



AT FIRST BAPTIST

Senior Pastor
James Balson, Jr.
Minister of Music
Sue Neely VanBrunt
Organist
Jeanne Gross

Audio Visual Specialist
Casey Sage
Custodian
Rachel Green

Sunday Worship: 9:30 a.m.
Faith and Fellowship for All Ages: 11:00 a.m.

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Holy Week Reminders

Holy Week begins on **PALM SUNDAY**, March 29 when the Sr. Choir will present the **Easter cantata**, "Holy is the Lamb" during our 9:30 a.m. service! The wonderful story of His cross and resurrection will be narrated by Jerry Nutt Jr. and Heather Schultz Piche. The talented 25-voice choir is directed by Sue Neely VanBrunt, and includes special selections by Jeanette Butler, Alexander Freer, Michael Schultz, Cheryl Smith, Tim Spiller and Deb Stavish. The music is accompanied by pianist, Jeanne Gross. The story of the good news of Jesus is too important not to share! Be sure to invite friends and family to join you on this special morning. Let's fill the sanctuary with people and praise!



The Board of Education will be hosting the **ANNUAL EMPTY TOMB EASTER EGG HUNT** on March 29. We are asking for donations of candy or small

treats. If you are able to support this fun activity please leave donations outside the BOE office or see a board member.

Our **MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE** will be held at **7 pm on Thursday, April 2nd**. This observance will help us focus our hearts and minds on Christ with a time of Holy Communion, scripture, hymns of the faith, light refreshments and most importantly- -symbols of the Body broken and the Blood shed for us. How meaningful it will be to share these moments of meditation and prayer on this night that commemorates Christ's last supper.

On **EASTER SUNDAY**, April 5th, we will worship at 9:30 am amid memorial Easter lilies and spring flowers. The service includes a special message from Pastor Jim that will remind us of the day when Jesus triumphed over death and the grave. Pam Nutt will have a special sermon specially prepared for the children. The congregation will rejoice in our Lord's victory through traditional Easter songs like "Christ the Lord is Risen Today" and "He Arose" accompanied by trumpeters Dave Taylor and Pastor Jim. We'll hear alleluias ring from our Sr. Choir anthems and organ sounds by Jeanne Gross. Alexandra Freer, Clarissa Ivan and Tim Spiller will add their voices to special Easter selections "Was it a Morning Like This?" and "Because He Lives". What a glorious morning it will be!!

(Please Note: The nursery will NOT be staffed during worship but available for families that need to use it. Children in church will be given activity bags. There will be no Faith and Fellowship classes due to the Community Easter Dinner.)

19th ANNUAL COMMUNITY EASTER DINNER: APRIL 5

Plans continue for the 18th annual Community Easter Dinner with reserved meals available for pick-up (or delivered by our volunteers) from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. See Sharon Anthony if you might still be able to volunteer in some capacity. Donations are also accepted by making checks payable to First Baptist Church to help defray expenses for this important outreach meal.



THE FAMILY OF GOD

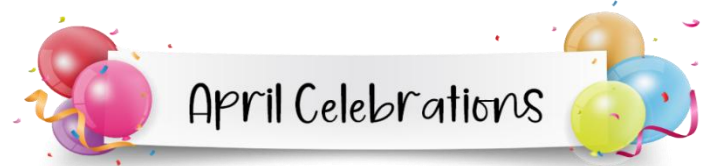
On March 15, we welcomed eight new members to our FBC family! Lylah Butler, Eden Butler, Elsa Porcello, Fiora Porcello and Theron Rust professed their faith in Jesus by walking through the waters of baptism while Jeanne Gross joined us through transfer of church letter. Ken Boser II and Brandi Porcello joined by previous Christian experience.



The Trustees have designated the **2026 EASTER OFFERING** to benefit the **Community Easter Dinner**



If you receive the At First Baptist via email, please don't take a printed copy from the entry table. Those copies are intended for our guests so they can learn about the ministry here at FBC.



