

The Courier

a newsletter from your friends at
First Baptist Church
in Hamilton, Ohio



"Where everybody is somebody and Jesus Christ Is Lord"

February, 2009

"Surprised By Love"

*Oh, how can I give you up ...?
How can I let you go?
How can I destroy you ...?
My heart is torn within me,
and my compassion overflows.
... for I am God and not a mere mortal.
(Hosea 11:8-9 NLT)*

Sentimentalists, don't get your hopes up by this title; this isn't a "chick flick" worthy story. It is, however, about the truth that underlies every single one of those stories that has value. In some ways, what we discover together here is far more important than any other story no matter how sentimental. This is the discovery of truth -- the surprising, experiential, multi-faceted, ever-repeating reality -- about love and all genuine love stories.

Love is unpredictable. There you have it. That's it. That's a truth you can bank on!

Love is unpredictable. Love does the unexpected. Love is full of surprises. Love is new even in the face of mind-numbing monotony. Love twists when rationality says go straight. Love forges ahead when logic says make a major change. Love doesn't budge when conventional wisdom says run. Love moves like the wind when common sense says "Be still and hide!" Love does the unexpected!

O I know that is not the exact definition of love in Scripture (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 for example). I can't quote a verse as a proof text that really summarizes what I'm saying ... at least not one verse that says it exactly. But I can get you proof.

God!

God is love. He shows it instead of just saying it. Or better yet, he says it by doing it. He can be tough or tender. He can be patient or pushy. He can rage and he can whisper. He can show his power and he can hide in the quietness of his creation. He can punish and he can suffer under the scourge. He can thunder and he can weep for a dead friend and his sisters. He

can demand allegiance, but he can also risk everything to win our hearts.

God is not unpredictable. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Yet his actions will always appear a bit unexpected and surprising if we do not humbly recognize that he is driven by one truth that trumps all others ... his love for us ... his gracious, undeserved, and unexpected love for us.

That's not to be confused with sappy emotions without gut wrenching sacrifice. It should not be mistaken for spoken intentions without follow through. This love should never be reduced to politically correct sounding speech with hollow character. We've let baby boomer sappiness and TV driven sentimentality replace the real grit and authenticity of true love ... unexpected, undeserved, sacrificial love. God will do the unexpected to reach the undeserving ... to reach us. He always has. He always will. That's what his book is about. Even more, that is what his ultimate message, Jesus is about. And that is what he is at work doing in your life and mine ... even when the unexpected turns of our life leave us ripped up and full of questions.

So ...

... will you trust that whatever he is up to in our world, your world, its about finding a way to reach you and your heart even when you can't understand all the why's of life?

... will you join him in his passion to touch everyone -- even the ones most of us can't stand or wouldn't waste time to reach -- and change them by his love?

–Phil Ware
Heartlight



American Baptist Women's Ministries

Blanket Sundays–Disaster Relief

Blanket Sundays will be February 8th and February 15th. In natural disasters (tornado, hurricane, flood, fire, mudslide, earthquake, etc.) many people are left with little or nothing. Church World Service furnishes initial emergency service with blankets, mattresses, tents, etc. Suggested donation for a blanket is \$8.00. Checks should be made payable to American Baptist Women.

Don't forget that in February we will be collecting items baby layettes. If you see a bargain, please bring it in and give to Bertha Campbell (893-9808) or give to a greeter.

Baby Kit (Layette)

- 4 Cloth Diapers
- 2 Shirts
- 2 Washcloths
- 2 Gowns or Sleepers
- 2 Diaper Pins
- 1 Sweater or Sweatshirt
- 2 Receiving Blankets
(1 can be a knitted blanket)

Disaster survivors need essential items to reclaim their homes and lives. Through the White Cross you can help prepare special recovery kits that provide both tangible assistance to people in need and show that neighbors near and far truly care. The contents of these kits are small things but having or not having them can make a world of difference in an on-going development program or when disaster strikes. Would you help Church World Service build an inventory of baby kits?

–Bertha Campbell

February Missionary of the Month:

Democratic Republic of the Congo
Wayne & Katherine Niles

Bible Book of the Month Joel

“Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things!”

Joel 2:21 (RSV)

Joel has been called “the prophet of religious revival.” His ministry was to Judah. The land of Israel had just suffered a plague of locusts that had left only desolation in their trail. Joel believed that this had been a judgment sent by God because of the sin of the people. He was the first to prophesy the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh.

PRAY for our hospitals in northeast India.

–Madge Walters

Young Women of Hope

The AB girls met after church on Sunday, January 25. After a delicious lunch provided by the girls and their families, Ruth Metzger shared about her trip to Israel and Jordon. After listening and seeing her slide presentation, we had a better understanding of the culture and places where Jesus walked. We really appreciate her time with us. The next meeting of AB Girls will be Sunday, Feb. 15.

–Nancy Whipple, Marilyn Bowling,
& Mindy Hazelwood



The next scheduled Work Day at Matthew 25 will be Thursday, February 19th. As usual, we would like to have a good working group to go. We will leave the church at the usual time, 8:30 a.m. Bring your sack lunch and beverage and be prepared for a good day of work and fellowship. Thank you.

–Pastor Bill and Bert Brantingham



Free Tax Service

Provided by IRS approved tax preparers under the supervision of AARP Tax Aide. Bring last years Income Tax returns to First United Methodist Church on Ludlow Street between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our own **Naomi Hoskins** has served as a counselor in the program for many years, and is a local coordinator. For further information see Naomi Hoskins (863-1873).

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A VISION FOR MINISTRY

(From the Pastor's 2008 Annual Report)

In his recent ministry paper, *The Barna Update*, George Barna states that Christianity is no longer the American default faith. For much of America's history, the assumption was that if you were born in America, you would affiliate with the Christian faith. But that is no longer the case. Over half of the people surveyed now contend that **Christianity is just one of many options** that Americans choose from when settling on a faith and worship system. It is also worthy to note that by a three to one margin (71% vs. 26%), adults state that they are more likely to develop their own set of religious beliefs than to just accept a comprehensive set of beliefs offered by a particular church or denomination. They are also willing to discard those teachings which do not fit into their developing self-made theology.

