

The Courier

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



"Where everybody is somebody and Jesus Christ Is Lord"

February, 2012

"The Ultimate Valentine"

In one of his earliest books, Max Lucado tells the story about a concerned mom who journeyed to Rio de Janeiro to find her teenage daughter. This ambitious young woman had left their small boring village to find work and the exciting life of the big city. But the mom, knowing the only work available for young peasant girls in the big city, gathered up all of her money, bought a bus ticket and as many small pictures of herself as she could afford.

In Rio, this determined mom went into every sleazy hotel she could find. She placed pictures of herself on the corner of bulletin boards, bathroom mirrors, and on the front door of many a lobby. On the back of each picture she wrote a few words. "I still love you! Please come home."

Rio is a big city, filled with many houses of desperation. Soon the money and the pictures ran out and the loving mother had to return home to her familiar little house in her peasant village. One day, drawn by some unknown grace, a broken young woman entered the lobby of run down hotel, saw a familiar face in a picture on the corner of the bulletin board. She slowly removed the picture and read the words on the back: "No matter what you've done, no matter where you've been, I still love you! Please come home." She did.

God was not content to let us ruin our lives in rebellion. While as God he could have denied us the choice to rebel, he chose instead to give us the opportunity to return. Love without choice is not love, just like a god who would not risk rejection could never be a true Father. So God sent us the ultimate valentine. Jesus came and died on the cross to be that unmistakable message from a loving parent to his rebellious children: "No matter what you've done, no matter where you've been, I still love you! Please come home." What are you waiting for?

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son...to save the world through him."

(John 3:16-17)

–Phil Ware
Heartlight

Give It Away

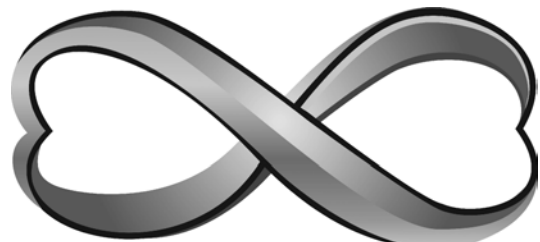
You've been blessed with the best Valentine ever:

This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God (1 John 4:9-10 MSG).

So, pass it on!

This is how we've come to understand and experience love: Christ sacrificed his life for us. This is why we ought to live sacrificially for our fellow believers, and not just be out for ourselves (1 John 3:16 MSG).

–Phil Ware
The Phil Files



Love Never Ends



**American
Baptist
Women's
Ministries**

Blanket Sundays–Disaster Relief

Blanket Sundays will be February 12th and February 19th. 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 Missionaries of the Month:

Democratic Republic of the Congo
Wayne & Katherine Niles

Wayne works with IMA World Health and serves as the in-country finance officer for several health projects and manages the DEVRU project. DEVRU helps Congolese fight starvation with disease resistant and high protein food crops, and helps Congolese farmers generate income for many decades with a new variety of palm tree that produces abundant oil. **Katherine** works with Congolese Christian health professionals and grass-roots community leaders. Their goals are to reduce Congo's maternal and child mortality rates by finding solutions to common health

problems using cooperation, local resources and the word of God. She also coordinates White cross and support for the network of Baptist hospitals and health centers.

Nicaragua
Drs. David & Laura Parajon

David and Laura Parajon serve through the non-profit organization AMOS Health and Hope, in partnership with rural communities. David is an internist and Laura is a family physician and both have training in Public Health. They work to bring health, hope and healing to the impoverished and vulnerable people of Nicaragua. Their work includes sustainable and preventive community health care programs, deworming campaigns, disaster relief, and services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Bible Book of the Month Philemon

“And I pray that as you share your faith with others it will grip their lives too, as they see the wealth of good things in you that come from Christ Jesus.”

Philemon 6 (LB)

Philemon is a letter concerned with individuals rather than churches, Paul's only private letter. It is a tactful intervention for a runaway slave whom Paul had converted and who had helped Paul in prison. Paul, who never criticized slavery overtly, was here attacking it indirectly, asserting the spiritual equality of all persons in Christ.

PRAY for the human family of earth, God's beloved children, friends and nurturers of one another. May we celebrate the worth and uniqueness of each of us.

–Madge Walters



The next scheduled Work Day at Matthew 25 will be Thursday, February 23rd. 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

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Of Genuine Love And Friendship

February is a month that has often been dedicated to celebrating the value of friendship and love. Valentine's Day stands at its center, weaving its thread of affection through each of its days. And the greeting card industry loves it. But love was not invented by Hallmark or American Greetings. Genuine love finds its genesis in the very heart of God, and is meant to spill over into our hearts and then into the lives of family and friends. The book of Proverbs addresses the value of developing relationships, but not the kind that last for a few weeks or months. It speaks of walking with friends over the course over many years— sometimes over a lifetime.