APRIL BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Sunday, April 12

@ Noon Board of Christian Missions

Monday, April 13

@5:30 pm – Board of Christian Education

Tuesday, April 14

@ 6:30 pm – Trustees

BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Yvonne Perry Clark
- 4 Jean Kwiatkowski
Karen Moore
- 6 Madison Davenport
- 7 Karen Woodring
- 9 Wallace James Taylor
- 12 Jack Croft
Geoff O'Dell
- 19 Nancy Lennon
- 20 Carleigh Spiller
- 21 Janell Martin
- 27 Julie Kerls

ANNIVERSARIES

- 21 Trevor & Karen Moore



UPDATE OUR MILITARY WALL

We are accepting pictures for our Military Wall of Honor. If someone in your family or circle of friends is currently serving in a branch of the US Military, please bring a picture (up to 5x7) and address for the bulletin board in the lobby so that we can put a name with a face to offer a more personal prayer for safety and send a card or note of thanks to them. It is important that we don't forget those who are allowing us the freedoms that we enjoy every day.



ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY: SATURDAY MAY 2

Start Time: 9:00AM

There will be further information announced in the weekly bulletin as it becomes available!!



DISSOLVING FEAR

As we look at the world circumstances around us, read the news and watch the reports it is easy to be overwhelmed with a sense of helplessness, fearfulness, dread, and anxiety.

Such seasons of wars, financial turmoil, unknown outcomes, and fear call us as Christians to remember the old truths we all know - but sometimes need to be reminded of. The Apostle Peter writes in II Peter 1:12,13 saying, "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you..."

In Deuteronomy 31, Moses is passing the reins of leadership over to Joshua. Joshua is facing the daunting responsibility of leading several million Israelites to conquer a land of walled cities, giants, and warriors. The Israelites have been nothing but nomads in the desert for 40 years. The future is uncertain and fearful. In the book of Joshua, after Moses has died, Joshua is urged three times in chapter 1, to take courage and to not be afraid. It was a most fearful season.

In such seasons, for Joshua and for us, we need the reminder of Deuteronomy 31:8.

"And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

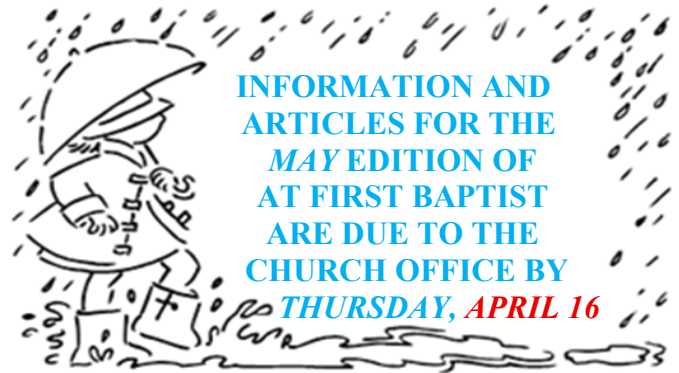
Here is your encouragement, Christian!

1. **The LORD goes before you.** As your leader, He is making the path. He is taking "Point" and clearing the dangers. In His Providence, He is lining up all the circumstances and details so that "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28).
2. **He will be with you.** The Lord is not far away, but close at hand. Jesus said "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5). Consider also that God is WITH you, NOT against you. And "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).
3. **He will not Leave nor Forsake you.** No matter what you have done, no matter how you may stumble and sin.... He will not forsake you! His promises to you are sure! He is faithful, no matter what! Our personal failures won't change His character. Our external circumstances won't overthrow His Sovereignty. "Many are the afflictions of the

righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all." (Ps. 34:19).

With such encouragements, let us renew our trust in Him as faithful and able. "Casting **all** your care upon Him, for He cares for you." (I Peter 5:7).

~Pastor Jim



Linda Kennemuth is the contact person for our church **PRAYER CHAIN**. If you would like to be included in the circulation or if you have a prayer concern to share, please contact Linda at Linda Kennemuth: 716-904-0860 stelllindy@gmail.com



WORSHIP/STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

If you are looking for additional opportunities to engage in a Bible study or worship time beyond our Sunday morning service (9:30 a.m. with Sunday School at 11 a.m.), you might want to consider the following regular activities:

- 9:30 a.m. Monday Morning Bible Study**
- 9:30 a.m. Wednesdays, Ladies Bible Study**
- 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Pause for Power**

GENESIS HOUSE ANNUAL SALE

The annual flower sale will soon be underway at Genesis House. This is the biggest fundraiser for our homeless shelter. The sale includes top-quality geraniums and hanging baskets. Watch the Sunday bulletins for more details on flower choices and prices as well as the delivery date





KATIE DEGROFF SWIMS IN NJCAA NATIONAL COMPETITION

On March 7 and 9, Katie DeGroff participated in the NJCAA National Swimming and Diving Competition in Florida. As a member of the

Jamestown Community College Swim Team, Katie and her teammates traveled to Florida earlier that week to compete with other college athletes. Katie placed 14th in her breast stroke event cutting 5.5 seconds off her time; and 8th



place in the 200 I.M. The boys' and girls' teams both



won national championships at the event!! Congratulations Katie and the JCC Jayhawk teams!!



