



*December, 2018
Volume 64, No. 11*

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
200 Lynn Ave.
Ames, IA 50014-7188
Worship Sundays 9:45 am

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515-292-9612
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www.fbcomes.org

First Baptist Church is an open and caring family of faith where worship is central and faith engages both heart and mind. We are warmly ecumenical, delight in our diversity, and cherish our Baptist heritage of freedom. We are called by Christ to share God's love with the campus, community, and the world.

As we seek to follow the way of Jesus, we welcome all people to fully participate in our fellowship: all ages, colors, backgrounds, political affiliations, and physical and mental abilities; male and female, gay and straight, rich and poor, single and married. We are all God's children, and all are welcome here.

The Spire

*First Baptist Church, Ames, Iowa
Celebrating 150 Years!*

Advent/Christmas Worship at First Baptist

We invite you to join us for worship on Sundays at 9:45 as we celebrate a season filled with music, comfort, joy, and hope

December 2 – First Sunday of Advent, 9:45 am

“A Word of Hope” (Isaiah 11:1-10)

Yuletide Orchestra in worship

Hanging of the Greens following worship

Saturday, December 8

Church Christmas Dinner, 6:00 pm

Program led by our children will follow

December 9 – Second Sunday of Advent, 9:45 am

“Mary’s Song” (Luke 1:39-56)

Recognition of December graduates, Yuletide Orchestra in worship

Fellowship Time following worship

December 16 – Third Sunday of Advent, 9:45 am

“God in the Little Things” (Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 2:8-14)

Yuletide Orchestra in worship

Vespers at Northcrest, 5:00 pm

December 23 – Fourth Sunday of Advent, 9:45 am

“Trust and Faith” (Matthew 1:18-25)

Rev. Gary Martin

December 24 – Christmas Eve

5:00 pm - Social Hour (you are welcome to bring goodies to share!)

6:00 pm - Candlelight Service



First Baptist in the Twenty-First Century

Through the past year, we have published articles about our church's history in celebration of our 150th Anniversary. All of these articles and more are available on our [church website](#). I will be compiling and editing these articles into a book in the near future.

We now come to the most recent years of our church's journey. At this point, I am dispensing with third person reporting and simply sharing what I see as some of the more noteworthy events and activities of the church in the last 20 years. As they say, your mileage may vary.

In the spring of 1999, Susan and I were serving a church in Arthur, Illinois, when I received a phone call from Jack Cleasby. Jack said that he was chair of the pastoral search committee of First Baptist Church in Ames, Iowa. I had previously served as a campus minister and we were intrigued with the idea of serving in a college community. We were impressed with the church and wound up coming to Ames in the fall of 1999.

My immediate take was that this was a church rich in talent, resources, and possibility, but that years of slow numerical decline, which is so often the case for long-established churches, had made recent staff departures and the interim time of self-reflection that followed difficult.

Several things happened in the first couple of years to help turn things around. The choir moved permanently from the balcony down to the main sanctuary. Choir members sat in the congregation and then went forward to sing from the chancel steps. Before this, on a given Sunday, there might have been 60 in worship with a fourth of those in the balcony. This did not contribute to a feeling of togetherness and community. Still fairly new on the job, Mindy Phomvisay was (and is) a wonderful choir director. New singers, including students, joined the choir and our music program, as has long been the case, has continued to be a real strength of the church.

Along these lines, we began our Music Camp in the summer of 2000. My friend Mike Waltenberger had led a Music Camp at his church in Decatur, Illinois for a number of years and I had always thought that it was a terrific idea. We had few children in the church, no kids in the neighborhood, and we had not done a Vacation Bible School for several years. All of this made a special week with children difficult, but Ames is a community where parents want their children to be involved in the arts and we had a wealth of musical resources available, both inside and outside of our congregation. So we tried it.

That first year, I thought that if 15 kids showed up and nobody got hurt, then we would have tried something new and it would have been a success. As it turned out, we had 55 campers, only a handful of whom were connected to the church. Many church members contributed to the week by volunteering, preparing food, leading crafts, and recruiting campers. One church member paid the registration fee for every child who attended. I remember Lorene Hoover saying at the time, "This is the best thing our church has done in a long time." We are now looking forward to our twentieth Music Camp, and it has continued to be one of the significant ministries of our church.