Most of us have casual friends, acquaintances, and work associates who pass in and out of our lives. But if we are fortunate, we also have a few close friends who become increasingly important over the years. Only moments ago, as I write this article, I received an email from a colleague whose friendship was born out of our shared life during college and seminary days. How good it was to “catch up” with one another, and to reaffirm our long-standing friendship. The Bible extols such friendships. Perhaps you remember this passage in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12:

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be over-powered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

The wisdom of this passage suggests that it would be good for us to build teams of people with whom we can walk through life—people who enable us to try again when we fail, encourage us when we are discouraged, lighten our work load when it gets too heavy to bear alone, comfort us (keep us warm), and give us strength against the evil forces, temptations, and trials we all face. Proverbs offers words of warning about the types of friends we choose for these journeys:

He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm (Prov. 13:20).

What Solomon is telling us is that wise friends will make us wise; foolish friends will bring us harm. Close friends are more deeply connected to wisdom than we might think. Though we may view ourselves as independent individuals, we are joined to our close friends by something akin to a semi-permeable membrane. You remember reading about these in science those many years ago, right? Ultra-thin walls of the cell through which pass tiny particles needed for the health of the cell.

What passes between close friends are values, convictions, morals, habits, goals, and even elements of faith. They pass back and forth, whether we realize it or not. *So, despite our illusions of individuality, we end up being deeply affected by either the wisdom or the foolishness of our friends.* This means that we can enhance our chances of growing in a positive direction by choosing the right people with whom we share friendship:

- If we want to develop sound judgment, we should choose friends renowned for making wise decisions.
- If we want to strengthen our convictions, we should pick people with reputations for standing up for what they believe.
- If we wish we were kinder, more thoughtful, we should spend more time with those who treat others with gentleness and grace.
- If we want to walk more closely with God, we should put ourselves under the influence of people who make spiritual disciplines a priority.

Choosing the right friends is like putting together our own personal development team. But the opposite is also true--*foolish friends can ruin us.* Their folly can seep into our lives

(From the Pastor's Heart, cont)

and taint our desires and goals. Their faulty moral compasses can steer us off course. Their distortions of truth can undermine our understanding of God and His ways. Paul wrote:

Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character" (1Co 15:33).

If we let ourselves be corrupted, we will pay; we will suffer harm. *Perhaps you think that you are strong enough to be an exception to that rule.* That you have walked with God long enough, have become stable enough, and can hear the whisper of the Holy Spirit clearly enough, that you could spend any amount of time with any kind of person and remain unaffected. But re-read Paul's wisdom on the matter. If you think you will be unaffected by your friends, you have been misled.

What kind of person do you want to become? Clarify that issue, and the rest is academic. Our close friends may be very different from us in many areas. What is key here is the deeper issues of *integrity and character*. If we are committed to following God's path—wisdom, initiative, goodness, discipline, truth, etc., then we should intentionally surround ourselves with people who exhibit those qualities. As our friendships with those people grow, so will our character and our pursuit of godliness.

I have addressed the issue of friendship and love in this article not only because this is a month for valentines, but also because during this month we have the opportunity **to celebrate the retirement of Bill and Bert Brantingham** among us. Over these last nineteen years, Bill and Bert have endeared themselves to our hearts. They have joined hands with us to do ministry in countless ways—pulpit ministry, hospital visitation, funerals and funeral dinners, trips with our KeenAgers, leadership in American Baptist Women, the Bread of Life ministry, the deacon WatchCare Program, Mathew 25, and other activities too numerous to count. Through it all we have been privileged to count the Brantinghams as our friends.

On Sunday morning, February 5, First Baptist is planning a morning worship service and dinner celebration in their honor:

- We would like the congregation to shower the Brantinghams with **genuine expressions of love**—greeting cards, notes, photos, and a monetary love gift. Please send the notes and gifts to FBC marked with "Brantingham celebration" before Thursday, February 2nd. We will assemble these into an album for presentation to them. **(Make out the checks to First Baptist Church.)**

- Following the service, we will proceed to the Family Center where a *dinner reception* will be prepared in their honor. Please **make your reservations** for the dinner on the inserts in the registration pads on Sunday morning.
- For further details, please see the Sunday bulletin, a second article in this *Courier*, or refer to the letter sent to your home.

In this month of love and friendship, as we value the many ways people have touched our lives, what a wonderful opportunity to express our love to the Brantinghams for what they have come to mean to us. I hope you will express to them how much you love them and plan to join us for this celebration event.

