



AT FIRST BAPTIST

DAN MCDOWELL
Senior Pastor

SUE NEELY VANBRUNT
Minister of Music

ROBERT FAULDS
Organist

MICKI ELLIS
Audio Visual Specialist

MILLARD COOK
Asst. Pastor Senior/Adult Ministries

BRUCE LAVERTY
Director of Family Ministries

PENNY SOROKES
Church Secretary

BONNIE KETTLE
Financial Secretary

GERALD NUTT
Custodian

An Abundance of Thanks



GIVING THANKS DINNER

Plan to join with your church family on Saturday, November 21, at 6:00 pm as we celebrate our many

blessings. The Fellowship Committee will provide the turkey, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce and beverages. Please sign up to bring potatoes, vegetables, or desserts according to your last name using the following schedule: A- H - desserts; I-P - potatoes; Q-Z – vegetables. The "price of admission" is a canned or dry good to be donated to the Olean Food Pantry. Sign up on the bulletin insert or call the church office by Nov. 17.



HANGING OF THE GREENS ON SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22

Advent begins on Sunday, November 29!! Join us for lunch after Sunday School on November 22 (the Sunday before Thanksgiving) and help us put up the Christmas decorations! Together we can make our church appropriately festive and set the mood for a wonderful holiday season. Sign up on the bulletin insert or call the church office so we can plan for the food.



NOVEMBER IS "THANK GOD FOR RECOVERY" MONTH AT FIRST BAPTIST!

Did you know our church hosts more than 8 recovery groups every week? Narcotics Anonymous groups meet in our church on Monday night at 7:30, Tuesday morning at 10:00, Wednesday afternoon at 1:00, Wednesday night at 7:30, Friday night at 7:30 and Saturday evening at 6:45. An Alcoholic Anonymous group meets here on Wednesday and Saturday nights at 8:00 and an Al-Anon (support group for the families of alcoholics) meets here on Friday nights at 7:00.

Every Sunday School class, music group, Bible study and board has been challenged to adopt one of these groups this month and to "bless" them somehow through your prayers, notes, cards or by leaving some food for them to enjoy. Please do so without infringing on the anonymity of the participants.



THANKSGIVING OFFERING

*This year's Thanksgiving offering has been designated to the **Olean General Hospital Chaplaincy Program** by the Board of Trustees. The Thanksgiving envelope in your giving envelopes may be used for this purpose.*

“THE PRESENT OF JESUS – A PRESENT TO OPEN EVERY DAY”

is the theme of our Third Annual Ladies Christmas Retreat on Saturday, December 5. Wendy Pope from Proverbs 31 Ministries will deliver the message based on Isaiah 9:6. *“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*



Wendy is a wife to Scott, mother to Blaire and Griffin, author, speaker, and Bible study teacher. She loves lazy Sundays watching golf with her husband, thrift store shopping with her daughter, and watching building shows with her son. She is the author of *Trusting God for a Better Tomorrow* and *Wait and See* (to be released Fall 2016). Wendy writes devotions for Proverbs 31 Ministries *Encouragement for Today* and is a content provider the free online devotion app First 5. She leads women all over the world to life change through her in-depth online Bible studies. She is witty, down-to-earth, and transparent. Wendy teaches in such way that every woman feels that she is speaking directly to their heart.

Wendy says “My heart’s desire is to know Christ intimately and to stir the same desire in other women. The calling God has placed on my life is to encourage women to hunger for a close walk with Jesus Christ. I want women to know their needs, their thirsts can only be quenched by a life totally abandoned to self and devoted to Him. My life’s verse is Acts 20:24: “However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus had given, me, the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.”