Another early success was a growing sense of fellowship. A memorable example is a Karaoke Night held in the fellowship hall. A large crowd of all ages attended the event, which included a meal of Laotian noodles and egg rolls prepared by Aiddy Phomvisay's mother. Parents sang with children, college students performed, the "Seventies Preservation Society" (those who went to high school in the 1970's) sang "American Pie," and Bob and Jenna McCarley, who grew up on either side of the Red River in Oklahoma/Texas, sang "Red River Valley." The shared joy across generations, as well as the number of newcomers who participated, set the tone for a welcoming and caring atmosphere in the church.

Another idea that came out of a church planning retreat was a Fall Renewal Weekend in which we would invite a noted scholar or Christian leader to make presentations and preach on Sunday morning. Speakers included James Dunn of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; Charles Kimball, author of *When Religion Becomes Evil*; Bill Leonard, dean of Wake Forest Divinity School; and Molly Marshall, president of Central Baptist Seminary. This was not so much a new practice for the church as a rekindling of a long valued connection between faith and intellectual life.

The result of these and other efforts was some numeric growth along with growth in spirit and congregational self-identity. The church had decided to make no decisions regarding its future for three years after calling a pastor. After three years, rather than considering the church's survival, we embarked on a sanctuary renovation and facility improvement program



called "Faith in Our Future." This functioned as much as a statement of faith and spiritual commitment as a capital campaign. We installed air conditioning and new carpeting, painted the sanctuary and other areas, built an ADA-compliant ramp, and installed a new electronic organ (the old pipe organ being beyond repair). A couple of pews were removed on each side to give more space between pews, the pews were angled slightly, and pew cushions were added. The chancel steps were made wider to facilitate use by the choir, and the built-in pulpit and lectern were replaced by portable ones that could be moved for events such as concerts or Music Camp. Fundraising for all of these projects exceeded our goal, and members put in many hours of labor.

With survival less of an issue, the congregation could now focus more fully on its ministry. Some other notable happenings since 2000 include:

College Students. In 2002, UCCM disbanded due to lack of funding. For First Baptist, this ended forty years of ecumenically sponsored campus ministry. This served as an impetus to put more energy into our own church-based ministry to students. We have continued to have a Bible Study/fellowship group for students and young adults, meeting either on Sunday mornings or as a Sunday night Student Supper. A church basketball team was both a fun activity and a means of recruitment for students and others. Students have served in all areas of church life: choir members, worship leaders, Church School teachers, deacons, and more. The connection between Iowa State University and First Baptist, which has existed since the very early days of our church's history, continues to be important.



Mission Trips. We have sent work teams to our American Baptist Assembly in Green Lake, Wisconsin as well as served with a home repair ministry in East Tennessee, Bethel Neighborhood Center in Kansas City, and Murrow Indian Children's Home in Muskogee, Oklahoma. All of these trips have been intergenerational, with children, youth, college students, and adults of various ages participating. These experiences have been opportunities for learning, reflection, expanded horizons and growth. We are looking forward to a trip to assist with rebuilding efforts in Puerto Rico.

Community Involvement. First Baptist's long tradition of involvement in the community has continued. Recent examples include work with Habitat for Humanity, continuing leadership and involvement in Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance and Ames Ecumenical Housing, and participation in AMOS, a community organizing group. We have particularly supported ACCESS (women's shelter) and Primary Health Care (clinic for uninsured

and underinsured). Our annual Great Day of Service in which community service projects are a part of our Sunday morning worship has been a way to connect the impulse for service with our worship.

Connections with Other Congregations. As has been the case from the very beginning, First Baptist continues to be a significant congregation in our region and denomination. We have ranked second in our region and among the top 100 churches nationally in support to American Baptist United Mission, which is remarkable given the relatively small size of our church. First Baptist has been a significant participant in regional ministry and hosted the Mid-American Baptist Churches regional gathering in 2016.

Locally, we have partnered with other congregations in numerous ways and continue to lend a Baptist flavor to local ecumenical work. A few years ago we began an annual summer worship service at Brookside Park together with First Christian and Ames UCC-Congregational. Interestingly, these are the churches mentioned most often in previous articles spanning our 150-year history. Our organizing service in 1868 was held at the Congregational Church, and in the 1930's and 40's First Baptist and First Christian came close to merging.