THANK YOU'S

We would just like to say THANK YOU to everyone who supported us during our recent challenges; all who offered prayers, sent cards and kind wishes. We truly appreciate your love and support!

Paul and Lindsay Cummings



BAPTISMS MARCH 15, 2026

THERON
RUST



LYLAH
BUTLER



EDEN
BUTLER



FIORA
PORCELLO

ELSA
PORCELLO





ASSIST MODERATOR'S VIEW

Youth provide hope for future world
I am working through my yearly
opportunity to review student
applications for the Gordy
Wuethrich Memorial Scholarship.

This is a small fund our family contributes in his memory toward the education of a graduating senior or college freshman in our former home in Lenawee County, Michigan.

Upon opening the file a few days ago, I was shocked to see the number of applicants. There were 48! I think this partly demonstrates that college is so expensive these days, the young people are reaching out for any opportunity to help them purchase a few books or pay a fragment of some pretty hefty tuitions.

Even before Gordy passed, we thought about how we worked our way through his five higher education degrees, resulting in a Ph.D. in Continuing Education. I don't remember any scholarships, just our jobs, graduate assistantships, and a large student loan, which we paid off in full. I know, however, it is much more expensive now. So, the scholarship is one way we feel he is still contributing to the futures of the youth today. Mentoring was something he truly enjoyed.

These annual reviews are eye-opening to me, maybe more a reinforcement toward believing in the future. We hear a lot of not-so-good reports about the generations coming behind us. Some consider them lazy, not informed and as having "no clue." That's not what I see in these applications. They are lengthy with a series of questions that provide information such as background, like how many are in their family, how much do they expect school will cost and how they anticipate they will manage it.

It is taking me a few days to do the review, because I like to do it thoughtfully. I pay close attention to the final piece: an essay our particular scholarship requires, stating, "My dream and how this scholarship will help me achieve it." A few just write a line or two. Occasionally, someone fills the page. Mostly, teens write a few thoughtful paragraphs that lay out their hopes for the future, not just theirs, but for their communities and the world. Despite statistics, which often seem to come from large urban or metro areas, these kids still see marriage and family as a big part of their future. This surprised me a little with news reports of a younger generation not

having kids or even a permanent life partner, according to some studies. Granted, Lenawee County is pretty rural and our scholarships mostly go to students who plan to study agriculture in some form. Applications include those going into veterinary science, food science and ag machinery trades, but ours is also open to a study of Business or Economics, because Gordy loved teaching Econ. You'd be surprised at the apps we get in this category, because most anything can be defined as a study of business or economics.

My point in writing about this is reading these thoughtfully written applications from young people inspires me and leaves me with hope for the future. Frankly, I am sometimes disheartened by news reports, polls and surveys and statistics outlining young people's beliefs and habits. The hard part for me (and my sister-in-law when she gets her turn in a few days) is to whittle the 48 down to just one who will get the award, but what's nice is seeing that so many are worthy. We wish we could award funds for them all. Fortunately, the county event provides from 300-400 scholarships each year from many families and organizations, which offers several opportunities for each candidate.

More hope came last week. Being able to assist (as a deacon) in last week's baptism of five of our own church's young people was such an honor and a privilege. More than that, however, this joyful event also provided all of us with inspiration and hope for the future, I think. And it WAS joyful to see Pastor Jim baptize Lylah, Eden, Theron, Elsa and Fiora for Jesus.

Some Pew Research polls have been more hopeful of late, too. In recent years, they've shown Bible purchases are up. Also, that figures are rising in the number of people returning to church. It's interesting to me that young men are especially interested and researchers note they are a segment of society that is especially searching for meaning in life.

Aren't we all? But it starts with Jesus. Faith in Him. Trust in Him. I hope you've had a thought-provoking Lenten season and will have a joyous Easter celebration. He is risen, and there's no greater news for ALL our futures than that!

Happy Spring!
Deb Wuethrich