What Others are Saying about Wendy:

“Wendy has inspired me to new depths of enthusiasm for exploring God’s Word, yet made the discovery process simple enough to learn and use even amidst my sometimes chaotic schedule. Wendy’s passion for Living out God’s Word in her everyday life is refreshing, her teaching style is motivating and her approach to delving into the Scriptures is fun to learn and exciting to apply.” --Marlo Huffington, Chairman of the Board, Hearts at Home

“Wendy loves God and His Word with all of her heart and it is evident when she speaks and writes. She passionately shares about God and yet exposes her

own shortcomings so that she can connect with her audience. She encourages women to spend time with God every day and to put God first in all things. She is fun, energetic, and engaging. I know that we will be friends for a lifetime. –Wendy Westmoreland, Retreat Events Coordinator, Hillcrest Baptist Church

“Wendy has a delightful presence and a confidence in the truth in God’s Word. She has a good balance of sharing openly and humbly from her own life but allows God to take charge. She passionately shares scriptures and exhorts women to make time alone with God a priority in their lives. Her love for Jesus and her convictions based on His Word are strongly evident.”—Marilyn Smith, Conference Guest

The activities will begin at 10:00 am in the sanctuary with some Christmas Carols, Scripture, and Wendy’s message (and a door prize or two!). At 11:00 we’ll move to Fellowship Hall for brunch and a time of fellowship and fun (and more door prizes!). The cost is just \$15 per person for early registration (til November 30); \$20 from December 1 til December 5. Tickets are available in the church office.

Mark your calendars..... Save the date! You’ll want to be here for this time to get away from the stress of the holiday season for a few hours, soak in some divine inspiration, relax with friends, and charge your battery for Christmas.

Come and bring a friend....or a few!



THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE (And lighting of the Crèche) will be held at 6:00 pm on Sunday, November 22 at Mt. Zion Assembly on Front Street (near War Vets Park where the former bowling alley was located). Rev. La Mont Higginbottom, the new pastor of the Trinity United Methodist Church will bring the message.

Family of God



We extend our Love and Sympathy to the family of Carl Samuelson who went Home to be with his Lord on October 15. Carl had been an active member of FBC for 68 years serving many years as a Trustee.



**ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING –
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 7:00 PM
PLEASE PLAN TO HAVE A MEMBER
PRESENT FROM EACH
BOARD OR COMMITTEE.**

ADVENT BEGINS NOVEMBER 29

The 2015 Advent Devotionals are being written and compiled by the Christian Writer's Group that meets twice a month here at FBC. Copies will be available by mid-November....watch for more information in the bulletin and be sure to pick up your copy. Your Advent Season will be especially BLESSED!



ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

Please note that all annual reports from staff members, boards and committees are due in the church office by **December 30**. Electronic submissions are appreciated! Reports received after this date will not appear in the full report.

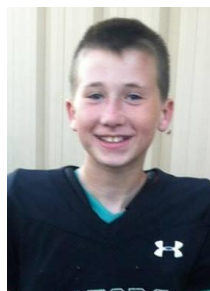
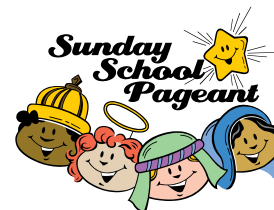


CONGREGATIONAL/CORPORATE MEETINGS NOTICE

The Annual Meetings of our church will take place on **December 6, 2015, and January 17, 2016**. The December Congregational/Corporate meeting will be held in the sanctuary immediately following the 9:30 worship service. The purpose of this meeting is the election of officers, boards and committees for 2016. Fellowship Time will be held after the meeting. The January Corporate meeting will review the annual reports from 2015 and enact a budget for 2016. Church members are encouraged to attend both meetings.

ATTENTION PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS!

Our children are currently learning the Christmas story during Children's Church (9:45 am) and the Sunday School hour (11 am) and are making preparations for the Christmas Pageant to be presented on December 20. Please join us.....We would love to have all of our young people involved!



YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE MONTH

Our Young Musician of the Month for October was Lucas O'Dell, a 5th grader at Allegany-Limestone Elementary School. Lucas sings in the Kids Choir, plays Junior Bells and is beginning to

learn to play the trumpet. He said that he likes to learn about music and the people who sing it. He loves singing in church and along with the radio. His current favorite song is our Stewardship Theme Song "Thrive" by Casting Crowns. Lucas is the son of Geoff and Cheri O'Dell. We are happy that he is willing to share his musical abilities here at First Baptist!



