



First Baptist Church

Of Traverse City

Bringing Hope by Sharing God's Love

December 2017

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

December Church Calendar

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

Sunday at 9:15 a.m. – Adult Sunday School led by Joe Underwood.

Love INC Adopt-a-Family recipient information is available in the church narthex.

New December/January/February editions of ***Our Daily Bread*** are available on the front and back entrance tables.

Sun., Dec. 3 – First Sunday of Advent, Communion shared and December birthdays and anniversaries celebrated.

Tues., Dec. 5 – Before, During & After Incarceration fellowship meal beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Sun., Dec. 10 - Church membership will vote on changes/amendments to church constitution and bylaws

Tues., Dec. 12 - AB Women's Missions Group will meet at noon at the church.

Sun., Dec. 17 – FBC Congregational Christmas Meal in the downstairs fellowship room

Sun. Dec. 24 – One service will be held at 10:30 a.m.

Mon., Jan. 1 – New Year's Day

Sat., Jan. 6 – Apprentice Program opening session (all participants in all locations) at First Congregational Church. First session at FBC is January 14.

Sun., Jan. 7 – Communion shared and January birthdays/anniversaries celebrated

Sat., Jan. 13 - 2018 Church Council planning session, including lunch.



Advent: Preparing by Giving of Ourselves to Others

A Word from

Pastor MaryBeth Robertson

"Fear not, for behold, I am bringing you good news of great joy that will be for all people." Luke 2:10

As you prepare for Christmas, what are you feeling? This is the time of year we sometimes feel there is too much to do and not enough time to do it! Well, good news. The angel's announcement to the shepherds is also for us! First and foremost, Christmas is a time of joy, great joy. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Emanuel, God With Us.

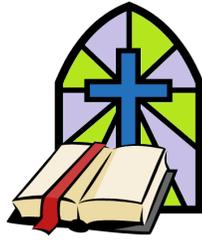
Rather than my usual column, elsewhere in this newsletter you'll find an "Advent Calendar." Just as children enjoy counting down the days until Christmas, I invite you to "count down" to our celebration of Jesus' birth, a once-in-history event. As God has given his only son to us, let us prepare for Christmas by giving of ourselves to others. Many of the days invite you to say "thank you" to someone. Only a very few days cost money. Each day's activity is a suggestion for that day. Only five need to be carried out on the days identified: four Sundays and Dec. 5. Ask someone to do a day's activity with you; that will make it even more in the spirit of the season.

Enjoy sharing your time of preparation, your Advent observance. And this Christmas, may the wonders of God's love fill your hearts with joy!

Yours in Christ –

Pastor MaryBeth

December Sermon Messages and Scripture
Join us every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.



December 3 – *Come and See: Hope, not Darkness*
Isaiah 43:1-7

December 10 – *Come and See: Peace, not Uncertainty*
Colossians 3:15 (TLB); Philippians 4:7

December 17 – *Come and See: Love, not Indifference*
John 14:21; 1 John 4:7-8

December 24 – *Come and See: Joy, not Fear*
Psalm 98

December 31 – *A New Day, A New Opportunity*
Philippians 3:12-4:1



December Birthdays/Anniversary

Dec. 4 – Christina Becker

Dec. 7 - Arya Wares

Dec. 16 - Creta Varti and Brian Zuniga

Dec. 19 – Jackson Hulett

Dec. 20 – Alice Underwood

Dec. 22 – Nicole Wares

Dec. 26 – Darlene Yeomans

Dec. 30 – Ron Tuck

Dec. 31 – Leo Strait

Dec. 29 -Anniversary of
Jeff and Margo Ackerman

FBC Financial Update (through November)

YTD General Fund Income: \$55,094.25

YTD Expenses: \$48,700.58

YTD Missions: \$13,744.02 (through October)

Memories of Christmas

By Marian Larson

When I was a child during the great depression, Christmases were pretty skimpy affairs. Of course, I didn't know that then because I didn't know we were poor.

I must have been about six (children were much more naïve back then), when my older brothers and sister had left home, mother, dad and I were in the old country kitchen (probably the only warm room in the house), when bells could be heard ringing outside, sleigh bells? It couldn't have been anything else. Dad certainly wouldn't have rigged the bells to ring while we were all listening inside, would he

My sister told me about a Christmas before I was born, when she and my two brothers drew names for gifts. They each had a nickel to spend. Her gift was an art-gum eraser and she hated it. When she was 80, she was still embarrassed and regretting how badly she had behaved.

One year, I remember my mother telling me that Santa was poor this year, but I can never remember being disappointed. There was usually a little doll, with hand-made clothes, and maybe something else. Grandfather sent us some oranges and candy. I remember later telling mother that she had been teasing me by telling me Santa was poor that year. How little it took back then to make a child happy! Those lean Christmases are probably some of my best memories. I cringe at the way we handle it today when we think everything on their wish list needs to be given.

