

The Messenger

Summer 2015



A publication of The First Baptist Church of Westfield, NJ

“God takes a Vacation?”

“In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.” Mark 1:35

During the summer months, many take much needed time away from daily work, chores and responsibility. Rest and relaxation is vitally important in order to recharge and return with a clear and focused mind to do not only do a good job, but a great job!

We know from reading the Bible that God rested on the seventh day from the work of creation and that he also instructed the people of Israel to remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy and to keep it as a day of ceasing from labors. In the New Testament, we find Jesus often taking time away from a day of healing, teaching, and preaching and from being with the disciples and the crowds. Jesus went to a solitary place to focus and to pray.

So, it is indeed very good to take time off to rest from your labors! But for people of faith, for followers of Jesus should this time of rest also include time away from communal worship with your church family? How can it be that the practice of taking a vacation from church is included in taking a vacation to rest and to relax? Imagine if Christians throughout the centuries had picked up this practice of ceasing

to sing and to pray and to study and to meditate with others on the same faith path during the “summer” months!

Did God call us to a part time faith or to a faith that is in us and gives us Christ-like identity? Did God call us to a seasonal faith to be active and use the gifts that God has given to us only during the school year, but never o nev-



er during the summer because the sun is out and the shore is calling?

What if God had that same attitude? What if God took a vacation from us? And what if God just did not have time to deal with our day to day life; to be present and available in days of heartache and pain. What if God is absent when the bad news of a health diagnosis comes our way? What if God is a seasonal God and that the summer he created for us to enjoy, is also a time for God to be away. What if God said, “See Ya!”

I suspect many would not think highly of this God. I would think that many of us would not want to put our faith in that a part-time, or seasonal God. I suspect that many of us would question

the Bible when it says that his steadfast love endures forever. Or, where it says in Psalm 86:1, “In the day of my trouble, I shall call upon you for you answer me.” Don’t we want God always there for us?

So, during the summer months of this year of our Lord 2015, do take a vacation to recharge, to get refreshed and renewed. Take time to rest. It is very good! And if you are away at a beach, take time to pray and to sing and to read your Bible. If you are on a mountaintop, do the same. If you are hiking through the forest, praise God for God’s goodness. If you are swimming in the ocean (stay away from sharks!) and look up to the heavens so that you thank God for supplying water for us to enjoy and to live. Do all these things while you are on vacation!

But when you are home, pay attention to the writer of Hebrews 10:24-26a

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

For if we willfully persist in sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins...”

Have a Safe, Happy, and Worshipful Summer! God bless you with every blessing.

Pastor Mayra

Did you know that our nursery is bounding with little ones? What a blessing it has been to have two baby dedications in one month! We also have two other members that are expecting their little bundles of joy in the upcoming months. We have six children 4 and under that regularly attend, sometimes staying in the back of the sanctuary, but most visiting the nursery more and more as parents feel their children are ready.

What does that mean for us? As a parent who has actively participated in worship, it has been a blessing to know that my four children have been well cared for while I am upstairs. And now that mine are out of nursery, it means everything to me that they learn about Jesus Christ's love and sacrifice for their eternal lives. As a congregation, we have made a promise to God (as Pastor Mayra reminded us during those dedications) that we will assist the parents in the nurturing and Christian Education of those children.

How can you help? Will you consider spending a little time with these amazing little children? What does that require?



Nursery Assistant: Push a stroller back and forth (maybe even while sitting), color a picture, listen to a tale told by a toddler, make a silly face to a baby to make them smile, get to know Linda Johnson, our staff in the childcare room, a little better.

Sunday School Assistant: Provide supervision of children as the teacher provides the lesson. Lend a hand to the teacher if any materials are needed.

Please see me if you feel like you can serve in either of these ministries. We want the parents to feel the love of the congregation as they faithfully bring their little ones into God's presence.

Carleen Morris, Chair, Christian Education

Thank you to Tyler Martin for volunteering to be a youth leader for the month of June! Thanks to the Yang and Klochkova families for providing dinner during the month. Youth Group needs volunteers to help lead and to provide dinner. The summer is an excellent time to volunteer for a dinner as the group tends to be small! Please let me know if you are willing to provide a dinner in July.

As a special note about June I want to thank all the youth that participated in Youth Sunday and the recent service project of Taming of the Dungeon (cleaning the basement - filling that extra huge dumpster you may have seen!).

Youth group continues in July with Devin Araujo volunteering as a youth leader. We will be concluding our "Why Jesus" study set, performing service, playing games, and having a great time. Please encourage any youth that you know to participate. We generally meet Sun from 5:00 - 7:30.



In Christian Fellowship,
Glen Brown



RI Mission Trip last month. Pic taken at Harbor Church on Block Island. Pastor Steve Hollaway and Cameron Greenlee on left, along with (L-R) Pastor Kadin, Johnny Klikushin, Brittany Lambros, Marlee Araujo, Natasha Klochkova and Alicia Lambros.

Congratulations to our June Graduates!

Chelsea Housel from South Plainfield High School, June 19

Hasitha Kakileti from Westfield High School, June 23

Megan Winey from Union County Magnet High School, June 10



May God's blessings follow you wherever you go and whatever you do!



Our Memorial Garden sign is up!!

Coming Soon – FBC’s 150th Anniversary!!



Records show that December 2015 marks the 150th anniversary of First Baptist Church in Westfield! We will be planning a year-long celebration of this milestone beginning the first weekend in December.

