Worship Service

Sunday, December 1 | 10:30 a.m.

The Hanging of the Green will take place at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 1 featuring music provided by the Chapel Choir and the Voices in Bronze Handbells. For years, the Hanging of the Green service has been a staple in the worship life of the church signaling the beginning of the Advent season. This Traditional Worship Service features the actual decorating of the Sanctuary as part of the service. As each symbol is explained, the decorations will be put up during a song. Come be a part of this interactive service, and hear again the background behind the symbols of the Christmas season that we all hold so dear.

“Christians Be Joyful”—Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 8 | 10:30 a.m. | Sanctuary

presented by the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra

A twenty-one piece orchestra will join our Sanctuary Choir and you, the congregation, to raise a glorious sound of our noels and hallelujahs to the Lord. You won't want to miss this meaningful Sunday as the Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra present arrangements and songs composed especially for the Advent season, along with many of the beloved traditional Christmas carols.

“A Children’s Choirs’ Christmas”

Sunday, December 15 | 5 p.m. | Heritage Hall

presented by the Cherub Choir, Music Makers, and Young Musicians

The Cherub Choir (K4 and K5), the Music Makers (grades 1-3), and the Young Musicians (grades 4-6) will present their Christmas concert in Heritage Hall. The kids have worked hard this fall to put this program together, and each choir will sing several songs on their own that they have prepared especially for the Christmas season.

“There’s a Song in the Air”

Wednesday, December 18 | 6 p.m. | Hudson Hall

presented by the Mellow Brook Singers

The Mellow Brook Singers will present their Christmas concert in Hudson Hall. The Mellow Brook Singers, our 55+ choir, will present the same program they have been sharing with the community as they travel to nearby nursing homes to minister through their songs and presence. Dinner will be served at the regular price (\$7 adults/\$3 kids/\$20 maximum). Come and enjoy great music, good food, fine fellowship, and a lovely atmosphere.

Annual Presentation of the Living Nativity

Thursday, Friday, & Saturday | December 20, 21, & 22 | 6:45, 7:30, & 8:15 p.m.

Don’t miss the 56th anniversary of the Living Nativity, presented by the students and children of our church! Each evening will feature three shows, along with cookies and hot chocolate to share with our guests in our community. If you’d like to participate in one of the shows, simply come up to the Student Ministry Area to find a costume and join the heavenly host. If you can provide cookies for our hospitality tent, contact Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org).

December Worship Opportunities (*continued*)

“Glorious: A Telling of the Christmas Story”—Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 22 | 10:30 a.m. | Heritage Hall

presented by the MBBC Worship Band, Chapel Choir, and other guests

The worship band and members of the congregation will present a telling of the Christmas story from early prophecies through the birth narrative through Scripture and music presented by special guest musicians. This has been a warmly inviting service that people of all ages enjoy attending. Bring a friend to experience the “glorious” wonder of the Advent season.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Services

Tuesday, December 24 | 4 or 6 p.m. | Sanctuary

We invite you to come and hear the good news of Jesus Christ, which we celebrate with the remembrance of His birth during this special Christmas Eve service complete with beautiful décor, lovely music, and candlelight ambience. As in years past two service times will be offered to allow for more participation by friends, family, and our community. Choose your hour and come with your family and make this time of worship a centerpiece of your family Christmas tradition.

Combined Worship—Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, December 29 | 10:30 a.m. | Sanctuary

Please note: We will have concurrent Traditional and Contemporary Worship Services on December 1, 8, 15, and 22. December 29 is our only combined service. We will have Sunday Morning Bible Study every week in the month of December at 9:15 a.m.

Churchwide Announcements

Advent Devotional Book

Our Advent reading plan, *Jesus Is Better: The Letter to the Hebrews*, begins on Monday, December 2. Copies are available for pick up in the Narthex and by Heritage Hall. We hope you'll take one copy for your family as we journey through the book of Hebrews and reflect on the hope of Jesus in this season.