Barna concludes that as a result, growing numbers of people now serve as their own theologian-in-residence, and are comfortable with embracing an unpredictable and contradictory body of beliefs. 82% of those under 25 hold that practice. With people spending less time reading the Bible, and becoming less engaged in activities that deepen their biblical literacy, faith views are more often adopted on the basis of conversation, self-reflection, and observation, rather than teaching. Feelings and emotion have now taken a more central position in faith-building. Understanding this is more important than ever. Things are not what they once were. And neither is the challenge before us.

As a people called First Baptist Church, it is critical that we have a clear understanding of "whose we are" and for what purpose has God called us together in this world and in our city. This understanding/vision enables us to express the hope that is in our hearts as we invite our God to make Himself known among us and through us to a people who are lost without Christ. It is the desire of our spirits to say to our Lord, "*We want to make a difference in the world.*" Our ministry must be far more than a focus on what makes our families happy and fulfilled as we choose from the many options available to us in this busy and abundant culture. It is more than just hanging on to what makes us comfortable. **This church business is not all about us.** It is seeing the passion of Jesus lived out in the world of sin, darkness, and need, and to follow in His footsteps among a people who are more and more out of touch with what God wants to do in this world.

In previous years we have clarified several key points that identify us God's people in this place, who are called to serve our Lord in this world. We cannot determine what we are to do in this ministry, without clearly understanding God's call upon our lives:

Our Cause

Our cause is the Great Commission of Jesus Christ: *namely, that the gospel is to be taken everywhere, that everything Jesus taught we are to teach, and that we should remember that Jesus is with us always* (Matthew 28:19, 20). No one else has been charged by God with this task. It is the church only that God has called to introduce His love and power to a lost world.

Our Purpose

In the development of our church ministry, we have stated and reaffirmed on a number of occasions the value of our current purpose statement:

*We are believers in Jesus Christ, called of God,
Gathering for worship, instruction, & fellowship;
Scattering for care, evangelism, and
transformation of the world for His Kingdom.*

This statement is found on all of our printed materials. It requires us to ask of any activity, and every event--How does this effort fit into the purpose of what we are to be about?

Our Vision

Our statement of purpose requires us to ask questions about how we are going to

(From the Pastor's Heart, cont)

contextualize our ministry efforts:

- Who are we as we sit on this hill, over-looking the the river flowing through our city?
- Why do we exist as a people called First Baptist Church of Hamilton, Ohio?
- Who is our target audience?
- How do we become more responsive to the needs of our community?

Answering these questions brought us to agree that we are...

A multi-generational, multi-community, church family that ministers to all, and provides an opportunity for all to minister.

This means that in all of our efforts of ministry, we will attempt to remember that **members of every generation are important**--that every person has a place among us. That includes the respected, long-time members, who enabled us to become who we are as a church family, through years of their sacrifice and labor, as well as the younger children among us--and every generation between--will be the target of ministry. Every generation will have an opportunity to serve, to discover a place to worship in ways that are meaningful, and will find something here to meet their emotional, physical, and spiritual lives.

Our Core Values

In our efforts to be faithful to our purpose and vision, we reminded ourselves that there are some essential qualities and activities that we especially value. These core values will continue to be key qualities that will identify us as a people who desire to serve the Lord in 2009 and beyond:

First Baptist Church will be...

- Word (Scripture)-centered, with strong preaching/teaching
- Christ-centered
- A people of prayer
- Motivated by missions, evangelism, discipleship
- Committed to relationships and fellowship
- Open to people who do not have a Baptist heritage
- Led by leaders who are committed to integrity
- A worshiping congregation
- A unified congregation
- A congregation that shows love and compassion
- A congregation that appreciates its heritage
- A congregation that makes good use of its organizational structure.

Ministry Strategies

Utilizing the unifying categories of Cause, Purpose,

Vision, and Core Values, in 2006 we developed **seven specific strategies that address key areas we identified as important to our continued ministry efforts** (a clarification and contextualization of vision being the first):

17. To strengthen of our worship so that members of every generation find a meaningful experience before the throne of grace (strategy #2);
18. To sharpen our community life so that we are more intentional about becoming a welcoming and encouraging faith community (strategy #3);
19. To become more aware of the current involvement of the people of the congregation in their many efforts of ministry in our community, enlisting others to participate with them (strategy #4);
20. To become more effective in communication among members of the board and committees; to develop a mentoring system where leadership development becomes a more intentional process among those who wish to serve the community of faith (strategy #5);
21. To educate and develop generous Christians who understand the value of faithful, obedient stewardship of time, talent, and treasure (tithing) (strategy #6);
22. To become more effective as a church that prays (strategy # 7).

The Future for First Baptist Church

Refocusing on our mission and reaffirming our strategies will be a major focus in 2009. But it will take more than just developing a clear understanding of our **Cause**, being able to recite our **Purpose and Vision**, living our lives under the influence of our **Core Values**, or even giving attention to our **Ministry Strategies**, to make us more effective and fruitful as a church ministry. These areas are essential, and we have made some major progress in each in the last several years.

But one thing is clear to most of us who have been laboring on behalf of the First Baptist ministry--**we need to find more effective ways to touch the lives of real people.** We have the essentials down pretty well. Now we need to move this "ministry ship" so that we more effectively intersect with people's lives and introduce them to the Lord and the ministries at FBC.

This will likely require new ministries geared for the unchurched, and additional efforts focused upon linking guests with ministries already in place. Every church member will need to **discover ways to become an inviting people.** Every ministry group and Sunday school class will need to rethink what they do to make themselves more accessible and inviting to those who are not yet involved and participating. What we have observed is that we have an open door where

(From the Pastor's Heart, continued)

new friends are welcomed; but we also have back doors where established people slip away from us because of personal issues, disinterest, hurt feelings, or new interests developing in other ministries and churches.

