

SANDSTON BAPTIST CHURCH

His Last Command, Our First Concern

Matthew 28:18-20

JANUARY 2025 | VOLUME 51 | ISSUE 1

From My Heart to Yours . . .

In his book “*Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life*” Dr. Charles Swindoll wrote

“An usher met me as I was leaving the church several Sundays ago. He had been involved in counting the morning offering. He smiles as he walked up to me, stuck out his hand, and said, ‘I’ve got something for you. It came in the offering.’

Here was a little hand-scribbled note from a child who had been in in our worship service.

It read:

‘To Paster Chuck Swindol

I don’t think you know me, but I shure know you. You are a very good speaker for Jesus Christ. I think your neet. I even understand what you are saying and that’s how it should be. I LOVE YOU!

Guess what was attached to the note. A chocolate sucker, all wrapped in cellophane, ready to be enjoyed.

Now, friend, that’s admiration. When a darling little kid will surrender his prized possession . . . wow! That sucker means more to me than most any honor I could ever receive, because it represents something no amount of money can buy. A child’s respect. Personal admiration. To some busy, active youngster tucked away in our vast congregation, I represent somebody he or she looks up to. And believes in.

I’m honest, it chokes me up. It also keeps me on my toes. Somewhere out there is a child who eyes are on me . . . whose ears are tuned in . . . who’s also pretty choosy. After all, that sucker was wrapped in cellophane and tied with ribbon . . . and it hadn’t even been licked (as far as I could tell).

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***Admiration.** There's not much of it today. Maybe that explains the inordinate hunger for fantasy heroes like Batman, superman, Luke Skywalker, E.T., and Rocky. There has never been a day when the athletic prima donnas have had larger fan clubs or bizarre musical groups bigger crowds. There was a time when patriotism provided us with all the models we needed. Remember? "Why, whoever had the audacity to suggest a hint of suspicion against MacArthur . . . or 'Ike' . . . or the local police department, or the FBI for the matter? The cop on the corner may have been stared at, but it was out of respect, not rebellion. Physicians were also admired. So were teachers. And lawyers. And preachers. And hard workers. And mothers.*

What's happened? Why the low regard for leaders? Especially the outspoken ones who stand for decency and integrity and love for country, the flag, human dignity, and a wholesome respect for the family. Have political scandals raped everyone's trust in anyone? Are all police officers suspect? Is it necessary for every surgeon to conduct his profession more concerned about a malpractice lawsuit than the gall bladder operation? Is corruption now so prevalent in government that young men and women with integrity no longer consider political science a viable major? . . .

Our cynical self-centered society would do well to restore an invaluable antique that has been cast aside, forgotten like a dust-covered treasure: admiration. As that restoration occurs, so will the esprit de corps of our nation, the morale that once gave us pride to pull together and passion to stand alone. Our children need it. So do our youth, as well as adults. Individuals we hold in high esteem, in whom the qualities of greatness are incarnated. People who mirror the bedrock principle of solid Cristian character. Those things can neither be purchased nor inherited. Slowly, almost unawares, admiration becomes the carbon paper that transfers character qualities by the rubbing of one life against another.

Like Christ with His guys. Like a godly coach with the team. Like an authentic Christian businessman with his peers. Like a faithful dad with his family. Usually, the model doesn't even consider himself such until something little happens.

Something as little as a chocolate sucker in the church offering plate on Sunday morning."

What I find most interesting about this word from Dr. Swindoll is that it was written some 41 years ago . . . and seems so needed in 2025 as we enter a New Year and face new challenges and opportunities. Friends, I pray that we will find it in our hearts to show more admiration and encouragement for one another in the year ahead as we serve our awesome and holy God. We have new leadership in D.C. and (sometime in the future) you will have a new pastor leading you as well. I encourage you to join together in prayer for our country, for your community . . . and your church.

How about showing some admiration for the person sitting next to you or standing in front of you. A chocolate sucker could make all the difference in the world!!!!

Let's claim 2025 for the Lord Jesus Christ. No matter what changes or circumstances come our way, let's make every effort to be positive in our spirit and powerful in our witness. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your (interim) pastor, *you are the wind beneath my wings . . .* I don't know how long the Lord (and you) will allow me to continue serving with you, but I promise as long as we are together, I will give you my very best in love and ministry. You are an awesome fellowship of believers, and I count it a great honor and privilege to have this "season" with you. Happy New Year

I am joyfully His . . . Yours, Pastor Tom



From E'Beth

First Happy New Year! My wish is 2025 is a year of new blessings and abundance of spiritual growth for each of us and all of us as a body of Christ.

