



December 1, 2016

First Things

A Monthly Newsletter for Members and Friends

Our Vision: *“We are a church partnering with God by intentionally building the Kingdom of God, through abiding in Christ, discerning God’s will and discipling others in the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

Lead Pastor

I usually use this space within the monthly newsletter to offer some insight into what has been happening in the church, an opportunity that is coming, or to offer some visioning for the future. But this month, in honor of Christmas, I thought I would send a more traditional Christmas letter from me to you! I don’t often talk about myself or my family, so I thought this would be a nice change!

Can you believe that as of December 1, I will have been at FBC for four years? It seems like of those four years, these last eighteen months have been filled with one change after another for me professionally. Last June, I entered into a new position as Lead Pastor of FBC. In my first six months in the position, I assisted the personnel



Rev. Lara Heise joined our pastoral staff, in December 2012, as the Pastor of Preaching and Teaching; in June 2015, Lara transitioned into the role of **Lead Pastor**. Lara has a passion for preaching and teaching God’s word and for walking with people as they discover who God has created them be. Lara is active in the Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, Mid-Michigan Health Advisory Council, and Faithwalking. She and her husband, David Heise, have two children: Lola and Devin.

committee in hiring two new staff members; followed by three departures of short and long time staff members in the next six months. Each one of these changes has taught me so much and challenged me to grow as a leader. I am learning the necessity of clarifying the role as Lead Pastor, clarifying a vision for the church and the leadership, creating and maintaining boundaries, and how to handle conflict/anxiety. As much as I miss each of these leaders, I am grateful to God for using the experiences to help me grow!

These last eighteen months have held a lot of changes for me personally as well! In the summer of 2015, I returned to full time work as the mother of two. My health, with which I had struggled during my pregnancy in the Fall of 2014-Spring 2015, seemed to have improved drastically, helping me keep up my energy, for the rest of 2015, to chase two children around! My challenge, for the beginning of 2016 was trying to keep a balance between work, with all the changes, and home--which I succeeded and failed at repeatedly! Then, in July 2016, my family faced the biggest change yet when my husband, David, and I began the process of a divorce, and the kids and I moved in with my parents who live in Sanford, MI.

Even in this, I have seen God work in my life to show me areas where I can grow in my personal relationships and to help me see areas where I need Him to work in me.

As of November 1, David temporarily returned to Illinois. He too has moved back in with his folks and is pursuing work in Illinois, hoping to save the finances to return to Michigan soon. He is still in

Prayer Partners

For those that grieve: The family of Kathy Williams, and the family of Ann Dittenber (Kerry's mom).

For the health needs of many of our church family: Thayer Bradish, Sharon Cooper-Bussell, Etheljean Carroll, Pastor Lara and the Heise Family, Dale Green, Emma Mantel, Amy Meilink, Ruthie O'Dell, Elaine Parsons, Jeff and Joyce Phillips, Anne Poindexter, Jim Pope, Andrea Ross, Dick Seamster, Eleanor Stengor, Jan Sutherland and Family, Marcia Williams and Denny & Judy Zeiss.

And the needs of loved ones: Acacia (Walter's granddaughter), Scott Carruthers (Jim & Sharon's son), Carter (Mary Lou Sperry's nephew), Jared Engleman (Mary Lou Sperry's nephew), Jimmy (Rena's brother), Shirley Gagnon (Kathy Burch's Sister-in-law), Mark Parsons, Tim Richard & Family (McCourt friends), Marcee Simpson (Nate & Joyce Poland's daughter), Marcus Terwillegar, & Wayne (John Williams' friend).

If you know of other folks in our church who need special prayer, please contact the church office by phone: 835-6731 or by email: office@midlandfbc.com.

contact with the kids regularly.

Needless to say, these past six months have been hard for the kids, Lola, age 6, and Devin, age 1. They are at a stage where they struggle to really understand what is happening and why. I am very grateful that we were given the opportunity to live with my parents where they receive more than ample love and spoiling!

Lola, age 6, continued this fall at Plymouth Elementary as a 1st grader. She is active in Take Note, the after school program at FBC, and Brownies. When she is home you can usually find her singing, dancing, playing pretend, or watching her new favorite show "Elena of Avalor." Her little personality grows every day; she is sweet and sassy. I am a proud mommy!

Devin turned 1 on April 6. We had a "Mustache Bash". It was adorable! He is attending daycare at the Hitchcock's home five days a week now. When he is home, he is getting into everything, even if it means missing his favorite show Mickey Mouse Clubhouse. But, he is as smart as can be. Today he said, "I want a bottle." Not bad for an 18 month old!

It has been a crazy few months, but I am looking forward to 2017 with a sense of peace. I know that God has been with me through the insanity. I know that He has a plan for my life, my children's lives, and this church. I just pray daily to be open to His leading so that I can faithfully take the next step forward.

