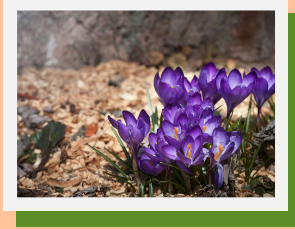


The Messenger



A publication of The First Baptist Church of Westfield—March 2014

Baptists and Lent

Most of the Christian world will soon enter into what we traditionally call the Lenten Season. This is time to meditate and reflect on the Passion of Christ and its meaning for the sinner.

While many traditions pause on Ash Wednesday to place ashes on a penitent's forehead and folks are asked to give up something dear and near to their heart during the 40 days leading to Palm Sunday, we in the Baptist tradition do not usually engage these days in this way. This comes out of our understanding of SALVATION and of a DISCIPLESHIP WALK.

Salvation: the simple heartfelt confession of belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of ones' life, as found in many verses of Scriptures such as Romans 10:8-13:

But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the

same *Lord* is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

So, there is no earning salvation, no extra penitent work needed to be done, no need for a special cleanse to be ready to be loved and accepted by God. All that is needed is a believing and confessing heart and any day and at any moment this can be done if the heart is ready.

Discipleship Walk: the day to day love walk with Jesus as Lord; the day to day following Jesus and his teachings; the day to day conversations with God through Jesus (prayer); the day to day understanding that while we are in this world, our soul is saved, but our body is still on earth. We will sin and therefore need to confess. I John 1:5-10:

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and

cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

So, our following Jesus is a walk towards spiritual maturity and deeper faith and it is a daily experience. It is not based on rituals, or rites of passage, or doing the right things at the right times or on following the Christian calendar year.

While we can certainly be more intentional during the Lenten Season about paying attention to our spiritual well-being and ultimate place in eternity, we can rest assured that our confession and belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus is sufficient to give us not only eternal life, but life abundant here on earth. Just like our own blood gives us life, be assured that the blood that Jesus shed on the cross is a life giving and life restoring.

If you feel that you still need a ritual during Lent because of your past understanding or tradition, then you might want to increase your prayer time, your study of the Bible with others, and your more consistent coming to worship on Sundays. All of these will soon become part of who you are and who you are is LOVED.

Pastor Mayra

Choir Notes

THANKS... to **Glen Brown**, bass & guitar, and **Devin Araujo** and **Ricardo Ribeiro**, drums, for playing during worship in February... to **Steve Lind** for leading the Ringers in worship on Feb. 9 while Bill was away... and to **Steve Lind** and **Katie Engel** for leading bell rehearsals during February... with the Feb. 2 scripture reading being Matthew 5:11-14, our thanks to the Youth Choir alumni who “returned” to sing one of their favorite songs during worship — *Godspell’s Light of the World*... and CONGRATULATIONS to **Dot Waugh**, who was recognized during worship on Feb. 23 for her 70 years of dedication and commitment to the FBC Chancel Choir. She was surprised by family, flowers from her son and daughter-in-law, and a gift from the congregation — “Amazing Grace”, a book of daily devotions, all based on hymns. The presentations were given by Bill Mathews, who shared some memories and reminded us that while most choir members sing praises to God through most of their lives, they do so in different churches and in different choirs. It is indeed rare to spend all of those years in one church, and in one choir. So, CONGRATULATIONS, Dot!



...**Hilary and Marlee Araujo** for their willingness to coordinate our Church Gathered/Church Scattered Initiative this year
 ...**Tyronne Singh and Allen Chin** for leading the Men’s fellowship Breakfast
 ...**Katie Engel, Sirlene Roman, and Nancy Lambros** for forming part of our Social Media Task Team.
 ...**Glen and Jessy Brown, Ricardo Ribeiro** for their very dedicated time and energy in making this year’s Valentine’s Dinner a great success.
to the **Reception Team**, who makes sure we have delicious goodies every Sunday
 ...**Lil Wheeler** for washing and folding our tablecloths
 ...**Dot Waugh** for repairing our pew bibles
 ...**Lil Wheeler, Dot Waugh, Lee Romano, and Caroline Siess** for helping to mail the February Messenger.

