



February 7, 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."

Prayer Partners

For those that Grieve:

Adam's family (Dan Rashott's cousin).

For the health needs of many of our church family: Etheljean Carroll, Shawna Kobel Elmore, Barb Franklin, Pastor Lara and the Heise Family, Betty King, Emma Mantel, Amy Meilink, Ruthie O'Dell, Elaine Parsons, Joyce Phillips, Anne Poindexter, Andrea Ross, Eleanor Stenger, Jan Sutherland and Family, Bob Winchester, 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), Don Houghton (Mary Lou Sperry's nephew), Jimmy (Rena's brother), Tim Richard & Family (McCourt friends), 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.



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.

WEBSITE UPDATE

Team Chairs, if there is any part our website that pertains to your team or responsibilities, please review and send any proposed changes to office@midlandfbc.com

Lead Pastor

During the Annual meeting last year, I said that in 2016 we, as a church, would begin the process of discovering what it means to be the church in this day and age. All around us we see churches in decline and yet there is this sense that God is on the move. As we began that journey last year, I had the sense that the church of today is one that is confident of their identity in the world, as Christians and as a church. With that guidance, the leadership took on the task of first determining if the congregation felt that the vision and values established under the guidance of John Dick, still accurately defined our identity as a body.

After much discussion with the congregation over the summer months, the leadership discerned that the previously created principles and values still accurately portrayed the make-up of our church, we are: a body of believers who value each person's relationship with God and believe that we are each a minister; both of these that the church is to be separate from the state and separate from other church bodies in how we function. We practice believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper as the two ordinances commanded by Jesus Himself. We place a high value on stewardship and education, on missions and prayer, on worship and music, and on Christ-centered caring and inclusion.

On Rally Day this fall, I used those key concepts to cast a vision for the rest of the 2016 year, which was to be a year to really focus on our identity. At that time, I committed that the leadership would place an emphasis on living into these values throughout the year. Now, I would like to offer up an update as to how exactly we, as a church, are doing with reaching that goal and how we will continue to live into those values for the rest of this year.

Like other Baptist churches, we affirm that ministry in the church isn't solely the responsibility of the pastor, but that others are to take on this important task as well. We are fortunate at our church to have those who are willing to serve in numerous capacities, including but not limited to, Team Network. I was excited this year to welcome several new "ministers" onto Team Network: Bobbie Baker, Brett Seamster, and Bob Winchester; as well as adding two new positions to the team (the Music liaison and Education liaison) in order to bring even more voices to the table for meetings. But again, these are not the only ones doing ministry among us, we place equal value on those who serve here whether that be the pastor, a member of the leadership team, or anyone who serves this church. So, in that spirit, I would like to thank everyone who has led or taken part in a ministry here at FBC this year.

In the coming year, 2017, the Leadership Development team, at my urging, has agreed to help the various ministry teams develop this value further by inviting the chairs, ministry leaders, staff, and myself to create mission statements. The goal

of this activity is to provide some clarity about roles within the church so that we can begin to more fully function to the best of our ability; in other words, "This is our job, let us do it." Thank you to Leadership Development Team and the ministries who have already started to participate in this endeavor.

As is our custom, since September we have been providing wonderful Sunday school classes for toddlers through adults who have allowed participants to explore Scripture, which again we hold as truth and as being able to be interpreted by individual. We also have two Bible Studies which are not being run by a pastor, but by lay leaders who are working beside other members to hear the message of God for their lives by studying the book of Acts. These experiences have provided opportunities for everyone to grow in their relationship with God. Thank you to the teachers who have served by leading us through discussions and activities from September until now, and who will continue to offer these opportunities until the summer.

In addition to these experiences, a small number of us took advantage of the opportunity to participate in Faithwalking in November. This one day retreat provided an exciting challenge to grow in one's faith to all who attended. I am happy to announce that another opportunity to attend the retreat will be offered again here at First Baptist in May.

In addition to Bible study and Sunday school, we have had a chance to live out our values of Scripture as God's truth and to continue to develop each of our own relationship with God on Sunday morning through the sermon series. This past year the messages focused on helping us clarify our identity as God's children, through study of the Gospel of Luke, and our identity as a church, through the study of the early church as found in the book of Acts. These efforts were enhanced by the addition of other of our church's values: music and the Lord's Supper. Our church's music program has been blessed with the talents and leadership of Jan Sutherland, along with the additional talents of those on the Praise Team, Chancel Choir, Concert Bells and of course, Take Note! Youth and Children's choir.