CALLING ALL CANTATA SINGERS!!

One of the most popular new Christmas songs is "Mary, Did You Know?" This song has been performed by many artists including Kenny Rogers, CeeLo Green, Reba McEntire and Mark Lowry. This stirring song provides the theme for this year's Christmas Cantata.

Using many traditional carols, a few contemporary favorites and stirring narration, the story of the birth of our Savior is told in a fresh and inspiring manner. Rehearsals have begun for this Dec. 20th presentation. So, if you would like to sing with the Sr. Choir (and we hope you do!), come to rehearsal THIS THURSDAY at 7 p.m. to prepare. You will be blessed as you bless others!



On **Sunday, November 8**, we'll pay tribute to our veterans during the morning service. A

special fellowship time will be held in their honor following worship.

On **Wednesday, November 11**, our church (in coordination with the Greater Olean Association of Churches) will host a free breakfast featuring pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, ham, hash browns and beverages from 8-9:30 am in our Fellowship Hall. This meal is offered in honor of military veterans and active service members and is free of charge for them and their families. Everyone is welcome to attend. Donations are welcome but not required. Let Pastor Dan or Penny know if you are willing to volunteer to cook, serve or clean up for this breakfast.



The FBC Youth will be having its annual Christmas Card fundraiser on November 1, 8 and 15. Donations to have your name included on the All Church Family Christmas Card will be taken each Sunday by members of the youth group at the receptionist's desk following worship **until November 15**. The card will be included with the mailing of the December issue of At First Baptist.

LIGHTING THE LONGEST NIGHT FOR GENESIS HOUSE



Lighting of the Luminaria

December 21st is the longest night of the year. To the homeless person, it can be lonely and scary.

Please help brighten our area by joining our Fourth Annual Luminaria Sale to benefit the work of Genesis House. Kits are \$10 and include 10 bags, 10 votive candles, sand, and directions. Please contact Donna DeLong at 557-8323 or the Church office. Orders are due by Dec. 1st.

CHRISTIAN WRITERS GROUP MEETS ON 1ST AND 3RD MONDAYS

Have you ever wanted to try your hand at writing a devotional? Do you write poetry (even for yourself) or fictional stories based on faith? Would you like to try writing but are unsure of how to begin? A Christian writers group was formed last October at FBC. This group provides a safe place for peer critique and fellowship and offers an instructional component on how to write devotionals, how to approach spiritual memoirs and other topics of interest. If you are interested in writing (regardless of whether you have been published or not), please contact Deb Wuetrich at 716-379-8702.



November Board Meetings
Sunday, November 8 @ Noon
 Board of Christian Missions
Monday, November 9 @ 6:00 PM
 The Board of Christian Education
Tuesday, November 10:
 Diaconate @ 6:30
 Trustees @ 7:00



POINSETTIA DONATIONS

Donations for the flowers and decorations for the sanctuary will be received in the church office until December

13. Please indicate, along with your check, who you would like to have honored or remembered. Also let us know if you will be taking a plant with you following worship on Sunday, December 20. The Diaconate has decided to deliver the poinsettias to our shut-ins at the beginning of the Advent season rather than waiting until the week of Christmas. Your donations will still be used to make those gifts possible. A donation of \$10 per plant is suggested.



Our Pastor is inviting any and all retirees in our church family to a Christmas Party/Luncheon on

Monday, **December 14** at noon. He will offer some devotional thoughts as well as an opportunity for food and good fellowship. We will have a white elephant (or dollar store) gift exchange as well! Transportation to this event is available for any who need it. There is no charge but donations will be gratefully accepted. Please sign up on the bulletin insert or call the church office by Thursday, December 10, if you would like to attend.



Homebound Christmas Outreach

During the upcoming Christmas season, the Diaconate will be sponsoring some special ways for the congregation to reach out to our shut-in/homebound family members.