Angel Tree

MBBC sponsors children from various agencies for our Angel Tree. The tree is located in the office area near the receptionist desk. Please stop by and sponsor a child. If you have questions, contact Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org).

Poinsettias

If you would like to give a poinsettia in memory or honor of someone, contact Barbara Morgan (205-803-3443 or barbara@mbbc.org). The price is \$20 each. Deadline is Monday, December 16.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON & POP-UP SHOP

Benefitting The WellHouse

THURSDAY, DEC. 5, 10 A.M. - 6:30 P.M. & FRIDAY, DEC. 6, 8 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.

Pick up gifts for neighbors, co-workers, teachers, etc. All home-made items are bagged, tagged and ready for gift-giving! We have lots of choices, including:



- Peanut Butter Balls and Oreo Truffles
- Gingerbread Cookies and Salted Caramels
- Cheese Wafers & Pepper Jelly
- On-trend jewelry and other gifts (including fun gifts for the guys on your list)
- Christmas gift tags and stickers
- Custom luxury soy candles, soaps & lotions
- Doggie treats and MUCH more!

Box lunch is available for dining in or takeaway beginning Friday at 11 a.m. Individual lunch is \$20 per person or reserve a table of 8 for your group for \$160 via credit card at www.mbbc.org/well-houselunch or make a reservation by calling the church office at (205)871-0331. Reservations preferred but drop-ins accepted as space allows. All proceeds go to The WellHouse.



MOUNTAIN BROOK
BAPTIST CHURCH

Cooks for MISSION
A MOUNTAIN BROOK BAPTIST CHURCH INITIATIVE



3631 MONTEVALLO RD. S. ENTER AT THE PORTICO ON OVERBROOK RD.

Cooks On A Mission Pop-Up Shop & Luncheon

Thursday, December 5 & Friday, December 6

Kick off the Christmas season with a delicious luncheon and Pop-Up Shop to benefit The WellHouse. The Pop-Up Shop is open Thursday, December 5 from 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m. and Friday, December 6 from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Lunch is Friday beginning at 11 a.m. Take away lunch is also available. Pick up gifts for neighbors, co-workers, teachers, etc. All homemade items are bagged, tagged and ready for gift-giving! We have lots of choices, including:

- Peanut Butter Balls and Oreo Truffles
- Gingerbread Cookies and Salted Caramels
- Cheese Wafers, Cracker Toffee and Pepper Jelly
- On-trend jewelry, purses, shawls, ponchos and other gifts (including fun gifts for all the guys on your list)
- Christmas gift stickers
- Custom luxury soy candles, soaps & lotions
- Doggie treats and MUCH more!

Individual lunch is \$20 per person or reserve a table of 8 for your group for \$160 via credit card at www.mbbc.org/wellhouselunch or make a reservation by calling the church office at (205)871-0331. Reservations preferred but drop-ins accepted as space allows.

Cooks On A Mission December Food Sale

Wednesday, December 18 | 2-6 p.m.

Stop by MBBC to pick up lots of good food to make your holiday entertaining stress free. Back by popular demand we will have Party Ham and Swiss sandwiches, as well as Potato Chowder and French Toast Casserole, plus any remaining inventory from

Missions (*continued*)

previous months. The French Toast Casserole is perfect for Christmas morning or to take to a neighborhood brunch. And stock up on the Party Ham and Swiss Sandwiches before those bowl games and the Super Bowl. All proceeds will go to local missions projects.

Ministry Partner Spotlight: IMPACT Family Counseling

IMPACT Family Counseling, with offices in Vestavia and Southside, is a long-time ministry partner of MBBC. Founded in 1991, IMPACT provides outpatient counseling and a variety of other services such as mentoring, relationship education, family strengthening, and anger management to residents of the Birmingham area.

According to IMPACT Executive Director George Casey, IMPACT's client base is largely individuals and families who are dysfunctional in some way. Further, most are economically challenged. "Most of these folks do not have the kind of insurance that covers counseling. They are trying to keep the lights on and gas in the car so they can get to work. They don't have the resources to get the counseling that they need. But thanks to the support of MBBC and other churches, we can provide high-caliber, professional counseling at little or no cost," George shared.