New Traditions. Besides Music Camp and the Great Day of Service, this would include:

- a "Worship Under the Trees" service on the front lawn at the beginning of the school year
- an annual Church Cook-Off that is a wonderful social event as well as a fundraiser for missions
- an Ash Wednesday service using Taizé music
- a Super Bowl Party, which has become "a thing"
- a Children and Youth Sunday
- our Yuletide Orchestra, with participants of all ages.

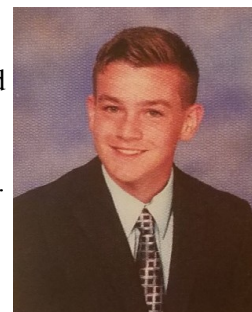
- Pastor Dave Russell



December Graduates

Congratulations to those graduating this month! Our December graduates will be recognized in worship on December 9.

Alex O'Connor is graduating from Iowa State with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Alex has been a pre-med student and will be attending Medical School this fall at a yet-to-be-determined med school. Alex is the son of Annalee and grandson of Joyce Davidson and Lee Davidson. His great-grandparents John and Elaine Anderson were longtime First Baptist members. Alex has been a counselor at our Music Camp and will be taking part in our mission trip to Puerto Rico this summer.



Kaylinn Taggart will receive a BS in Community and Regional Planning from ISU. She received an architecture degree last May and stuck around for the second degree. She already has a job with CBRE / Heery in Iowa City, where she did an internship last summer. She will be working on architecture and community/regional master planning in hospital designs. A native of Council Bluffs, Kaylinn has been very involved at First Baptist since coming here as a freshman.

Erin Johnson completed her Master of Public Administration degree from Drake University in August and will go through the commencement ceremony this month. Erin is currently the Manager of Sponsored Programs Accounting at Iowa State University. This department manages the research dollars that come to ISU and provides guidance regarding sponsored funding guidelines and federal regulations. Congratulations to Erin on successfully juggling work, family, and school and receiving her degree! (She is still taking a few accounting classes in preparation for taking the CPA test.)





December 2

Worship Leader: Pat Coffey
Ushers: Bob Parrish, Kent Johnson
 Jan Thompson, Wallace Sanders
Sound System: Bob Parrish

December 9

Worship Leader: Catherine Parrish
Ushers: Larry Schrag, Nancy Maydew
 Kaylinn Taggart, Wilson Korges
Sound System: Tom Logue

December 16

Worship Leader: Jan Thompson
Ushers: Dianne Borgen, Jerilyn Logue
 Tom Logue, Jon Pritchard
Sound System: Kent Johnson