Loving you in genuine friendship,
Pastor

Budget Status Report

The Month of December, 2011

Projected (Budgeted) Spending	\$67,388
Offerings	<u>63,751</u>
Over (Under) Budget	(\$3,637)
Actual (Budgeted) Spending	\$74,606
Offerings	<u>63,751</u>
Over (Under) Actual	(\$10,855)

The Year Through December, 2011

Projected (Budgeted) Spending	\$741,286
Offerings	<u>693,797</u>
Over (Under) Budget	(\$47,489)
Actual (Budgeted) Spending	\$746,081
Offerings	<u>693,797</u>
Over (Under) Actual	(\$52,221)

—The Board Of Trustees



**A Retirement Celebration for
Bill and Bert Brantingham
Sunday, February 5, 2012**

Dear Church Family,

For nineteen years, Pastor Bill and Bert Brantingham have graced our congregation by their service to our Lord and to His people at First Baptist Church. In 1990, when Bill retired for the first time after 32 years of faithful church ministry to five churches in British Columbia, Manitoba, Illinois, and Ohio, he thought he would find a comfortable chair in their new home and—*do what??* That retirement interlude lasted about two months before he began a nine-month interim ministry in Troy, Ohio. I believe, in words close to his own, “*If I had continued to sit in my comfortable chair, I would be in glory by now.*” Just sitting was not in the Lord's plans for their lives. As is always true for His faithful servants, the Lord began to arrange circumstances to bring them to a new and unexpected ministry in February, 1993—*First Baptist Church of Hamilton.*

For nearly two decades, the Brantinghams have touched our hearts and lives in visitation, hospital calls, preaching, grief counseling and funerals, prayer, Matthew 25 leadership, Keenager Ministry, and friendship and humor to us all. **Each of us have our stories about how they have made an impact on our lives. These personal stories I would like for you to share with them.** Please read on...

On Sunday morning, February 5th, the Board of Deacons is inviting the congregation to participate in a Celebration of the Brantingham's ministry among us. The morning will include a special worship service, invited family and guests, a communion service, followed by a dinner (by reservation) in their honor.

Following the dinner we will share with Bill and Bert a notebook filled with letters of love and appreciation for their ministry. Please mail or bring those letters to the church office marked “Brantingham Celebration” or give to Nancy Follmer.

We would also invite you to participate in providing a a monetary love gift that will express our appreciation to Bill and Bert. By now, the church family should have received a letter detailing our final plans for the celebration. An offering envelope was included for your love gift.

We hope you will mark your calendars today, and plan to join us on Sunday, February 5, 2012. Thanks for your participation in celebrating this special event.
Pastor



Drop your kids off at 6:00 p.m.

Make sure you have already fed them dinner!
Optional snacks will be provided
Babysitting will be provided by Jeremy with the high school and college students

Pick them up by 9:30 p.m.

SIGN UP TODAY

**Cherub Choir Rehearsal Schedule
February & March**

Feb. 5 - Canceled - no evening service
Feb. 12 - Canceled
Feb. 19 - Rehearsal 6 -7 pm
Feb. 26 - Canceled
Mar. 4 - Rehearsal 6 -7 pm
Mar. 11 - Canceled
Mar. 18 - Rehearsal 6 -7 pm
Mar. 25 - Canceled



Dinner Fees Raised

At their January meeting the trustee took action regarding a funding problem that had existed for some time. As noted in last October's edition of the Courier, there has been a gap between Wednesday night dinner costs and the funds available to deal with those expenses. By the end of 2011 that deficit had grown to \$3,000. It was not the goal of the trustees to make money for the church off the dinners but the losses needed to be reduced. Consequently, effective February 1st, new dinner fees became \$5 per person (including children who eat from the main table), \$15 per family (those living in the same household), and \$1.50 for children under twelve who eat from the hot dog table. This was the first increase in dinner charges since January 2006.

KeenAger February Meeting

The KeenAgers will meet at church on Monday, February 13th, at 10:00 a.m. with Dan Finrock speaking on *Farm Boy's Trip To Coney Island*. Lunch will be catered by Lisa Dulli. The cost will be \$8.00. Make your reservations by February 5th.

--Bertha Campbell,
Pastor Bill & Bert Brantingham

Courier Online

If you would prefer to read your Courier online rather than having it mailed to your home, please call the church office, 868-1412, or email to ellie.dinger@fuse.net. You can get it at the church's web site: www.firstbaptisthamilton.org.



We had another fantastic meeting in January for our MOPS mom's!! We heard from Larry Bowling on financial planning. Thank you Larry you did a great job! Now where to start?? : We had a total of 24 in attendance at the meeting despite the rain! For February we are going to hear from Gay Henize on the topic of Marriage Drift. Gay was a Mentor to Parkside MOPS for 13 years.

Events taking place for February are:

- 13th - Mom Only dinner at Panera at 6:30. Then a scavenger hunt to follow at Northgate Mall. Host is Katie Donahue
- 28th - Mom/Child at McDonalds on Tylersville at 10:30. Host is Kerri Miller.

I would also like to take a moment to thank our childcare workers...THANK YOU! We could not have our meetings without you, thank you for your devotion to our group.

Please keep our MOPS group in your prayers and we are always looking for childcare help :

Serving Him,
Kerri Miller

Help!! Moppet Workers Needed!

Moppet workers are needed each third Tuesday of the month to watch the children of the moms who are enjoying their MOPS program. Please call Karen Buchanan if you are willing to help - 863-1472.