Thank you to all of those who are leading Bible study groups each Sunday morning and to those leading other groups on Wednesdays and in the Sista'hood. Walking through life in God's Word is such a vital component of sustaining and growing our faith and testimony.

If you are not yet participating in a Bible study group please strongly consider trying those available until you find the right fit. You will find a wonderful group of Christian peers that will walk along side of you as you gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of God, Christ, and life as a Christian.

If you have an interest in working with children in exploring and learning the Bible please let me or Lindsay Horne know and we will connect you with that opportunity.

Again best wishes for a healthy, happy, joy filled, prosperous new year.

E'Beth Watts

DOTTIE WILLIAMSON GROUP

Final Update For The 2024 Shoebox Collections Season

WOW!! What an amazing 2024 season for Operation Christmas Child! God was glorified over and over with the outpouring of shoeboxes filled by our church family and our community. My most sincere thanks to **ALL** who gave your time during National Collection Week to engage so graciously with our donors. It was pure joy to see so many new faces join our ranks of "veteran" volunteers! Thirty-nine individuals logged in 265 volunteer hours by the end of the week, and unloaded, "cartonized", and transported **5,578** shoeboxes! This is the largest ingathering of shoeboxes since we began as a drop off location in 2010! To our men who did the set up and take down of our "center" and who did all of the heavy lifting, my most sincere thanks and gratitude.

I want to share one additional number with you. As many of you know, I am a year round volunteer Area Coordinator with Operation Christmas Child. Our area encompasses Richmond city east of the James River, Charles City, Hanover, Henrico, King William, and New Kent, Counties and the Town of West Point. Throughout this area a total of **30,389 Gospel Opportunities** were collected, breaking another record! **To God Be The Glory, Great Things He Has Done!!**

I don't share these numbers pridefully, but most humbly, as they represent **God's people responding** to one of the most amazing opportunities we each have been given to share the Good News of our Lord and Savior with children all around the world through a simple shoebox filled with Love, Hope, and Promise ☺☺ May we approach the 2025 season with the same commitment and resolve to follow God's leading and watch how **HE** will work in and through us to accomplish great things for His Glory. With my love, gratitude, and most sincere wishes that each of you experience a blessed and peaceful Christmas with your families and friends, *Jean Jones*



Youth and Parents,

Welcome to a new year! It is hard to believe that 2025 is upon us. As I write this letter we just finished up our 2024 Youth Christmas Party, a fun time with games, food, presents, and laughter! I would like to take time to thank our Sunday School Teachers Kassie Hayes, Doug Milby, Kyleen Terrana, and Jeff Schmid, small group leaders on Wednesday Nights Molly Milby, Jesse Crider, Chris Fant, Andrew Welenteychik, and Makayla Ivey, as well as adult volunteers that help out weekly Michael Stitzer and Fred Meredith. We have a great group of volunteers that take time out of their schedules to be there weekly for youth events and just be there for these youth as they grow in Christ. This month we got to hear and see our Youth Praise Team and Majesticks group for a wonderful musical service on December 15th, have our normal youth events, our Youth Christmas Party, and got to carol for some of our shut-ins. We were able to visit with three of our shut-in families, it was great to bring a little joy and Christmas cheer to them, as well as to pray with them. It was a great December and end to our 2024.

As we look ahead to 2025, our youth will be heading on their "Not So Fall" Retreat to WinterBlast in Bluefield January 18-20. We ended up having to get more spots for our group, having 36 youth and adult leaders going! Pray for our group as we head to a weekend of fun and connecting with God and as a youth group.

I hope to have dates soon for our annual youth mission trip, please be looking for them via email! Any other youth events/updates will be sent via email or posted on our youth Facebook group- SBC Fusion Youth. Youth and/or parents that are not a member of either, please send me an email sbcyouth.info@gmail.com or look us up on Facebook-- SBC Fusion Youth (also Instagram @sbcfusion).

Reminder- No youth on January 1st, our regular Wednesday Night Youth will start back up on January 8th.

Justin Blunt





As the year transitions into the winter season, we are excited to share the wonderful events, lessons, and opportunities planned for the children in our ministry. This is a season of joy, gratitude, and giving, and we aim to create meaningful experiences for your children to grow spiritually and connect with others. We have had a great month studying Advent and learning about its meaning during Christmas.