March Music Schedule

Chancel Choir
March 2, 23

Song Leaders
March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Orchestra
March 16 (meet @ 9am)

Rehearsal after worship (11:45) on March 9

Chancel Ringers
March 30

Children’s Choir
March 9 (meet @ 9:45)

News from the Sunday Morning Singles Discussion Group

The Sunday Morning Singles Group discussed the following topics in Feb.

- ◆ Colors that define personality.
- ◆ Dilemma – A question of ethics.
- ◆ Valentines Day, past and present.
- ◆ Pros and cons of being single.

We invite you to come downstairs, have your second cup of coffee, and join us in lively discussion from 9am—10:15am in Harvey Hall.

Submitted by Maryann Friscia



former member Jane Stoner:

Edward Stoner, Managing Editor of the Vail Daily News in Vail, CO, covered the Winter Olympics for the newspaper. Edward and his family attended FBC for many years. Proud parents, Joe and Jane reside in Atlanta.

Labels for Education!

The CE committee would love to earn free items to enhance our Sunday school and Youth Group programs. We will be setting up an account with *Labelsforeducation.com* which will allow us to redeem points for art, athletic and educational supplies. We invite EVERYONE to participate by cutting out and saving the "Labels For Education" from participating products such as:



Here is what the labels may look like on your packages.



Start collecting now and ask anyone in your family that does not collect them yet to join in. (I keep mine in a baggie in my kitchen drawer.) After a few months, I will ask you to bring them to church so that we can submit a large batch. Please help us in this endeavor. What a great and easy way to contribute to our programs!

Carleen Morris

Missions on the move....

The Christmas Offering has been distributed to: The Cliffs at Eagle Rock, The YWCA of Union County, The Battered Women's Shelter, and the ABCNJ Ministries Fund for Philippine Relief. I personally delivered the checks to The Cliffs and The Battered Women's Shelter (pictured below). Both organizations were extremely grateful for our support.

Our Sunday School Children were busy on mission activities. In January they collected cans of soup for St. Joseph Social Service Center in Elizabeth. The soup will provide hot meals for many families during this cold winter. They also recently made floral decorations for the dining room at The Cliffs.

The dinner teams provided two more meals for the homeless families that are guests of Family Promise. Nancy Martin, Sirlene Roman, and Michael Winey are new cooks. Evans Antoine and Wendell Scott volunteered as overnight hosts. If you can help with these activities or help serve the meal from 6-8pm, let Janet Winey know.

- - janet winey



- March 3** Scott Lind
- March 5** Chick Miller
- March 7** Art Taylor
- March 8** Donna Lind
Lucas Rosario
- March 9** Denise Virzi
- March 12** Matt Greenlaw
Shirley Miller
- March 15** Glen Brown
- March 17** Steve Lind
Lee Romano
- March 19** Dot Bachman
- March 21** Reese Alan Greenlaw
- March 22** Leonard Gabriel
- March 23** Joan Harvey
- March 26** Patrick Martin