You may not be aware, but Take Note has grown more into an opportunity for community outreach this year than it has in years past. A majority of the members of Take Note! are not only not attending this church, but any church; and some have even asked for more information about becoming part of our FBC family! This ministry provides us with the opportunity to plant the seeds for little ones who had not previously been exposed to the Gospel story and the love of God to experience these things on a weekly basis while learning music. What an amazing way that God is continuing to bless our church and allowing us to live out our values! I don't know about you, but I am looking forward to what is going to happen through that program the rest of this year and in the coming years.

The truth is though, since September our church has not just been reaching into our community and fulfilling our value of missions through Take Note! but also through opportunities like the CROP walk and packing backpacks. We are not a church who simply sends money to places so others can do missions; we are doing it ourselves. First Baptist is actively working to put an end toward hunger in Midland, not just once a year but weekly. Every Wednesday, during the school year, our fellow FBC friends join with members of the community to pack over 100 bags of food for children who otherwise may go hungry on the weekend.

In addition, this year our passion and Christ-centered caring for children was also extended, again, to close to two hundred children and their parents who entered our building to trick or treat. In addition to the trick or treaters, this year we were assisted by other individuals connected to the church through Take Note! and Boy Scouts. We are building relationships for the good of the community!

There is no doubt about it; we are a church that values mission. Even when the budget needed to be cut this fall, the leadership of this church held tightly to this value and to the belief that missions was too important to be on the list of ministries who would have fewer resources this year. Thank you to all who serve on the mission team and to those who have served these missions these past months. But we still need help! Summer is coming and with it come new opportunities to serve our community through the Block Party and One Week One Street. I would invite everyone to consider how you can join in these efforts, as well as add to them, so that we can further live out our call to live our Christ Centered lives.

Speaking of Christ Centered caring, since the fall, the staff and Congregational Care team have made numerous calls, sent letters, and even visited with a great number of our members. These connections have at times been in the hospital in a time of crisis but also at other times when the purpose was just to connect, or to check on someone that we hadn't seen for a while. I am so grateful for the help that Congregational Care has offered me in this area. Part of my goal for the rest of this year is to continue to do my part in consistently offering Christ centered caring not just with members of the church who are hurting, but with others who attend church so as to build deeper relationships within our congregation To better accomplish this goal, I asked to preach only seventy five percent of the time. This would offer me an additional twelve hours a month to connect with people. In order to do that I asked that \$1000 be moved from my ministry expense account and put into the Guest Speaker line item of the budget. I felt this would be the best way to be good stewards of the churches resources.

In addition to these one-on-one meetings we have had, and will continue to have, other chances to gather as an entire body to offer one another. Since September,

we have lived into our value of Christ centered caring through events like: Consecration Sunday (thanks to the S&F Team) and Hanging of the Greens (Thanks to Pat Mc Court, Lacey Wright, and Holley Rashott). I personally am looking forward to the additional opportunities still on the horizon like: Lenten Worship services, Easter Breakfast, and Summer Midweek Connections. These are incredible chances to build our relationships with one another, so I do hope everyone will consider coming.

There is no doubt about it, our church values relationships and people. That is why I am glad to have a wonderful Leadership Development Team who are forever reminding me and leading the way to be good stewards of all our leaders. I am happy to have a mission team who reminds us to be good stewards of our resources of time and money which go to doing the work of building God's kingdom. But, there are two teams for which the value of stewardship defines everything that they do: the Stewardship and Finance team and the Property management team. The resource of our building is being well maintained and up kept through the care of Property management and the work of Boyd Green.

Personally, I am ecstatic that the building is now being utilized now 6-7 days a week by not only the Head Start program but our local schools, Boy and Girl Scouts, and recovery groups. I believe it is thanks to the good stewardship and leadership of all of the teams which has brought us to the point where we ended the year with less than \$6000 deficit. That is a huge change from previous years. I am proud of these teams' efforts and focus not just on how we can maintain our life as a church, but how we can use every resource we have for the glory of God. This coming year, I hope and pray that each team will continue to pursue the same vision; as we continue to live into our value of stewardship.