Our children's choir had a wonderful performance in December led by Emmie Blunt, and we look forward to sharing our musical talent with the church again this spring. Children also enjoyed a fun Christmas movie night where we enjoyed fellowship, pizza, hot chocolate, and a Christmas movie! Our Awana program continues to grow and thrive; we welcome anyone to experience the blessings of this program as an adult volunteer!

Monthly Theme: Sharing God's Love

This winter, our lessons focus on how children can share God's love through acts of kindness, compassion, and generosity. Weekly Bible stories in children's church will include:

- The Good Samaritan
- Feeding the Five Thousand
- The Birth of Jesus

We encourage families to discuss these stories at home and find ways to practice kindness together.

To put this theme into practice, we are planning a service project for the children to participate in so we can show God's love through our service. Stay tuned for more details!

As we embrace the beauty of winter, let us remember to share warmth, kindness, and faith with everyone we meet. We pray for a season filled with peace, joy, and blessings for all our families.

Lindsay Horne
Children's Ministry Coordinator
horne.lindsay@gmail.com

January

EVENT CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <i>Happy New Year!</i> *Church Office Closed* *No Wednesday Evening Activities*	2	3	4
5 9:00am Worship 10:15am Bible Study 11:30am Missions Team Meeting BG 5:30pm Portuguese Ministry	6 10:00am Note Writing 11am Williamson Group 6:30pm Men's Basketball	7 2:00pm VanLear	8 5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Awana, Youth, Adult Choir, HIS Group, & Prayer Meeting	9 11:30am Friendly/Singles Club @ Olive Garden—White Oak 5:30pm Brotherhood 7:00pm Deacons	10 6pm Pickleball BG	11
12 9:00am Worship 10:15am Bible Study 11:15am Welcoming Team Meeting BG 5:30pm Portuguese Ministry	13 10:00am Note Writing 6:30pm Men's Basketball	14	15 5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Awana, Youth, Adult Choir, HIS Group, & Prayer Meeting	16	17 6pm Pickleball BG	18
19 9:00am Worship 10:15am Bible Study 5:30pm Portuguese Ministry	20 10:00am Note Writing 6:30pm Men's Basketball	21	22 5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Awana, Youth, Adult Choir, HIS Group, & Prayer Meeting	23 10:00am Quilters BG	24 6pm Pickleball BG	25
26 9:00am Worship 10:15am Bible Study 5:30pm Portuguese Ministry	27 10:00am Note Writing 6:30pm Men's Basketball	28	29 5:30pm Dinner 6:00pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Awana, Youth, Adult Choir, HIS Group, & Prayer Meeting	30	31 6pm Pickleball BG	



JANUARY

Birthdays



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Angela Perdue Les Robinson	2 Timothy Bailey Mason Scott	3 Adam Hazelwood Grace Jessie Deanna Waldon	4 Caleb Harding
5 Stacy Dixon Vernon Stephenson	6 Hannah Jessie Jesseca Johnson Robert Smith Cassandra Stickel Justin Talley Rosalie Terrana	7 Marcie Donkle	8	9 Peggy Arehart Janet Blunt Wally Carter Kevin Hazelgrove Jason Holloway John Reynolds Melissa Vayo	10 Monica Heilman Greg Middleton Jeff Wilborn	11
12 Tessa Ludwig	13 Thomas Marsh	14 Cindy Crockett Michael Robertson	15 Faye Fellows Bianca Johnson Bernice Nelson Nicole O'Bier Donna Thompson	16 Kyle Leyda Anita Riley Millie Schultz Charlestyn Steele	17 Susan Fowlkes Jonathan Schaefer	18 Penny Hudson Charlie King Gina Peterson Kyleen Terrana
19 Aimee Clayton Gabrielle Hunkele Rebecca Palmer Diane Ruff Jeff Wachsmuth	20 Bob Clements Jr. Matthew Scott Haller	21 Kenneth Wagner Jessi Wilson	22 Jesse Crider	23 Carl Downey James Wesley Steven- son Nikki Stevenson	24 Stewart Meredith Carolyn Nicholas Larry Ninio Ellen Walker Jason Watts	25
26 Alice Tate Rhonda Wash	27 Ronald Haynes Susan Jinnette Luke Martin Jeff Ramey Benjamin Roberts	28 Tristan Rochon Hannah Roller Kristen Taylor Susan Chandler	29 Nicole Griffith David Paciocco Glen Powell Robin Wade	30 Kettie Britton Brenda Crain Brenda Evans Shannon Herrington Tracy Sargent Ann Blanchard Walsh	31 James Duzan Alma Heilman Heather Mitchell Rei Ashley Nakagawa Lewis Shobe Betty Ann Watson	



Notes From Tommy

Happy New Year to everyone! I'm looking for exciting things to be happening in our church, and especially with our music program.