--Karen Buchanan
MOPS Childcare Co-ordinator



Summer Softball

Softball begins in April! If you would like to play on the men's team (games on Tuesday nights), please see Brian Dickman. Watch the bulletin for sign-up dates. All games are played at North End (Ford's Field).

--Brian Dickman
Director of Sports and Recreation



Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Child Christmas Program

We did it!! We helped 100 children and seniors have Christmas gifts. We helped our own community, Butler County.

How wonderful the church family is to help people in need. This year went great as everyone was ready to take names and buy gifts. This made it easy for me. I want to say thanks for helping me help the needy families. Christmas morning kids opened gifts and had a wonderful Christmas. Thanks to the Salvation Army for putting this project together.

Special thanks to Nancy Whipple for giving me the encouragement to do this mission project; Brian Begley for helping sign people up; the Deaconesses for the money they donated; the big Christmas Card from Cheryl and Claire; Ron Lakes for helping check the cars to make sure no one was missed and for helping take all the gifts to Salvation Army; and thanks to everyone who helped out this year. Special thanks to Pastor Metzger for advice, yes, we have a wonderful pastor. Thanks! Thanks! Thanks!

—Your brother in Christ,
Michael Gipson

New Life Vineyard Church Presents *Meet Me At Luigi's* February 25th at 7:00 p.m.

When a comet is scheduled to pass over town, the manager and staff of Luigi's Italian Restaurant hire on high school students to handle the expected crowds of tourists, scientists, and media people. Meet Me At Luigi's is an interactive dinner theatre about a restaurant owner who shows his staff God's love.

\$10 for play, salad, spaghetti dinner, bread and dessert

Tickets: 513-545-7312

(Proceeds go to restoring the church
at 2470 Princeton Road)

Directed By: **Katie Buchanan Simpson**



Awanna Club

Awana February Calendar

- 1st - Mini-Store T&T/Inside Out Night
- 8th - Mini-Store Sparks/Animal Night
- 15th - Valentine Theme Night (wear red or pink) Mimi-Store Make-Up Night
- 22nd - Superhero Night (Dress like a superhero)
- 29th - Grand Prix preparation/Challenge Night

Challenge nights are going well! We pray you are learning about stewardship as you bring your 25 cents for dues each week. During store time, there will be an opportunity to purchase your Awana Grand Prix car kit. Workshops will begin in early March to prepare for the races on March 28. Be thinking about your design now! As always, we are always looking for those who would like to be on a sub list for Awana. Sometimes we have 4-5 leaders out. We could use you!

—Claire Metzger, Cheryl Motzer,
& Sandra Imhoff, Awana Leaders

Annual Childcare Appreciation Luncheon Sunday, February 19th

Nursery, toddlers, Kinderchurch, Kidschurch, Awana, Terrific Tuesdays, Wacky Wednesdays...the list goes on and on. We LOVE to have so many opportunities for our children here at church. So many of you volunteer your time, talents and money for these programs. We would like to thank you by serving you lunch! Please join us for a free luncheon immediately after the church service. (John's)Pizzas, soup, salad, drinks and dessert will be served. And yes, your whole family is welcome! We want to show you how much we love and appreciate your time and love to even the littlest of our awesome church family. Please sign the RSVP in the connector so we can get a good count for the food. This is also an opportunity to sign up for any childcare spots that may be open. You knew we were going to mention that!

—Claire Metzger & Cheryl Motzer
Co-Directors of Children's Ministries

Son Surf Beach Bash! July 9-13, 2012

That is the theme for Vacation Bible School this year! The date is set and we are already working on props, decorations, skits, etc. to make this year really great. Any returning teachers who would like to commit to their class is more than welcome to sign up early. We also like to give you plenty of time to think about how to decorate your room, maybe even come up with a catchy name. An organizational meeting will be held in March.



Carpenter's Hands Signs Of Love



The next **Silent Dinner** will be held on Friday evening, February 3rd at Northgate Mall. See you there!

—Maria Miller
Director of Deaf Ministries

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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.

Upward Basketball

This year the Upward Basketball Games and Cheerleading are being played at North Fairfield Baptist Church on Saturday mornings at 9:00. The season runs from January 21st - March 10th.

Corrections and Additions To The Directory

Please call the church office with additions or changes to your address, phone number, or e-mail address.

