

THE HARAN HERALD

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025



HARANBAPTIST.COM

7539 Old Bent Mountain Road,
Roanoke, VA 24018

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

Sitting here in Hill City, South Dakota examining all the man-made beauty surrounding this area. Mount Rushmore, the Crazy Horse Memorial, a beautiful arched wooden bridge that one passes over to get to Mt. Rushmore, all beautiful structures. Then we drive through Custer Park and the Badlands and see the beauty God created and there is absolutely no comparison! Man does amazing things. God does perfect things! The beauty of this land as we drove from Standing Rock to Hill City is awe-inspiring! God's work always leaves me speechless!

Do you really appreciate what we have at Haran Baptist? I feel like most of you do. Those who went to Bradshaw, WV have a deeper understanding of having to do with what you have. The church there was an old elementary school. Nestled way back in a valley between two high mountains. The people there are victims of politics and the closing of most of the coal mines. Yet, Christians continue to persevere in bringing the Gospel to all who live there by caring for their needs both physically and spiritually.

Now imagine sitting in an old American Baptist Quonset hut style church. It is either extremely hot or extremely cold. Either way, Indians and others are gathered to worship and hear the truth of God's Word. Flies are abundant along with box elders and wasps. The building does have heat and air but the bugs are constant. Through all the swatting God is still honored and praised! Time was air-conditioning did not exist in the two churches in Cannon Ball but through prayer and a lot of volunteer work, both are places to honor God! There is no youth ministry but there is children's ministry. Snow does not stop services and there is always light food or snacks. There is a piano but only gets played when Mary Etta or some other guest is there.

Haran Baptist is fortunate! Youth ministry, music ministry and a body of believers that support both in prayer and money the ministry of the church! We are entering the so-called holiday season. It is important to keep in mind that not all churches that love the Lord are able to celebrate in the same fashion as us. Christmas is second place to me in celebrations with Resurrection

Sunday being my favorite! I do love Christmas, of that you can be sure. But not for the presents! I love it because God became human and provided a way for me to be with Him forever! Thanksgiving is a close third as it gives me the opportunity to express how grateful I am to God for my salvation, my wife, my family, and my church!

This season, I am asking you to remember to keep Christ foremost in your celebration and reflect on those whose church may not be fancy but their dedication and love for the Lord is just as great!

May the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

—1 Peter 5:10-11

—Pastor Don



*Thanksgiving
Dinner*

SATURDAY, NOV 22, 6 PM

...THE GLORY OF THE LORD SHONE AROUND THEM...

a Night Like This

DEC 14 CHRISTMAS WORSHIP 11 AM

NOV 30

HARAN KIDS
**ONE
STARRY
NIGHT**

WITH HANGING
OF THE GREENS

DEC 7

HANDBELL
CHOIR
**MIDNIGHT
CLEAR**

DEC 14

PRAISE BAND
**A NIGHT
LIKE THIS**

CHRISTMAS
WORSHIP

DEC 21

CHOIR
GOD
**WITH US
THIS HOLY
NIGHT**

DEC 24

CHRISTMAS
EVE
**NIGHT
DIVINE**

5:00 PM



A NIGHT LIKE WHAT?

I hate to say it. But you know it's true. Half of what we sing about Christmas night in Bethlehem is just plain made up.

The little town of Bethlehem was not lying still. Nothing was silent or calm. We don't know if it was a midnight clear or if the stars were brightly shining. I'm pretty sure the little Lord Jesus cried. The manger was probably in the lower floor of a house, not in a stable. The shepherds did not see the star. The wise men weren't there that night at all—they had to come all the way from Persia. They weren't kings, there were an unspecified number of them, and they probably rode horses. Had there been a little drummer boy, Mary would have told him to stop making so much noise.

But...none of that is really that important. These are just details we've made up to fill in our imaginations. (Luke, writing his gospel, clearly did not anticipate his readers' preoccupation with weather conditions.)

What's important is what the Bible *does* tell us about that night.

IT WAS THE FULLNESS OF TIME.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive adoption as sons (Galatians 4:4-5). For thousands of years Israel had been watching, waiting, longing for their Messiah, long promised and prophesied. But the time was finally right. There are human explanations for this—the roads and the common languages of the Roman empire made it easy for the gospel to spread through the world—but of course these are just guesses. (God isn't sitting around waiting for human empires to make His plans possible!) In His sovereign plan, this was the time. This was the night.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH...

