

DECEMBER 2022

THEME: THE TREE



MORATTICO BAPTIST CHURCH

THE HILL

PASTOR'S CORNER

One of the great honors of my life was to be the congregant of and deacon for Rev. Craig Smith. I can say with certainty that serving him as my pastor brought me great joy and I know that he appreciated my loyalty. In addition, one of the greatest privileges of my life was to call him my friend.

If in our lifetimes we make one special, life changing friendship, we can consider ourselves blessed. For me, Reverend Craig Smith was that friend. From the moment Jan and I walked into the doors of Morattico Baptist Church, we knew that he was a special person; a kind and loving person, and the kind of pastor that we could wrap our arms around. From 2002 and up to the day he went home to the Lord, our friendship grew and I considered him to be as a brother. I miss him and I think of him every day. I feel his love for Christ when I am preparing to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Recently we planted a Sweet Bay Magnolia tree among the oaks. This tree stands in
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THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

It is difficult to pinpoint when and why Christians first began to use evergreen trees at Christmastime. There are many legends and myths regarding the origin of Christmas trees. For example, the ancient Romans brought greenery into their homes in winter to symbolize life in the midst of bleakness and death.

German Christians in the early part of the 16th century may have been the first to use evergreen trees during Advent and Christmas. Those trees had no candles on them, but were decorated with items on hand: colored paper, gold foil, apples and dolls. German immigrants brought the custom to America around 1700 when they settled in Pennsylvania.

Some scholars say that evergreen trees represent Christ, because they too, are everlasting. Others say that Christmas trees remind us of salvation which came to us through Christ who died on a "tree." St. Peter wrote: "He [Christ] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

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A Special
DEDICATION



This fall a tree was planted in the church yard in memory of our dear friend and pastor, Craig Smith. Plans are to landscape around and place a memorial bench beside the tree as well as have a dedication service.

A little about the tree...

The tree is a Sweet Bay Magnolia, colloquially known on the Northern Neck as "Swamp Magnolia". The blossoms have the most wonderful scent in late spring-early summer, and we love that it is so significant in the botanical world, just as Craig was so significant in the trajectory of Morattico Baptist Church.

Magnolia virginiana, most commonly known as **sweetbay magnolia**, or merely **sweetbay** (also laurel magnolia, swampbay, swamp magnolia, white bay, or beaver tree), is a member of the magnolia family, Magnoliaceae.

The flowers are creamy white, with 6-15 petal-like tepals. The flowers carry a very strong vanilla scent that can sometimes be noticed several hundred yards away. The fruit is a fused aggregate of follicles, pinkish-red when mature, with the follicles splitting open to release the 1 cm long seeds.

Continued from left

The seeds are black but covered by a thin fleshy red coat, which is attractive to some fruit-eating birds. They swallow the seeds, digest the red coating, and disperse the seeds in their droppings.

Magnolia virginiana is often grown as an ornamental tree in gardens, and used in horticultural applications to give an architectural feel to landscape designs. It is an attractive tree for parks and large gardens, grown for its large, conspicuous, scented flowers, for its clean, attractive foliage, and for its fast growth. In warmer areas *Magnolia virginiana* is valued for its evergreen foliage.

The English botanist and missionary John Banister collected *Magnolia virginiana* in the southeastern United States in 1678 and sent it to England, where it flowered for Bishop Henry Compton. This species was the first magnolia to be cultivated in England, although it was soon overshadowed by the evergreen, larger-flowered southern magnolia (*M. grandiflora*)



O Christmas Tree! History of the Traditional Carol

It wouldn't be Christmas without carols and what better than one about a tree! The popular Christmas carol "O Tannenbaum" was written in Germany in the mid-1500s. "O Christmas Tree" is a wildly popular holiday song. In fact, the song is so popular that there are many different versions, each of which is based on a traditional German folk song. That song, "O Tannenbaum," is centuries old and has nothing to do with Christmas.

A Tannenbaum is a fir tree (die Tanne) or Christmas tree. Although most Christmas trees today are spruce (Fichten) rather than Tannen, the qualities of the evergreen have inspired musicians to write several Tannenbaum songs in German over the years. Surprisingly the song was not related to Christmas originally. It became connected with the traditional Christmas tree by the middle of the 19th century and sung as a Christmas carol.