Adams, Janice
Phone # 889-3821

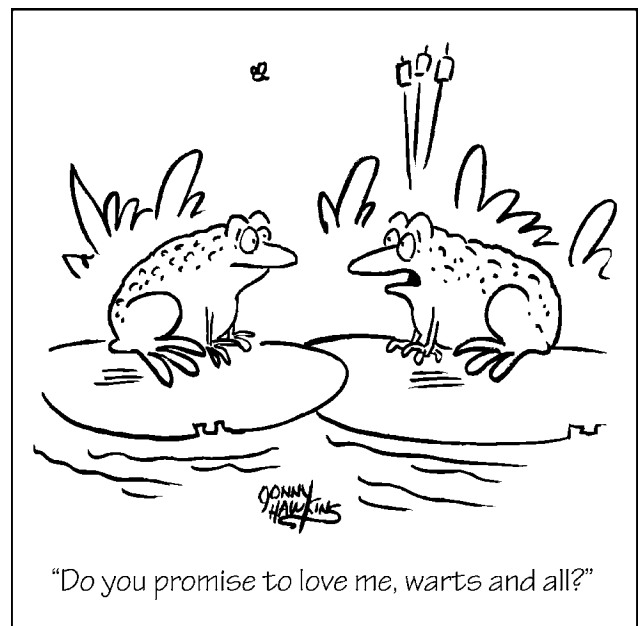
Brantingham, Bill
Cell phone # 280-2658

Day, Charlotte
7 Muriel Court # F
Fairfield, OH 45014
Phone # 513-602-6517

Griesinger, Bernie & Martha January-March
Heritage Oaks
Hyland Hills
Unit # 1813
Sarasota, FL 34241

Howard, Pam & Howard, James
405 Progress Avenue
Hamilton, OH 45013

Mardis, Clayton & Andrea
3340 Lake Center Drive
Apt. # 207
Mt. Dora, FL 32757
Hailey
Sydney





**From The Heart Of
Lisa**

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.”-1 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 wintery 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!

Chad Allen (Wright State University)
2434 California Road
Okeana, Ohio 45053

Jordan Allen (Cincinnati State)

Traci Boomershine (Ball State University)
603 Woody Hall
Muncie IN 47306

Joey Braun (Ohio State University)
65 W 8th Avenue
Apartment A
Columbus, Ohio 43201

Andy Cain (Earlham University)
801 National Road. West
Room 453
Richmond, Indiana 47374

Emily Cain (Miami University)
600 S. Maple Street
202 Dodds Hall
Oxford, OH 45056

Sara Cain (Butler Tech)
1500 Alberta Drive
Hamilton, OH 45013

Brian Chamberlain (University of Cincinnati)
5028 West Scioto Drive
Fairfield, Ohio 45014

Oliver Davis (Miami University)
1483 Sir Martin Drive
Hamilton, Ohio 45013

Adam Davidson (Wooster)
1189 Beal Avenue
C1467
Wooster, Ohio 44691

Katie Ford (Miami University)
903 Lawn Avenue
Hamilton, Ohio 45013

Rachel Harris (University of Cincinnati)
315 Brooks Road
Hamilton, Ohio 45013

Jeff Hazelwood (Ohio State - ATI)
1036 Franklin Ct.
Wooster, Ohio 44691

Drew Helton (Wright State University)
1570 # 1 Reece Drive
Fairborn, Ohio 45324

Teresa Hoff (Miami University)
9 Madeline Place
Hamilton, Ohio 45013

Heather Keith (Miami University)
342 Flower Hall
5347 Bonham Road
Oxford, Ohio 45056

Lauren Keith (Miami University)
319 South College Avenue
Oxford, Ohio 45056

Michael Krall (Ohio University)
95 Richland Avenue
Convocation Center Room 350
Athens, Ohio 45701

Noah Krall (University of Cincinnati)
5198 Westgate Drive
Oxford, Ohio 45056

Megan Miller (Miami University)
6736 Southampton Lane
West Chester, Ohio 45069

Ryan Schwab (Miami University)
3280 Frazee Road
Somerville, Ohio 45064

Lauren Schwartz (Miami University)
620 Walter Avenue
Fairfield, Ohio 45014

Katie Scott (Miami University)
111 N. College Avenue
Oxford, Ohio 45056

Mandy Scott (Miami University)
416 South Main Street
Oxford, Ohio 45056

Logan Stanger (Ball State University)
1523 N McKinley Avenue
Hurst Hall 225
Muncie, IN 47306

Corynn Tuley (Miami University)
1415 Cereal Avenue
Hamilton, OH 45013

Amy Wallace (Miami University)
2660 Astro Place
Fairfield, Ohio 45014

–Lisa Dulli
College/Career Coordinator



**Upcoming
Women's Christian Author's
Book Club Books**

March 12: Book Club - Frank Peretti's "*Monster*"

April 9: Book Club - Francine River's "*Atonement Child*"

May 14: Book Club - Lynn Austin's "*Wonderland Creek*"

June 11: Chris Fabry's "*Dogwood*"

July 9: Joyce Magnin's "*The Prayers of Agnes Sparrow*"

The Women's Christian Book meets the second Monday of each month at 11:00 a.m. at the Fairfield Lane Library.