~Rev. Lara Heise

SCRAPBOOKERS AND OTHER HOBBYISTS

FBC Scrapbookers have reserved the Hearthside Room on Friday and Saturday, December 9th & 10th, from 9AM-5PM each day. This is a great time for fellowship, so we would like to invite friends with other hobbies to join us for whatever time they can. If you do beading, sewing, knitting or whatever, you are invited! Any questions? — please call Leona Seamster at 832-2078.

THANK YOU

Thank you, Pastor Lara, for your hospital visits, as well as prayers and cards from friends, during my recent hospitalization. This is a truly blessed Thanksgiving.

~Eleanor Stenger

NURSERY WORKERS NEEDED

Our Nursery needs two people in the room each Sunday from 9:30 to 12:00 Noon. Our Nursery Room teacher is Andrea Shumake. Please sign up to help at the Welcome Center. We would love to have some sign up for the first, second, third or fourth Sunday of the month; or you may sign up for a Sunday from time to time as your schedule allows. Thank you!

YOUTH

We need Youth Meals for Sunday at 5:45 p.m. Please sign up to prepare a meal for our youth at the Welcome Center. Plan to prepare for 10-12 people.

DECEMBER YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

December 3 2:00-4:00PM

Our Youth will join the Youth of Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church for a Christmas Party.

Bring a wrapped gift with a value of around \$5 new or used for a gift exchange.

We will play games and decorate Christmas cookies for the Christmas caroling on Sunday. Invite a friend and be ready to get in the Christmas spirit and spread some joy. Peace to all.

December 4 3:00-5:00PM

All Church Christmas Caroling (Youth from Chapel Lane have been invited to join us.)

December 11 & 18 5:45-7:30PM

Regular Youth Group

FBC Church Services and Functions may be Videotaped for Shut-in distribution and broadcast on MCTV. If you are interested in viewing our services, they will be broadcast on Charter Cable MCTV digital box Channel 191 on Wednesdays at 5:30PM and on Thursdays at 2:00PM. Church services in video format may also be viewed at <http://www.awincom.com/church-movies/>



MUSIC NOTES from the MUSIC MINISTER

As we enjoy the cooling of the weather and consider our Thanksgiving and Christmas plans, we remember and reflect on the many opportunities to praise God through music and give thanks for the many people who offer to God their time and talents by their music participation and leadership in worship.

TIMES OF CHANGE: It is with great joy that I look on the new year of music ministry at First Baptist. As our personnel has changed, I have taken on a more (literal) hands on approach to leading in worship by directing and planning for the Praise Team and planning and playing the organ in worship. At present, I will also accompany the choir as I direct from the bench, but the Personnel Committee is moving toward hiring a choral accompanist. I will continue to accompanying in rehearsal and worship as we search for a pianist with the right skills to be our accompanist.

MOVING PEWS: The moving portion of our pew story has occurred. The Praise Team and Handbell Choirs have found their permanent homes in the sides of the Chancel. A Big THANK YOU to Mary Langley for sewing the new, blue bell table skirts.

CAROLING! CAROLING! All are invited for the annual caroling, Sunday, December 4 from 3-5. This is our chance to bring cheer to all of our homebound members. Bring the whole family! Much hot chocolate, smiles and cookies are enjoyed by all. Thank you to Mary Langley for coordinating this event.

CALENDAR: Take Note! Children and Youth Choir and Bell Ensemble continue their after school fall season. As of the most recent count, we have twenty-four K-12 students participating. More than half either do not have a church or attend church elsewhere. This is truly mission work. **Take Note! Children and Youth** participated in worship on **Nov. 13**. We are in the final stages of rehearsing our Christmas musical, *The Backward Christmas Pageant*. **Take Note!** is asked to be in the sanctuary at 8:45 on Dec. 11 to prepare for the musical. Please remember to put **December 11**, and our spring musical, *O, Jonah*, **May 14**, dates on your calendar.

MUSIC REHEARSALS: Worship Band continues to rehearse **Sunday mornings at 8:40am**. **Chancel Choir** meets **Sunday mornings at 9:00 am** to warmup and rehearsal continues **Thursday, 7:15-8:30**. **Chancel Bells** rehearsal continues **Sunday, 6-7:15**.

MAKING CONTACT: Please contact me via email, jant@tm.net, or by phone. I am in the office Mondays and throughout the week in the afternoons and evenings. You may also reach me at home 835-1962.

FINAL NOTE: Thank you to my church family for all the thoughts, prayers, love, laughter and good food that have come to me and my children this year during this difficult personal time in our lives. Merry Christmas. ~Soli Deo Gloria, Jan Sutherland

Posted on Facebook:



Good morning to our dear friends, near and afar:

As y'all know, the time flies like lightning. By the time you realize it, the Thanksgiving Holiday is just around the block, which means another year has gone by.