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). John is very careful to make it clear that this was God who became man. Jesus was in the beginning with God, He was with God, and He *was* God—but He became an actual physical man, taking on flesh to dwell with us. John also writes in his first epistle: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched...* (1 John 1:1). Mary and Joseph and the shepherds were the first to see the Savior with their own eyes, to touch Him, to know that He was here.

MUSIC NOTES

...AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John, as a disciple of Jesus, saw His glory as the Lamb of God and the risen King, but long before any of that, the shepherds were given the honor of seeing the glory of the Lord. *And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them* (Luke 2:9). They hurried to find this baby and found Him in the most humble scene possible, completely lacking any earthly glory. But they recognized what they were seeing. *The true Light which gives light to every man was coming into the world* (John 1:9).

GOD REACHED DOWN TO MAN.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke 2:13-14). When the angels told of peace on earth, they didn't mean peace as we tend to understand it. There never has been peace on this earth in human terms. The angels were speaking of something different: peace between God and man.

The Bible tells us something else about God's time: *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly* (Romans 5:6). The peace of Christmas has nothing to do with human efforts. We are powerless. Only God could make it possible—and He offers it freely to everyone. *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God* (John 1:12).

This is the hope, joy, peace, and love of that night in Bethlehem. The time had come, the Word became flesh, we beheld His glory, and the chasm between God and man was bridged. This is the good news of great joy for all people!

We read that *the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen* (Luke 2:20). Join us to do the same! Join us for our Christmas services to rejoice in the gift of God so freely given. Come remember a night like this: when God's glory came down.

—Anna Ruth

A NIGHT LIKE THIS

Was it a night like this?
One star would rule the sky,
Announcing the greatest hope
In unending light.
The promise now lives.
Was it a night like this?

Was it a night like this,
When shepherds heard the sound
Of angels declaring glory,
Glory come down?
Oh, what a gift.
Was it a night like this?

Was it a night like this?
There in a mother's arms,
She looked in her Savior's eyes
the very first time?
Imagine the bliss.
Was it a night like this?

Glory, glory to God in the highest,
Goodwill and peace now to all men.
Emmanuel, God's with us.

Could it be a night like this,
That we fall to our knees,
Awed by this love poured out,
So rich and free?
As real now as then,
Let it be a night like this.

Glory, glory to God in the highest,
Goodwill and peace now to all men.
Emmanuel, God's with us.
Oh, God's with us.

Words and music by Krissy Nordhoff, Alisa Turner, and Michael Farren. Copyright 2019 Nordinary Music, Integrity's Alleluia! Music, Mercury Life Publishing.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. —2 Thessalonians 3:3

The last few months we have been studying the book of Numbers in our Sunday School classes. We followed the Israelites as they journeyed from Mount Sinai through the wilderness to the edge of the promised land. Like most expeditions, this journey was packed with unexpected events, it was long, and the Israelites faced many challenges.

How did they respond? With grumbling, frustration, and disobedience to God's commands. But through all these events, God's faithfulness to His people never faltered. He was with them.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST NOV 9, 9:00

Everyone is
invited!

Our journeys in life will sometimes take unexpected turns, leaving us frustrated or unsure of what lies ahead. But just like the Israelites we are not left alone to navigate through this life alone. We serve a God who is trustworthy and faithful and always with us. Amen.

—Bobby Ferguson

YOUTH NEWS

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. —Genesis 1:27

This year our youth are studying a book by Max Lucado called *Life Lessons from Genesis*. Genesis is the first book of the Bible and is a book of beginnings. God wants us to know where we came from so that we can learn where it is that we are going once we leave this earthly home and head to our eternal home.

In Genesis we get to experience creation and how God formed the sky and the earth out of nothing. We see how sin entered the world through the wrong choices of Adam and Eve.

But mostly the youth get to experience and understand how God made each of us in His image and how He has a special relationship with each of us.

God loves us all and He wants to have a personal relationship with us, so that one day we will be with Him in heaven. Amen.