Emily Miller Selected for May Festival Youth Choir-Music Hall

Emily Miller auditioned and was selected as part of the May Festival Youth Choir in Cincinnati. Composed of area high school students under the direction of James Bagwell (Music Director of The Collegiate chorale at Carnegie Hall and other American and international orchestras) the chorus showcases the best of today's young performers. Extensive weekly rehearsals will lead to the May performances with the May Fest Adult Choir and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra at Music Hall and the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption. As published by the New York Times, this honor is an unsurpassed experience in choral music performance. Tickets are available now at: mayfestival.com for the Music Hall and Basilica performances. (Due to the May Festival prestige for Cincinnati, tickets do sell out early- ask Debbie for the dates of performances to attend).

Emily is a sophomore at Lakota West and will also be performing Elijah with the Chorale Group in May. She studies private voice, piano, and guitar devoting many hours per week to her music. In January she competed in the Overture Music Arts event at the Aronoff with classical repertoire. Emily also is on the high honor roll at Lakota West! Congratulations, Emily!!

Curio Cabinets

Are you a collector? I need your help in gathering articles for a new display in our curio cabinets. I'm looking for at least ten people (there are a total of 10 shelves in the two cabinets) who are collectors of ANYTHING (of proper size) that you would be willing to share for exhibit and for others to enjoy. Please call Carol Howard - 887-9415. I need a quick response. Thanks!

–Carol Howard



February 14

Bible Dig-In

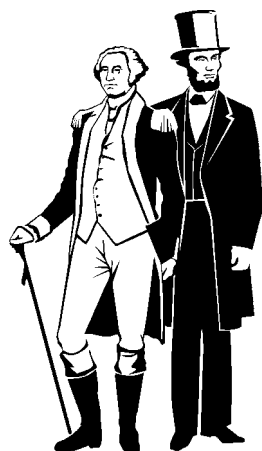
Have you ever felt like you read a passage of Scripture and “get nothing out of it?” Did you feel like you just don’t understand the Bible? Then I’d like to invite you to join us for a seminar in Bible study; a Bible “Dig-In.” We will both study a Bible passage and talk about the process for doing Bible study. This is called “inductive” because we look at the facts that are in a passage and then work on understanding the point of the passage. Then we can understand what the meaning is and, following that, how we apply it to our lives.

While this will help any person in their Bible study skills, I particularly want to invite those who are leading small group Bible studies. The principles and methods that we work on are applicable to study in any context, individual or small group. They also help if you are preparing to give a devotional talk in any setting. This is appropriate for any age, from high school on up.

We will meet on Saturday, March 4th, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with a break to have lunch together. We ask a \$5.00 contribution for lunch. We will have sign-ups in the connector the prior 2 Sundays, so that we know how many to plan on for lunch and how many copies to make of the hand-outs.

Paul wrote to Timothy “*Study to show yourself approved to God . . .*” This exhortation is still true for us today and not restricted only to the young. He wants us to understand His Word, because if we do, we are better able to “keep” His Word, obey Him, and please Him. And we do want to please Him. I hope you will join us on March 4th to Dig-In to the Bible.

–Dennis Dudley



February
February 20th

Rotary Revels Present Guys And Dolls

March 22, 23, & 24 at 8:00 p.m.
March 25 at 2:00 p.m.

At Parrish Auditorium
Miami University Hamilton

Tickets are \$16.00

Attention: KeenAgers! KeenAgers are going to Rotary Presents *Guys and Dolls* on Thursday, March 22nd, at 8:00 p.m. There are **only 20 tickets** available. Please sign the list on the bulletin board ASAP. The cost is \$16. All money is due Sunday, February 12th.



Free Tax Service

Free tax service is provided by IRS approved tax preparers under the supervision of AARP Tax Aide. Bring last years Income Tax returns to Partners In Prime at 140 Ross Avenue between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning February 7th - April 12th.



Souper Bowl Sunday

Sunday, February 5th, 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 will be donated to a local food pantry and money will go to the Deacon’s fund. Thanks for your participation!

–Jeremy Spence



Child Care Schedule

Nursery (Morning)

February 5 - Kathy Inloes & Joey Sackenheim
 February 12 - Claire & Chris Metzger
 February 19 - Sharon & Dwain Brewer
 February 26 - Kerri Miller & Teen Helper

One & Two Year Olds

February 5 - Brandi Emenaker, Lauryn & Taylor
 February 12 - Cheryl & John Motzer
 February 19 - Tabitha Smith & Hannah
 February 26 - Cheryl Motzer, Noëlle & Sydney

Kinderchurch

February 5 - Cheryl & John Motzer
 February 12 - Dorothy Hollowell & Vickie Baker
 February 19 - Barb & Brian Begley
 February 26 - Dorothy Hollowell & Vickie Baker
 KidsChurch Helper - Sandra Imhoff



Childcare Schedule

Many thanks to those who have answered our plea for help with our childcare schedule. 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!