Impact's programs include:

Anger Control Training is designed to empower individuals to accept responsibility and learn healthy skills for managing frustration and anger. Through guided instruction and candid interaction, participants will learn to identify underlying beliefs; recognize their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; and diffuse conflicts.

Cribs for Kids is a partnership between the Jefferson County Public Health Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, the Caring Foundation, and IMPACT Family Counseling to provide safe sleep training and a Pack 'n Play to parents/caregivers who do not have a safe sleep environment for their baby.

Family Strengthening is an eight-week course designed to help parents and teens build strong relationships by teaching family members to work together to resolve conflicts productively.

Mentoring is a one-on-one and group service IMPACT provides to children and young adults.

Relationships that Matter is a series of educational courses and seminars to help couples and individuals strengthen relationships and build healthy marriages.

Successful Schools is IMPACT's individual and group counseling and behavior aid support services designed to reduce the conflicts and problem behaviors exhibited by students.

IMPACT's U-Turn program is designed to empower individuals with skills for all of life, including parenting, relationship education, economic stability, and career readiness.

George asks that MBBC members pray for the organization and its clients. "We need that more than anything," he said. In addition, IMPACT is always looking for mentors for their one-to-one community based mentoring program. "You can make a difference in the life of an at-risk teen in as little as an hour a week," he said.

Missions (*continued*)

IMPACT is also accepting applicants for their junior board. The IMPACT Junior Board of Directors is a volunteer group of successful, socially conscious, and motivated young adults, ages 23-40, who are committed to supporting and promoting the mission of IMPACT Family Counseling. This will be done by building awareness and raising funds primarily through planning and executing events.

Finally, the organization accepts financial donations. If you would like to learn more, visit www.impactal.org.

Perry County Thanksgiving Donations

Just before Thanksgiving, MBBC Life Deacon and long-term Missions Committee member Jo Wills loaded up the church van full of food donated by MBBC members and headed south to Perry County, as she does every year.

“This year we are helping about 260 families who otherwise would not have much on their Thanksgiving table,” she said.

For many years, MBBC has provided much needed aid and support to many who live in Perry County. “We partner with a ministry called Sowing Seeds of Hope, which is based in Perry County. They also gather food items. We put it all together and fill bags with everything needed to make a Thanksgiving meal. MBBC also contributes funds to give a \$10 gift certificate to 120 of the neediest families to purchase any fresh items needed,” Jo shared.

Sowing Seeds of Hope develops a list of persons needing assistance at Thanksgiving and the local pastors and deacons deliver the bags to their church members.

On December 14, Jo and her helpers will put on a nativity pageant in Perry County. “We use a tent covered with burlap and a painted backdrop to set the manger scene. We use costumes from the MBBC Living Nativity, and we use the historic narration of Dr. Dotson Nelson to tell the Christmas story. We provide cookies and fruit and punch for each child attending the program, and distribute the shoe boxes lovingly filled with gifts by MBBC members,” she explained.

Jo is always looking for people to help her with the pageant. If you are interested, email Jo Wills (jo@taxspecialist.com).

Love Grantswood: Reading Volunteers

Volunteers go to read every other Tuesday morning from 9:30-10:30 a.m. This is a great way to become invested in our community by getting to know students and build partnerships with teachers. The dates for December are: December 3 & 17. If you're interested in getting involved in reading, contact Laurie Bowers (lauriebowers@att.net).



Children's Ministry

Angel Tree

Our Angel Tree is up to help children for Christmas. You can help in one of two ways: 1. Select an angel, shop and return the angel and gifts no later than the deadline. Angels are requesting gifts earlier and earlier. 2. Make a donation to MBBC and designate the gift "Angel Tree." Shoppers will buy for children not taken off of the tree as well as purchase gift cards for food and other wishes. Thank you for your generosity. In previous years, we have been able to help more than 100 children.

