



All I Want for Christmas Is My New Phone Tree

By B.J. Hutto, Senior Pastor

Friends,

I hope that all of you, and all your loved ones, ended last year well and got everything you wanted for Christmas! As it turns out, our church staff was lucky enough to get one of the things we'd been hoping for most.

Some of you may know this, but over the summer the church's phone system began to fail. It had been showing its age for a while now, but this past summer we came to a breaking point. Some of us could still make calls to people outside of the church, but we could no longer make office-to-office calls, and we also lost the ability to answer any calls that came in. This, as you might imagine, was a problem...

We were able to figure out a short-term fix by getting an inexpensive cellphone and forwarding all of the church's calls to it, but we knew that that was little more than a band-aid. Still, what to do? Who knows anything about replacing commercial phone systems?

Who has the time to learn? Thankfully, **Mike Suvada**, our church's Communications and Technology Administrator, stepped up. Mike worked with the company that had been providing our phone service for years to see if the problems could be fixed, and when it became clear that they couldn't, he began reaching out to colleagues at other churches in the area to see which providers they use and what their experiences have been. He eventually figured out that we needed to get away from a traditional landline-based system and replace it with an online VOIP service. He contacted vendors, got quotes, and coordinated the installation of the new system. None of this was particularly interesting or glamorous, and it all took significantly more time and effort than any of us expected. Still, when the church needed someone to step up and help, Mike did, and we're all extremely grateful for the amount of work he put into it!

I wanted to tell y'all this story for a couple of reasons. First, certainly, to thank Mike. Secondly, because it's a good example of the behind-the-scenes work that most members don't ever get to see, and it's also an example of how important reliable infrastructure is to our congregation's life. (It's hard to keep up with pastoral care concerns, for example, when the phone system is unreliable!) But third, and perhaps most importantly, it's also an example of someone at HAB stepping outside of their normal area in order to help out the church. While Mike's title includes technology and communication, his main areas of focus—and his professional background—are in media, social media, and the church's presence on the internet. He didn't have any experience with anything like this, but he was willing to step outside of his comfort zone and learn what was needed.

So there it is: a story about a new church phone system for Christmas! About as exciting as a new set of tires on your car... but also just about as important to our day-to-day lives. And yet, at the same time, this is also a story of someone willing to stretch himself in order to serve his community.

If more of us were that generous with our time and energy—if more of us were that willing to step out and volunteer, to try something new—imagine what all this church could do in 2023!

Kind regards (and Happy New Year!),

B.J.

B.J. Hutto, Ph.D., Senior Pastor

Thomas M. Shapard, D.P.M., Associate Pastor for Music & Worship • **Britt Hester**, M.Div., Associate Pastor for Youth & Christian Education

Laraine Humbert, B.M.E., Pastoral Assistant • **Mike Suvada**, B.A., Communications & Technology

Darrell Mitchell, M.B.A., Financial Manager • **H. Kendell Smith**, Dip.C.M., Minister of Music Emeritus

Who Ya Gonna Call?

We finally have our new phone system!
See below for a list of people to call and their extensions.

Church Phone: 904-396-7745
Receptionist: ext. 111

Dr. B.J. Hutto, Senior Pastor

Pastoral care, Wednesday Bible study, sermons, theology
bj@habchurch.com
ext. 102

Rev. Britt Hester, Associate Pastor for Youth and Christian Education

Pastoral care, youth, Sunday Bible Study, preaching, missions
britt@habchurch.com
ext. 105

Dr. Tommy Shapard, Associate Pastor for Music and Worship

Music, worship planning, choirs, ensembles
tommy@habchurch.com
ext. 104

Laraine Humbert, Pastoral Assistant

Reservations, bulletins, *Herald*, calendar, room usage, general questions
laraine@habchurch.com
ext. 103

Mike Suvada, Communications and Technology Administrator

Congregational emails, website, social media, technology
mike@habchurch.com
ext. 107

Darrell Mitchell, Financial Administrator

Offerings, payments, bills
financial@habchurch.com
ext. 101

Vladimir Lagodny, Facilities Manager

Facilities, set-up
vladimir@habchurch.com
ext. 701 or cell 904-343-1409



Remember to Remember

By Britt Hester, Associate Pastor for Youth & Christian Education

Happy New Year! I hope your holidays were merry and bright, and I hope your 2023 is off to a great start. It is customary this time of year to begin thinking about the future. Perhaps you have already put together a list of goals you hope to achieve in the new year. With the words of “Auld Lang Syne” still ringing in your ears, you may have committed to becoming a “better you” this year. And despite what may stand in your way, you have mentally and spiritually conditioned yourself to remain steadfast in achieving your desired outcomes.

