

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

SEPTEMBER 2015

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

Pastor Jeremy's Think Tank *Silence, Solitude and Sabbath*

The other day Aleesha came across an image of a mom and a kid on Facebook as the little child was heading off for the first day of school. In reply to an apparent question from the child, the mom said, "I just don't know what I am going to do when I go home to a peaceful and quiet house all to myself." I hope you can see the irony and humor. There have been days that I wonder what I did with all the peace and quiet we had before having kids. Don't get me wrong. I love the noise that comes while they run around the house, build with Legos, and such, but some days they can be very loud.

Then I remember that before kids I did not have more peace and quiet. I just filled my life with other sounds and noises. The TV was on way more than it is these days in our home. I would work longer hours and fill the silence with the "click" and "clack" of the keyboard and the sound of the computer mouse. Hobbies and other activities would require my time and attention. My life was filled with noise, people, and activity.

Probably, for the past 20 years, I could count on my hands the number of times I intentionally made space for silence and solitude (being alone.) Those times, however, were not times when I would take a break from work, but instead were means to an end. Over the past 20 years I recall how others have encouraged me to slow down as a pattern of healthy leading, living in the Spirit, and life in general. Yet, I thought God had called me to do great things for Him. I now know that I had believed a lie from our culture and Satan himself.

As you may know, we're in the midst of a message series titled *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* and one of the steps toward emotional health is engaging in silence, solitude and taking Sabbaths. The basis for this is in Scripture where we learn from creation that God took a day to enjoy his work and not engage in other activities. The prophets at times were called to go away alone for a short period of time in order to listen. Christ, before He did anything, spent 40 days in the desert to experience silence and solitude before God. Then, throughout His ministry, the Gospels remind us that he spent habitual time praying alone.

Yet, this would seem counterproductive to many Christians and definitely to the world. There are always things to do, people to meet, and opportunities to share the Gospel. Isn't this being selfish? The list could go on. But, I have found the practice of silence, solitude and Sabbath keeping to be very freeing and calming. It

allows me to be more effective and aware of the opportunities that arise during the rest of the week.

During the past five or six weeks I've been integrating silence, solitude and Sabbath into my weekly life. Saturdays are now my Sabbath day where I try my best to do no work-related activities. This doesn't mean I am just sitting around being lazy, either. Instead, I'm "working" on things that bring me joy and are not related to my "doing" as a Pastor. I may clean up around the house, work in the yard, help build something with the boys, etc. My goal is to do things that relax and take the burden off my shoulders so I can work better on Sunday/Monday.

Then on Sunday/Monday I've been trying to intentionally have times where I can be alone and silent before the Lord. The goal is not for me to lay out a request before Him, but instead to calm myself enough to hear His voice. The goal is to spend time with God so I can spend time with others. I have no agenda but to allow God to do and say what He wants.

This is similar to the story of Elijah, who one time was in a cave waiting to hear the voice of God. In 1 Kings 19:9-18 we learn the details of the encounter Elijah had with God on the Mountain of God. Elijah knows that God is going to come to speak to him, he is given this promise; he just doesn't know how. After spending the night on the mountain in a cave, a wind came and shook the mountain, but this was not God speaking. After the wind there came an earthquake, but God was not there. After the earthquake there was fire, (a way God had previously spoken to others on the mountain), but God was not there. It was after all this noise that God came in a whisper.

We, as a church, are at a pivotal moment in our history. We could start "doing" many good things and try to be many things. But, I believe now more than ever we must engage in silence and solitude so we can clearly hear God. We must block out the noises of life to be able to hear. The world will tell us one way to "be the church," but we must sit in silence, solitude and with the Scriptures. I am convinced that this will help us hear God.

Leading from a life of silence, solitude and Sabbath keeping (or at least trying),

Pastor Jeremy

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

Established 1870

September Church Calendar

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

Adult Sunday School Resumes Sept. 13 – Meeting each week beginning at 9:15 a.m. and led by Margaret Underwood

Thursday Evening Prayer and Bible Study – Meeting each week at 6 p.m. Join us as we learn and share our journey to *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*.