The best-known version of a Tannenbaum song was penned in 1824 by Ernst Gebhard Salomon Anschütz. The lyrics do not actually refer to the Bible story of Christmas or describe a decorated Christmas tree. Instead, they refer to the fir's evergreen quality as a symbol of constancy and faithfulness.



+Christian Symbol+



Cedar Tree

A species of evergreen used to decorate for Christmas, the tall cedar tree symbolizes Christ's majesty year-round. Cedars of Lebanon, which have grown to 130 feet, were known to Old Testament people. "The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted" (Psalm 104:16, NIV). David's palace and both Solomon's palace and temple were built of cedar wood. The word cedar is found 75 times in the Bible. Due to its evergreen nature and longevity, this tree is associated with eternal life and thus sometimes used in cemetery landscaping.



(L to R) Kim McManamey,
Rosie, Rich and Richard Pruet

The Pruet Family attended
the Special Needs Conference at Eagle
Eyrie in October.

Christmas Flower Dedications

IN MEMORY:

- ❖ Barbara Lee Smith by Linda Herring
- ❖ My parents by Brenda Crowther
- ❖ Fred Swaffin III by Charlotte Swaffin
- ❖ Jeanne Luttrell and Nell Brothers by Page Carlson
- ❖ All those who have gone on by Curly Harcum
- ❖ Luther and Margaret Welch by Ginny and Brian Barnes
- ❖ Melvin and Virginia Pitman by Ginny and Brian Barnes
- ❖ Jessie Britt by the Britt/Reih's family
- ❖ Craig Smith by Janet and the children
- ❖ The family of Wayland D. Carter and the family of Edward Dodson by Debbie Dodson
- ❖ Asa and Helen Pittman by Timmy and Kathy Pittman
- ❖ David Haynie by Timmy and Kathy Pittman
- ❖ James Albert Fisher by Roxy Fisher
- ❖ Ann Fisher by Roxy Fisher
- ❖ Eva Jones Fisher by Roxy Fisher
- ❖ Walter and Ruby Abbott by Richard and Jan Abbott
- ❖ Mary Simmons by Richard and Jan Abbott
- ❖ Homer "Hap" Jones by Richard and Jan Abbott
- ❖ Fleta Snelling by Mary Fletcher
- ❖ Fred Swaffin III and Joseph Nonnemacker by the Nonnemacker family
- ❖ Carl and Hazel Noting by Bob and Peggy Nolting
- ❖ Irene Murray by Bob and Peggy Nolting
- ❖ Our Parents by Carol and Ed Kratt
- ❖ Ella may Kuykendall by Kenny and Andrea Kuykendall
- ❖ Howard Whay by Crystal Whay

Christmas Flower Dedications

IN HONOR:

- ❖ Maya Bailey Stevens and Kinsley Reese Hudson by Ronald and Stephanie Hudson
- ❖ Tom and Terri Groh by the Britt/Reih's family
- ❖ Stephanie Hudson by Debbie Dodson
- ❖ Our beautiful congregation by Richard and Jan Abbott
- ❖ Our parents by Jim and Mary Beth Hawkins
- ❖ Charlotte Swaffin and Mary Anne Nonnemacker by the Nonnemacker family
- ❖ Our newest deacon, Linda Herring by the Nonnemacker family

The Flower Committee wishes to thank everyone who purchased a Christmas flower this year. The participation was very much appreciated and we were able to create a beautiful Christmas display in the sanctuary. Thank you so much!!





- 3 **Ronnie Dodson**
- 4 **Joe Souders**
- 13 **Carolyn Whay**
- 14 **Rosie Pruett**
- 15 **John Mann**
- 24 **Emma Smith**
- 27 **Lisa Holcomb**
- 29 **Nick Nonnemacker**
- 30 **Nathaniel Barnes**
- 31 **Kim Stout**

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child 2022 was a huge success! Thanks to all who contributed and volunteered. A special thank you to Linda Herring and Janet Smith for their efforts in organizing and seeing the project through!!

Our goal was to prepare 150. We exceeded our goal. Can you guess how many? The answer is below:



THE ORIGIN OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

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By his wounds you have been healed” (1 Peter 2:24, RSV).