Our board chairs and other key leaders gathered on January 17th for an excellent time of communication and interaction over exactly these issues. They will be addressing these issues in their respective board and committee gatherings. But we must understand that God has called ALL of us to the task of building up this body of Christ.

Even though there is much work still before us, it is a good place to be as we stand near the beginning of 2009. I am convinced that the Lord will mightily bless our work in the year before us as we prayerfully commit it into His care. I hope you are filled with a similar expectation and hope as we remember why God has called us together as a people called First Baptist Church.

Looking forward to another year of mission and relationship, Pastor

More Bible Study Opportunities

Hear me, hear me! Calling all "young" couples of the church! You are invited to attend a new study focusing on the parables of Jesus. The format includes DVD clips, as well as discussion and completion of study book questions. The group meets every other Friday, with the locations varying from week to week. Most often, the studies will be held at church in rooms 113-114, while, on occasion, they may be hosted in a group member's home. We meet for supper around 6:30 pm, and begin the study around 7:15 pm. A babysitter (or 2) is hired to watch the kids while the adults meet. The families attending "chip in" on dinner and childcare. If you have any questions, please contact Brian Begley at 829-6263. We hope to see you there!

Looking for a place to go on Wednesday nights while your kids are in AWANA? A small group has formed, studying "The Five Love Languages of Children." The group meets downstairs from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Using the study book as a guide, informal discussions take place about our children, and how to discover their love languages. Please see Chris Metzger or Angie Inloes if you have any questions about this group. Be sure to check it out after you drop the kids off for AWANA. Of course, those who do not have children in AWANA are welcome to attend!!

–Brandi Emenaker & Claire Metzger

Budget Status Report

The Month of December, 2008

Projected (Budgeted) Spending	\$56,202
Offerings	<u>73,818</u>
Over (Under) Budget	\$17,416

Actual (Budgeted) Spending	\$65,318
Offerings	<u>73,618</u>
Over (Under) Actual	\$ 8,300

The Year Through December, 2008

Projected (Budgeted) Spending	\$723,198
Offerings	<u>651,267</u>
Over (Under) Budget	(\$71,931)

Actual (Budgeted) Spending	\$714,948
Offerings	<u>651,267</u>
Over (Under) Actual	(\$63,681)

–The Board Of Trustees

Calling All Couples!!!

The Weekend To Remember Conference is coming soon to the Cincinnati, Ohio area and we at First Baptist are planning on taking a group. The conference date is March 6-8, 2009 and will be located at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Cincinnati. This is an amazing conference geared for couples and those soon to be married. You can read some great stories online at familylife.com and I hope you will check things out. The cost of the conference is \$89 per person, a savings of \$40 per person, when you call or register online with our group name "fbcham" or our group code number of "19950". You can register on your own and then book your own hotel or stay at the Hyatt Regency for \$100 per night. The conference begins on Friday evening and will conclude on Sunday morning. For more information please see Jeremy or Aleesha Spence. Hope you will take part of this group opportunity.

–Jeremy Spence

**Newsletter
DEADLINE**

Reminder: All articles for the monthly newsletter, The Courier, are due in the church office by the 15th of the month. They can be emailed to Ellie at ellie.dinger@fuse.net or elliedinger@juno.com. Articles received after the 20th may not be in that month's newsletter.



We Are Looking For You In Sunday School!



"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."
Psalm 122:1

Congratulations to those who had perfect Sunday School attendance for October, November, and December, 2008.

Nursery

Ruth Gaskins

FOCUS

Bill Roberts

Toddlers

Marsha Helton

Ed Emerick

Homebuilders

Jerry Wallace

Parenting

Mike Braun

Kindergarten

Eugenia Sexton

Keystone

Bettie Carmack

Kathy Chambers

Betty Eicher

Primary

Nellie Roberts

Bob Eicher

Isabell Johnson

Betty Powell

Middler

Mitchell Inloes

Fred Schilling

Irene Schilling

Sr. High

Jeremy Spence

TNT

Marilyn Bowling

Carpenter's Hands

Robert Williams

Office

Linda Gibbs

Carol Howard

—Linda Gibbs

Letters of Love, Appreciation, and Memory

As many of you have heard by now, George Scripture, former pastor of First Baptist Church from 1963-1973, has been diagnosed with bone cancer. While bone cancer is often a painful condition, George is taking medication that has the pain under good management. Many of us have come to love George and Ruth over the years, not only for their service to the Lord, but also for their personal friendship. We would like to invite the congregation to write letters and notes of love and appreciation for them. We will gather the letters and make a presentation to them in mid-February. Time is short, so please give the letters to Jerry or Johnnie Wallace as soon as you can.

--Pastor

On Tuesday, January 20th we held our fifth monthly MOPS meeting for 2008-09. We had a total of twenty-two ladies in attendance with one new mom visiting our group. During the winter months our numbers seem to decline a tad but we continue to see at least one new mom each month. This is evidence that God is working among our group. This month our theme focused on the roller coaster with our topic on healthy and easy workouts moms can do in the busyness of our days. Our own MOPS mom, Staci Dickman a certified personal trainer, did an awesome job informing us on how everyday tasks can be turned into exercise. Tips included vacuuming, carrying the laundry, going up and down the stairs and using either laundry detergent or soup cans for weight training. Her tips were enjoyed and well received by all of our moms. We also collected the front of Christmas and all occasion cards to send to St. Jude's to assist them with their card making project. We collected over 100 cards for this mission. We also have committed to collect plastic spoons for One Way Farm. To date we have been able to send them 28 sets of spoons. If you would like to help us with this mission please drop off a bag of spoons in the office for the MOPS mailbox. We collect these monthly so there is no time deadline for donations.

Our outings for January consist of a moms only movie night which will be held on January 29th beginning at 7:00 at the home of Chasity Metz. Our February outings include both a moms only and a mother child. Moms only will be a food tour of Jungle Jims and our mother/child will be a trip to the indoor play center at Sharon Woods. If you would like to attend any of these events or just would like more information please see me anytime.