Each Tuesday – Ladies' Bible Study series in progress. Marilyn Shaw is leading the sessions each week from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., focusing a book by Kelly Minter titled "What Love Is."

Sun., Sept 6 – Labor Day Sunday, Communion Sunday, and September birthdays/anniversaries celebrated.

Fri., Sept. 18 and Sat., Oct. 19 – Church will be used for a rehearsal and wedding

Looking ahead . . .

Fri., Oct. 2 and Sat., 3 – Church will be used for a rehearsal and wedding

Tues., Oct. 6 – AB Women's Missions meeting at noon at the church

Sat., Oct. 10 – Annual Fall Crafts, Baked Goods and Rummage Fair from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sun., Oct. 18 – Pastor Appreciation Sunday

All church attendees (regulars and visitors) are asked to complete and submit a weekly "Connection Card."

This is a new tool that is used to connect and engage regular attendees and visitors through prayer requests and volunteer opportunities. The information will be kept confidential.

Financial Update (through August)

YTD General funds - \$50,871.83

YTD Expenses - \$46,496.79

YTD Mission funds - \$7,397.66

September Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Sept. 6 – Carol Bristol

Sept. 12 – Steve Strait

Sept. 14 – Sue Wares

Sept. 15 – Jim Burkhart

Sept. 19 – Jeff Ackerman

Sept. 27 – Paul Reid

Sept. 29 – Diane Cowley

Sept. 7 – Wedding anniversary of Dean and Valma Davis

Sept. 12 – Wedding anniversary of Zeke and Mary Fleet

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



First Baptist Church

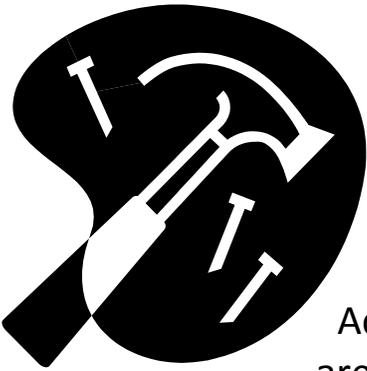
244 Washington St.

Traverse City, MI 49684

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

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

Established 1870



Church and Parsonage Improvement Projects

According to Leo Strait, several church and parsonage projects are on tap for this fall . . . please see Leo if you'd like to get

involved:

- Wall extensions on the pastor's office and brickwork repair on the back of the church are nearly complete
- Mortar work will be completed on the stone foundation on the church's west side
- Plaster work is being done in the back entrance to the sanctuary
- Parsonage basement window glass will be replaced and new kitchen and bath faucets will be installed.



CRAFT FAIR BAKED GOODS - AND RUMMAGE SALE

Saturday, October 10 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Become a part of this annual FBC event! We're looking for those one-of-a-kind autumn or Christmas crafts, your favorite baked goods, farm produce, and rummage sale items. Set up for the fair will take place on Friday, Oct. 9 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please see Toni Hulett for more information!

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

Established 1870

Kid's Korner



What's going on at "Junior Church?" Teachers Aleesha Spence and Mary Fleet have a dynamic agenda of vibrant and "hands-on" activities, all geared to teach our children about God and His Word.

Here are a few of these activities:

- Learning Bible verses and talking about ways these verses apply to the lives of our kids.
 - Prayer
 - Singing – and also practice of the FBC Kid's Bell Choir.
 - Games and Crafts
- Weekly "Big Picture" lessons about Bible stories and learning about the lives of real Biblical people.

September Bible lessons include:

The Book of Josiah – Following good leaders can help us obey God

The Book of Jeremiah – God's words show us the best ways to live

The Book of Daniel – Pray to God every day

If you have a child or grandchild, please invite them to join you at FBC and become a part of this great time of learning and fellowship! Please see Aleesha or Mary for more details.