



Bethel Baptist

December 2016

Thoughts from Pastor Gene

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham: (Matthew 1:1)

The book of *Matthew* was written especially for the Jewish people. *Matthew* includes about fifty direct citations from the Old Testament and there are around seventy-five references to events found in the Old Testament. Matthew wanted to show unbelieving Jews that Jesus was the Messiah and he also wanted to instruct and encourage Jewish believers.

Jewish males trace their lineage through their fathers. By listing Jesus' genealogy, Matthew identified Him as a true descendant of Abraham and a rightful heir to the throne of David. But Matthew's Gospel goes beyond personal genealogies and historical events. Matthew presents Jesus as both the King of the Jews and the Savior of the world. Matthew shares a universal message that is for everyone.

D. James Kennedy wrote the following thoughtful words in his devotional *New Every Morning*:

"Christ's life on earth was absolutely unique. He never learned because He knew all things. He never apologized because he never did anything wrong. He never corrected his teachings; he never sought advice. Never before or since has such a Man as this lived, who invariably evoked from the hearts and minds of those who beheld Him the startled question, "What manner of man is this?" The baby asleep on Mary's lap was Christ our King, Lord of the universe. What a privilege to know Him!"

A familiar quote reminds us how insightful and responsive God is to our greatest need – *"If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator. If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist. If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist. But since our greatest need was forgiveness, God sent us a Savior."*

God's goodness and generosity were remarkably displayed when Jesus entered the world as the virgin-born son of Mary. God the Son lived a perfect life and sacrificed Himself on the cross to pay the debt for our sins. He rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. Everyone who believes and trusts in Jesus receives God's forgiveness and begins a new life as a child of God that will never end.



Christmastime Service & Party

On **Sunday, December 18**, we'll be combining a special worship service with a *Happy Birthday Jesus Party!* Our worship service at 11:00 am will include a special presentation from our kids and Christmas music. After the worship service, we'll gather in the fellowship area to sing Happy Birthday to Jesus! There will be surprises for the children and treats and hot chocolate for everyone. You and your guests will be immersed in the joy of Christmas and the love God has for us!

faith &
hope love

Christmas Eve Service

We hope you'll join us on **Saturday, December 24** at **5 pm** as we hold our first Christmas Eve service! This service will be in lieu of a morning worship service on Christmas Day.

This moving service will include Communion, candle lighting, and special music. We'll have the opportunity to gather with family and friends in a traditional and timeless way that reminds us of our Savior's miraculous birth, sacrificial death, and Second Coming. We hope you'll make plans to attend this worshipful celebration and invite someone to join you!



Christmas Offering

The members and friends of Bethel have again demonstrated an impressive concern for others this fall. Over 100 shoeboxes were sent out via Operation Christmas Child and the offering for Brother Hoy's Christmas Food Drive totaled \$3,766.82! As 2016 winds down, we have an opportunity to show our love and appreciation for our church. Our annual Christmas Offering this year will address three specific needs:

- Ensuring the church's General Account closes out the year on a positive note
- Funding the 2017 expense associated with the lawn service that maintains the back of our property
- Covering the 2017 expense associated with the church's website

Let's follow the example of our Heavenly Father this month and be a "*cheerful giver*" (II Corinthians 9:7)!

Annual Business Meeting

This year's Annual Business Meeting was held on Sunday, December 4. Members voted on the 2017 Proposed Budget and the nominees for church officers. The budget and the entire slate of candidates were approved unanimously. The 2017 Budget goes into effect in January and the church officers will also begin their terms in January. Thanks to everyone who voted and thanks to the men and women who will be joining others to serve and lead our congregation.

Bill Morris – Deacon (2 years)
Kelly Dodd – Trustee (2 years)
Karen Gardner – Trustee (2 years)
LeAnn Huddleston – Missions Committee (1 year)
Tim Moore – Missions Committee (2 years)
Gayle Thomas – Missions Committee (2 years)
Glenda Atkinson – Church Clerk (1 year)



There's More to Christmas...

There's more, much more to Christmas than candle-light and cheer;
it's the spirit of sweet friendship that brightens all the year;
it's thoughtfulness and kindness, it's hope reborn again,
for peace, for understanding and for goodwill to men!

(Anonymous)