Our February meeting is sure to be a huge hit! We will be hosting our 5th annual Pamper Fair. What a great opportunity to invite someone you know to come and check MOPS out in a non-threatening environment. We will also be offering free childcare, with the help of Jeremy, that evening to allow you to spend some time with your spouse. Sign up is required so if you need further information about this event please see or call me anytime.

Please continue to pray for the MOPS ministry, the moms who attend along with those who will attend, the Moppet workers and the members of steering. May all who are involved and attend our meetings see Christ through us.

Enjoying the Adventure with Him-
Elise
Coordinator

A Special Valentine's Love Story

Her family had come to America from Sweden. She had a typical Scandinavian look... Long blond hair; blue eyes; long slender legs; soft, blemish-free skin; high cheek bones. She was gorgeous - she was beautiful. In fact, a professional international photographer in her hometown thought she was so pretty that he used a photograph of her to advertise his business.

But that was not her real beauty.

She was raised by some wonderful Christian parents and had become a Christian at an early age. Integrity, honesty and sweetness were just a few of her characteristics. In fact, at her engagement party, her sister, who knew her better than anyone, said that she had never heard her tell a lie. All of her friends said the same thing about her: She was the sweetest girl they knew. She would never speak a harsh word about anyone. Everyone loved to be around her.

A young man she met in her freshman year started dating her and fell in love with her - both her exterior photographic beauty and the wonderful godly character of her inward beauty. She fell in love with him and they spent every free moment they could with each other over the next four years. They were committed to each other and they believed in waiting long before the "True Love Waits" Campaign ever existed.

One week after they graduated from college, they were married. They loved each other's company. They would walk together, exercise together, go on bike rides together, chaperone youth trips together - go to movies, watch TV, eat pizza, travel - all the things any normal couple would love to do together. They were so much in love.

She taught school for a year and then became a bookkeeper for a surgical supply company. One day while she was working, for no apparent reason she lost her balance and fell on the floor. She was later able to get up and went to see a doctor that night. He set her up to see a Neurologist. The following day, it happened again. For no apparent reason, she lost her balance and fell. This time, though, she couldn't get up. She had lost all feeling in her legs. They wouldn't move.

Her husband had to come to the office and pick her up in his arms and carry her to the hospital. After six days in the hospital, the doctor gave this beautiful, active young lady the dreadful news. She had Multiple Sclerosis and she would continue to deteriorate.

This young couple, who had now been married only 18 months - who loved to go everywhere together and do everything together - would now face some new challenges. All their future plans would change, everyday life would change. They would change.

For the next 20 years, this young lady did deteriorate. She had to take steroids (not the kind athletes use, but anti-inflammatory steroids). Her bones became brittle, breaking easily. Her face became puffy and bloated and she could not even put on make-up. Her body was a mess. She went from a walker, to an electric scooter, to a wheelchair. She could no longer feed herself, write her name, or control her own bodily functions. She now had to have someone stay with her 24 hours a day.

If that couple had not had the kind of committed love that's based first on a personal relationship and a commitment to Jesus Christ and second, on a love that's based on a commitment to each other, the marriage never would have lasted. In fact, a large percentage of the marriages where a spouse has MS, the other spouse leaves them. The other spouse won't stay committed to the constant care and the continual physical, psychological and mental changes that continue to occur.

Please hear me carefully - those two people are not heroes. They are not super-saints or super-Christians. They will be the first to tell you that they are not super Christians. Those two people are normal, ordinary people, empowered by the Love of God and a love for each other, to do what the world considers beyond normal and extraordinary.

I know this for a fact - because that woman, that beautiful young lady who will never walk again, who can't even feed herself, is Lynda Langerfeld - my wife. She's not a hero. I'm not a hero. We're children of God, doing what the children of God are supposed to do. Doing what His children are called to do. Doing what God expects of every man and every woman who make a vow before God on their wedding day.

Often, Hollywood will portray a "hero" sacrificing his life for his "heroine" in a film. In the world's eyes, he's a hero. In God's eyes, he's an ordinary man making an extraordinary sacrifice that every Christian who's committed to his spouse ought to make. Sacrificial, Committed Love is the rule, not the exception. We're not super-saints, we're not heroes when we're being faithful and committed to our mates. We're doing what God has called every husband and wife to do since the beginning of time.

--David Langerfeld
Faithsite



Awana Club

Awana February Calendar

- 4th - Store Night
- 11th - Valentine's Day Theme Night
- 18th - Regular Club/Grand Prix Workshop
- 25th - Regular Club/Grand Prix Workshop

Awana is looking forward to its big race night. This event brings in parents and families, so stop by and say hello and it will give you an opportunity to see this wonderful ministry in action—literally! (also we always have popcorn on race night...☺).

- The T&T club will be having their Grand Prix event on Wednesday, March 11th in the gym. Stay tuned for more detailed information to be sent home with clubbers regarding car information and racing rules.
- The Sparks and Cubbies clubs will hold their Matchbox races on Wednesday, March 18th. Stay tuned for more detailed information to be sent home with clubbers regarding what will be needed for this fun-filled evening.

Thanks to the families and volunteers for working with their clubbers on the sections in their AWANA books. This takes a lot of preparation, and the kids are doing so well in their achievements! If your child's goal is to complete a book this year, they need to be about halfway through his/her book by now, as we are halfway through our AWANA year! Yikes! It's going fast! If your child needs to catch up on their sections, listeners will be happy to check sections on Sunday mornings or evenings. We are planning a special activity for clubbers who complete their books by the end of the year. That is a special accomplishment! See any of the AWANA leaders if you have any questions about completing sections.

Sparks is in need of some additional listeners to help students with their sections. If you are available to help one or two students with their sections, we would be glad to have your assistance from 6:50 pm to about 7:10 pm. If you can spare a few minutes, we would appreciate your help! With some additional helpers, this will allow a little bit more of individualized attention with the kids, and allow more time for story and recreation. Thanks!