- 🕯 Poinsettia plants will be delivered during the first week of Advent (beginning November 29) so that they can be enjoyed during the Christmas season
- 🕯 Advent Calendars will be posted on the café windows for each of our shut-in/homebound members. We are asking the members of the congregation to sign up for one day (or more!) to be in touch with one or more shut-ins. You can send a card, visit, call, etc. Use your imagination...just be in touch in some way to brighten their day at this special time of year

Please join us in making this Christmas Season blessed in special ways for our family members who can't be with us physically to celebrate the birth of our Savior.



"Come Rain or Come Shine"

BY Jan Karon

-- latest in quaint book series

It's been a few years since I first fell in love with a small town called Mitford, set in the mountains of North Carolina, a place rife with unique and interesting residents. Mitford isn't a real place; it's the figment of author Jan Karon's imagination. But the town and its colorful people could be real, as I have known individuals with some of their traits.

Karon once had a successful career in advertising, but at one point she tired of the big city and went home to the

mountains, unsure of what she was going to do. She tells how one day she was looking out the window, and in her mind's eye, she could see a figure hunched over in the wind. That was when Karon conceived of Father Timothy Kavanagh, an aging Episcopal priest, and wondered what his life was like.

Beginning with "At Home in Mitford," Karon went on to pen 12 books in the series—plus a few offshoots—leading Father Timothy through a late in life marriage, the adoption of a son, and many adventures with his Mitford community members. The recently released "Come Rain or Come Shine" offers what long-time Mitford series fans have been waiting for: the wedding of Kavanagh's son, Dooley, to another "throwaway" child that friends adopted earlier in the series.

Dooley and Lace at first hated each other as youths, even they both hailed from troublesome backgrounds that might have found them sharing things in common. Over the years, however, they came to acknowledge their attraction. But the young couple practiced patience, with both in college and not wanting to disappoint their adoptive families. The wait was longer than most, because Dooley was studying to become a veterinarian.

In "Come Rain or Come Shine," Dooley is about to buy out a longtime mentor and friend and establish his own practice at Meadowgate Farm, a setting that has appeared in earlier books. The couple wants a simple wedding at the farm, but things get complicated as the anticipated date arrives.

Karon writes from several viewpoints, but primarily uses Lace, Dooley and Father Tim as they share thoughts and memories of their times together. Some of the former characters from Mitford appear briefly, such as Esther and her famed Orange Marmalade Cake. Dooley's fractured family members also gather for the event, and the reader can see healing, but distances yet to travel on their journeys from what happened in their lives. I don't know if this is Karon's final book in the Mitford series, but if it turned out to be I could be satisfied with such a bookend on a series I have come to enjoy and love. The author provides a satisfying ending—or new beginning—for the two children readers first met as rejected ragamuffins. She offers a contentedness to Father Timothy's life after his many adventures as rector of not only Mitford's church, but others he'd pastored, and a just right feeling about his retirement.

If you are searching for a good read for the coming winter months, I suggest you get a list of the Mitford books (online or in the cover of a recent one) and snuggle into the recliner for a satisfying escape with some colorful characters facing mysteries, challenges and rural mountain life.

—Reviewed by Deb Wuethrich



THINGS THAT THE LORD LOVES

*"These six things doth
the LORD hate: yea, seven
are an abomination unto*

*him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that
shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked
imaginings, feet that be swift in running to
mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he
that soweth discord among brethren". (Prov. 6:16-19)*

From the text I have chosen it would be easy to take the negative side of our actions. Those are spelled out very clearly and they should not be overlooked or in any way dismissed as unimportant. However, I would like to take a few moments to look at the other side of these character traits and actions.

1. **A Humble Spirit** – Prov. 16:19 "Better it is to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." One of the fruits of the Spirit in Gal. 5 is meekness. Meekness results from the realization that all we have and that we are is of God and not of ourselves. The meek are the true servants, for meekness is abounding strength held in restraint, and expressed in service. They are the wealthy men, for in such submissive service is the secret of possessing all things. Thereby, they are giving all of the glory to God and not trying to take it unto themselves.