Finally, no look back over these last few months would be complete without a few words being said about our church's discussion on same gender marriage. After a survey and two all church discussions, it has become clear that there are many faithful interpretations of Scripture which offer different insights into how we as a church will engage members of the LBGT community. As I reflect on what has been said, I have been taken with how the discussion has not really been just about our value of inclusion, and what the day to day membership of an individual who is in a same gender or would like to be in a same gender marriage, but it has brought this value together with our other belief that God's truth is revealed in Scripture, the value of each person's relationship with God, and the conviction that each member is a minister. It is clear that there are differing perspectives among us. But these values bind us together still. The idea that we must now hold to is not how do we all come to one position, but how do we remain beautifully diverse in the way that has made our church stand out and honor the value of inclusion for so long has been important to our body. How do we remain in relationship, submitting to one another, knowing that each of us will have to make some

allowances but that out of love we do that so we honor our diversity? That is the question still needing to be addressed.

Personally, as I reflect back on the months since Rally Day, I am happy at how well we lived out our values and guiding principles. But, we are not finished yet. My plan is I to continue regularly asking our teams and leaders how our guiding principles and values are being lived out, so that we continue to grow in how we are living out these values. This is the goal for 2017, to grow in how we live out these values.

For those not currently sitting on a team or ministry, I invite you to join this process by praying (which is another one of our values, one which we practice on a weekly basis in worship). Pray about how we as a body can live out our identity in a fuller sense. I invite you to ask questions of the leadership and teams, to help hold us accountable to our commitment to make our church's values and principles central to our actions and decisions this year. In return, I challenge you to be engaged in the communications coming from the teams about how they are discerning living out these principles. I want to encourage our body as a whole to dream big about how we can grow living out our identity as FBC and as followers of Christ.

I still don't believe that God is done with FBC. In fact, I believe that a new chapter is just beginning. I see new and amazing things happening among us. We have increased our number of regular attenders in the twenty-something age group, which is impressive in any church! We have young families asking how to become more active in the church. This may have been a hard year, but God has also been blessing us. Let us move forward in anticipation of what God is going to do!

~Rev. Lara Heise

THANK YOU

Thank you, FBC Family, for the lovely Poinsettia plant that I received at Christmas.

~Eleanor Stenger

The Salvation Army called to thank First Baptist for its contribution to the Red Kettle Campaign 2016.

First Baptist Church collected \$244.20 for the cause. (The caller also told me the Salvation Army met its campaign goal for this year!) Many thanks to all who participated!

~Thank you, Elaine Parsons

NURSERY WORKERS NEEDED

Nursery help is needed during services where Take-Note families join us:
(From 9:30AM to 12:00 Noon)

February 12

April 16

May 11

If you can help, or know of someone that might be able to help, please contact the church office, or Sign-Up in the Narthex.

FBC ADVERTISEMENTS

When our church does a project, activity, or program that might be of interest to the community or neighborhood, it would be great to make that known to a wider audience than is reached by First Things. Elaine Parsons has agreed to use her writing skills toward that end. If you are aware of something you think should receive some publicity in the Midland Daily News, for example, please let Elaine know.

YOUTH

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

FEBRUARY YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE

February 5, 12, 19, 26 5:45-7:30PM

Regular Youth Group Meal & Activity



MUSIC NOTES from the MUSIC MINISTER

Music Notes from the Music Minister February 2017 As we work our way through the freezing rain and the dark evenings of January, 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.

A NEW SCHEDULE FOR LENT Please join us for midweek Lenten worship in the chapel, March 1 through April 5. After two successful experiential worship services in the chapel on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, many worshippers expressed a desire to continue worship in this intimate style. The services were

thematic and experiential- for example, understanding the symbolism of the Christmas tree through scripture and activities. The worship team looked into this request and has committed to leading midweek Lenten service on Wednesdays, from 6:30-7:15pm, beginning with Ash Wednesday, March 1, and concluding on April 5. These six Wednesday worship services will focus not on a sermon, but on experiencing different styles of worship through scripture, prayer, and concrete sensory experiences designed for all ages. The services will also be more intimate with piano accompaniment. With the addition of an evening experiential worship service on Wednesdays in Lent, the Chancel Choir will be moving rehearsal to Wednesday evenings after the services beginning March 8.