—Brandi Emenaker, Claire Metzger,
& Sandra Imhoff, Awana Leaders

Awana Store

Are you a shopper? Do you like to bargain shop? Well, if you are out and about, and run across some awesome deals on items that kids might enjoy, pick them up for AWANA! We are always looking for interesting items to include in our AWANA Store and our AWANA Fair. We are especially in need of items which will be of interest to boys ages Kindergarten through 6th grade. Students earn AWANA Bucks for a variety of reasons each club night. A few times a year, students get to spend their saved Bucks on shopping nights. It is always an exciting night when it is store night! If you have something that you would like to donate to the store, please see Brandi or Claire. If you run across a quantity of items, and would like to be reimbursed, just save your receipt and turn that in to Brandi. A requisition will be filled out for you. Thanks again for your support!

Junior Jam 2009 Saturday, March 28th 9:00am - 4:00pm Cedarville

Junior Jam is a one-day, high-energy event with music to get yer toes a-tappin', games and hands-on activities to get yer feet - & mind - a-movin', & a lunch to stop yer stomach from a-growlin'! Not to mention one-on-one time with University students! Ya'll can learn somethin' from them! This year, we're throwin' a "Roof Raisin' Ruckus" as we tell ya how to show forgiveness & kindness to the folk in yer life. And believe me... we'll be a-raisin' the roof!

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another,
forgiving one another,
just as in Christ
God forgave you." Ephesians 4:32*

Your kids will take home memories, practical lessons, and Bible promises that we pray will make a difference in their lives for years to come!

When: March 28, 2009

Cost: 20 per student includes all activities and lunch. First Baptist will cover \$5 of each child who would like to attend. Chaperones will be free. T-shirt purchases may be made at the event for \$5. If you have any questions, please see Brandi, Claire, or Cheryl Motzer. RSVP's will be due by mid-March
Ages: 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students (and their friends!)

—Brandi Emenaker & Claire Metzger
Co-Directors of Children's Ministries



Carpenter's Hands Signs Of Love



Happy Birthday!



February 11 - Jack Wyant

Interpreter Schedule for February

Feb. 1	Jo Manson	Maria Miller
Feb. 8	Jo Manson	Maria Miller
Feb. 15	Jo Manson	Maria Miller
Feb. 22	Jo Manson	Maria Miller

The next **Silent Dinner** will be held on Friday evening, February 6th at Northgate Mall. See you there!

—Maria Miller
Director of Deaf Ministries

Childcare Appreciation Luncheon

We will be holding our childcare staff appreciation luncheon on Sunday, February 22nd, in the Family Center immediately following morning service. We encourage you to join us for a free, home cooked meal if you have spent time in any way working with children at church. Please note that Jeremy is not counted as a child! :) Claire and Brandi will be making a variety of soups and other side dishes as a small token of appreciation for your volunteer efforts with the children of our church. Please sign up at the table in the connector if you will be able to attend.

—Brandi Emenaker & Claire Metzger
Co-Directors of Children's Ministries

VBS Showcase

The VBS Showcase, sponsored by Berean Christian Bookstore, will be Thursday, February 19th, from 7 - 9 p.m. If you would like to attend and check out the latest VBS curriculum, let Brandi or Claire know. The event will be held at Dayspring Church of God in Forest Park. Ridesharing may be available.

Women's Ministry Council News

Legacy of Love Coffee

Dear Ladies,

You are invited to attend the Legacy of Love Coffee that will be held Friday, February 20th, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 200.

We will celebrate the love of family and friends by emphasizing the power of the written word, remembering that the greatest love letter is the Word of God. Several ladies will share special letters received as a result of the "Letters from Dad" program that was held for the men of the church. Other written mementos and stories about loved ones will be shared, as well as any that you might like to bring along that hold special meaning for you.

Tickets will be available at the table in the connector on February 1st, 8th, and 15th. The \$5.00 cost will cover the continental breakfast and several table favors.

Let us remember the love of God, family, and friends as we fellowship together. Let us rejoice as we read their words.

With love,
Women's Ministry Council

Serve City

Dinner was served at the Serve City shelter on January 30th. Thanks to those of you who helped prepare food and those we came to serve. We will prepare another dinner on Friday, May 29th. Further information will come from the Women's Ministry Council.

Love is in the Air...

February has come around so fast we cannot believe how quickly this new year has already progressed. With Valentine's Day approaching, those who work in schools will know that they can pull out the Valentine material and help their students share with others and send Valentines to the whole class. No one student wants to be left without a Valentine card, so they send one to the whole class in the hope that they will receive some in return. Aren't we so blessed that we don't need to send Jesus a Valentine card in the hope that He will send us one back! Jesus loves each and every one of us-- "No matter what we look like, no matter where we live God loves you." (Even after 22 years I can still remember the words to a song that I sang in Kinderchurch!!!) We hope that this month we especially look forward to being able to show children Jesus' love and to help them understand that the greatest love in the world was God sending His son Jesus to die for us. That this is real love!

—Claire Metzger
Co-Director of Children's Ministries



From The Heart Of Marilyn

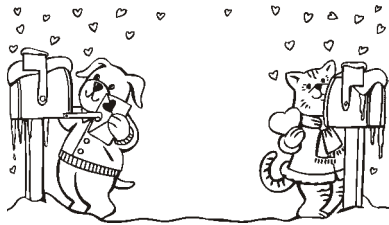
College Corner

E-Mail From God

Go After Love

“Go after a life of love as if your life depended on it—because it does.”-I Corinthians 14:1 (The Message)

Valentine’s Day is a wonderful time to remember that our Father’s love never changes and His heart is

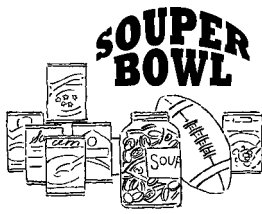


always open to receive us. May our college students feel His special love this Valentine’s Day. Our college students would love to receive a loving thought of encouragement from their First Baptist Church family. The wintry days can get cold and long when you are on a campus and a card in their mailbox really will help to pick them up!