2. **Speaking the truth** – Eph. 4:15 tells us to speak the truth in love. Isn't a shame that in today's culture we must be continually reminded to tell the truth. There was a day a man's word was his bond and could be trusted. Especially as Christians we need to be people of our word. As hard as it may seem at times remember God loves us to speak the truth,

3. **Hands that heal the guilty** – Mat. 5:44 "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" It might be easy to say that I have not killed anyone who did not deserve it. But have you helped, healed, encouraged and prayed for those who (in our minds) do not deserve it. This is the thing that God loves. For when we see all men created in the image of God and in need of a restored relationship with Him then we are looking at man as Christ looks at man.

4. **Thoughts that are true and Godly** – Phil. 4:8 tells us to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, that have a good report, and that have praise to them. Our thought life can easily make us or break us. If you desire to be doing that which God

loves then keep your mind on truth and things which honour Him. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:5).

5. **Feet swift to follow the Lord** – Many are like Peter who followed the Lord a far off (Mark 14:54). But that which the Lord loves are those who run to follow Him. Let us each morning seek and devour the Word of God that it may be the "lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psm. 119:105). Then we will be able to run and not be weary, walk and not faint but rather mount up with wings as eagles. (Isa. 40:31)

6. **A friend that speaks the truth** – We are to stand by our friends and brothers in Christ as they are being falsely accused. "A Friend loveth at all times" (Prov. 17:17). And we know that there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. (Prov. 18:24) So if we are conformed to the image of Christ we too will stick close to comfort and strengthen our brothers.

7. **They that build unity among the brethren** – The sowing of discord is the selfish act of I want my way. Whereas the building of unity says I want God glorified first and foremost in the body. Each person in the body has their own personality, goals, desires and agenda. When we are able to set those aside and seek the peace and over all prosperity of the body that is what the Lord loves. So let us seek to live a life that the Lord can look upon with joy and love.

~Pastor Millard



Pastor Dan and Pastor Millard

want to say

"Thank You"

for the wonderful

Pastor Appreciation Celebrations

you offered in October

We love you too!





From the Pastor's Heart...

Just as we did in 1014, we spent a lot of time in August, September and October of this year talking about the church we

want to be. During worship in August our Board of Missions told you a little about the ministries that we support and why we support them. Cari Matejka shared her experiences in Africa and her passion for continuing the work there and I announced that I am feeling led to go to Africa with Cari next year to gain personal perspective on what God may be leading our congregation to do there.

In September we introduced the stewardship theme "Thrive". The chorus of that popular Christian song proclaims: *"Just to know You and to make You known; We lift Your name on high. Shine like the sun, make darkness run and hide. We know we were made for so much more than ordinary lives. Its time for us to more than just survive. We were made to thrive"*

Those words describe what we are aiming at in 2016. In September we heard from Chris Rosel as the Chairwoman of the Board of Christian Education about the ministry of discipleship we are trying to offer here.

We also heard a passionate plea from Casey DeGroff about the need in our church for dedicated leadership on the Diaconate Board. Casey asked us to picture in our minds someone we would consider to be our "consummate deacon"... Who would you choose to be *your* Deacon? And then she challenged us to ask that person to serve in that capacity in 2016! The vision of the Diaconate Board for 2016 is to put our best and brightest in the position of serving there as spiritual leaders.

The last week of September we heard from Dave Torrey and the Board of Trustees about the work of that board and the issues that they are beginning to contemplate in regard to our building and finances in the years ahead.

In October our Fellowship, Music and Communication Committees were represented by Nancy Taylor, Bev Firth and Dave Anderson, sharing their perspectives on that those committees hope to accomplish next year with your support.

Meanwhile in September I shared 3 messages emphasizing the importance of every member of our congregation striving for greater spiritual maturity and unity. And in October I spoke to you from the heart about the ABC's of stewardship (Attitude, Belief, Consecration and Desire). The focus was Malachi 3:10: ***"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing."***

I offered a money-back guarantee along with the challenge to take up God's challenge to put Him to the test at least for one week (on October 25). As I write this, that date still lies before us and I am praying that you are prayerfully considering taking up that challenge.