–Claire Metzger & Cheryl Motzer
 Co-Directors of Children's Ministries



Wednesday Family Dinners

February 1 - Pastor & Jeremy's Birthday Dinner

Menu: Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Gravy, French Toast, Hash Brown Casserole, Biscuits
 Hosts: Yada Sisterhood/Men's Class

February 8

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

February 15

Menu: Baked Potato Bar, Vegetable Soup, Tossed Salad, Corn Bread, Loretta's Texas Sheet Cake
 Hosts: Trustees

February 22

Menu: Swiss Steak, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Green Beans, Tossed Salad, Rolls, Peach Cobbler
 Hosts: Chancel Choir

February 29

Menu: Lasagna, Tossed Salad, Bread Sticks, Dessert
 Hosts: Deacons

Reminder: Adults should contribute \$5.00 per person for the meal (including children who eat from the main table), \$15 per family (those living in the same household), and \$1.50 for children under twelve who eat from the hot dog table. 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, Mike Gipson, & Jerry Hampton



Pastor Jeremy's Think Tank

The Nice Days Of Winter

As I sit down at my desk to write this article our weather has gone from winter to an almost spring-like day, minus the sun. I could insert my favorite joke about Ohio weather changing as much as a teenager's mood but that would only take it space, and this month I do not need to take up any space with lame jokes that may not be totally true. But this weather has given me some things to ponder.

I realize that most people do not enjoy the winter, or at least the evidence that winter typically brings to prove it has arrived: cold, ice, snow, and more cold. We constantly use these months to look forward to spring and the revitalization of life that comes with birds chirping, grass growing and flowers blooming. However, could it be that we miss the greater good of winter?

Could it be that without winter we would not realize how beautiful the spring flowers are, or the warmth of the sun without the cold of the night? Would we really understand the gifts from God because He saw fit to bring us through another cold spell? I realize these questions are somewhat rhetorical and we would want to immediately respond with something like, "Of course I would!" Believe me, that is how I would want to respond. But in my heart, I realize maybe that isn't how I would answer.

This brings me to a deeper level of what winter represents the dark days of our life: spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally. Those times when the pain is overwhelming and we wonder if things will ever be "normal" again. Though not presently in a "winter season" of my life I can't help but look back and see just how God gave me spring days, like the one I am experiencing while writing, to help me realize that there is hope because He is in control.

Oh how hindsight is always 20/20! But, this realization gives me hope for my future winter days, and they will come (see James 1:2-8, if not the whole book), that I can rejoice in the winter, as much as the spring, because my hope rests in the one who holds the seasons in His hands. Winter is not the end, though when I am in the midst of painful and dark times it seems like the end, because we know that one day God will make everything "new" and bring us into His city (Revelation 21).

So for those of you who don't like winter, try to relish the reminder that without winter you may not appreciate spring. For those of us who are in the midst of wintry times in our life: Spring is coming!! You have a God that will make all things new. My guess is that even in your winter there are days like today and the hint of spring. Rejoice in those days no matter how

short they are because it reminds us of the hope that is found only in Jesus.

Be God's,
Jeremy

UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 5: After the morning service we will be collecting money and canned goods for the Souper Bowl of Caring. All canned goods will be given to Laurel Avenue Church of Christ and the money collected to our Deacon's Fund. Please plan on bringing at least \$1 and a canned good that Sunday.

Also immediately following the service we will be having a luncheon to honor Pastor Bill and Bert Brantingham on their recent retirement. Please see the details elsewhere in *The Courier* for more information.

CREW Super Bowl Party: This year we will be convening at the Spence home for the Super Bowl where we will see the New York Giants take on the New England Patriots. Please bring either a snack or drink to share. We will get the party going around 6pm and you are free to stay until it is over or your parents want you back home. Come join us as we watch some football, discuss the commercials, and enjoy each other's company.

February 11: CREW CIA project with the ONE Ministry as we babysit for parents so they can enjoy a Valentine's Dinner Night Out. The kids will be arriving at 6pm and you are free to leave at 10pm after the kids are gone. Please sign up in the CREW room to help out and come ready to serve our parents. A snack will be provided for all workers and kids but please eat before coming to help out.

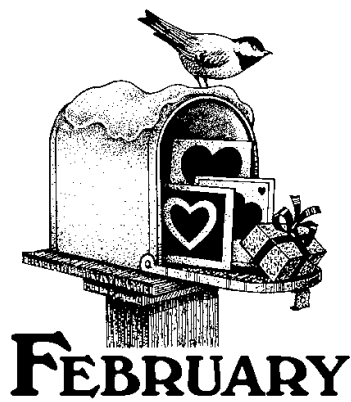
February 19: Have you helped out in KinderChurch, Kid's Church, the Nursery, or other Children's Ministry area? If so please plan on staying after for a lunch in your honor. Please see the information Cheryl and Claire have in another section of *The Courier* for the details. Thank you for serving our church.

Sr High Ski Trip: Immediately following CREW Lifeline on February 19 the senior high CREW members will be going to Perfect North Slopes to ski and snowboard. The cost for the evening is \$30 per person and includes rental, ski lift, and food on our way home from the slopes. Parents please pick up your student at 8am on Monday morning. Permission forms and what to bring list can be obtained by seeing Jeremy.