Amber Allen (Miami University) 5297 Layhigh Road Hamilton, Ohio 45013	<p> Birthday 6/12 </p>	<p> Alex Thiel (Ohio State University) Park Hall Room 707 110 W. 11th Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43210 </p>	6/15
Chad Allen (Wright State University) 1239 Springwood Lane Rm 406 B LAH Fairborn, Ohio 45324	11/2	<p> Susan Thomas (University of Kentucky) 256 Kalmia Street Apt. # 5 Lexington, Kentucky 40508 </p>	1/10
Mark Braun (University of Toledo) 1848 Meadowlark Avenue Toledo, Ohio 43614	4/11	<p> Jennifer Wallace (Ohio State University) 378 Naiche Court Columbus, Ohio 43213 </p>	12/11
Rachael Davis (Miami University) 2483 Sir Martin Drive Hamilton, Ohio 45013	10/17	<p> Nick Wilson (Miami University) 1401 Eaton Avenue Hamilton, Ohio 45013 </p>	3/25
Drew Helton (Wright State University) 1570 # 1 Reece Drive Fairborn, Ohio 45324	5/17		
Martha Helton (Miami University) 918 Greenwood Court Trenton, Ohio 45067	9/16		
Rachel Keller (Miami University-Hamilton) 4176 Bedford Avenue	6/21		

–Marilyn Bowling
College Coordinator





Souper Bowl Sunday

Sunday, February 1st, is Souper Bowl Sunday. Please bring to church with you a can of soup or any other food item and \$1. Members of CREW will be collecting these items at the doors. Food items and money will be divided between New Life Baptist Mission and Serve City. Thanks for your participation!

—Jeremy Spence

Rotary Revels Present The Sound of Music

March 19, 20 & 21 at 8:00 p.m.
March 21 & 22 at 2:00 p.m.

At Parrish Auditorium
Miami University Hamilton

Tickets are \$15.00
Contact Karen Buchanan
863-1472

Tisha Patton - Rehearsal Pianist
Bob Borden - Orchestra Conductor
Sam Horton - von Trapp Child
Karen Buchanan - Nun

Attention: KeenAgers! KeenAgers are going to Rotary Presents *The Sound Of Music* on Saturday, March 21st, at 2:00 p.m. There are **only 20 tickets** available. Please sign the list on the bulletin board ASAP. The cost is \$15. All money is due Sunday, February 15th.

KeenAger February Outing

The KeenAgers will be traveling to Springboro to see *Polynesian Fire* at the LaComedia Dinner Theater on Thursday, February 12th. They will be leaving the church 9:30 a.m .

★ Thank You! ★
★ THANK YOU! ★

From Ruth Metzger

Rehearsals have begun for *Nic at Night*. There are 28 precious boys and girls coming. Please put the date on your calendars, Sunday, March 29th, for our performance. We'd love to see you there.

In the meantime we'd like to thank those that made the King's Kids Christmas musical *Christmas in Reverse* such an enjoyable experience. We owe a debt of gratitude to you. I know all of you said you are doing this as an offering to the Lord, but I'd still like to thank you from the bottom of my heart!!!

First to the parents for encouraging and supporting your children and their friends/relatives and for providing snacks and transportation each week.

Second to the crew for their fantastic work and dedication: John and Cheryl Motzer, Debbie Allen, Lauren Schwartz, Sandra Imhoff, Rod Anderson, Noel and Sydney Wilson, Lauren Imhoff all pitched in to help with the set. (Duke Energy might have a future for John and Rod!!) In addition Debbie and Lauren were there for every rehearsal teaching and leading the children with such energy in the choreography. They also filled in for me for the weeks I was gone on our trip to Israel.

Third, to our terrific sound technician, Todd Keith, who graciously gives us his time and expertise even though his children have grown too old for King's Kids. He's the one who makes us sound so good. Without him we'd have to close up shop.

Fourth, to Pastor Den who volunteers to do the bulletin each time and leaves his name off the credits!! He also is a great encourager to the director when she gets flamboozled!!!

I have much to be thankful for in this ministry. I don't know that I will ever cease to be amazed at how wonderfully little children praise their Savior through music. Many times, even during rehearsals, I am moved to tears as I watch and listen to them sing.

In grateful thanks,
Ruth



President's Day, February 16th



Child Care Schedule

Nursery (Morning)

February 1 - Linda & Larry Wallace & Oliver Davis
 February 8 - Shirley Wade & Olivia Hoskins
 February 15 - Dwain & Sharon Brewer
 February 22 - Chris & Claire Metzger

One & Two Year Olds

February 1 - Judy, Amy, & Anna Wallace
 February 8 - Chris & Claire Metzger
 February 15 - Monica Rose & Hailee
 February 22 - Mike & Dale Braun

Kinderchurch

February 1 - Dorothy Hollowell & Vickie Baker
 February 8 - Brandi Emenaker & Teen Helper
 February 15 - Dorothy Hollowell & Vickie Baker
 February 22 - Brandi Emenaker & Teen Helper



Childcare Schedule

Many thanks to those who have answered our plea for help with our childcare schedule. Thanks for saying "yes" to Ruthie Wallace instead of "no." And really, who can say "no" to Ruthie anyway? : For those who have volunteered to assist in KidsChurch, there is a little management information to share. After the kids are excused from the service, they line up to be counted before they head to Room 200. Please stand with the kids, and then lead them to the bathrooms for a quick break. After all of the students have returned to the line, please lead them to Room 200, where Karen will be waiting to begin the lesson and activities for the day. As an assistant, you will not need to do any lesson planning or leading of activities, unless you would like to! You will be a support for Karen, helping to set up snacks, manage a game, help with a craft, or whatever else Karen might have up her sleeve! Thanks in advance for your help with this growing group of children!