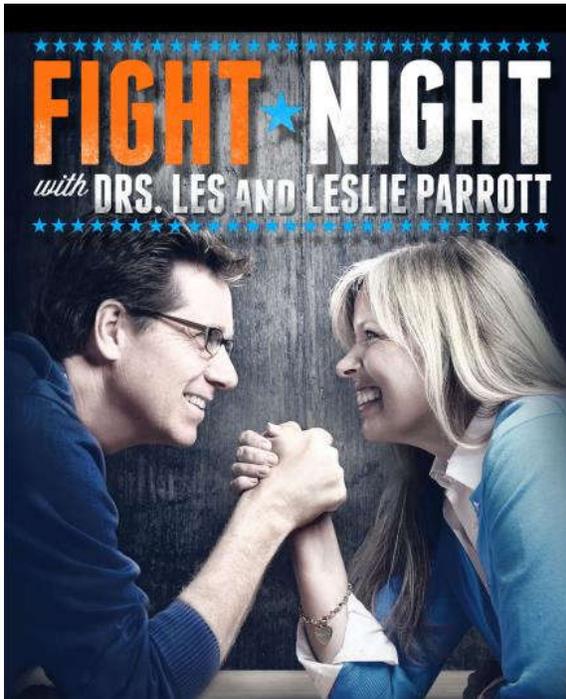
A VERY SPECIAL BELL FESTIVAL Chancel Bells have been invited to take part in an all-day Bell Festival at Memorial Presbyterian Church Saturday February 18. Everyone is invited to Memorial Presbyterian Church on Sunday, February 19 at 4:00 pm for the Festival Concert. All bell choirs will participate in three group ringing numbers and each will perform one solo piece. We will also be playing our solo piece, Thanksgiving Praise by Jason Krug in worship Sunday morning February 19. We are grateful to the congregation for your support.

CALENDAR Take Note! Children and Youth Choir and Bell Ensemble continue their after school winter season. As of the most recent count, we have twenty-three 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 will participated in worship on February 12. Take Note! will also participate in worship Easter morning, April 16. Please remember to put our spring musical, O, Jonah, May 14 on your calendar. We are looking for adults to help with various Monday activities in February and March. Please contact Jan.

MUSIC REHEARSALS Worship Band rehearses Sunday mornings at 8:40am. Chancel Choir meets Sunday mornings at 9:00 am to warm-up. Chancel Choir Thursday rehearsals continue through February 23. Wednesday rehearsals begin on March 8, 7:15-8:30 and continue through April 5. Chancel Bells rehearse Sunday, 6-7:15 and will participate in worship February 19. Chancel Choir please note this change - **There is NO Chancel Choir rehearsal the week of March 1. Instead, Chancel Choir will sing at the Ash Wednesday service, March 1. We will meet at 6:00 to warmup. Worship is at 6:30.**

MAKING CONTACT Please contact me via email, jant@tm.net, or by phone. I am in the office all day Monday and throughout the week in the early morning hours before 9 am, afternoons and evenings. You may also reach me at home 835-1962.

As a Christian in 3rd century Rome might have said- Soli Deo Gloria,
~Jan Sutherland



PRESENTED BY MIDLAND COMMUNITY FAMILY MINISTRIES

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2011
6:30-9:00 PM

\$40/COUPLE
EARLY BIRD SPECIAL RATE OF \$30/COUPLE
THROUGH FEB. 4

LOCATION: MIDLAND EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
7221 N. JEFFERSON AVENUE, MIDLAND, MI 48642

REGISTER TODAY AT
LESANDLESLIE.COM

 Midland Community
Family Ministries
mcfamilyministries.org

A FUN DATE NIGHT – A RELATIONSHIP GAME-CHANGER
YOU'LL LAUGH, LEARN, GROW CLOSER & NEVER LOOK AT FIGHTING IN THE SAME WAY

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/>



We'd like to send Warm Birthday Wishes
to all who have birthdays in February!

