



# First Baptist Church

Of Traverse City

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

MARCH 2017

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

## March / April Church Calendar

**Each Sunday at 10:30 a.m.** – Worship gathering with children’s program downstairs during the message.

**Each Monday at 9:30 a.m.** - Group Bible Study

**Mar. 1 – Ash Wednesday** - beginning of Lenten season.

**Fri. Mar. 3 – “Transforming Lives with Love”** a LoveINC fundraising event at 6 p.m. at the GT Commons. Tickets are \$40 each; contact Zeke for more information, or call Love INC at 941-5683.

**Sun., Mar. 5 – Communion** shared and birthdays celebrated.

**Sun., March 5** – A special **COIN OFFERING** will be collected to purchase a rug for our Junior Church classroom.

**Sun., March 5** – 9:15 a.m. *Exploring the Seven Churches of Revelations.* **Adult Sunday School** series will be led by Joe Underwood.

**Mon., Mar. 6 – Pinterest Party.** Snacks at 5:30 p.m. and crafting begins at 6. Craft is a burlap floral wreath. See Toni Hulett for supply list or for more information.

**Tues., Mar. 14 – AB Women’s Missions Group** meets at 12-noon at the church, weather permitting.

**Sun., Apr. 2 – Communion** shared/ birthdays celebrated

**Apr. 9 – Palm Sunday**

**Tues., Apr. 11 – AB Women’s Missions** at 12-noon .

**Apr. 14** – Community **Good Friday service** at Central United Methodist Church, noon to 3 p.m.

**Sat., Apr. 15 – Easter Baked Goods and Rummage Sale** in the church basement from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Sun., April 16 – Easter Sunday**



## As We Observe Lent

*A Word from  
Pastor MaryBeth Robertson*

*“In repentance (returning) and rest you will be saved, in quietness and trust is your strength.”*  
Isaiah 30:15

**T**his month we enter into the days leading up to Jesus’ death and resurrection. For Jesus, the way he was to take was clear and the consequences of his choices were obvious, at least to him. Luke 9:51 tells us “(Jesus) set his face to go to Jerusalem.”

Lent is a time of preparation. We know the story: Jesus gathered the disciples together for one last supper, was betrayed by one of his own disciples, was tried and then sentenced to be crucified. We also know the rest of the story: that on the third day Jesus rose from the dead. We know the story *and* we need to re-read the story, over and over to remind us of God’s great gift of love.

On Sunday mornings this past month, we’ve identified practices such as hospitality, generosity, risk-taking missions, service and spiritual growth, and practices of churches that bear fruit. We’ve recognized that spiritual growth and faith development must be intentional: it must be a decision we make to do what is necessary to draw closer to our Lord. Lent presents us with a time in which we can be quiet, reflecting on the life we are living, and identifying the ways our loving God is inviting us, ever and always, to put the Lord first in our lives.

During these 46 days we have plenty of time to pray, to read and study God's word, to reflect, to be quiet in the presence of God. Some faith traditions observe Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, by placing ashes in the form of a cross on each worshiper's forehead. Ashes remind us we have a limited lifespan and that we make choices that take us away from God. Perhaps this is something we can include in our observance next year.

Lent is a time of preparation. Because we know the story we also know we are called to repent, to acknowledge our sins and return to God. I invite you, each day, to plan time to wait on the Lord. I invite you each day to take time to pray and meditate on God's forgiveness and love. I invite you each day to take time to read Jesus' story, thanking God for Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for you.

Lent is a somber time of preparation. Let us also set our faces to journey with Jesus as he goes to Jerusalem and to the cross. As you journey, may you be strengthened through returning to God and resting in our Lord.

Yours in Christ -

*Pastor MaryBeth*

*Join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m.  
Fellowship time follows the service.*

#### **Upcoming Sermon Titles and Scriptures**

<b>March 5</b>	Encountering God Through Worship Psalm 84:1 and Psalm 99
<b>March 12</b>	What Does the Lord Require? Isaiah 58:1-12
<b>March 19</b>	Teach Us to Pray Matthew 5:6-1 and Luke 18:9-14
<b>March 26</b>	Is It OK to be angry when I pray? Psalm 5
<b>April 2</b>	Acknowledging God's Love Psalm 117 and Psalm 103

*New phone number for Pastor MaryBeth  
(231) 944-8080*

# March Birthdays



Kerry Fleet – Mar. 17  
Dave Wilsey – Mar. 20  
Andy Strait – Mar. 31

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### ***A Need to Confess*** **By Velma Wiebe**

**James 5:16** tells us, "Confess your faults to one another, that you may be healed!"

I've made many good choices in my life, but also many bad ones. How many times have I tried to say something good, but it was received as offensive. Oh, that I would have worded it differently, or not said it at all. But God's grace and mercy are so great toward us and He forgives us anyway.