Let me be among the first to celebrate and encourage you. For indeed, goals are good. Goals inspire, challenge, and stretch us. Goals provide us with a map to navigate the unknown future; goals provide clarity in an otherwise hazy existence. By all means, aim high, work hard, and conquer all of your goals this year! Before you go, however, don’t forget to open one of the best gifts of the new year.

In the rush to forget the past and embrace a fresh start, we often do ourselves a great disservice. We are often so intent on crushing our new ventures that we don’t take the time to appreciate the journey of the past year. Of course, not every year is one we care to remember. Nevertheless, every year is worth remembering because in remembering we catch of glimpse of who we are *becoming*. It is no small thing to reflect on all you have accomplished, overcome, and endured in the past year. Most of us are too hard on ourselves to truly value the distance covered, the progress made, and the love shared over an entire year. Perhaps the gift of remembering is the antidote to self-hatred.

Frederick Buechner, in perhaps his most popular sermon, “A Room Called Remember,” shares these words:

“The time is ripe for looking back over the day, the week, the year, and trying to figure out where we have come from and where we are going to, for sifting through the things we have done and the things we have left undone for a clue to who we are and who, for better or worse, we are becoming. But again and again we avoid the long thoughts.... We cling to the present out of wariness of the past. And why not, after all? We get confused. We need such escape as we can find. But there is a deeper need yet, I think, and that is the need—not all the time, surely, but from time to time—to enter that still room within us all where the past lives on as a part of the present, where the dead are alive again, where we are most alive ourselves to turnings and to where our journeys have brought us. The name of the room is Remember—the room where with patience, with charity, with quietness of heart, we remember consciously to remember the lives we have lived.”

As we begin a new year together, don’t forget to remember. “Remember consciously to remember the lives we have lived.” Look back and see where God, like a shepherd, led you through peaks and valleys alike. Remember and celebrate.

Remember and weep. Remember and resolve to embrace lessons learned, to cherish wisdom found, and to share grace freely given and received. Remember to remember. Who knows? Maybe you’ll discover you’re already more than enough.



Youth Christmas party

Ugly Christmas sweaters



*Christmas music
presented by choirs
& orchestra*



*Wrapping
gifts for
Towers
residents*



*Serving a Christmas
luncheon at the
Towers*



Thanks to your generosity, we were able to help UCOM (United Community Outreach Ministry) provide Christmas meals for about 70-75 families.

Delivering Christmas bags to UCOM

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Thank you to our Children's Team:

Patti Carson
Julie Carter
Anne England
Courtney Hester
Ansley Parfitt
Rachel Shapard

Wednesday Nights for Kids



5:30—Supper (by reservation)

6:00-7:00—Children's choir
& other fun activities



JOIN US FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday Mornings

9:45-10:45 a.m., room E-14

Facilitator: Shirley Dasher

If you can volunteer to teach or be a helper, please contact Rachel Shapard at rachel@tfhope.org

News of the Church Family



Sympathy to...

...Debbie Hagan in the death of her husband Ted. He died Saturday, November 19, 2022. Please pray for Debbie, Norma, Allen, Jo, Jessica, Allison, Ken, Cathy, and all of Debbie's family during this very sad time. The service will be Saturday, January 7, at 11:00 a.m. in our sanctuary, followed by a reception in the fellowship hall.

...Anne Hueser & Curt Beadell in the death of Anne's sister Kathleen.

...Janet Metcalf and family in the death of Frank, Janet's husband, on Thursday, December 8, 2022. The memorial service was Friday, December 16, at 2:00 p.m. in our sanctuary.

... Jamie, Leanne, Hailey, Ella, & Samuel Hartle in the death of Adam Hartle, Jamie's brother.

Thank you...