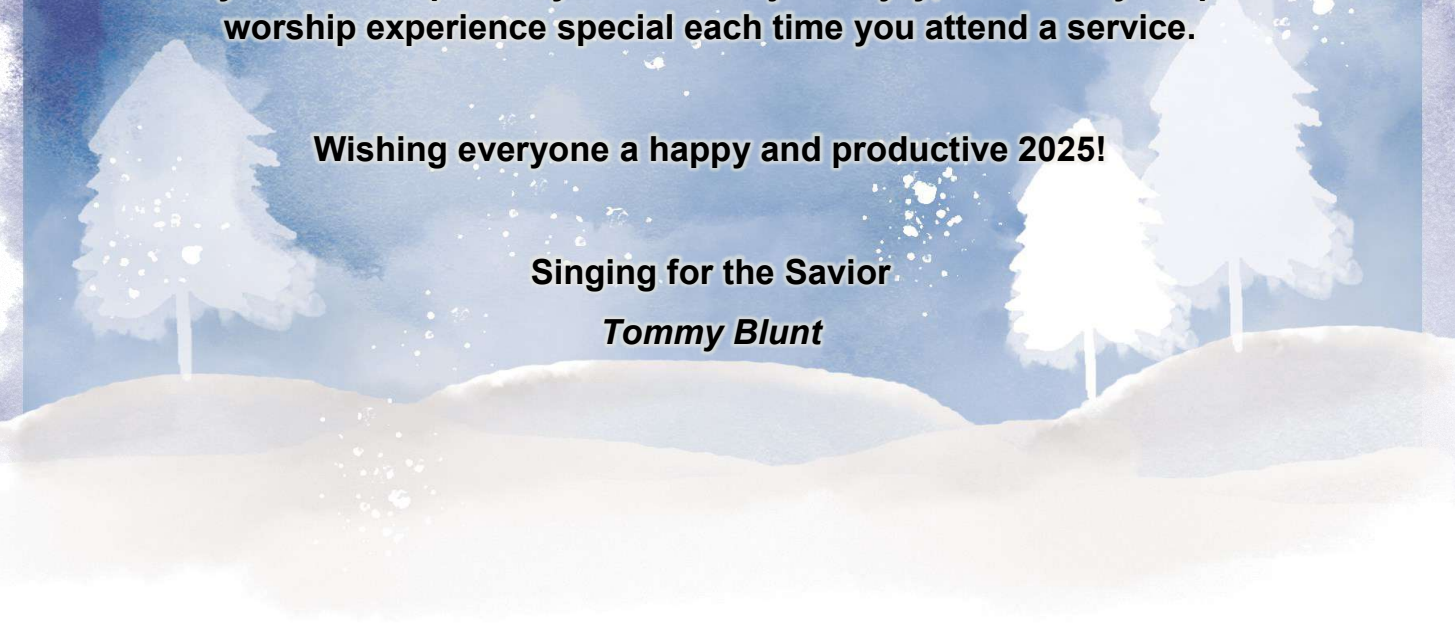
One of the first things that is being planned out is an upgrade to our sanctuary video screen. Our current screen and video projector is pretty outdated, and the new screen will be much more clear and brighter. We will also be using a new computer program to run the graphics which will make it more interesting to look at and understand.

Our services will continue to be a blended mix that represents the talents of the groups and individuals that make up our music program. From the Adult Choir and Praise Team, to the Children's Choir and Youth Praise Team, the Majesticks, soloists, Men's Chorus, and guest musical groups, we will have a great variety of musical styles that I hope everyone will not just enjoy, but make your praise and worship experience special each time you attend a service.

Wishing everyone a happy and productive 2025!

Singing for the Savior

Tommy Blunt



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

2025 CHALLENGE

In 2024, you allowed God to work in your hearts. A goal of 700 children for Jesus was apparently too small for such a mighty God and a generous congregation. You packed a whopping **851** FUN, FULL, & PERSONALIZED shoeboxes which means you shared the hope and joy of Jesus Christ to 851 children and families and communities.

SO WHAT IS IN STORE FOR 2025?

