

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

OCTOBER 2015

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

Pastor Jeremy's Think Tank *To The Library*

One of our boys' favorite places to go is the library on Woodmere Avenue. Daniel is especially excited because, in addition to his usual family trips to the library, his preschool class will be making monthly visits. Daniel was told that when he goes with the school group he is not allowed to head to the movie section to pick out his latest movie viewing choices. That said, it's a joy each evening when Josiah and Daniel pick out story books, sometimes as many as five each, for us to read to them before our nightly prayer.

If you were to come over and spend at least five minutes at our house, you would be asked to read one of the "latest" books they got from the library. The current collection includes mostly superhero stories of Batman, Superman, Green Lantern and the Justice League. I'm sure the boys would be happy if about every three days we were back at the library to exchange books, CDs, and DVDs for new ones. As much as I appreciate their love for books, I'm sure that as reading becomes "required" in school, some of their love for reading may dwindle.

Yet, even if this love of reading may eventually dwindle, I hope that their journey may be similar to mine in that they will return to a love of reading later in life. Currently, I'm at different stages of reading about four books. My annual goal is to read six books, and as long as I continue at my current pace, this goal will be completed.

The books I read come from all walks and avenues of life. Yes, I constantly read at least one book that is church and/or ministry related. One on my list is *Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and So Can Yours*. I hope the content is as encouraging and promising as the title. One that I am about one-third of the way through is proving to be less "encouraging" and more challenging. The book is Thom Rainer's *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*, which Rainer brings to light some of the characteristics of churches that died. I wish I could say we have none of the symptoms, but this is not true. More to come in another column.

Other books may include fiction, history, biographies or good non-fiction, but the goal is always to be non "work" related. I loved reading a few hundred pages of a book on Abraham Lincoln before returning it to the library. (I was only about one-third of the way

through but I had a hard time continuing after four renewals). Mark Twain's autobiography has been on the list for about seven years. Unfortunately for me, this was also the time I started grad school.

I have other books that pertain to counseling so I can learn about theories and research that allows me to better help others. There's never a time when I am not without at least a couple books in my possession – granted, having many digital books on my iPad does help me carry them around).

Yet, I have another stack that measures about three inches in height, a stack of magazine and articles to read. These again run the spectrum from counseling, church, family, and reviews of consumer items. Each magazine was selected for a purpose. It is my hope that in the next couple weeks I can dive into this pile to gain some insights, gleanings and to just enjoy some relaxing down time while drinking a cup of coffee or tea.

By now most of you are probably thinking, "Why on Earth are you writing about reading?" I write about reading because all the stories we read, the magazines we read, the books on tape we listen to, can all point us to the greatest story we can read: God's story, *The Bible*. Francis Schaeffer is quoted as saying, "We should read the newspaper in one hand and the Bible in the other." If we want to be serious about sharing God's story we must also be familiar with the stories being shared in our culture and world. The early church was masterful at sharing God's story in the context of what was going on around them. Many of us today are not familiar with God's story, thus we cannot and do not share it.

I realize some may not like to read, others may have difficulty reading, and others just seem to not be able to find the time. My reading never happens by chance. The challenge of Scripture is that we must know it well enough to be able to share it with others. We will never reach new people for the Kingdom if we don't know the story of the King. So start reading this week, for five minutes. I leave you with the blessing I give my boys each week, "May you love stories and come to know the story of God each and every day."

Reading each week,

Pastor Jeremy

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October 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 – Meets each week at 9 a.m. and led by Margaret Underwood

Thursday Evening Prayer and Bible Study – Meets each week at 6 p.m. Join us as we learn and share our journey as we study “*The Covenants of God.*”

Sun., Oct. 4 – Communion Sunday and October birthdays/anniversaries celebrated.

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.

Looking ahead . . .

Sun., Nov. 1 – Daylight Savings Time ends, Communion Sunday and November birthdays celebrated

Mon., Nov. 2 – Pinterest Party – snacks at 5:30 p.m. – craft class at 6:15 p.m.

Sun., Nov. 22 – Annual Church Meeting and Potluck

Sun., Nov. 26 – Thanksgiving Day

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 September)

YTD General funds - \$55,943.27

YTD Expenses - \$50,478.69

YTD Mission funds - \$7,900.94

October Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Oct. 4 – Herb Mansfield

Oct. 8 – Vadene Barshney and Marv Studinger

Oct. 16 – Donna Strait

Oct. 17 – Maria Wares

Oct. 20 – Juanita Strait

Oct. 21 – Abigail Ackerman

Oct. 29 – Harold Wilsey

Oct. 9 – Wedding anniversary of Dave and Julie Wilsey

Oct. 18 – Wedding anniversary of Charlie and Juanita Strait

Oct. 21 – Wedding anniversary of Tim and Celeste Singleton

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



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