-Brandi Emenaker & Claire Metzger
 Co-Directors of Children's Ministries



Wednesday Family Dinners

February 4 - Jeremy's Birthday Dinner

Menu: Spaghetti Casserole, Tossed Salad, Bread Sticks, Peach Cobbler
 Hosts: Keystone I

February 11

Menu: Beef Stew over Hot Buttered Noodles, Cole Slaw, Rolls, Cherry Crunch
 Hosts: FOCUS

February 18

Menu: Chicken and Dumplings, Peas and Carrots, Fruit Jello, Rolls, Loretta's Texas Sheet Cake
 Hosts: Keystone II

February 25

Menu: Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Corn, Applesauce, Rolls, Dessert
 Hosts: Chancel Choir

Reminder: Adults should contribute \$4.00 per person for the meal; the cost for children under 12 years old who eat at the "Hot Dog" table is \$1.25. If they chose to eat from the main table, the cost is \$2.00. Be sure to make your reservation on the Friendship Folder each Sunday.

Reminder: Anyone desiring to borrow items, such as, chairs, tables, coffee pots, etc. are now required to fill out a sheet in the office with name, date, item, and number borrowed and then the date, item, and number returned. Please see Ellie.

February Greeters

Don Gingrich, Evelyn Maddox, Nancy Follmer,
 Mary Petry, & Jerry Hampton





Pastor Jeremy's Think Tank

It is that time of year when I start to be reminded of what I did not do last year and make the intentions to do better this year. Once again, God is reminding me of taking time out of my schedule and life to spend with Him. One would think that after a couple years of being "reminded" of this fact I would actually "get it".

In fact this is the main theme of a series the CREW and I have been exploring the past couple weeks as we have asked the question, How Can I Survive the Busy Life? We have had some great times interacting and learning from each other. This series is also another way that God has been reminding me of lessons still to be learned and lived out. The main lesson is, of course, the idea to "slow down" and take time to be with Him.

At the core, this is a continuation of the dialogue God and I have concerning the intentional life over the past couple months. I believe it is also a reminder of what it means when Christ said in John 10.10, "I come to give you life and life more abundantly", or as I say "life as it was meant to be lived". So what you find below are just two ways that I am trying to make time for God out of my day that sometimes is too busy for me to know what exactly I am doing. Hopefully you will be encouraged and challenged to do what I am doing; spending intentional time with our Lord.

Praying in between the times I hit the snooze button. I know this may sound strange and I should really just get up and get going but the hour or so, yes, you read that right, in which I hit the snooze button has turned out to be a great way for me to spend time with God. Each nine minutes I begin or repeat a prayer for someone or something that I know needs God's touch and so it has been nice to start my day off this way.

By taking Dobby, our dog, for a walk each afternoon during lunch, not only do I get to exercise a little but I can also take time out of my day to spend in reflecting and letting my mind think of God. So far it has been great, only a couple days in, but I am at least hitting "two birds with one stone" as they say.

You may have read those and thought, "man that isn't hard or much". This is exactly the point. Sometimes I feel that I must make loads of times when I believe all God wants some days is the "short" and intentional times for us to be with him. Yes, we need the long times with God as well and I would not replace my brief times for the long period of times spent with God but sometimes we need the short times each day to help get through the day. I believe this is part of what we see Christ do as he "often withdrew to lonely places and prayed (Luke 5.16)." May you and I find those places in our life where we can go and pray alone, seeking the Master's face and embracing his grace.

Taking Time to be with the Master,
Jeremy

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sunday Nights at 5:15pm: Youth Choir will be meeting for anyone interested in helping serve the church in this ministry. The youth choir helps to lead us in worship on a couple Sunday mornings throughout the year. See Laurin Sprague for more information and to sign up.

1st: After the morning service we will be collecting money for the Souper Bowl of Caring drive. Canned goods will be collected as well at that time. The funds will go to help serve people in Hamilton who may be in need. This is a great way to help others by donating at least \$1. There is information elsewhere in the Courier for you to find out more. I need a couple of students to help collect the money. Please see Jeremy to sign up.

1st: CREW Super Bowl Party!! The place has yet to be decided but we will be getting together to watch the Steelers play the Cardinals. Things will start around 6pm. Guys need to bring a snack/dessert item and the ladies need to bring a pop/drink to share with all. Hot dogs, chili, skyline chili dip, and all the toppings will be provided for you. The party will wrap up around 9pm or whenever your parents pick you up.

8th: Small Groups will resume. There will be a 7th-8th grade group, 9th-10th, and 11th and 12th. Get ready to join us for this great time or discussing how the Bible is vital for our everyday life. If you have any suggestions on different studies please see John and Ruthie Wallace, Mike and Dale Braun, or Jeremy Spence and Linda Wallace.

11th: T.F.C. (Time for Change) will be having an all city youth service this evening. We will leave the church at 6:30pm and return around 8:45pm. The service will be at the Hamilton High School's auditorium and will include worship, a drama, student speakers, and hopefully you. If you are interested in helping out with the worship please see Jeremy NOW!

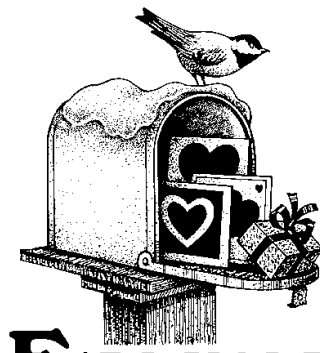
17th: I need some help in babysitting some kids for a MOPS outing this evening. Please let me know if you are able and willing to do this. It is only for a couple of hours and for about 20 kids. The more we have the easier it is. Great way to earn community service hours.

20th and 21st: Senior High Ski Outing to Perfect North Slopes. Cost will be \$25 per person. We will leave around 9:00pm and return early morning. It is important that you are ready to go by 9:00pm to allow ample ski time at Perfect North. Pick up or leave from church will be around 8am.