Mother/Daughter Gingerbread Dinner & Decorating

Sunday, December 1 | 5-7 p.m.

Moms, bring your daughter for a fun evening. We will have dinner and decorate gingerbread houses. Houses can be decorated traditionally, or you can pick a fun theme! The cost is \$20. Additional houses are \$10 if more than one house is needed. Please sign up by contacting Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org). A limited number of houses have been purchased.

Parent's Night Out/Friday Friend-zy

Friday, December 13 | 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Preschool and school age friends will have dinner, do crafts, and play games. Sign up no later than December 8 by contacting Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org). The cost is \$10 per child or a maximum of \$25 per family.

Preteen Christmas Escape Room

Friday, December 13 | 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Preteens, help find the missing gold. The clues will be in a special room. Bring a friend and join us for dinner and a night of fun. Cost is \$10. Sign up no later than December 11 by contacting Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org).

1st-3rd Grade Sunday School Party

Friday, December 20 | 5-7:30 p.m.

Bring a \$10 gift for dirty Santa (a game or gift card). We will have dinner, play games, and be angels or shepherds in the first two performances of the Living Nativity. Sign up by December 18 by contacting Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org).

4th-6th Grade Sunday School Party

Sunday, December 22 | 5-8:15 p.m.

Bring a \$10 gift for dirty Santa (a game or gift card). We will have dinner, play games, and participate in all three performances of the Living Nativity. Sign up no later than December 20 by contacting Sharon Howard (sharon@mbbc.org).

Save These Dates

January 31-February 1 • 4th-6th Grade Bible Drill Retreat

May 27-28 • Preteen Mystery Trip

June 20-27 • Family Mission Trip | Brunswick, Maine

July 6-10 • Vacation Bible School | Theme Concrete & Cranes

July 19-23 • Children's Camp | YMCA Camp Chandler

Student Ministry

The Brook

Sunday, December 1 | 6-7:30 p.m. | Student Ministry Area

Our final time at The Brook in 2019 will see us wrap up our study of the book of Acts.

Student Growth Groups Christmas Celebration

Wednesday, December 4 | 7-8 p.m.

Each growth group will celebrate the end of the semester together. Check with your Growth Group Leaders for details.

Progressive Christmas Party

Sunday, December 8 | 5-8 p.m.

We will meet at the church then progress from home to home to eat and party! Feel free to invite your friends. Please RSVP at mbbc.org/progressive by December 4 so we can ensure we have sufficient transportation and food.

Living Nativity & After Parties

December 20, 21, 22 | 6-10:30 p.m.

Students are invited to serve in each of the three Living Nativity performances each night. Following the final performance each evening, you are encouraged to stick around for an after party—a fun fellowship event for students who participate in the Living Nativity.

Wall-O-Money

Remember to be gathering and bringing back your contributions to our “All Things Are Possible” Capital Campaign Wall-O-Money. It would be awesome if our Student Ministry family could complete this BIG goal, but it will take YOUR help to make it happen. If you’ve not yet had the opportunity to pick up your envelope(s), there’s still time! Remember: Delete—Delay—Donate. We can do this!

Winter Youth Summit

January 17-19 | Huntsville

Registration has closed, but late additions may still be possible.

Contact Ben Winder (ben@mbbc.org) if you are interested in joining us. Participants, remember to select your Breakout Session choices at mbbc.org/WYS.

Women's Ministry

2020 Women's Retreat

January 24-25 | Pursell Farms, Alabama

Ladies, if you're looking for something to add to your Christmas wish list, why don't you ask your loved one to sign you up for our 2020 Women's Retreat and a weekend of fellowship, Bible study, and fun at Pursell Farms? Arrival times on Friday, January 24 are flexible; you are welcome to arrive anytime in the afternoon (dinner is on your own) and we'll gather for our first session at 6:30 p.m. Our plans are to finish up on Saturday afternoon, January 25, and return to Birmingham before dinner. Cost is \$150 and includes lodging, retreat t-shirt, continental breakfast items on Saturday, and lunch on Saturday. Lodging will be two people to a room and we'll be staying at the Inn at Pursell Farms. Spots are limited and the registration deadline is January 5, so sign up today to secure your space by visiting mbbc.org/womensretreat or by contacting Amy Hirsch (amy@mbbc.org or 205-803-3471).