March's Newsletter deadline is February 20 at Noon.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR - 2017

Regular Schedule

ABIDING SCRIPTURES FEBRUARY — 1 KINGS 18:21-39

Sundays	9:30 AM 11:00 AM 5:45-7:30PM 6-7:15PM	Worship Service - Communion Service is the 1 st Sunday of each month Sunday School Youth Activity & Meal (Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26) Chancel Bells Practice	 
Mondays	10-11:30AM 3:45-6:00PM 6:30-8PM 6:30 PM	Staff Meeting (2 nd Monday staff meeting is on Tuesday @ 11AM) Take-Note Children & Youth Choirs Bible Study - Room 16 (Feb. 6, 19, 26) Team Network Meeting - Media Rm - February 12 - <u>All church is invited!</u>	
Tuesdays	7:30 AM 10-11:00AM 4-5:00PM	Men's Breakfast at M's Café at 5103 Eastman Rd. Pastoral Connections Missions Team Meeting - Harmony Room - February 14	
Wednesdays	1-2:00PM 6:15 PM 6:30 PM	Worship Planning Meeting Property Management Meeting - Media Room - February 1 Leadership Development Team Meeting - Media Room - February 1	
Thursdays	10:30-12 ^{Noon} 5:30 PM 7-8:30PM	Bible Study - Media Room (Feb. 2, 9, 23) Stewardship & Finance Meeting - Media Room - February 16 Chancel Choir Practice	
Saturdays	10AM-2PM	FBC Serves at Open Door - February 11 (2 nd Saturday of Every Month)	

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Special Event</u>
Feb. 5	10:30AM	Annual Business Meeting following Worship Service
Feb. 11	10AM-2PM 5-9:00AM	FBC Serves at Open Door - see Chuck McCourt for details All-Church Game Night
Feb. 12	9:30AM	Take-Note Children & Youth Choirs Sing during Worship Service
Feb. 15	11:30AM-2:00PM	Retirees' Table Game & Picnic - Harmony Room
Feb. 20	-	March Newsletter Deadline

SAVE THE DATE!!!

LENTEN Worship Services

Wednesday's in March - 6:30-7:15PM

February Ushers

Rick Imhoff
Amy Meilink
Jim Hitt
Jacquie King



February Church Greeters

5 Dave & Jenn Hitchcock
12 Jim & Debbie Hitt
19 TBD
26 TBD

[CLICK HERE to Connect to Church Calendar](#)



CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Serving with Love



Say HELLO to the Steib Family!

Harry, Cathy, Tyler and Quinton are very active at First Baptist Church in many capacities. You have seen them all frequently, but how did they find FBC while living and now working in Freeland? They were originally invited by Rev. John P. Dick as he was Cathy's patient here in Midland. Cathy is a Physical Therapist and, after helping John find more physical comfort, they accepted the invitation to our church and we all have been getting to know one another ever since! Cathy now works at Covenant Visiting Nurse Association doing home care. She graduated with her Master's degree in Physical Therapy from Grand Valley State University in 2001 and her Doctorate degree in PT from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions (Provo, UT) in 2005.

Harry is living his dream. He is a Branch Manager at Isabella Bank in Freeland and graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Central Michigan University in 2001. Harry and Cathy were in the same class in high school and married August 4, 2001, which was a very big year for them!

We are all fortunate they continue to be drawn to FBC due to the many relationships they have made here. We are also fortunate they found their way here because they are dedicated to improving and supporting their Freeland community through community service.

These parents love to travel with their boys, Tyler, 11 years old and in the sixth grade at Freeland Elementary School, and, Quinton, 7 years old and in second grade at Freeland Learning Center. They have enjoyed Disney World, Universal Studios and SeaWorld and they frequent Myrtle Beach every other year. Harry has family in Canada, so that is a big draw for them. Friends and family are very important to these busy four.

You can ask Tyler about his favorite board games, what art project he has in the works, and which musical presentation he will next bring to all of us. Quinton loves his video games. See if you can challenge him in a game! Everyone in this family loves camping including Moolah, their Whippet. She was Quinton's 7th birthday gift, but both boys love her and care for her as well. Moolah was a compromise between Harry's "real dog" and Cathy's desire for a smaller, low-shed dog.

We invite you to get to know the Steib family; they bring joy to this congregation and we are blessed they are among us at FBC!

Date: February 7, 2017

Newsletter for Friends and Members
First Baptist Church
915 E. Sugnet Road
Midland MI 48642-3772

Sunday Schedule

9:30AM Worship Service
11:00AM Sunday School



First Baptist Church
915 E. Sugnet Rd.
Midland, MI 48642
Phone: (989) 835-6731
Email: office@midlandfbc.com
Website: www.midlandfbc.com

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)

Jan Sutherland: Music Minister

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