



First Baptist Church

Of Traverse City

Bringing Hope by Sharing God's Love

January 2018

244 WASHINGTON STREET

(231) 946-4727

January Church Calendar

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

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

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

Mon., Jan. 1 – Joyous Wishes for a New Year

Tues., Jan. 2 – FBC hosts Before During & After Incarceration meal and fellowship, beginning at 5:30

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

Sat., Jan. 13 – Church Council Planning Session, 9 am – 2 pm; lunch is provided

Reminder:

Pinterest Parties resume in February

ABWomen's Mission group will resume meetings in April



*A Word from
Pastor MaryBeth Robertson*

"...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 12:2b

Recently I read that "change is inevitable, transformation is intentional." I believe the source is Father Richard Rohr. As we stand on the threshold of 2018, do we anticipate this will be a year of change (inevitable, welcome or unwelcome) or a year of intentional transformation?

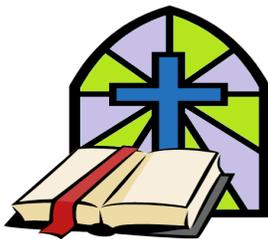
At Christmas we celebrate God's gift of love to us in the birth of the baby Jesus. Christmas, the day, may occur only once each calendar year. Christmas Day, as the celebration of love and God's offer of new life, is only a beginning. What difference will the birth of Jesus, the Christ, the Savior, make in your life in 2018? How will you live life differently, even victoriously, throughout the 365 days of this next year?

Yes, each of us is getting older. Yes, in many areas of life in our city, our state, our nation and our world, events are uncertain. Change will happen this year! Change also will happen at First Baptist, whether we choose change or not. The transformational question for us, individually and as a church family, is "How will we be open to transformation, to the renewing of our minds, so we will know the good, acceptable and perfect will of God? What is each of us willing to do differently to open ourselves to transformation this coming year? What is each of us willing to do differently to respond to God's call to transform the ministry of FBC?"

In the next couple of weeks, I invite you to devote yourselves to prayer, asking God to reveal GOD'S guidance for FBC. Share your thoughts and concerns with Council members for their planning session on January 13. Let us seek God's will for FBC and for our ministry in 2018.

Yours in Christ –

Pastor MaryBeth



January Sermon Messages and Scripture

Join us every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

**January 7 – Finding the King of the Jews
Matthew 2**

**January 14 – God is Taking Us Where?!
Acts 1:8, Acts 9:15**

**January 21 – Who is This Jesus?
Psalm 125; Malachi 3; Mark 9:9-13**

**January 28 – Praying the Lord's Prayer
Matthew 6:9-13**



January

Birthdays/Anniversaries

- 1 – Junior Garza
- 2 – Nicole Strait
- 14 – Rachel Wares
- 15 – Gale Seger
- 17 – Rev. Bill Nelson
- 19 – Scotty (Wares) Stanley
- 27 – John Murray; Velma Wiebe

Anniversaries

- 16 – Leo and Donna Strait
- 19 – BB and Mary Garza
- 22 – Cliff and Sue Wares

(If we've missed someone, *please* let us know!)

Looking Ahead or Looking Back?

Marian Larson

A new year looms ahead. A new beginning? Am I looking ahead or looking back?

I am facing my 90th birthday in 2018, and I tend to think of the disappointments, the regrets and the failures of those ninety years. Then I began to wonder where is my faith, where is my trust? Where is my joy in the Lord?

I Peter 1:8 "yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable"

Psalm 16:11 "In thy presence is fullness of joy"

Neh. 8:1 " Rejoice in the Lord alway and again I say rejoice"

What is joy? A constant bubblyness or euphoric outlook? I don't think so. A glimpse of a piece of blue sky after a storm, the beauty of a lone crocus in the spring, your neighbor's smile. We are promised joy, it comes from Him. It is not dwelling on past disappointments, but the hope of having the Lord's peace in your heart.

Looking ahead and remembering to rejoice in the Lord always for He is my strength and my joy unspeakable.

What Shall We Do With The Great Big and Wonderful Promises of God?

Velma Wiebe

First, we have to realize that God loves us very much and wants to give us what we ask for, if we believe in God and believe God will give us what He promised. (Mathew 7:11,7) One of God's gifts that is very important to have is the Holy Spirit. God promises this to us, to our children and to all that are far off. (Acts 2:39)

We respond to God's promises with praise, praise in our hearts at all times. To receive God's blessings, we need a heart filled with praise.

(Psalm 67:5-7)

Doubting God's word is the first step away from God, and from receiving God's promises. (Hebrews 10:23) If we rely only on our feelings, we often move farther away from God. But if we set our minds on God's word (2 Cor. 9:8) and resist the devil (James 4:7,8) we will draw closer to God.

God promises us victory in our lives! (2 Cor. 2:14, John 10:10, Psalm 46:1, 1 Cor. 15:57) In the words of actor Sylvester Stallone, "I believe that any success in life is made by going into an area (or problem) with a blind, furious optimism!"

