

Join us for Worship This Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Established 1870



First Baptist Church

Of Traverse City

Furthering the Good News of Jesus and Reaching New People for the Kingdom of God

JANUARY 2015

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

Pastor Jeremy's Think Tank

Looking Forward to 2015

This is the time of year we all think about how to make our new year better than our previous year. For some it isn't hard. In fact for some this previous year, 2014, is one they wish would just hurry up and end so they can get on to 2015. So 2014 may have been a year that you want to forget. That's okay; we all have years that we want to forget.

Many of us will pick resolutions; I know I have a couple in mind. Others will create lists and plans for 2015. My guess is that nearly all of us have something on our list related to health. It may include some of the following: get in better shape, lose weight, recover from surgery, not be sick, learn to better cope with stress, relax more often, eat healthier, and the list could go on. Besides just physical health we also can resolve to focus on financial health, jobs, and relationships.

Above all our lists and thoughts we focus on what it means to be healthy. This is a key component to moving forward as we've learned this past fall. Moving towards a better future means we take the time to plan before just starting. My prayer for all of us, myself included, is that before we get too far into 2015 we would sit down to reflect, and make a conscious effort to envision the improvements necessary to make 2015 better than 2014.

The same is true for churches. As a church we must spend some time reflecting, praying and discerning what God would have us do to be healthier in the years to come compared to how we now are. As I've been reflecting over the past couple weeks, some things have come to mind that we need to consider in order to continue on the path of revitalization and health. Revitalization and health are not mutually exclusive but instead are two sides of the same coin. For us to be on the path of revitalization means we will become healthy. If we are a healthy church we will revitalize ourselves as well.

As we move forward, a key area is prayer. I'm convinced that for us to regain the health we've had in the past, and effectively reach our community for the kingdom of God, we must become serious about praying. Prayer is the foundation for any health we will have as a church. As I look at our present church, we have not created space in order to pray as a community and

communally seek the Lord. The more vibrant our prayer time together and the more we can create space for God the more we will know what God wants.

I know this to be true because Scripture is filled with examples of God making His will known when people, communities and individuals make space for Him. In 1 Samuel 1 we read the story of Hannah and of her persistence in approaching God for help since she was barren.

Beginning January 8 we'll gather on Thursday nights for the purpose of praying and digging deeper in God's Word. For the first six weeks or so we we'll go through a study titled, *When God's People Pray: 6 Sessions on the Transforming Power of Prayer*, a study by Jim Cymbala. This study will help us to understand prayer, the role of obedience in prayer, how prayer complements our reading of Scripture, and how we can create more space for prayer if this is what we sense God is asking us to do. I'm confident this will be a great way to begin our mid-week gathering together. Our Thursday gathering will begin on January 8 at 6 p.m. and we'll finish up by 7 p.m. each week. Kids can be downstairs while the adults and those who join us will be upstairs in the Sanctuary or coffee-time room.

I'm also excited about our new message series that begins January 4: *The Relationships You Want*. All of us could improve our interactions with others and this is a series geared to help us in this area. Some of the topics we'll discuss on Sunday mornings include: learning to say "no", being wanted not needed, and knowing when to end things while learning how to have good boundaries with each other.

Once again, this series is not just for us as individuals in the church. All healthy churches must learn how to have healthy boundaries and know how to love others through our strengths, learning when saying no is the best answer, all while seeking to be involved in the areas He desires for us. After this series I am convinced you'll have the foundation necessary to have the relationships you want and to start transforming your relationships into the ones that are filled with more health and less dysfunction. Join us each week in January through early February. While you are at it, bring along a guest as God's Word transforms us.

Towards a Healthy 2015,
Pastor Jeremy

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January Church Calendar

Adult Sunday School – Meets each week at 9:15

Junior Church – Bring the kids as new and exciting lessons, projects and music are underway! Children meet downstairs during worship.

Sun., Jan. 4 – Communion Sunday and January birthdays/anniversaries celebrated.

Tue., Jan. 6 – AB Women meet at FBC at noon

Thurs., Jan. 8 at 6 p.m. – Weekly Prayer and Bible Study begins. First topic to be covered is *Prayer*

Sun., Jan. 11 – Brief Church Meeting Following Service

Sun., Jan. 18 – Church Council Meeting

Mon. Jan. 19 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Looking ahead . . .

Sat., Feb. 14 – FBC Sweet Shoppe, Craft and Rummage Sale, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Note from Ann Hains

I would like to thank each and every one for the many gifts of meals, fruit baskets, cards and prayers. The thoughtfulness of so many was greatly appreciated. I am so happy to have so many caring friends and relatives!

God Bless you all –

Ann Hains



We're thankful for the FBC Children's Bell Choir for gracing our church with excellent Christmas music. The talented group also performed at the annual church luncheon on December 14. Thanks also to Aleesha and Mary for their leadership and support.

First Baptist Church

PO Box 6733

Traverse City, MI 49696

Birthdays:

Jan. 1 – Junior Garza

Jan. 2 – Nicole Strait

Jan. 6 – Steve Zuniga

Jan. 14 – Rachel Wares

Jan. 17 - Rev. Bill Nelson

Jan. 19 – Scottie Stanley (Wares)

Jan. 27 - Velma Wiebe

Jan. 28 – Chip Underwood

Jan. 31 – Rev. Mark Montei

Anniversaries:

Jan. 16 – Leo and Donna Strait

Jan. 22 – Cliff and Sue Wares

Financial Update (through Dec. 28, 2014)

General Fund YTD Income - \$76,097.19

General Fund YTD Expenses - \$75,494.80

Missions Funds YTD - \$5,951.34

The unfailing love of the LORD never ends! By his mercies we have been kept from complete destruction. Great is his faithfulness; his mercies begin afresh each day. I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in him!"

Lamentations 3:22-23

*Have a happy and healthy
New Year!*

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