Valentines Dinner: A Magical Night of Fun and Love

February the 14th, You are not in Kansas anymore! You are greeted at the side door by formally dressed youths, Zach and Jason, who are eager to escort you indoors. On the way, you're encouraged (emphatically) by Natasha to have your picture taken with a beautiful cupid backdrop in the stairwell. Upon exiting the stairwell you find yourself in a Harvey Hall that has made a Cinderella-esque transformation with the decor of a royal French estate. You hear the sound of two live jazz musicians pouring out spontaneous and graceful tunes. Before you can quite take it all in you're offered a variety of hors d'oeuvres and sparkling cider. If you are exceptionally fortunate you have a meatball and an antipasto skewer before you find your way to a table setting that would have made Caesar blush. Master of Ceremonies, Devin Araujo comes out to make an introduction so hilarious you feel fortunate that you are not in the middle of an appetizer. Then something most unexpected happens: White Bean Soup – an unending supply of delicious white bean soup accompanied by the most beautiful classical guitar. Suddenly the music stops... Pastor Mayra comes to the front of the room to pray for God's continued blessings on the evening, the youth group, and you the generous supporter of our Youth and their missions. Lifting your head after prayer you are greeted by a youth with an impeccably plated and expertly prepared prime rib dinner with trimmings. If you have a moment to look up – you see the large screen with the Youth Group slide-show. Then comes the overwhelming presentation of unforgettable deserts; Truffles, Brownies, Fruit, Mousse, "Cups of Dirt", Muffins and Cannoli – the list goes on and on (and on). Natasha steps to the microphone delivering delightful poetry. Then all the youth gather around as Luis Araujo comes to the stage with a jaw-dropping magic show. Ken Wooster's stories bring outrageous amounts of laughter from Nick who then creates an epidemic of hilarity.

Then as a certain individual is struggling with technical difficulties, Devin takes the mic and improvises a genius comedic expedition. You are most definitely in tears at this point. Then wait - is that Frank Sinatra singing? No better – it's Allen Chin improving upon the original in a joyful performance. Finally, a bit of culture with a Bible reading in diverse languages.

It was indeed a magical evening of fun and love. As with Oz so much of the magic and love happened behind the curtain. The youth prepared for about 6 weeks, not to mention the food preparation, serving, and cleanup they did that night. Patrice Brown (Jake and Zach's mother) provided multiple appetizers including Antipasto Skewers and the Tapenade Canapés). Cat herder Ricardo prepared the slide-show and was essential on the floor. Jake Brown and Ebony Payne practiced hard for their musical performances. Jessy was Chef (and birthday Girl). In addition to being a significant part of the clean-up crew - The Martins provided multiple appetizers including the legendary meatballs. The Wineys brought plenty of ultra-fresh mousse. Youth members Nick, Jason, and James provided awesome deserts in addition to all of their dedicated work. Allen Chin and Ken Wooster provided wonderful entertainment. Natasha recruited volunteers, planned the activities, made some great desert (yep the Truffles), and was our picture-taking hostess. The Engels spent days transforming Harvey Hall to the vision it became. They were also essential in the kitchen throughout the evening. The Araujos provided three deserts (although the youth made sure one never made it to the desert table), a most celebrated MC, and a mind-bending magic show. This is just a sample of all the blessings that went into the evening. I feel grateful to have been witness to the giving done by the youth, their families, and all of their supporters. It was a wonderfully successful fundraiser – not just in terms of showing our financial support (brought in over \$1300 for missions) but was a most blessed individual and community expression of God's love.

Glen Brown

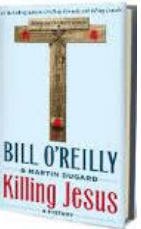


Saturday, March 8 @8:30am

Women's Book Club

Saturday, Mar. 15, 10 am in the church lounge.

The book for discussion is "Killing Jesus" by Bill O'Reilly. Refreshments provided by Lil Wheeler. Visitors welcome. Questions? **Bette Savage** (908) 575-8637 or elzsvg@netscape.net



Baptist Camp Lebanon

- 2014 Camping Schedule is
- available through the church
- office or by visiting
- www.camplebanon.com



Valentines Dinner February 14



Calling all 2, 3 & 4 year olds!!!

BRAIN QUEST EVENT



Here in the church nursery! March 16th after reception.

Children and parents, come to enjoy a fun time of learning together!

PJ's & Movie Night!

...for children

Showtime: *Friday, April 4th*

Drop-off: *6p.m.* * Pickup: *8p.m.*

Now Playing: *Frozen*

The Big Screen: *FBC lounge*

Pizza and Popcorn will be served!