Last year I told you that "in order for the world around us to believe in the vision we espouse, we must demonstrate its effectiveness in our attitudes, our compassion, our faithful confidence as we share the faith, hope and redeeming love of Jesus Christ with all people by striving to be the church of Jesus Christ where every member is a minister.

To do that more effectively in 2015 I proposed:

- A. Our highest callings are to be **beacons of truth and life.**
- B. **There is no substitute for private devotions.** Sunday School, group Bible studies, radio and TV teaching, etc. are important but God speaks to our hearts best when we are alone with Him.
- C. **Introduction to the Old Testament:** To prepare you for those devotions we will offer an introduction to the books of the Old Testament (as we did for the New Testament in 2013).
- D. We will focus more attention on **leadership development** next year by offering opportunities to learn and grow in leadership skills.
- E. Last but not least, we need to **improve our outreach** by looking for opportunities to meet unchurched people and bring them into fellowship with us.

We didn't accomplish the Intro to the Old Testament last year so I am planning to do so in 2016. The only thing I would add to those goals is that our most effective efforts in leadership development will not come through seminars and classes. We need to develop leaders by mentoring those who are being called into leadership in our congregation.

There are obvious biblical models for this. Jesus mentored His disciples and Paul mentored people like Timothy and John Mark in the New Testament. The Old Testament is filled with examples like Moses and Joshua, Eli and Samuel and Elijah and Elisha.

It would be wonderful if the Lord were to add more new people with leadership skills to our fellowship (like He has recently with the Crowleys, Deb Wuetrich and Mike and Corinne Hooten). But ultimately our mission is to nurture and disciple people over the long haul so those who grow up here are equipped to serve and become the pillars this church has always had. People who God used to make this church what it has been in this community for 185 years!

~Pastor Dan



Happy Birthday!

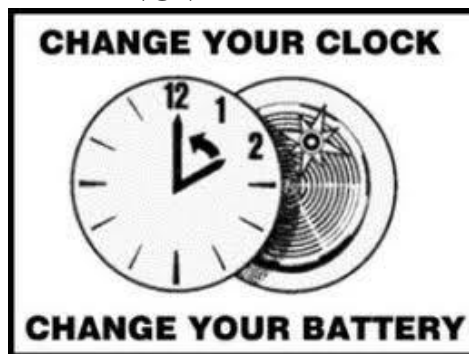
NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3 Rhiannon Peck
 4 Marilyn Piepho
 8 Art Brown
 Katie Harrison
 9 Jeff Nutt
 Dan Sorokes
 10 Jim Kirkpatrick
 11 Julie Barnes
 Bud Fortner
 Laura McDowell
 Mark Taylor
 13 Zach Faulds
 15 Michele Cone
 16 Carol Walker
 17 Travis Buckley
 19 Micah Collins
 20 Bob Ketchner II
 21 Chris Rosel
 23 Carol Mahoney
 24 Ashley Sage
 26 Josh Anderson
 27 Lori Funden
 Dan McDowell
 Ken Wallace
 Eli Rust
 30 Linda Anderson
 Cheyenne Rust
 Eli Rust
 Ken Wallace



8 Bruce & Carole Laverty
 23 Art & Lynn Brown
 25 Harley & Donna DeLong
 28 Don & Jodie Martin

STANDARD TIME BEGINS
 SUNDAY,
 NOVEMBER 1



TURN YOUR CLOCKS BACK
 ONE HOUR
 BEFORE YOU GO TO BED ON SATURDAY,
 OCTOBER 31



*Articles and information for the
 December Issue of
 At First Baptist
 Are due by Thursday, November 12*



THE RETIRED MINISTERS & MISSIONARIES OFFERING

In the month of December we will receive the Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering, which provides a special honorarium (just in time for the holidays) to the missionaries, pastors and their spouses in our denomination who served us so well for so long! This is a tremendous blessing for them; let's do our part!