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

Wanda McDaniel

Congregational Business Meeting

On December 10, at a special congregational business meeting the congregation voted on proposed amendments and updates to the First Baptist constitution and bylaws. The constitution and bylaws, as amended, were approved: 23 voted in favor of the proposed amendments and updates, two voted against, one person abstained. Action was taken to suspend the provision for a financial secretary for one year. There has been no person designated as financial secretary for at least two years. Responsibilities of that position are currently shared by the treasurer and those who count the offering each week. On a voice vote, the proposal to suspend the position for one year was approved.

Christmas Sharing

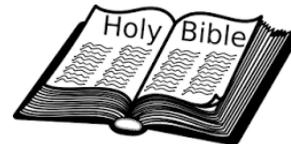


As a congregation, First Baptist shared Christmas cheer with two families. A couple with twin infant sons was suggested to us by Love INC. Another couple with baby Inez Grace was suggested by Toni and Joe Hulett. Thanks to all who purchased and wrapped gifts such as diapers, pajamas, boots, a couple of toys for the children and gas cards for the parents. Toni and family delivered gifts to Inez Grace's family. Tana, Diane and Diane's nephew Andrew delivered gifts to the Love INC family on the Monday before Christmas.

Church Council to Meet

On Saturday, January 13, Church Council will meet in a planning session to envision First Baptist's ministry for 2018. The challenge Council members will address is: To what ministry or ministries is God calling FBC in 2018. Council members will be encouraged to be open to God's leading in new directions of ministry. They also will be cautioned to avoid thinking, "What do I want this church to be/do."

To all in the congregation: As you also take time in prayer and in listening for the guidance of God's Spirit, if you have suggestions for Council to consider, please give them to Pastor MaryBeth, Zeke (Moderator) or to any Council member.



American Baptist Women's Missions

Juanita Strait



At December's meeting we voted to send \$500 from the funds raised through the church's craft fairs to each of the following: Amanda & John Good in Hungary, Puerto Rico via ABC International Ministries, and the annual Haiti mission trip via ABC Michigan coordinator Lynne Punnett.

Plans were made to shop for comforters for the Phoenix Hall beds. Thinking they might enjoy getting them by Christmas. Tana W. and Juanita S. met at Bed, Bath and Beyond. Due to sales (and Tana's coupons) we were able to purchase comforters, each of which came with one sheet set, and still stay under the amount budgeted for this donation. It was fun picking out 12 various prints and patterns we thought the women might enjoy. Tana was able to coordinate a time to drop them off and staff planned to surprise the women before Christmas. Thanks to Tana for arranging to transport all 12 comforters! Thanks to Bed, Bath & Beyond staff who were accommodating and helpful. Thank you, again, to the women and men of the church for making our fundraising possible. Because of your support, the women's ministry can continue to bring hope by sharing God's love.

ABWM society looks forward to a new year of reaching others for Christ through our fundraising and missions. Please remember our next meeting will be in April. Watch for our survey in January and help us determine the best day and time for future meetings. Have a Blessed New Year.

Read through the Bible in One Year

To deepen our understanding of scripture and to strengthen our relationship with Christ, let's commit to reading through the Bible together this year. Let's set a time to come together and discuss what we are reading, to ask questions, to pray and wait on God's Spirit to lead us to understanding how to live each day as Christ's hands and feet. We will use the devotional guide *Our Daily Bread*, which suggests which portions of scripture to read, in addition to the daily devotion. If you are willing to commit to reading through the Bible this year, please tell Pastor MaryBeth or Zeke so we can set a time most convenient to all participants!

Recycling to Begin in 2018



God has entrusted us with care of God's creation. Our understanding of stewardship of "things" coordinates well with "reduce, reuse/repurpose, recycle." For the past two years (or maybe longer), FBC has done limited recycling. This year, let's expand our efforts. There will be two receptacles in most places where currently there is only a trashcan. One receptacle will be the trashcan; the second will be a blue container with the recycle symbol on the outside. To make this easier, a list of acceptable items will be attached to each container. We can begin this week: bulletins and empty beverage cups go into the recycling container, for example. Thanks for expanding your understanding of stewardship of God's creation!

Thank You

Some of those who recently have deserved our thanks:

- ◆ Those who have cleaned the church in 2018
- ◆ Those who shovel snow and clear sidewalks
- ◆ Joe U and Marie for preparing, serving and cleaning up following the FBC Christmas dinner
- ◆ Mary F., Diane C. and Margo A. for providing lessons and leadership for Children's Church
- ◆ Those who lit Advent candles: Mike H., Vickie H., Garrett and Nick H., Abby and Margo A., Zeke and Mary F., Sarah W., Joe U., Marie, and Nancy.
- ◆ Eric Erickson for singing on Christmas Eve day
- ◆ Jo P. for accommodating the additional demands for music during Advent

With the contributions—time, talent and money--of all of those in our congregation, First Baptist continues to bring hope by sharing God's love. Thank you!

FBC Financial Update (through December) YTD General Fund Income: \$61,119.76 YTD Expenses: \$51,995.97 YTD Missions: \$13,744.02 (through November)



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PO Box 6733
Traverse City, MI 49696
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