Please bring a pillow and sleeping bag / blanket & wear comfy pj's!

Sign up and get your tickets on the bulletin board outside the church office!



Invite a friend!



The children's centerpieces were so graciously welcomed by the residents of The Cliffs! When Lee and I arrived with the delivery, the ladies were about to



have a Spelling Bee! I asked if there were any prizes for the game, and the activities direc-



tor said there were not, but when bingo is played, it's called \$100,000 Bingo and each winner gets a 100 Grand candy bar! :-)

Katie M.



Children are a gift from God! Those who teach and guide children are serving God in a special way, showing kids who Jesus really is and encouraging them to follow him. Positive relationships are paramount, and an important ingredient to being an effective teacher is unconditional love. From babies to the oldest of children, they learn and thrive in an environment of nurture and care.

Of course, each one of us has a different personality. Some are full of excitement and smiles; others are more quiet and reserved. All of this is good because kids need both lighthearted and serious adult role models. Regardless of our disposition, we can relate to preschoolers and children with genuineness and heartfelt concern.

I'd like to share some points that I have learned and for us all to keep in mind when it comes to working with children.

Be honest and authentic. Be the person you are. Eye contact is important. Get down at their eye level to talk with the child and to listen to what they have to say.

Use facial expressions to let the child know you are a part of the conversation.

Look for areas of common interest. You can share together through reading books, playing games, and group interaction. The starting point even could be to ask about the Bible story of the Sunday School lesson, and extend the learning opportunity by talking about your own observations or experiences related to the focus of the activity. Share from your heart.

When children are loved by their family and church family, they begin to understand that God loves them, too. We thank **Linda Johnson** for her ten years (and counting!) of service in our nursery; we thank **Erin Klein** for teaching Sunday School for the past five years (now to rest during a sabbatical); we thank **Lee Romano**, as she changes her hat from Sunday School *teacher* to Sunday School *special helper*! We are grateful to now see **Rev. Su-leima Rosario-Diaz** and **Allison Johnson** in a Sunday School teacher role! Let's continue to uphold and remember the many others along the way who have also helped the children make clear connections to God's love.

Our story is part of God's story. We aspire to be a teaching church that will make disciples of Jesus. I am thrilled to introduce a **Teachers' Bible Study** beginning in **March** to be held **the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m.** All interested are invited to participate in this intentional time of worship and learning together. "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)

Katie McGuire

Director of Children's Ministries



Our next big event is the **Spring Rally/Love Gift Luncheon** Saturday, March 29th at Memorial Baptist Church, Yardville, NJ. We will carpool from First Baptist Church, Westfield at 7:30 am, to arrive in time for Registration and coffee at 8:30 am followed by the program at 9:00 am. Any and all are welcome to attend. The cost is \$7.00 for the day and includes lunch.

There will be two speakers: Tamika Solomon from the Gloucester County Center for Family Service and Rev. Carla Romarate-Knipel, Pastor of Central Baptist Church, Woodbury. We have always had a wonderful time at these events as we worship with our sisters from other churches and learn about opportunities to serve. Last year our own Pastor Mayra was a principal speaker.

This year we are collecting the following **new or gently used items** for Tamika to take to the Safe House in Gloucester County.

A box labeled “Donations for Safe House Gloucester County” is available just outside the office to collect the following items:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journals • Children’s Socks, underwear, pajamas –all sizes • Sports Bras –all sizes • Sweatpants for women – all sizes • T-Shirts for women –all sizes • Canned goods/ Dry Goods • Measuring Cups/Spoons • Digital Thermometer (other than meat) • Meat Thermometer • Dish Towels, Cloths, and Pot Holders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bake Ware • Silverware • Cooking Utensils • Coffee Makers • Four Slice Toasters • Hand Mixers • Mixing Bowls • Kitchen Gadgets • Gift Cards: Shop Rite, WAWA, Wal-Mart, Target, TD Bank |
|---|---|

Remember, many women have to leave their homes with only a minimum amount of household goods and clothes when they are in danger. We can help give them a hand up to reestablish their homes.