—Bobby Ferguson

ACTIVITIES & REC

Wow! What a huge success the Fall Festival was this year! Again, this was a great way for our church to reach out to the community around us. The activities committee would like to thank everyone who volunteered and who helped to make this fall festival the success it was! We raised just over \$2,000, between the festival itself and the silent auction! We would like to congratulate our chili cook-off winner this year, Judy Laprade! We look forward to hosting again next year!

Our next event together will be the **Thanksgiving Dinner** on Saturday, November 22 at 6 p.m. This is always a special event for our church. We will need at least five turkeys and two hams for this dinner. If you are willing to cook a turkey or ham, please contact the church office, or let me know as soon possible so we can plan accordingly. As a reminder, keep your receipts so you can be reimbursed for the purchase of turkeys and the hams. We ask (if able) to bring a couple of sides dishes and/or dessert. Please come and join us for an evening of great food, fellowship and giving thanks!

Joy to the world! It's that time of year again to go out as a church and spread some CHRISTmas cheer! This is always a fun-filled time for us all. We are currently in the process of planning a date/time in December to go caroling at some local nursing homes. Please keep a lookout for more information. I will make an announcement soon, as well as getting a sign-up sheet together for those who are interested in participating once details are finalized.

Blessings to all,
Brittany Stoots

LIBRARY NEWS

10 Things to Thank God For Daily

by Lauren Ayers (New Spring Church) + added comments

It's easy to be thankful on Thanksgiving (and Christmas). It's an entire holiday season about gratitude. Across America, families will watch parades, eat turkey, and celebrate God's provision over the past year.

God wants us to be thankful, but His vision for thankfulness is bigger than a once-a-year celebration.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 tells us to give thanks all the time and for everything. We are called be thankful daily, not just once a year.

1. A Savior. Jesus died for us (John 3:16). He paid the price for our sin so that we didn't have to. Jesus' sacrifice is a beautiful example of how much God loves each of us.

2. A fresh start. Every day is a new day (Lamentations 3:22-23). We have a God of grace whose mercies begin new every morning. Our past doesn't define our future.

3. A purpose. If you're reading this, God is not done with you (Ephesians 2:10). He created you on purpose, with purpose, and for a purpose. We are God's handiwork, uniquely designed to carry out His plans.

4. A beautiful world. God's creativity is on display 24/7 (Nehemiah 9:6). How many times do we drive from point A to point B and never stop to witness the beauty of God's creation?

5. The ability to worship. We have the freedom to worship Jesus every day of the week (Psalm 100:4). We sing lullabies to our children and belt out our favorite music in the car, why would we not sing out to our Savior?

6. Peace in any circumstance. God does not promise that life will be easy, but He does promise us peace (John 14:27). When we take our eyes off our circumstances and focus on Him, He gives us peace.

7. A full life. Jesus doesn't want us to just endure life; He wants us to enjoy life. John 10:10 says Jesus came so that we could not only have life, but have it to the full.

8. The Bible. The Bible doesn't just speak of things in the past; it speaks to us today (Hebrews 4:12 and 2 Timothy

3:16). Through the Bible, God instructs us, encourages us, and guides us.

9. The church. We don't have to walk through life alone (Hebrews 10:24-25). God's church is a community of people doing the best they can to follow Jesus' example. In the church, we find the encouragement to grow in love and good deeds.

10. A reason to hope. We serve a God who is not only a promise maker, but also a promise keeper (Numbers 23:19 and Romans 8:28). He promises to work all things together for our good. There is no greater hope than in a promise fulfiller who has conquered death.

Every day, we can be grateful for God's grace, God's Son (Jesus), God's blessings, loved ones like family and friends, personal well-being such as health and a home, and everyday things like food, clean water/air, and freedom. Other things to consider include nature, pets, and simple joys like a good book or music.

Our library is grateful for the books that Martha Knighton donated. They include the following:

- *The Photograph* by Beverly Lewis—donated in memory of Sandra Sloan
- *Sisters of Mercy Flats* by Lori Copeland
- *Land of Dreams* by Laurine Snelling
- *Once Upon a Christmas Carol* by Melody Carlson

We also have available the *Share Jesus Without Fear* Leader Kit (Book, 2 DVDs, 1 CD ROM) that we studied in our four-session adult Bible study.

