

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

JULY 2015

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

Pastor Jeremy's Think Tank

Reclaiming "Us"

I've accumulated plenty of memories with my son, Daniel, during his four years on this earth - more than most of you would care to know, I'm certain. As we all know, Daniel has no shortage of confidence when it comes to life and loves to tell his stories and say things that just make you laugh. He's brought our family and our church much joy. One of his memorable routines began shortly after moving to Traverse City, when each day he would "pick out" his own clothes to wear. He would get dressed and then confidently come out and ask, "How do I look? Good?" Or sometimes he would come out and just proclaim to the world, "I loook goood!" After such a proclamation he would walk around "modeling" whatever he was wearing until all recognized that he did indeed look good. (How many of you are laughing or at least smiling at this picture in your head?)

For many of us, I imagine there are times when we look in the mirror and don't proclaim that we look good. We remember the days of better health, better looks, more hair, fewer bags under the eyes and clothes that had a better fit. I know this is true of me! Other individuals aren't concerned about their looks but instead wonder how they got into such despair and became bound by the chains of addiction, work and one relationship after another that still leaves them unfulfilled and damaged.

The harsh answer is this: the change didn't happen overnight but instead was a slow fade into the present reality. For me, I didn't gain the extra 15 pounds overnight, because if I did, I would have stopped it. Instead, it has come on me over the years, one pound at a time. We arrive at addiction and sinful behavior not by great leaps, most of the time, but by small decisions over time that leads us down a path we never intended to be on.

Scripture teaches us this truth as we look through the pages of the Old Testament. We may be amazed as we read some of the acts in the book of Judges because we may wrongly assume that everything took place in the span of a few years instead of the many decades. Or as one continues to the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles, the mood continues to grow more and more somber. The reader of this history should be left to ask, "How did this all happen?" How did the nation of Israel, God's People, go from great devotion and love for Him as they enter the Promise Land, to

almost complete denial of Him and His ways. The prophets teach us it was completed by one small decision after another until they finally didn't look anything like the nation God called them to be. Hence, why God told Cain that he must be on alert because, "Sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." (Genesis 4.7) Peter, later in the Bible, would encourage all of us to, "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5.8)

What is true of individuals can also be true of organizations. Sometimes organizations and churches get to a point where they no longer "look good" or recognize themselves. When this happens it typically comes from many years and by decisions, that, at the time, seemed to be "good."

I believe that this is the case with us as a church. We do not always "look good" in our own eyes when we remember where we've been. But fortunately, our future does not need to remain in our present reality. We must begin the task of reclaiming what it means to be us, First Baptist Church of Traverse City. The road of reclaiming our identity, vision and mission will NOT happen overnight but it will happen if we want it to.

Our first step in reclaiming our identity is our *Camp Discovery* Family Bible School that's scheduled for July 19 through July 23. We have a long legacy of serving families and children in our community that has been lost through time. Our history says that more than 90 kids were once present with all their joy and energy. I hope that you will help us reclaim our identity by doing a couple of things: first, by praying for our Camp Discovery each and every day through July 23. This is crucial because without prayer our efforts are in vain. Second, be part of the week as a volunteer with the kids or in the adult class. Third, intentionally and personally invite families and children to attend Camp Discovery. This invitation must be done personally if we expect people to respond. Lastly, it's time we start to consider the next steps on the path of reclamation as we move forward to a brighter future. We must pray, discern, and act differently! The path forward is hard but it is worth it. Please let me know your ideas on how we can move forward together.

Reclaiming our Identity Together,

Pastor Jeremy

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July Church Calendar

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

Adult Sunday School – Meeting each week beginning at 9:15 a.m. and led by Margaret Underwood

Prayer and Bible Study – Meeting each week at 6 p.m.

Sun., July 5 – Communion Sunday and July birthdays/anniversaries celebrated. The church kids' bell choir will also share a special musical number.

July 4 through 11 – National Cherry Festival

Sun., July 19 through Thurs., July 23 – Camp Discovery Summer Family Bible School. Mark your calendars for this great five-day experience that will be held each evening from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. We'll host programs for pre-school through grade six kids as well as an adult class. Registration can be found on the FBC website. Please plan to volunteer for this week's activities.

July 28 through Aug. 2 – TC Film Festival

Tues., Aug. 4 – Ladies' Bible Study begins. Marilyn Shaw will lead the sessions each week from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., focusing a book by Kelly Minter titled "What Love Is."

All church attendees (regulars and visitors) are asked to complete a weekly "Connection Card," which can be put in the offering plates. This is a new tool that will be used to engage regular attendees and visitors. You're also invited to share prayer requests and sign up for volunteer opportunities. This information will be kept confidential.

Please note --- The AB Women's mission meetings and the Pinterest parties will resume in September.

Financial Update (through June 2015)

YTD General funds - \$36,582.52

YTD Expenses - \$32,059.24

YTD Mission funds - \$5,784.55

July Birthdays and Anniversaries:

July 1 – Maxine Spitz, Sigrid Duell

July 3 – Garrett Hulett

July 8 – Margaret Underwood

July 16 – Emily Zuniga

July 18 – Nick Hulett

July 23 – Rev. Tom Mansfield

July 25 – Lexi Ackerman

Please contact the church office if you have additions or deletions to the birthday/anniversary list.