The next big event will be our **Christian Women’s Conference** at Harvey Cedars Bible Conference, Harvey Cedars, Long Beach Island from Thursday evening May 29th 5:00 pm through dinner Saturday, May 31st. You can register for one or two nights or even for one day using the Registration form on the bulletin board. Find a buddy to go with—it doubles the fun.

WE ARE OFFERING MATCHING GRANTS UP TO \$100 PER PERSON FOR FIRST TIMERS!!!!!!

You are welcome to see our Financial Statement for 2013 and our Budget for 2014. We gave \$935 towards mission work overseas, state/national expenses and our state project which is similar but targeted for Mercer County. We depend on pledges to carry out our work. Again, all are welcome to participate in any way you find possible. Come to find fellowship and joy in serving the Lord with your sisters.

You can get more information from Jean Kellogg, Maryann Friscia, or through the office.



This month...

Worship theme for March: *A Life Line to God*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 Deacons, 7:30pm	4	5	6 New Testa- ment Study, 7pm	7	8 Men's Breakfast, 8:30am
9 Clocks go AHEAD!!	10	11 Missions, 7:30pm	12 Musical Club, 7:30pm	13	14	15
16	17 	18	19 Agape Sup- per, 6:30pm	20 Spring be- gins!	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Wanted.....
YOUR Pic!!



Grab a camera and take yours...then forward to the church office so that we may put together our Selfie bulletin board! If you want us to take one for you, contact Katie Virzi or the office.

SAVE
THE
DATE

SUNDAY, APRIL 27
CHURCH GATHERED/CHURCH SCATTERED
Together as ONE—Faith in Action

Join us on Wednesday, March 19,
6:30pm, for our Agape Potluck
Supper!

Please bring a dish to share.
If you can't make this one, our
other Agape Suppers are April 16
& May 21.

agape™

- Our 2014 church directories are here in the office. If you have not yet gotten yours, please contact the office so that we can get you one.
- If you have any changes to any of your information we have, please let the office know so that we may update our records.





www.fbcwestfield.org

FIRST BAPTIST
WESTFIELD

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Nancy Lambros
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Help spread good news
and help promote your
church!



ONGOING CALENDAR

Weekly, unless otherwise noted.

Sundays:

- 9:00 a.m. Singles Gathering (Fellowship Hall)
FBC Childcare available 9-11:30
- 9:15 Adult Bible Study, led by Pastor Mayra
- 10:30 a.m. Worship Service**
- 10:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School (pre-school-5th grades)
- 11:30 a.m. Children's Choir & Youth Song Leaders rehearsals
- 11:30a.m. Prayer Team meets (*monthly, 1st Sunday*)
- 5 p.m. Youth Ministry (6th-12th grades)

Tuesdays:

- 7 a.m. GRUB w/ the Guys (*1st Tues, Mar 4*)

Wednesdays:

- 12Noon "Conversations with God" (prayer time) in our sanctuary
- 7pm Teacher's Bible Study (*1st Wed, monthly*)

Thursdays:

- 10:30 a.m. The Hearing Society : Speech Reading Class
- 7:15/8 p.m. Chancel Ringers/ Choir Rehearsal

Saturdays:

- 10 :00 a.m. Women's Book Club (*monthly, Mar 15*)

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Mayra Castañeda, Senior Pastor

William R. Mathews, *Minister of Music*

Katie McGuire, *Director of Children's Ministries*

Nancy Lambros, *Church Administrator*

OUR PURPOSE

Coming together in joyful worship,
we're here...

- To share the reality of God's love,
- To connect our lifestyles to Christian truth,
- And to put our faith into action through responding to needs in our community, nation, and world.