People have already started asking if we will try for 1,000 boxes. People are assuring me that we can do 1,000. That is definitely a God-size goal. I can tell you that we are willing to do whatever is necessary to help make that happen. Just remember, this isn't just about a goal, it is about partnering with God; about doing what He calls us to do—sharing the gospel with all creation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP SBC REACH 1,000 CHILDREN?

- Start praying about what God wants you to do to further His Kingdom.
- Start planning for your shoeboxes now. If you set aside \$10 every month, you would have enough money saved to pay shipping on 10 or 11 boxes.
- If you have special talents that can be used to make items for our OCC store, join our women who already help.
- Pack shoeboxes to honor people you love or in memory of those whom God has called home.
- Watch for upcoming news on how to help our youth pack more boxes and have the money to cover the shipping.

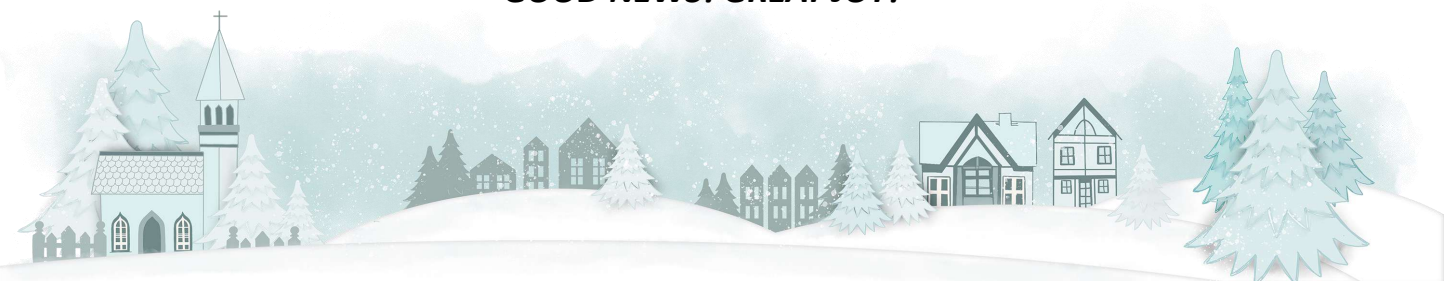
AN OCC BLESSING

Logan Watts was a very special OCC volunteer. He was a boy, a teenager, who loved sports and having fun. He didn't have to participate in this ministry, but he did because he truly loved serving and always did it with a smile. During his Celebration of Life, Karl shared our OCC ministry and how Logan was a big part of it.

He challenged people to pack another box to honor Logan. We will never know the exact total of boxes packed for Logan, but I can assure you it was over 150. 150 more children are able to know that they are loved by the same God who loves you and me and Logan. This wonderful young boy/man, who always put a smile on our faces, has now put smiles on the faces of many children around the world. Be like Logan, let your life have meaning and serve a purpose! Logan, you are forever in our hearts!



GOOD NEWS! GREAT JOY!



JANUARY

Dinner Menu

JANUARY 1ST

Happy New Year!

No Wednesday Evening Dinner

JANUARY 8TH

Pork Loin, Mashed Potatoes, Green Peas, & Dessert

JANUARY 15TH

Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes, Carrots, Gravy, Rolls, & Dessert

JANUARY 22ND

Chili, Baked Potato, Cornbread, Fruit, & Dessert

JANUARY 29TH

Covered Dish

We apologize but due to inflation we are having to slightly increase our dinner prices for 2025. Individual prices will now be \$9 per adult and \$4 per child. The family price will now be \$27 per family.



SHOW Delivery Schedule

JANUARY 2ND

Winter Break—No delivery

JANUARY 16TH

Darnell Hailey

JANUARY 30TH

Greg Martin

JANUARY 9TH

Larry Meador

JANUARY 23RD

Mike Edwards

Thank you
Volunteers



Church Announcements

SISTA'HOOD NEWS—CALLING ALL LADIES

On Saturday, January 25, WPER & EC will be sponsoring a Women's Conference at Fairmount Christian Church in Mechanicsville. Many of us have attended in past years. It is a wonderful day of worship with hundreds of other women. Purchase your tickets now. A box lunch is also available for purchase from Chick-fil-A so that you don't have to go out for lunch. Use this link to purchase your tickets: <https://wper.org/hope/> For more information, see Denise Harcum or Sandy Tyler.



The Church Office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1st for New Year's Day, Happy 2025!



FISH ITEM FOR JANUARY:

We are collecting Beef Stew!