My wife, Chua, and I, and, of course, our kids, too, want to thank our Lord Jesus for His love and care by keeping us safe and providing us with goods and opportunities.

We also want to thank our sponsors at First Baptist Church in Midland, Michigan, led by Dr. Joseph I. Mortensen and Mrs. Mortensen, along with late D. Trent and Avis Peterson, late Mr. and Mrs. Micks, Mr. Larry and Mrs. Kathy Williams, Mr. Jim and Mrs. Marcia Pierce, and all the church members for your kindness, love and care in bringing our family from the land of trouble into the land of freedom and opportunities, the United States of America, and taking very good care of us. The building behind us, 2811 Ronan St., was our second house in Midland that our sponsors rented for us in 1976. It's a very nice building. With that said, we thank you, thank you, and thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts! May our mighty God be with all of you and take very good care of you.

We also want to thank our many friends, near and far, for giving us an opportunity to be your friends. You are the ones that give us hope, energize us and keep us moving. We hope this Holiday season will bring y'all lots of happiness, wealth, hopes, love and joy.

With love from Kao and Chua and kids.

DECEMBER CALENDAR - 2016

Regular Schedule

		ABIDING SCRIPTURES DECEMBER — ACTS 27:22-25
Sundays	9:30 AM	Worship Service - Communion Service is the 1 st Sunday of each month
	11:00 AM	Sunday School
	5:45-7:30PM	Youth Activity & Meal
	6-7:15PM	Chancel Bells Practice
Mondays	10-11:30AM	Staff Meeting (2 nd Monday staff meeting is on Tues. @ 11AM)
	3:45-6:00PM	Take-Note Children & Youth Choirs
	6:30-8PM	Bible Study - Room 16 (Dec. 5, 19)
	6:30 PM	Leadership Development Team Meeting - Media Room - December 5
Tuesdays	6:30 PM	Team Network Meeting - Media Rm - December 12 - <u>All church is invited!</u>
	7:30 AM	Men's Breakfast at M's Café at 5103 Eastman Rd.
	10-11:00AM	Pastoral Connections
Wednesdays	4-5:00PM	Missions Team Meeting - Harmony Room - December 13
	1-2:00PM	Worship Planning Meeting
Thursdays	6:15 PM	Property Management Meeting - Media Room - December 7
	10:30-12Noon	Bible Study - Media Room (Dec. 8, 22)
Saturdays	5:30 PM	Stewardship & Finance Meeting - Media Room - December 15
	7-8:30PM	Chancel Choir Practice
	10AM-2PM	FBC Serves at Open Door - December 10 (2 nd Saturday of Every Month)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Special Event</u>
Dec. 4	9:30AM	Worship Service followed by Business Meeting & SGM Survey Results
	11:00 AM	Sunday School
	3-5:00PM	Family Christmas Caroling Event - Meet in Chapel
Dec. 9/10	9AM-5PM	Scrapbookers in the Hearthside Room
Dec. 10	10AM-2PM	FBC Serves at Open Door - See Chuck McCourt
Dec. 11	9:30AM	Take-Note Children & Youth Choirs Musical Presentation
	11:00AM	Luncheon with Take-Note Families (Please sign up to bring food.)
Dec. 12	3:45-6PM	Take-Note Choirs - Stratford Pines Followed by Pizza Party in the Hearthside Room
Dec. 15	-	January Newsletter Deadline
Dec. 24	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Dec. 25	9:30 AM	Casual Christmas Service in the Chapel Children can come in pajamas and bring one gift to open
Dec. 26-29	-	OFFICE CLOSED for the HOLIDAYS
Jan. 1	9:30 AM	Casual New Year's Service in the Chapel

December Ushers

Dave Hitchcock
Jenn Hitchcock
Tom Moeser
Kathy Williams



December Church Greeters

4 Mary Lou S., Kathy Williams
11 Bob & Jo Clarke
18 Dave & Sharon Bussell
25 Betty King, Doug King

Newsletter for Friends and Members

First Baptist Church
915 E. Sugnet Road
Midland MI 48642-3772

Date: December 1, 2016

Sunday Schedule

9:30AM Worship Service

11:00AM Sunday School

Communion served 1st Sunday of the Month

In the spirit of our compassionate Christ, we are a family of growing believers serving all of God's people in an ever-changing world!

If you do not wish to receive this mailing, please contact us to remove your name: 989-835-6731 or Email: office@midlandfbc.com

Website: <http://www.midlandfbc.com>

Lara Heise: Lead Pastor (Cell: 815-690-8476) / Rich Williams: Discipleship Pastor (Cell: 989-859-3332)

Jan Sutherland: Music Minister / Livingston Garland: Praise Team Leader

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