**Psalm 103:3,1** "(Bless the Lord)...who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases... as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us."

**Isaiah 55:8,9** "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts"

I sometimes don't show as much love as I should either. Christ commanded us, "Love one another as I have loved you!" and 1 Corinthians 13:3 says, "If we don't have love, we are nothing." With God in my heart, I should be able to show more love because "God is love!" I guess I have to pray more because I know I have to love God first (Jesus gave this as the first and greatest commandment) before I can love others as I should.

I also hope we can treat one another at church as we read in 1 Timothy 5:1-2, "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but rather appeal to him as a father, to the younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity." God Bless!

## ***Anxieties of Pastoral Search Committees*** **By Marian Larson**

I came into this church in the late 50's. In the "old days," if we needed a new pastor, we literally went to another American Baptist Church and stole theirs. However if you were a member of a congregation of an American Baptist church and on a given Sunday morning you saw a group of four or five well-dressed men (always men) who came in together, sat together and seriously concentrated on your minister, you thought, "Oh-oh, pulpit committee!" What was the man in the pulpit thinking of this oh-oh moment? Maybe he thought, "I like it right where I am", or "I hope this wakes up my congregation", or "Is it time to move?"

Although my own husband sat on a number of these pulpit committees, I never really knew how the service ended. On the way out, did they whisper in a clandestine aside, "Hey, pack your bags, you're going to move.", or did they wait in their pew until they could break the news to their surprised victim to say "Our church will be calling you?" Or maybe they just tried to sneak out unobserved.

Now days, these things are done with more dignity.

## ***American Baptist Women's Missions Report*** **By Juanita Strait**

The American Baptist Women's Missions group met on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. Donna Strait surprised us with homemade Lenten soup - a recipe her nieces brought back from their trip to Israel last year. Sweets and hearts were provided by Pastor MaryBeth and Toni.

All women of the church are invited to attend ABWM group meetings; the next meeting is Tues., March 14 at noon in the fellowship room - weather permitting. Dessert will be provided.

An Easter Baked Goods and Rummage Sale is scheduled for Sat., April 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please contact Sandy Hampel, [946-4323](tel:946-4323) or Juanita Strait, [941-5264](tel:941-5264) for more information. We appreciate all donations and thanks for all the love and time which goes into your baking and crafting.

The money raised has supported a number of Christian groups, organizations and people through the years. Here are just a few: local and foreign missionaries, Love INC, Christian college students, Hospitality House at Grace Episcopal Church and CAST (Coalition Against Sex Trafficking). We continue to support AB-Michigan and International Missions with funds and rolled bandages.

## **FBC Financial Update**

*(through February)*

YTD General Fund Income: \$9,929.65

YTD Expenses: \$6,209.80

YTD Missions Offering: \$999

Furnace Fund: \$7,375 to date

## ***Notes of Interest***

- A special coin offering will be taken on Sun., March 5 to help purchase a rug for our Junior Church classroom.
- Sign-up sheets for "Get Acquainted Meals" with Pastor MaryBeth at the parsonage are on the table in the fellowship room.
- Copies of "Our Daily Bread" (March, April, and May) are on the entrance tables. The Lenten season is an excellent time to begin using a daily devotional and spending quiet time with God.
- Thanks to those who helped Pastor MaryBeth move from Portland to Traverse City on Feb. 1. Included were Mike, Toni, Margo, Sandy, Jeff, Matt and Tina Robertson, Mary, Zeke, (and Abby and Lexi for their patience and cheerfulness!)
- Meeting dates for the 2017 church council are set for March 19, May 21, July 23, Sept. 24, and Nov. 12. The annual church meeting will be Nov. 19.
- Hot water heaters will soon be installed in the men's and women's restrooms.
- The parsonage bathroom is being remodeled and a storm door, washer and dryer will be installed in March.
- Church council is looking at best practices for greeting and retaining church visitors.
- Church council is exploring online and automated giving options.
- Missionaries Jon and Amanda Good and family will visit FBC on May 14 to speak about their work in Hungary.



Please Support the  
**Coin  
Offering**  
on Sunday, March 5

Proceeds will be used to  
purchase a new rug for  
the Junior Church  
classroom



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Traverse City, MI 49696-6733