There were several DVDs anonymously donated:

- *A Walk Through Revelation* by Pastor John Hagee
- *The Greatest Heroes of the Bible*—Republic Pictures
- *The Story Lives On* (The Billy Graham Library Dedication & Celebration Event)

And CDs:

- *Book of Revelation* by Pastor John Hagee
- *Prophecy* by Dr. David Jeremiah

We are so fortunate to have such a loving church family who share this invaluable material with our family members. As time allows, please take time to see if there is any book, DVD, CD, or research information that you would like to check out. We would love to see our wonderful resources utilized!

"We should certainly be thankful for our blessings but we should also make our blessings count!"

—Denise Carey

THANK YOU

Dear Church Family,
We wanted to thank you for your donation to Good Samaritan Hospice in memory of Cliff Dillon. It was so thoughtful. We also appreciate all the prayers and phone calls.

Love,
Matt, Nancy, Ethan,
Seth, and Jessica Dillon

Haran Baptist Church,
We want to extend our heartfelt thanks for the consistent prayers, thoughtful gifts and generous meals that you all provide to us throughout the year. Knowing that we have a community of faith standing with us is a true blessing!
Back Creek Staff

To the members of Haran Baptist,
Just wanted to thank you so much for the lovely breakfast you provided us. You are all so supportive of our school, and we appreciate it so much!

Thank you again!
Kate Metz, Back Creek teacher

First and foremost, Jesus is King. Thank you for all your cards and letters. I cannot tell you how important they have all been to me. Please forgive me for just now thanking you for your blessings to me. Thank you for your constant prayers. I have felt all of them. This year has been rough but I thank God every day when He enables me to get out of the bed and stand and then walk. I am still able to drive. I have my groceries delivered now so I do not get out of breath grocery shopping. I am OK with how my Lord takes care of me.

Again please forgive me for not writing sooner. I am the world's worst with mailing cards and letters. I have included one of my poems for you.

Love,
Pat Taylor

PHOTOS

If you take pictures of church events, we'd love for you to share them with us! Send photos to Anna Ruth at haranbaptist@gmail.com.

*Fall Festival,
October 11*







THE AMAZING JOURNEY OF A SIMPLE SHOEBOX GIFT BEGINS WITH YOU



PACKING, COLLECTING, & SHIPPING

People pack shoebox gifts each year to bless children in need around the world. Churches and groups collect these boxes the third week of November. Then, thousands of volunteers inspect and prepare the shoeboxes for international shipping.



INTERNATIONAL

DISTRIBUTION

Long before shoeboxes arrive in more than 100 countries, volunteer National Leadership Teams train pastors and community leaders who are eager to share the Gospel and bless children.



INTERNATIONAL

OUTREACH EVENTS

Churches around the world hand out shoebox gifts at festive outreach events where the Good News is clearly presented. Along with the gifts, we offer Gospel booklets called The Greatest Gift to help shoebox recipients learn about God's Greatest Gift, His Son, Jesus Christ.



INTERNATIONAL

DISCIPLESHIP & MULTIPLICATION

After receiving a shoebox gift, children have the opportunity to enroll in our 12-lesson follow-up discipleship program, The Greatest Journey. As a result of what they learn, boys and girls grow in Christ and share Him with others. Families are reached, churches grow, new churches are started, and communities are transformed.



THANK YOU to everyone who took part in packing shoebox gifts for Operation Christmas Child! Our boxes are ready to be labelled and sent to a Samaritan's Purse processing center (ours go to Boone, NC) and then distributed to children around the world. In past years, our boxes have gone to Colombia, Honduras, Peru, Paraguay, Ecuador, Ghana, Togo, Angola, Burundi, Zambia, Uganda, and Ukraine!

OCC MISSION

"Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." —Mark 10:14

The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations.

HISTORY

In the summer of 1993, Samaritan's Purse President Franklin Graham received a call from a man in England asking if he'd be willing to fill shoeboxes with gifts for children in war-torn Bosnia. Franklin agreed, but figured Christmas was months away. He forgot about the promise until he received a call back around Thanksgiving asking about the gifts.