Thanks to all of you who provided gifts for our Angel Tree families recently and to all those who came out to help with the party Saturday, December 14th. Especially all the youth who came out in large numbers to help. Thanks for your support of this prison ministry outreach project!



FINANCIAL REPORT

Offerings 12/01/24.....	\$10,843.00
12/08/24	\$4,081.00
12/15/24	\$10,612.00
12/22/24	\$14,107.71
12/29/24	\$4,244.00
VANCO (Nov).....	\$21,224.25
Weekly Needs	\$14,073.48

UNIFIED MISSIONS

Offerings 12/01/24.....	\$235.00
12/08/24	\$155.00
12/15/24	\$345.00
12/22/24	\$210.00
12/29/24	\$510.00
Weekly Needs	\$673.08

PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY (HIS GROUP)

Wednesday Nights 6:30pm – 7:45pm
Location – Vines Class

“Join us for an inspiring time of fellowship and learning at our Bible Study Class. All are welcome to delve deeper into the Word and grow in faith together. Whether you're new to the Bible or looking to enrich your understanding, we'd love to have you with us. Let's journey through the Scriptures together!”



Deacon Team Ministries 2024

The deacon position in our church is biblically supported in the scriptures of Acts 6 and 1st Timothy 3. Men showing the qualifications provided in those scriptures are selected by the church pastor and if accepted, serve in that role for life. According to the church bylaws, *"It shall be the duty of the deacons to encourage and assist the pastor in his ministry and pastoral work. This is done by ministering to the needs of active church families and by serving the Lord's Supper and assisting in Baptism.* Different teams have been established to ensure the deacons perform that duty. With Sandston Baptist going through this time of change, the deacon body wants to remind the members that the deacons are here to support them in any way possible. Please review the list below and reach out to any deacon for assistance or with questions.

Communion Team

Typically reserved for our church family & friends that are not able to attend service on a regular basis, this team of deacons will provide an in-home communion service. When requested, two/three deacons will go to the person's home and perform a brief communion service with them.

<i>Team Lead:</i>	Eddie Marsh	elkobasket@aol.com	(804) 737-4078
<i>Team Members:</i>	Donald Clark	donandnancyclark@yahoo.com	(804) 222-2930
	Jim Stewart	jestew53@yahoo.com	(804) 507-0851
	Kenny Cordle	kennycordle@verizon.net	(804) 920-9300
	Troy Westerman	tdwesterman@gmail.com	(804) 212-8821
	Wayne Pollard	paulway@verizon.net	(804) 737-9749

Crisis & Hospital Team

This team of deacons focuses on ministering to church family members in crisis situations such as hospitalization, death in the family, divorce, financial strain, job loss, etc. They accomplish this with visits, calls, cards, prayer and assistance.

<i>Team Lead:</i>	Ron Molnar	rpmdlm@gmail.com	(804) 737-5272
<i>Team Members:</i>	Alan Watts	alanwatts@comcast.net	(804) 641-6357
	Charles Hankins	charhankins@aol.com	(804) 737-2915
	Darnell Hailey	dgfphailey@aol.com	(704) 763-6810
	Tom Palmore	tomcarpal@aol.com	(804) 737-5130

Outreach Team

Collect visitor card information. If the phone number is available, thank the visitor for worshipping with us. Answer questions about programs and activities at Sandston Baptist Church. Offer a home visit if they would like additional information.

<i>Team Lead:</i>	Carl Downey	carl_downey@comcast.net	(804) 512-3683
<i>Team Members:</i>	Darren Hayes	rdarrenhayes91@hotmail.com	(804) 401-5200
	Jeff Wilborn	mechanic4813@verizon.net	(804) 982-9916
	Eddie Marsh	elkobasket@aol.com	(804) 737-4078

New Member Team

Contact new members to schedule a time/place to meet with them, review their new member packet and answer any questions they may have about our church or their new faith. Provide contact information and encourage them to contact you if they need help or have questions. Assist Pastor with baptisms including prepping & cleaning up the baptismal.

<i>Team Lead:</i>	Wayne Pollard	paulway@verizon.net	(804) 737-9749
<i>Team Members:</i>	Donald Clark	donandnancyclark@yahoo.com	(804) 222-2930
	Jeff Carter	mrjeffcarter44@gmail.com	(804) 840-5643
	Jeff Schmid	jeffschmid2@gmail.com	(804) 380-5130
	Larry Meador	larrygaylemeador@gmail.com	(804) 339-4862
	Mike Edwards	edwr8m@gmail.com	(804) 514-1630