

# Connections

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH JANUARY 2024 VOL XIII: ISSUE 1 LBCPC.org

“Happy New Year”

Join us

on Sunday mornings for a  
short but practical series on

Spiritual  
Disciplines



# *A Message from* **Andrew Spires**

LEAD PASTOR



What a year this will be for Lakewood Baptist Church! We celebrate fifty years on this property by God's grace. While the church's history goes back to the late 1800s, God has graced us to be here on Lakewood Drive for the last half-century. I am so thankful for those in the past who were committed to building and growing a body of believers here at Lakewood. I look forward to seeing what the Lord will do here in the next phase of this church's life. I do not believe Lakewood's best years are behind us, but are ahead of us! I believe that God has positioned this body of believers well to reach this community, this area, this state, this nation, and yes, even the world, with the life-saving message of the Gospel. We know from inspired scripture that nothing is impossible for our God and that our responsibility is to obey wherever He leads. This is my prayer and steadfast hope for this church, that we seek the Lord while He may be found, that we are missional and evangelistic in our mindset, and realize that real ministry is tough but rewarding. May God give us eyes to see that what takes place outside the four walls of this church is just as important as what happens inside of them. I pray that we will be led by His Word, guided by His Spirit, and respond in immediate obedience to His commands. I want to ask each of our members to make every effort to be at our quarterly member's meeting on Sunday night January 21st at 5 pm so that we can share with you the direction of the church going forward.

This is also the time of year when we seat new deacons who will serve the body of Christ here at Lakewood. First, let me say to the four men (Bill Norris, Rex Carter, Billy Greene, and Drew Parkman) transferring off, thank you for your excellent service to our church! Each of you has served well and met vital needs within the church. Your service is appreciated and please enjoy your time of rest (though we may call on you again in the future)! We have four men who have been selected by the church body to serve a new three-year term as deacons. These four men are as follows; Heath Owens, Gary Bradshaw, Jan Funderburk and Jacob Baker. Jan and Heath have previously served as deacons here at Lakewood and Gary is already ordained and has served as a deacon at several previous churches. Jacob will be our youngest deacon and will need ordination as such. I asked each of these men to write a brief bio so that you might have the opportunity to know more about them. Please join me in praying for each of these men as they enter this new role of service at Lakewood.

I have asked these four men to share a brief testimony with the body at our January member's meeting.

Praying for God's grace in this new year.  
Thankful for each of you!

God bless,  
drew

(Bios on next page)

**Heath Owens;**

Hello Church! My name is Heath Owens. I am married to Amanda Norris, and we have 2 wonderful children; Corbin - 9, and Kennedy - 6. I have been employed at TSYS for 11 years, all in IT. My wife Amanda is a 3rd grade teacher at Lakewood Elementary School. I grew up right here in Phenix City and Summerville Baptist was my "home church". I was raised in what I would consider a very traditional Christian home and gave my life to Christ at the age of 13 on a youth retreat in Tennessee. My Granddad, Bobby Owens, was also a pastor at Pine Grove Baptist Church here in Phenix City for 12 years. I am very thankful that I had godly men growing up who always pointed me back to the cross when I didn't always make the best decisions. I have been a member of Lakewood for almost 10 years. This will be my second time serving as Deacon at Lakewood. I currently serve in various capacities within the church. I am the leader of our Awana TNT class (3rd and 4th graders), I co-teach our Young Married Sunday school class, and I serve on the LRSP and Food Service and Social event committees. I consider myself very blessed to be able to serve you all for the next 3 years as a Deacon here at Lakewood. God bless."

**Jan Funderburk;**

"Married to my wife Shelrea and have two adult children Andy Funderburk and Jill Henderson (Josh). We have three grandchildren; Ethan, Owen, and Deacon Henderson. We have been members of Lakewood Baptist for seventeen years. I am a member of the Alleluia and Amen choirs and we attend Don Craft's Bible Fellowship class. I have previously served two terms as an active deacon here at Lakewood. My vocation was education. I taught for twenty-four years in the classroom as a teacher and nineteen years as an administrator. I retired as principal of Central High School. I accepted Christ at the age of 10 while attending North Phenix Baptist Church."

**Jacob Baker;** "My name is Jacob Baker, and I'm married to Jordan Baker! I first got involved with Lakewood through a Belize mission trip in 2017. This is also how I met my wife Jordan. I've been a member of Lakewood since 2019. I've owned and operated an inflatable rental business since 2020, called Inflatable Playgrounds & Party Rentals. I currently serve at Lakewood in Awana as well as co-leading the youth boy's Bible Fellowship class. I was raised in church during the early years of my life and I accepted Jesus into my heart at 7 years old. As I got older I began to allow my flesh to rule my life as I went through middle school and high school. I was putting on a mask and living a "double life." Out of high school, I went to a Christian college where I met a group of guys who began to pour into my life and helped me fix my eyes back on Jesus." P.S.- I have the greatest father-in-law and mother-in-law in the world...ok... maybe Drew added this part!