First Baptist Church

PO Box 6733

Traverse City, MI 49696

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For Camp Discovery
Family Bible School*

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***THANKS FOR YOUR
FAITHFUL GIVING!***

**2015 FBC Mission Giving
has nearly exceeded
last year!**

Year-end 2014 Mission Giving: \$5,889.34

2015 Missions Giving through June: \$5,784.55 *

*Does not include restricted funds (Diaconate funds, new project funds or memorial funds)
Includes a portion of 2015 February's Craft Fair funds.

Thank you for answering the call for mission giving in the US and abroad! God has worked marvelous deeds with First Baptist Church missions - and in the hearts of our congregation. These missions have helped people come to faith in Jesus, grow in their relationships with God, and change their worlds through the power of the Spirit. These missions include:

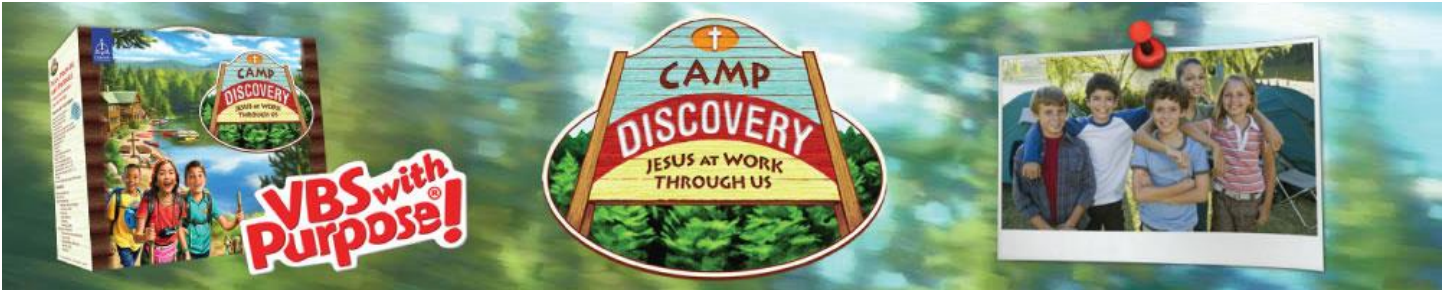
- Support of important ABC offerings such as America For Christ and One Great Hour of Sharing
- Support of the General American Baptist ministries missions –Support of retired ministers and missionaries
- Support of World Missions - including Jeni Pedzinski, the Kalkman family, and more than 1,800 other missionaries in more than 70 countries including earthquake-ravaged Nepal.
- Support of missions specific to American Baptist Churches of Michigan
- Support for our American Baptist Women's Love Gifts
- Support of Love in the Name of Christ in Grand Traverse County – helping our neighbors in need.

***“Declare His glory among the nations,
His marvelous deeds among all peoples.”***

Psalm 96:3

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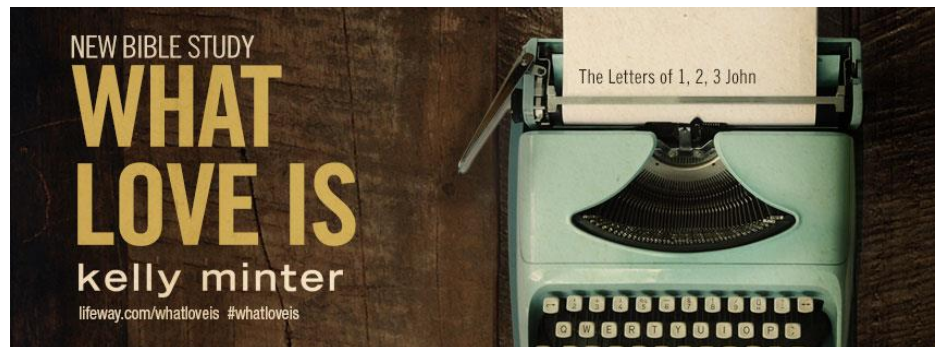
Looking ahead to these special summer events at First Baptist Church!



Mark your calendars for CAMP DISCOVERY – July 19 – 23 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church. We'll join forces with a visiting group from Prairie Baptist Church for this Family Summer Bible School with Purpose - designed for kids, kindergarten through sixth grade – and their parents. Start thinking about how you can volunteer and possible friends, neighbors and family members who could attend. More information to come --- and please keep this important summer event in your prayers!

Consider these volunteer opportunities:
Crafts – Music – Snacks - Greeting

Plan to attend!
**The FBC WOMEN'S
BIBLE STUDY**
*Moderated by
Marilyn Shaw*



This popular seven-week series begins Tuesday, August 4 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. and will focus on a new Bible study by Kelly Minter, "What Love Is," from the Letters of 1, 2, and 3 John. The cost of the study booklet is \$12.99; please let Marilyn know if you plan to attend.