February 25: Jr High CREW members will be heading to Perfect North Slopes to go tubing. We will meet at the church at 12Noon and returning around 4:30pm. Please eat before you come and the cost of tubing is \$15 per person. I will have forms available very soon to be completed and turned in by the 25th.

Dare2Share: The CREW will be going to Dare2Share in Columbus again this year on March 2 & 3. Please start to think about whether or not you will join us for this great weekend. Total cost will be \$50 per person and the money is due February 15 if you are going. Forms will be available from Jeremy.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>February 2012</h1>						
			1 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Inside Out Night/T&T Store 6:30 CREW Lifeline 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands	2 9:30 Ladies Bible Study 5:30 Worship & Music	3	4 8:00 Men's Prayer Gathering
5 Souper Bowl Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 12:00 Pastor Bill & Bert's Retirement Dinner 6:00 CREW Super Bowl Party @ Jeremy's	6	7 9:30 MOPS Steering	8 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Animal Night/ Sparks Store 6:30 Lifeline 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	9 9:30 Ladies Bible Study 5:30 Board of Trustees	10	11 6:00 Valentine Date Night
12 Blanket Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 4:30 Board of Missions 5:30 KingsKids 5:30 CREW Lifeline 6:00 Evening Celebration	13 10:00 KeenAger Progam with Dan Finrock and Luncheon 11:00 Women's Book Club at Fairfield Lane Library	14 10:00 Holloway Circle 10:30 Abell Circle 6:00 Smith Circle	15 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Valentine Theme Night 6:30 Lifeline 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	16 9:30 Ladies Bible Study	17	18
19 Blanket Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 12:00 Childcare Dinner 4:30 Diaconate 5:30 CREW Lifeline 7:00 Sr. CREW to Perfect North 5:30 KingsKids 6:00 Cherub Choir 6:00 Evening Celebration	20	21 9:30 MOPS	22 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Superhero Night 6:30 Lifeline 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir	23 8:30 Matthew 25 9:30 Ladies Bible Study	24	25 12:00 Jr. CREW to Perfect North Ski Trip 7:00 New Life Vineyard presents <i>Meet Me At Luigi's</i>
26 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 4:00 C.E. Board 5:30 CREW Lifeline 5:30 KingsKids 6:00 Evening Celebration	27	28	29 6:00 Family Dinner 6:30 Awana-Grand Prix Preparation/Challenge Night 6:30 Lifeline 6:45 Bible Study & Prayer 6:45 Carpenter's Hands 8:00 Chancel Choir			



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1 - Sophie Wallace

2 - Mike O'Hara

3 - Sharon Brewer
LeiLing Brown
Mary Brown
Pastor Metzger

4 - Jacob Metzler

5 - Garry Day
Stephanie Mullins
Jeremy Spence

6 - Reva Hensley

7 - Betty Powell
Kasey Jenkins
Leah Witmer

8 - Chrissy Apgar
Betty Emenaker
Lainey Hanna

9 - Rosie Smith

10 - Matthew Farris

11 - Suzanne Garver
Ricky Jackson

12 - Carol Dawson
Adam Davidson

13 - Kaye Haberthier
Beulah Hampton
Rick Jackson
Lauren Keith

14 - Noah Hampton
Sandy Morris
Nellie Roberts

16 - Debby Gibson

17 - Daniel Gabbard
Rachel Harris
Everett Hoskins

18 - Jonathan Bell
Eric Dietrich

19 - Emily Miller

20 - Cledith Humbach
Cathi Thomas

22 - Rod Anderson
Steve Cain

23 - Bettie Carmack
Miyoshie Jenkins
Jill O'Hara
Aleesha Spence

25 - Chris Rolfes

26 - Rosemarie Emrick
Amie Gard
Allyson Payne

27 - Nikolas Acus
Betsey Kelly
Flo Gill
Helen Mullen

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.

First Baptist Church
1501 Pyramid Hill Boulevard
Hamilton, Ohio 45013
Phone: 513-868-1412



Personal Notes

From Stan & Mary Brown

Thanks so much to all of you for visits and prayer surrounding Stan's surgery. Thanks to Pastor Metzger for the long trek to Liberty (IN).

From Don & Mary Lewis

We want to thank Pastor Metzger and Pastor Bill for taking time for the nice program they had at the church for Don when he was chosen for Veteran of the Year. Also I want to thank Pastor Bill for taking us to the Veteran program and to church on Sunday. Thanks to the church family for their support. Thanks again for everything.

From Don & Mary Lewis

We want to thank Pastor Metzger and Pastor Bill for the nice service they had for my brother, Preston Harris. Thanks to the church family for the visits, prayers, cards, and calls.

From Jennifer Williams

Thank you for all your thoughts and prayers. We will miss mom (Sandra Williams) very much but rejoice that she is with Jesus and her family in heaven. Thank you for being so good to my parents. They truly loved First Baptist Church and everyone who attends the church.



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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