ACTIVE Christian Living

ACTIVE Trip: *Les Miserables*

Saturday, January 11 | 1 p.m. | \$90

This wonderful musical, presented by Broadway in Birmingham, is coming to our city next year in January. This is a great opportunity that you will not want to miss. The musical, written by Alain Boublil, Claude-Michel Schönberg, and John Cameron, had its premier on October 8, 1985. It was adapted from French poet and novelist Victor Hugo's 1862 novel of the same name. The musical was a huge hit, and quickly became popular throughout the Western world, developing such a reputation that it even had its own movie interpretation made in 2012. We only have 20 tickets to this masterpiece, so make sure you purchase one as soon as possible.

ACTIVE Christian Living's 5th Annual Christmas Gala Featuring the Barbershop Men's Chorus: Voices Of The South

Thursday, December 12 | 6 p.m. | Hudson Hall and Sanctuary | \$25

Join us again this year as the Cooks On a Mission cater for us an exquisite meal in the elegant Hudson Hall. Following dinner we will adjourn to the Sanctuary to hear a delightful program of Christmas favorites presented by Birmingham's own Voices Of The South Barbershop Men's Chorus. You won't be disappointed! Tickets will be for sale on Sundays in Hudson Hall during the doughnut fellowship before Sunday Morning Bible Study and again in the Narthex both before and after the worship services, but spaces are limited.

ACTIVE Christian Living (*continued*)

ACTIVE Christian Living Luncheon **“History of Big Band Music in Birmingham”**

Michael Lingo, trombonist

Thursday, January 9 | 11:30 a.m. | \$7

Michael Lingo will be our guest speaker in January. He is a Vice President and Financial Advisor with Morgan Stanley here in Birmingham, but he also happens to be a very fine trombone player and he plays in several groups in town. While he began his professional career as a music educator with the Bessemer School System, he quickly transitioned into his financial advisor career. He never lost his love for music and making great music with other fine musicians in our town. Mike has most recently played at our church this past July with the “Just Friends Little Big Band” for our ACTIVE Christian Living’s “Night on the Red Carpet.” He played for us again this past September 29 as part of the brass quartet used to celebrate our church’s 75th Anniversary worship service. Mike is very actively involved with Super Jazz Birmingham. Comprised of 21 of Birmingham’s top professional jazz players, SuperJazz has performed concerts in the Birmingham area each year since 1978. Mike will be speaking on the topic “History of Big Band Music in Birmingham.”

Contact Joseph Mendum (sradult@mbbc.org or 205-803-3488) to inquire about reservations.

Contact Kely Hatley (kely@mbbc.org or 205-803-3458) for more information about our ACTIVE Christian Living ministry.



Meet Our New Member

We are so excited to welcome our new members to Mountain Brook Baptist Church. In the following pages, you are going to meet them and find out more about their faith journey.



Brett Knight

What led you to MBBC?

My wife, Taylor Jordan Knight, grew up in the church. We began attending regularly when we were expecting our first child, Jordan.

What have you enjoyed the most about MBBC?

I have enjoyed the fellowship of our church and the people I have met and become friends with in our Sunday School Class and my Growth Group. I have also enjoyed all of the preschool activities for Jordan and how MBBC has built, and continues to build, a strong religious foundation for her.

Tell us about your faith.

I attended church every now and then growing up but did not have a specific church to call home. My faith has grown stronger while at MBBC and continues to grow through the many opportunities that are provided by our church.

Where were you born and raised? Tell us about your family.