**Gary Bradshaw;**

My name is Gary Bradshaw and I am married to Donna. We have a son named Gregg. We have two grandchildren and two great grandchildren. I currently work part-time for Sod Solutions Inc. as a territory manager. Growing up I did not attend church regularly. It was not until I met Donna in junior high that I started attending church regularly. During our senior year in high school, Donna asked me did I know about the second coming of Christ? My answer was no. At that moment a seed was planted and through the years we found out God had a plan for us. An experience I will share with you at the member's meeting led us to start attending church and be baptized as a family on May of 1986. I joined Lakewood in 2021 and sing in the Alleluia Choir.



**Starts back**

**January 10th**

**Sister 2 Sister**

**Monday, January 8th**

**6:30pm**

**Fellowship Hall**



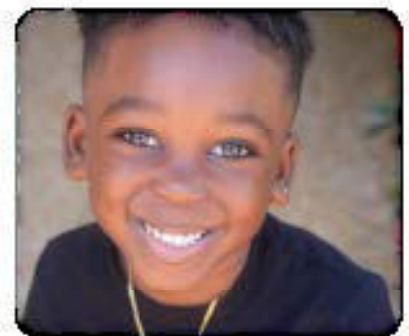
**Baby Bottle Boomerang**



***4 easy steps***

- 1. Pick up a bottle in the lobby**
- 2. Fill it up with check, cash or coins**
- 3. Bring it back to the church by January 21st**

**4. Change a Life**





# *A Message from* **Israel Jane**

INTERIM STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT PASTOR



Remember the anticipation building on Christmas Eve? That knot in your stomach, the hushed whispers with siblings, and the eager glances toward the living room. The twinkling lights, the pine scent, and then – the Christmas tree. Adorned with ornaments, tinsel, an angel or star at the top, and underneath, a treasure trove of shiny, wrapped possibilities waiting to be ripped open.

Christmas, for me as a kid, was a fierce rivalry over who'd get the best toy. Each package held a new world – a talking teddy bear whispering secrets, a bike promising adventures down unmapped streets, plastic dinosaurs, or an action figure about to come to life.

But here's the thing: even the coolest toys eventually faded; the batteries died, and the thrill wore thin. By Spring, we'd be back, noses pressed against the glass, dreaming of next year's gifts.

What if this New Year isn't a mere calendar swap, but a chance to unwrap a new version of ourselves? Not a plastic toy, but a heart renewed, a soul rekindled, a spirit overflowing with God's light.

In Colossians 3:9-10, Paul writes, "... you have laid aside the old self with its practices and have been clothed with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it." Imagine it! Like shedding a sweater that doesn't really fit

for a robe woven with grace, we can step into a year draped in faith, forgiveness, and love.

This January doesn't promise plastic dinosaurs, but hope that roars even louder. Forget board games like Clue; we'll be solving the mysteries of our purpose, lit by the divine spark within. And though batteries fade, God's love is eternal, empowering us to face any challenge.

So, let's approach this New Year with the wide-eyed wonder of a child on Christmas morning. *Not for gifts, but for growth. Not for fleeting thrills, but for a deeper connection with the One who created us.* Let's peel back the layers of expectation and uncertainty, and find beneath a treasure waiting to be unearthed – a renewed, radiant self, crafted by the hands of God.

And remember, this transformation isn't a solitary race. We have a family in Christ, a community of fellow dreamers and unwrappers on this journey. So, together, let's step into the magnificent unknown of a brand new year.

For as Ephesians 2:10 reminds us, "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*"

Happy unwrapping, y'all.  
May this year be your brightest yet."

# Lakewood Happenings

## January 2024

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	Happy New Year Office Closed 1	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 2	10:30am VK/ WMU 3			12:00pm Saturdays are for the Boys 6
Lord's Supper 7	10:30am Amen Choir 6:30pm Sister 2 Sister F/H 8	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 9	AWANA resumes 10		5:30pm Senior Game Night 12	13
5:00pm Deacons Meeting 14	10:30am Amen Choir 15	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 16	7:00pm Finance Team Meeting 17			19 20
Sanctity of Life 5:00pm Members Meeting 21	10:30am Amen Choir 22	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 23		6:30pm JEG/BW 25		11:00am Feed the homeless 27
6:00pm Deacon Ordination 28	10:30am Amen Choir 29	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 30				31

## November Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
11/05	\$29,033.55	\$130.00	\$5,377.00	\$170.00	\$34,710.55
11/12	\$19,811.04	-	\$2,518.50	\$732.00	\$23,061.54
11/19	\$11,811.26	-	\$1,350.88	\$402.00	\$13,564.14
11/26	\$10,233.30	-	\$508.00	\$125.00	\$10,866.30

### ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

#### SUNDAY

8:45am Worship  
10:00am Bible Fellowship  
11:00am Worship

#### WEDNESDAY

6:00pm AWANA  
6:00pm Bible Study  
6:30pm Youth Worship

# *A Message from* **David Stephens**

**CHILDREN'S PASTOR**



We are now into a new year at Lakewood. WOW! I am now entering year 5 in ministry here at our beloved church. As I've reflected over this past year there has been a theme that keeps returning to me in my quiet time. I've found myself asking what am I worshipping at my center? Is it Jesus all the time and in all things? What is the worship culture that I support? Culture is determined by something worshipped at its center and all the stuff that grows up around it. I pray that Jesus is the center of everything that I do, and all the 'stuff' that grows up around it showcases Him. Worship is woven into humanity. All people are worshippers. I don't think we really have to be taught how to worship. Many times when we think about worship the image of the church and corporate worship and its various forms come to mind. This definitely is worship, but I'd venture to say is a very small part of worship. Our worship of Jesus, as the creator God of the universe must be all of life. It is the air we breathe. It is all about our life. We are made to worship.

In Romans 1:18-25 we see society taking a hard turn to evil and in verses 23 & 25 Paul zeroes in on an exchange that is happening; we read, "changed the glory of the immortal God into an image make like a mortal man", "exchanged the truth of God for the lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (NKJV). As I lean into this text, I see that we will worship something. We all will be tempted to put items at our center that are not Christ. Roll Tide, War Eagle, screens (TV, computer, phone, tablet etc.). Maybe it's something like family, spouse, kids, career, that unique skill that you are known for. The current popstar being Taylor Swift, we have Swifty's everywhere. Think back on whoever the "it" person was in your day. All I have to do is keep writing more words to this list to hit on something you are into that has potential to usurp Jesus at the center of your worship. If we are made to worship, and our life is all the stuff that comes out of our worship. I want to do whatever I can with my brief moment on this earth to worship Jesus as best as I can.

Is Jesus the center of our worship in our church, homes, careers, marriages, relationships? Is Jesus at the center as we are fans of that football team? Nothing wrong with being a fan, but remember, our time on earth is so short. Many preachers talk about that dash on the tombstone or our 5 second resume. James calls it a mist. We need to be asking what are we doing with our time? What does your worship life consist of? Is being a soul winner and making disciples at the top of your 5 second resume? Are we reflecting back praise of the God who came to earth as a baby, lived, and died, so you and I can have the opportunity to live forever with Him? Our worship will reflect something. We will declare what is worth the most to us. My desire as we look forward to the return of our Lord is that our life of worship is centered on Jesus.

Your Children's Ministry team and I are looking forward to a great 2024. We are excited as we continue to develop environments where children and families see and learn about Jesus. Our focus on the discipleship of children remains strong as we prepare our weekly ministry alongside our large events. There is an eternal game at play here. We love God, and we hate evil. We are about developing real Jesus conversations with our children. There is a battle for our kids and our families. Please be praying for the next generation. The 2050 church depends on us. As long as the Lord carries we must never stop. Our life of worship to Jesus and what He taught through His inspired word is enough to overcome all assaults.

Thank you, truly, for the opportunity to serve you and yours.

Sincerely,  
David Stephens

***In Memory of:***

**Steve Harris**  
For General Fund  
from Ann Davis

**Carla Jameson**  
For Lottie Moon  
from Glenda Medley

**Tommy Evans**  
for Lottie Moon  
from Brenda Evans

**Montee & Clyde Miller**  
For Lottie Moon  
from Clara Jean Watson

**Roland Griffith**  
For LOAF  
from Margaret Wilson

**Bill Wilson**  
For LOAF  
from Margaret Wilson

**Becky Smith**  
for Lottie Moon  
from Ricky Smith

**Freddie Messer**  
for Lottie Moon  
from Glenda Medley

***In Honor of:***

**Cathy Greene**  
For Lottie Moon  
from Joyful Servants  
BF Class

***Senior Game  
Night***

~

**Friday  
January 12th  
5:30pm**

**MINISTERIAL STAFF**

**ANDREW SPIRES**  
• LEAD PASTOR  
• ANDREW@LBCPC.ORG

•  
• **Charles Keown**  
• WORSHIP & SENIOR  
• ADULT PASTOR  
• CHARLES@LBCPC.ORG

•  
• **Israel Jane**  
• INTERIM STUDENT &  
• YOUNG ADULT PASTOR  
• ISRAELDJANE@GMAIL.COM

•  
• **David Stephens**  
• CHILDREN'S PASTOR  
• DAVID@LBCPC.ORG

**OFFICE STAFF**

**Melissa Costello**  
FINANCIAL ASSISTANT  
MELISSA@LBCPC.ORG

**Carol Breault**  
OFFICE & PASTORAL  
CARE ASSISTANT  
CAROL@LBCPC.ORG

**Linda Keown**  
WORSHIP & MEDIA  
ASSISTANT  
LINDA@LBCPC.ORG

***Member's  
Meeting***

~

**January 21  
5:00pm**

**LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH**  
4011 LAKEWOOD DRIVE  
PHENIX CITY, ALABAMA 36867  
O: 334.298.6433  
LBCPC.org  
HOURS: M-TH 8:30AM-4:30PM  
FRI 8:30AM-12PM