For your prayers, food, and many expressions of love and comfort, my family is so grateful. Frank and I have been so blessed to be a part of HAB. —*Janet Metcalf*



HAB is delighted to welcome new member **Kameron Arnett** to our church family! Kameron can be found at Sunday morning services sitting with his grandmother, long-time member Dee Bumbarger, whom Kameron credits with always encouraging him to do his best when he was growing up. Kameron was born and raised in Jacksonville. He grew up in St. Johns and graduated from Bartram Trail



High School. During his high school years, Kameron rowed competitively as a member of a rowing club team. He attended the University of North Florida, where he majored in marketing. After graduating, Kameron began his marketing career in New York City, only to be derailed five months later with the advent of COVID.

Back in his hometown now, Kameron is working in logistics for a chemical manufacturing company and is enjoying being able to spend time with his grandmother. He also enjoys thrifting, which he discovered was a good way to furnish his apartment on a budget! Kameron now lives in San Marco, which makes it convenient for him to attend HAB, but the warm welcome he has received here is what led him to join the HAB family! —*by Carol Campbell, New Members Team*

Stay tuned for articles about the new members below who recently joined HAB:



Jana Johnson
Joined 12-11-2022



Allison & Aaron Clausen
Joined 12-11-2022



Margaret Douglass
Joined 12-18-2022



Little Friends Preschool Begins the New Year!

By Julie Mason, Little Friends Board Chair

Little Friends Preschool will start 2023 with 55 beautiful, wonderful, smart kiddos! Our children are such good learners, but who wouldn't be, with the excellent teachers, and a terrific academic curriculum tailored exactly to their individual ages and planned for learning while playing. They also have access to the exciting S.T.E.A.M. Lab (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and



Math) in the transformed space that was formerly the Media Center—now it's outfitted specifically for our preschoolers with a science center, a library with reading rug, reading nooks and reading tents, a whiteboard for creativity, child-size computers, an ant farm, and a host of other enticing learning tools.

We are looking forward to an excellent spring semester, culminating in the "Summer Adventures" program for five weeks after school is officially out at the end of May, for those children who wish to attend.



Wednesday Night Suppers 5:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall

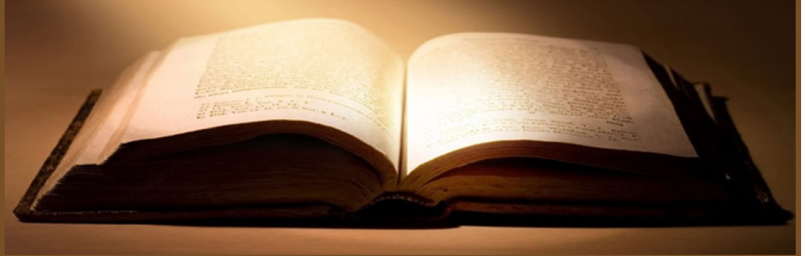
Reservations are required by Monday for the following Wednesday
by contacting Laraine at laraine@habchurch.com or 904-396-7745.

Adults \$10, children \$6,
immediate family maximum \$25.
(No meal January 4.)

Wednesday Bible study with B.J.

6:15 p.m. in the chapel

We're currently studying the book of Genesis

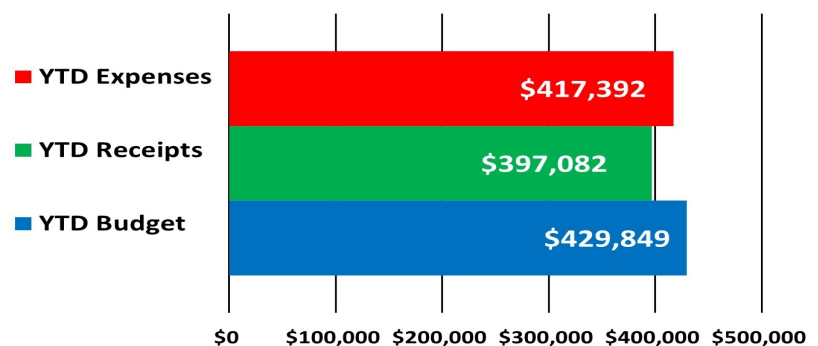


DID YOU KNOW?

You can give
online at
habchurch.com;
choose "Giving"
and then choose
"Donate."



Budget Year-to-Date at 12/23/2022





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Jacksonville, FL 32207-6321
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a place of grace

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www.habchurch.com

for more information.

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