I was born and raised in Selma, Alabama. I have lived in Birmingham since 2009 and married Taylor on June 11, 2011. We have a 3 ½ year old daughter, Jordan, who attends the MBBC Early Learning Center, and another daughter, Maggie, due around Christmas. My wife's whole extended family (the Jordans) are members of MBBC.

Where do you work?

I attended the University of Alabama for my undergraduate degree and moved to the Birmingham area in 2009 to attend Cumberland School of Law. I am now an attorney with the law firm of Jaffe, Hanle, Whisonant & Knight P.C.

Interested in joining MBBC?
Talk to one of our staff members or
find out more at mbbc.org/im-new

My hobbies and interests are ...

Alabama football, hiking, traveling with my family, and yard work.

My favorite restaurant is ...

El Cazador.

My favorite Bible Study is...

In our Growth Group, we are studying the gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles. Paul's transformation has been very enlightening to me and has helped me understand the true meaning of being a disciple of Jesus Christ.



Brett Knight

Joined November 10, 2019

MBBC Staff Members



Dr. Doug Dortch
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Want to find out more about MBBC
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Mr. Ben Winder
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Generosity Scorecard as of November 17, 2019

2019 Ministries Budget	\$3,447,078.00
Weekly Receipts	\$106,520.10
YTD Receipts, includes prepays	\$2,578,064.92
Average Weekly Budget	\$66,289.90
YTD Budget	\$3,049,338.17
Weekly Net	\$40,230.20
YTD Net	-\$471,273.25

Remaining receipts required to achieve annual budget:

\$869,013.08

Ways to Give



PLATES



ONLINE

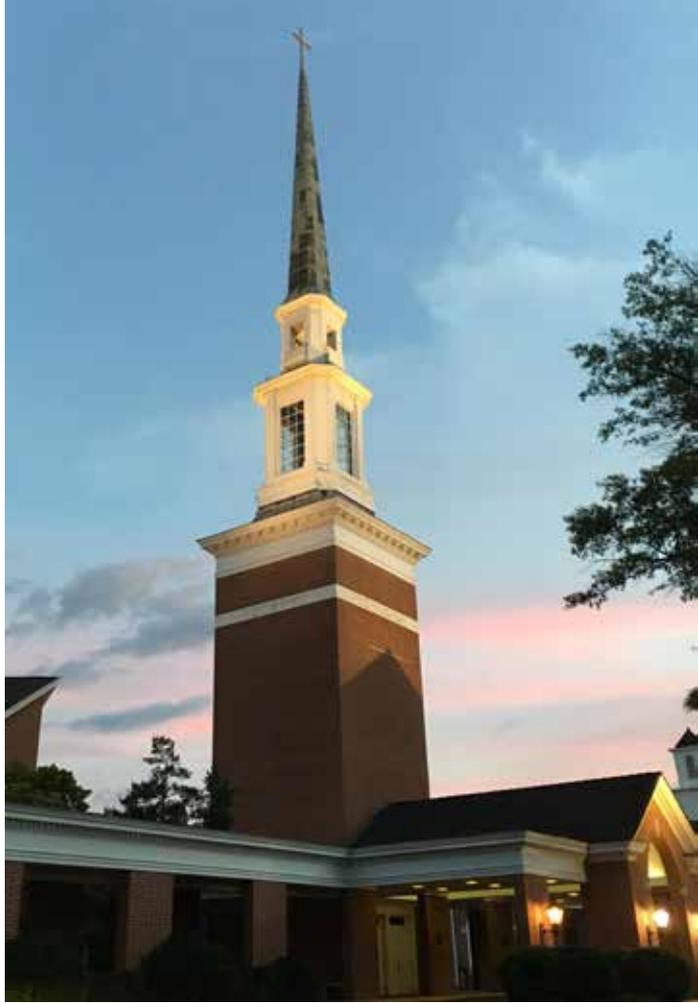
To give online,
visit mbbc.org/give.



TEXT

Text STOREHOUSE
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Love God. Live with Grace
and Generosity.



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MBBC Guest (password 803-3452)



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