How can you get involved? We need your ideas on how we should celebrate! There have already been suggestions for a church-wide dinner in December, artistic displays representing the decades the church has been in existence, a capital campaign to upgrade our building for the future of the church, monthly events celebrating significant people, programs and goals of the church, setting a goal of 150 of something specific such as 150 community outreach opportunities, 150 hours of prayer, or 150 random acts of kindness. Other churches have created memorial quilts and history books. What do you think?

As ideas come to you over the summer, send a quick email to the church, make a quick phone call, or leave a note in the office.

Next, we want everyone to be involved. We’ll be forming a task force in the fall to brainstorm and plan what we decide to do. You don’t have to do it all – but if everyone volunteers to help with one event or one task, we can have a fantastic year of celebration. We can also use these events to bring greater community awareness to FBC, and hopefully encourage new people to join our church family. It’s a wonderful opportunity!

Mark your calendars now with a “save the date” for the first weekend in December, and put your thinking caps on! We want to honor our heritage and look to the future – all for the glory of God!

Elaine Pratt
Moderator of Council

Sunday Bible Study at 9:15 a.m. will resume in September! Those faithful participants to this study will want to read through I and II Corinthians and also take time to meditate on the Psalms.



I encourage participation in our Wednesday noon prayer and meditation time which will continue throughout the summer months.

Summer Daniel Plan -- 6 weeks of group study on Faith, Food, Fitness, Focus and Friends and how to vastly improve your overall holistic health in spirit, mind and body. Proposed dates are: Wednesday evenings in **July 8, 15, 22, 29 and August 5 and 12, 7-8:15 p.m.** If there might be an interest in a day time study, we'll also make that available. Sign up sheet on table outside office.

- Pastor Mayra

THANK YOU TO...

- ...**Judy Rust** for her help each Friday with refilling pews and folding bulletin;
- ...**Caroline Siess** for helping to mail the June Messenger;
- ...**Carleen Morris, Bryan Morris, Luis Araujo, Linda Johnson, and all those** who helped prepare and assist with our Church Picnic;
- ...**Sirlene Roman** for keeping our FB page current;
- ...**Rintu Mathew** for leading our ESL class;
- ...**Barron Cashdollar** for trimming our front lawn tree.
- ...**All our new and continuing** church officers and committee members!

A special word of thanks to Paul Clark for his many years as chair of the Facilities Committee (previously Facilities and Finance). Paul’s labor of love has been invaluable and it is deeply appreciated by all in the congregation. Paul concludes his time of service on September 1, 2015. Let us unite in prayer for whomever God will call to fill this important servant-leader position. Special thanks also to Warren Hanscom for his work on replacing molding in Nursery and by the downstairs kitchen. Also for repairing the wallpaper in the women’s downstairs bathroom and kitchen hall.

2015 Ministry In Action Budget			
		Actual as of 5/31	Annual Budget
Revenues		\$	\$
Contributions - Pledge		71,998	177,608
Contributions - Plate/Other		11,579	31,500
Building		38,365	92,799
Total		121,942	301,907
Expenses			
Programs		11,782	33,793
Management & Admin		70,038	204,268
Building & Grounds		58,179	127,535
Office		3,003	10,500
Total		143,002	376,096
Revenue Surplus/(Deficit)		(21,060)	(74,189)
Non Restricted Funds Available		168,534	
(as of 3/31/15)			
2016 Ministry In Action Budget			



FIRST BAPTIST
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**WISHING YOU A
HAPPY & SAFE SUMMER!**



Dot Waugh
**295 South Ave., Apt 10,
Fanwood, NJ 07023**
(same phone number)

Singles Fellowship

Meaningful thoughts were discussed at Sunday Morning Singles when the following topics were raised:

- ◇ What give meaning to your life?
- ◇ How influential are you?
- ◇ What do you enjoy in summer?
- ◇ What input did your father have on your life?

We invite everyone to come downstairs, have a second cup of coffee, and join the discussion. The Singles Discussion Group meets every Sunday in Harvey Hall from 9-10:15am. All are welcome.



July Birthdays

- July 6** Dario Diaz
Beth Hanscom
- July 7** Michael Klikushin
- July 9** Marilyn Gulotta
- July 12** Kadin Williams
- July 13** Beth Frantz
- July 14** Allen Chin
Taylor Kline
- July 15** Alan Greenlaw
- July 17** Paul Koslowski
- July 18** Olivia & Jeffrey Morris
- July 20** Caroline Siess
- July 22** Dean Pratt
- July 23** Bill Mathews
Katie Virzi
- July 24** Colleen McGuire
- July 27** Mike Dobos
- July 29** Greg Scott
- July 31** Ken Wooster



August Birthdays

- August 1** Devin Araujo
- August 2** Daniel Singh
- August 12** Mary Chin
Marj Miller
- August 13** Nancy Lambros
Bryan Morris
Elaine Pratt
- August 14** Bill Hopkins
- August 14** Cal Martin
- August 15** Katie Engel
- August 16** Melissa Winey
- August 17** Matt Barton
- August 21** Nova Spinner

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:

- July 7** Ken & Terry Wooster
- July 21** Cal & Nancy Martin
- July 27** Marcelo & Sirlene Roman
- Aug 22** Barron & Mary Cashdollar
- Aug 22** Dario Diaz & Suleima Rosario-Diaz
- Aug 24** Alan & Pam Greenlaw
- Aug 31** Leonard & Janet Gabriel

CHURCH STAFF

- Rev. Mayra Castañeda, *Senior Pastor*
- Rev. Kadin Williams, *Associate Pastor*
- Glen Brown, *Youth Ministry Coordinator*
- Nancy Lambros, *Church Administrator*
- Monica Cano, *Custodian*
- Matt Barton, *Nightly Sexton*

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.