Franklin asked his friend, the late Pastor Ross Rhoads of Calvary Church of Charlotte to see if he could help with the need. A Sunday shortly afterward, Pastor Rhoads demonstrated for his congregation how to fill a shoebox with simple gifts and encouraged them to include a letter to the child as well. Within weeks, the church had 11,000 shoeboxes lining their hallways.

Due to their generosity and additional gifts from Canada, Samaritan's Purse sent 28,000 shoebox gifts to children in the Balkans that Christmas. Through these gifts, we communicated to children and their families what the angel said to the shepherds about Jesus' birth: "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people" (Luke 2:10, ESV).

Every year since, Samaritan's Purse has collected shoebox gifts filled with toys, school supplies, and hygiene items for children around the world. Since 1993, more than **232 million children** in more than 170 countries and territories have received an Operation Christmas Child shoebox. The project delivers not only the joy of what, for many kids, is their first gift ever, but also gives them a tangible expression of God's love.

THE GREATEST JOURNEY

Seeking to follow Jesus' command to "make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19), we have trained over 2.2 million volunteers from these congregations to teach The Greatest Journey, our dynamic follow-up discipleship course for shoebox recipients. Since 2009, 46 million children have enrolled in this 12-lesson program to learn how to follow Christ and share Him with others. More than 24 million of these boys and girls have made a decision to accept Jesus as their Savior during the course. Many are now praying for and sharing their faith with family and friends. As a result of this ever-expanding witness, new churches are starting and communities are being transformed!

BEHIND THE SCENES

This whole process is made possible by caring individuals who pack shoeboxes full of quality gifts for children in need. Many of these shoebox packers also use our Follow Your Box feature to discover the country where their gift will be delivered.

More than 11,500 year-round volunteers also get the word out about the Samaritan's Purse project across the U.S. In addition, some 80,000 short-term volunteers serve in more than 4,500 drop-off locations across the country every year during National Collection Week, the third week in November. Each shoebox collected then travels to one of eight processing centers to be inspected and prepared for international shipment by 100,000 volunteers. All of this is supported by the 14,000 volunteers in our prayer network.

Millions of Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts are collected each year from locations in North America and throughout the world, including Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Together we are working to see "a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Rev. 7:9-10).



LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING



WHAT IS THE LOTTIE MOON OFFERING?

In 1873, Lottie Moon was appointed as a missionary to China. She spent nearly 40 years sharing the gospel with love, courage, and unwavering faith. Her letters home inspired churches to pray and give, leading to the **Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions**.

Today, this offering supports missionaries and helps take the life-transforming message of Jesus to the nations. 100% of your gift directly supports missionary presence around the world so lives can be transformed through the gospel.



WEEK OF PRAYER: NOVEMBER 30-DECEMBER 7

Southern Baptists observe a **Week of Prayer for International Missions** each year before the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering emphasis. Will you join your heart with others to pray for missionaries around the world who are faithfully sharing the gospel?

Watch for the Lottie Moon prayer guide in your bulletin on Sunday, November 30 to read stories of missionaries and ministries supported by your prayers and by your gifts to the Lottie Moon Offering.



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

NOVEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

2 Robert Finken	8 Irelynn Yaunsem	20 Cindy Koon
4 Allie Avery	9 Betty Moran	21 Lisa Scott
5 Joyce Van Dellen	11 Kylie Ferguson	29 Steve Smith
7 Aubrey Stoots	15 Lynn Farley	Pat Taylor

ANNIVERSARIES

2 Floyd & Nancy Agee
16 David & Charlotte Crouch

DECEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

1 Debi Avery	13 Marie Wray	27 Darrell Hensley
2 Dianna Morris	19 Ray Franklin	Carolyn Robbins
7 Linda Walker	Hunter Hartman	

ANNIVERSARIES

7 Kevin & Catey Martin
20 Ron & Sarah Francis

JANUARY

BIRTHDAYS

2 Tori White	16 Don Summerville	28 Neil Wray
3 Amaleah Altis	18 Ruger Emery	30 Doug Johnson
5 Tina Robinson	21 Martha Knighton	Brittany Stoots
14 Kinsley Stoots	28 Nate Johnson	

ANNIVERSARIES

22 Zeke & Lynn Winfree	29 Allen & Victoria White
26 Larry & Debi Avery	

Are we missing a birthday or anniversary? Email the church office at haranbaptist@gmail.com and let us know.