The forbidden fruit of the tree in the Garden of Eden, when eaten, brought guilt and death. On the other hand, the “tree” on Calvary was the instrument by which God through Christ ushered in salvation, new life and hope. The Christmas tree can remind us of those wonderful gifts.



PASTOR’S CORNER

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honor of his service to Morattico Baptist Church and to the Lord he loved so much.

In the coming months, we will prepare the area around the tree and memorialize it to his service. The sweet fragrance of magnolia will fill the area among the oaks as a constant reminder of a good man, gone too soon. I look forward to the day that we can honor him with a service and dedication of this beautiful tree.

For my pastor, my mentor, my brother in Christ and my very best friend, H. Craig Smith, rest easy and know that you made a difference. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”

Blessings!



On October 30th we held our annual Fall Picnic. The food was delicious!

After the picnic, Brian and Ginny Barnes invited everyone to go on a hayride through their 400 acre farm. It was the perfect day for it. It was warm and sunny with the trees changing into brilliant fall colors. Even Kim's little dog enjoyed it, wrapped in a blanket on Kim's lap.

Along the way we learned about the family history of the property. It was so interesting. We stopped at the horses and watched the kids feed them. Next, we stopped at the sheep pasture and Brian answered lots of questions. The sheep have a coat more like animal's hair, so no shearing required. They are raised for their meat. They can mate year round, so we also saw some mamas and babies.

A great time was had by all. Thank you Barnes family!!!

~Jenny Crandall





NEW PEW BIBLES

New pew Bibles have been ordered to coordinate with the new color scheme in the church as well as update to the version that Richard uses.

If you would like to help us offset the cost, please see Linda Herring.

For a \$25 donation you can have your name or a memorial/honorarium placed in the front of a Bible.



IMPORTANT PLEASE READ

The church directory (pictorial) is in the process of being updated but we need your help.

If you have not had your picture taken, call Yours Truly (435-0200) immediately and make an appointment to have your picture taken.

If you had your picture take but not selected your directory photo, please go by Yours Truly and make your selection. If you do not make your selection, one will be selected for you.

Kathy Pittman is in the process of updating everyone's contact information. If you have not been contacted to verify your information, please see Kathy.

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 31ST

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Grover Branson

Clark and Jesse Bristol

Family of Dennis Burchill

Page Carlson

Eddie and Connie Dawson

David Deitz

Eleanor Delano

Tommy Ficklin

Bill Fletcher

Becky Frost

Reese Fugate

Steve Garcia

Terri Groh

Marbary and Virginia Harcum

Shirley McNeal

Carlton Milstead

James Newton

Brian & Mary Kathryn Pendleton and
baby Patrick

Timmy Pittman

Richard, Rosie and Rich Pruett

Ray Reynolds

Jonell Robertson

Sylvia Saunders

Sandra Scripture and family

Chauntea Shield

William Scott Smith

Fran Stout

Janice Walden

Those alone during the holidays

Men and women in service

Please note when you add someone to our prayer list, please provide their address so we may send them a card.

Please let us know when it is time to remove someone from the list.

Prayer list contact

Mae Shelton at 804-366-3817

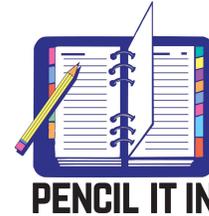


THE HILL, Morattico Baptist Church newsletter is owned and operated by YOU. We want your input. If you have ideas, suggestions, family news, articles or photos, submit them to newsletter@moratticobaptistchurch.org or call Kathy Pittman at (804) 761-2441.

Each month the newsletter has a theme. The theme for the following month will be noted in each newsletter to give you time to prepare a submission if you wish.

Deadline:
10th of each month

Theme for January:
Church History Month
“Spotlight on Pastors”



Sunday: 8:45am Sunday School (adult)
10:00am Sunday Service

Calendar events:

Dec. 3rd Greening the Church (lunch included)
Dec. 11th Carols and Scripture Service
Dec. 24th Christmas Eve Service 7pm
Dec. 25th Christmas Day Service 10am

**** Thursday night Bible Study/movie is on HOLD until after the holidays.**



Morattico Baptist Church

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