I was older when I became aware of the real meaning of Christmas. It's not about gifts or the lack thereof, but a beautiful retelling of the birth of our Savior.



Faith or Facts?

Which of these do we emphasize the most?

By Velma Wiebe

When we visited my sister and brother in law, my husband would often say, "Sometimes we need to use our faith to overcome the facts that we're facing."

In 2 Corinthians 9:8 we learn that God's grace is able to give us the help we need in the time of need.

In Genesis 1:2-3, God had faith against the darkness when He said, "Let there be light, and there was light."

In 2 Corinthians 5:7 it says, "We walk by faith, not by sight." (facts).

At the same time, it is a sin against God if we do not take good care of our bodies. In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 we're told, "We are the temple of the Holy Ghost, and God owns us, therefore we should glorify God in our body and spirit." A good example of someone who did not depend on God when he was sick was King Asa. In 2 Corinthians 16:12-13 we read that King Asa had a sickness in his feet, but did not seek the Lord, but only the physicians." It doesn't say that God helped him.

Our trials are sometimes allowed to make us stronger in the Lord. Romans 8:28 says that "All things work for the good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose."

In Mark 10:27 we read that Jesus said. "With men it is (may seem) impossible, but with God all things are possible."

"Faith is what connects our weakness to God's Power!"

Wanda McDaniel

Update from the American Baptist Women's Missions Group

By Juanita Strait

We deeply miss our president and dear friend, Margaret Underwood, who last year passed on to be with her Lord and Savior. We continue our mission of spread God's word, and to aid others locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. We invite all women of the church to attend our meetings on the second Tuesday of the month at noon at FBC. This summer, I accepted the call to be the ABWM president. Other officers include Diane Cowley, secretary, and Tana Wilsey, treasurer. Our next meeting is Tuesday, December 12. I will provide devotions and a light lunch.

During our November meeting our group put together eight food baskets for shut-ins and two for college students. At this meeting, it was decided to suspend meetings for January, February, and March because of potential absences and uncertain weather conditions. To accommodate the majority of our First Baptist women, we plan to conduct a survey to determine the best time to hold these meetings. We also work to raise and disburse funds for our mission work, and we'd like to include as many women as possible in this decision-making process.

Some mission areas that we have assisted or plan to assist include: foreign, national and regional needs, bandages and finances; our own Children's Pew Mission, Hospitality House at Grace Episcopal Church, and Love INC's families in need. Once again we will be involved with providing for a family, and perhaps two, this Christmas season. We also plan to support an American Baptist Scholarship recipient, and we'll support the Phoenix House as they need comforters for 12 beds. Fund-raisers included our autumn and spring Craft Fair and Baked Goods Sales, collection of Oleson's receipts, and our monthly meeting collections.

We look forward to another awesome year of spreading God's love.



Thanks to Marian Gauthier and others who helped decorate the church sanctuary for the upcoming Advent/Christmas season.



Summary of Nov. 19 Annual All-Church Meeting

Following our traditional potluck meal, council moderator Zeke Fleet called the annual FBC meeting to order.

Details of the 2018 were shared as follows: Total income for 2018 is projected to be \$60,030, a decrease of \$2,582 from 2017. Total 2018 expenses are budgeted at \$58,180, an increase of \$3,067 from 2017. If the 2018 budget is met, income will exceed expenses by \$1,850. Expense categories that are expected to increase in 2018 include compensation, computer hardware, office supplies and others. Following a discussion and church membership vote, the 2018 budget was accepted.

Church council officers for 2018 were approved as follows: Zeke Fleet, moderator; Diane Cowley, assistant moderator; Alice Underwood, treasurer; Marian Larson, clerk; and Tana Wilsey, missions treasurer. At-large members for 2018 include Leo Strait, Joe Underwood, Sarah Walter, Dave Wilsey, BB Garza, John Murray, and Juanita Strait.

Church membership approved a revision in the FBC mission statement as follows: "Bringing hope by sharing God's love."

Pastor MaryBeth explained the proposed FBC constitution and bylaw updates and amendments. A congregational vote will be taken on Dec. 10 following the morning service.

A draft of an updated FBC directory is being prepared. Pages were distributed to those present for proof-reading and editing. The goal is to have the new directory distributed after Jan. 1, 2018.

Since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, a survey of those present was taken and it was decided to hold one service that day at 10:30 a.m.

New business included discussions of a hired custodial staff member and junior church assistance.

The meeting closed with those present singing "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" and with prayer by Pastor MaryBeth.



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