Jr High Tubing Outing: If there are enough Jr. Highers and their families that would like to go tubing at Perfect North Slopes, we will take the trip. It could be the 7th or the 21st and would be an afternoon to early evening trip. Please let me know if you are interested and what date works best for you.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>February 2009</h1>						
1 Souper Bowl Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 5:00 Women's Council 5:15 Youth of Praise 5:30 KingsKids 6:00 CREW Super Bowl 6:00 Cherub Choir 6:00 Evening Celebration	2	3 9:30 MOPS Steering	4 5:00 ABW 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Mission Night 6:30 Lifeline 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	5 9:30 Ladies Bible Study 5:30 Worship & Music 6:00 Upward Basketball 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	6 6:00 Upward Basketball	7 8:00 Men's Prayer Gathering 9:00 Upward Basketball
8 Blanket Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 4:30 Board of Missions 5:15 Youth of Praise 5:30 KingsKids 6:00 Cherub Choir 6:00 Evening Celebration 6:00 Small Groups	9 11:00 Women's Book Club at Fairfield Lane Library	10 10:00 Holloway Circle 7:00 Abell Circle 7:00 Smith Circle	11 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Valentine/Store Night 6:30 Lifeline 6:30 Celebration Ringers 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	12 9:30 KeenAgers to LaComedia <i>Polynesian Fire</i> 9:30 Ladies Bible Study 5:30 Board of Trustees 6:00 Upward Basketball 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	13 6:00 Upward Basketball	14 9:00 Upward Basketball
15 Blanket Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 12:00 AB Girls 4:30 Diaconate 5:15 Youth of Praise 5:30 KingsKids 6:00 Cherub Choir 6:00 Evening	16	17 9:30 MOPS-Pamper Fair	18 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Grand Prix Workshop 6:30 Lifeline 6:30 Celebration Ringers 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	19 8:30 Matthew 25 9:30 Ladies Bible Study 6:00 Upward Basketball 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 7:00 VBS Berean Showcase @ Dayspring Church of God	20 10:00 WMC Legacy of Love Coffee 6:00 Upward Basketball 9:00 Sr. CREW Skiing to Perfect North	21 9:00 Upward Basketball
22 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 12:00 Childcare Dinner 4:30 C.E. Board 5:15 Youth of Praise 5:30 KingsKids 6:00 Cherub Choir 6:00 Evening	23	24	25 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Grand Prix Workshop 6:30 Lifeline 6:30 Celebration Ringers 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	26 9:30 Ladies Bible Study 6:00 Upward Basketball 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	27 6:00 Upward Basketball	28 9:00 Upward Basketball



FEBRUARY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1 - Geneda Cox
Sophie Wallace | 12 - Carol Dawson
Adam Davidson
Ken Hendricks | 23 - Bettie Carmack
Miyoshie Jenkins
Jill O'Hara
Aleesha Spence |
| 2 - Mike O'Hara | 13 - Chelsea Bowman
Kaye Haberthier
Beulah Hampton
Rick Jackson
Lauren Keith | 25 - Chris Forrest |
| 3 - Sharon Brewer
LeiLing Brown
Mary Brown
Pastor Metzger | 14 - Noah Hampton
Sandy Morris
Nellie Roberts | 26 - Rosemarie Emrick
Amie Gard
Allyson Payne |
| 4 - Jacob Metzler | 16 - Debbie Gibson | 27 - Nikolas Acus
Betsey Kelly
Flo Gill
Helen Mullen |
| 5 - Garry Day
Stephanie Mullins
Jeremy Spence | 17 - Daniel Gabbard
Rachel Harris
Everett Hoskins | 28 - Gerry Retherford |
| 6 - Reva Hensley | 18 - Jonathan Bell
Eric Dietrich | Note: Please call the church office if you notice that one of your family members has been inadvertently overlooked on the birthday calendar. We do not intend to overlook anyone but do not realize it unless you inform us. |
| 7 - Betty Powell
Kasey Jenkins | 19 - Michelle Brackett
Emily Miller | |
| 8 - Chrissy Apgar
Betty Emenaker
Lainey Hanna | 20 - Cledith Humbach
Cathi Thomas | |
| 9 - Rosie Smith
Cleo Tiernan | 22 - Rod Anderson
Steve Cain | |
| 10 - Matthew Farris | | |
| 11 - Suzanne Garver
Ricky Jackson | | |

Personal Notes



From Doris Hartley

I want to thank everyone at First Baptist for praying for me. The mighty power of prayer moves mountains. My thanks also to Bill and Pastor Metzger for their special prayers.

From Craig Keller

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone at First Baptist for your prayers and all the cards that I received when my step-father, Howard Reynolds, passed away.

From Oakley Wardlow

I would like to thank all of you for your special cards and prayers that I received while I was in the hospital and recovering at Berkeley Square. A special thanks for the remembrance during the Christmas service and for all the great cookies and candy that I received. The good people at Berkeley Square appreciated the treats as well. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Pastor Bill for his visitations, which I really looked forward to. I hope to be returning to church soon. God Bless!

Invitation to Scouting

Boy Scout Troop 912 invites boys ages 11 to 18 to outdoor adventures and personal growth with a Christian focus. Meetings are held every Tuesday, 7:00 - 8:30 pm at the Cincinnati Christian Schools Elementary Campus on Route 4 in Fairfield. Monthly campouts feature activities like backpacking, canoeing, bicycling, and horseback riding. Troop 912 aims to build Christ-like character in young men through experiences in adventure, service, and leadership. For more information, contact Scoutmaster Mark Klusmeier (851-0957 or mklusmeier@fssp-law.com) or Committee Chair Jim Bell, (582-8224 or jim.bell@abc-usa.org.).

–Jim Bell

Note Of Thanks From Mending Hearts

Thank you so much for your donated items. They will be used for the dinners Mending Hearts serves at each group meeting and the crafts will be utilized in our classrooms. We are a nonprofit organization, so these donated items are well appreciated. Thank you and God bless.

–Susan Clark
Coordinator, Mending Hearts

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Winter Reminder!

If Hamilton City schools do not open on a weekday because of snow or ice, the church will not be open that day either.

The Courier is a monthly publication of The First Baptist Church of Hamilton, Ohio. Deadline for articles to be submitted is the fifteenth day of each month. The pastor: Dr. Dennis M. Metzger; Editor: Ellie Dinger. Our purpose statement: *We are believers in Jesus Christ, called of God, Gathering for Worship; Instruction and Fellowship...Scattering for Care, Evangelism and Transformation of the World for His Kingdom.*

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