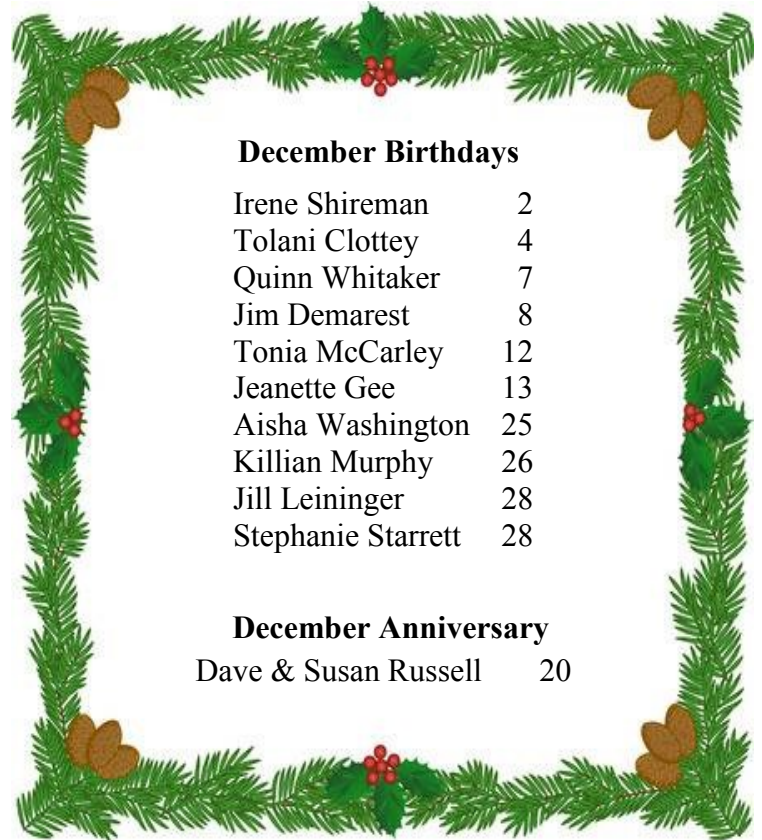
December 23

Worship Leader: Jere Maddux
Ushers: Scott Anderson, Julie Johnston
 TJ Nugent, Jere Maddux
Sound System: Tom Logue

December 30

Worship Leader: Joe Parrish
Ushers: Scott Anderson, Julie Johnston
 TJ Nugent, Jere Maddux
Sound System: Kent Johnson

December Flowers: Church Family



December Birthdays

Irene Shireman	2
Tolani Clotley	4
Quinn Whitaker	7
Jim Demarest	8
Tonia McCarley	12
Jeanette Gee	13
Aisha Washington	25
Killian Murphy	26
Jill Leininger	28
Stephanie Starrett	28

December Anniversary

Dave & Susan Russell 20

Christmas Dinner and Program

The **Christmas Dinner** is a long-held tradition at First Baptist with good food and warm fellowship with church family and guests. We look forward to a wonderful program led by our youth and children following the meal.



Christmas Dinner

This year's **Christmas dinner** will be **Saturday, December 8 at 6 pm** with a program following the meal. The meat, dressing, rolls, beverages and table service will be furnished by the church. Please bring a dish to share. If your last name starts with A-E, please bring a vegetable. F-L is asked to bring a salad. M-P is asked to bring a potato dish and Q-Z should bring a dessert. (If instead of your "assigned" dish there is something special that you would like to prepare, please feel free to do so!)

Please let us know if you can come by emailing or calling the church office, or using the friendship pads in the pews and marking Event 1. Please also let us know if you can help in the kitchen or with table set-up. Students, you do not need to bring a dish, please come as our invited guests!

Budget and Election Meeting



Our annual Budget/Election Business Meeting will be held Sunday, December 9 at 12 noon. We will approve a budget for the 2019 year as well as elect officers, board members, committee members, and representatives to various community groups. All are invited for this important meeting.



Northcrest Vespers Service



Our long tradition of holding a special worship service at Northcrest Community during the Advent season continues with the annual Northcrest Vespers Service. The service will be on Sunday, December 16 at 5 pm in the Green Room, on the lower level of the main building at Northcrest, 1801 20th Street. A fellowship time will be held in the dining room afterwards. Vespers is held at Northcrest as part of our ministry to residents there, but everyone is welcome to attend. Please note that parking is very limited due to construction. We encourage carpooling to the service.

Carol Sing December 16



Do you ever long for a time to sing the Christmas Carols? If so, you are invited to attend an afternoon of Christmas Carol Singing. The event will be Sunday December 16 beginning at 2 pm in the Farwell T. Brown Auditorium. This event is a joint effort by Ames Public Library, Ames Mennonite Church and First Baptist Church of Ames. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. Guests are asked to bring a plate of holiday treats to share following the carol sing. For more information call 515-337-1713.

Special Offerings in December



In this season of giving, First Baptist receives two special offerings.

The **Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering** is a tangible way of saying "Thank You" to those who have served us. The offering supports those who have devoted their lives to God's service by providing emergency assistance in times of need. The offering also provides Thank You checks to more than 3,300 retired American Baptist ministers, missionaries, and their widowed spouses. The offering

will be received on December 2nd and throughout the month of December.

The **Christmas Offering** is an opportunity to help provide for those most in need in our community. Half of the offering goes to the Emergency Residence Project, our homeless shelter in Ames. The other half goes to our Benevolence Fund, which is distributed to those coming to our church seeking assistance. The offering will be received on December 9 and throughout the month of December.



FBC Coffee Mugs



We still have a supply of First Baptist 150th Anniversary coffee mugs available for only \$5 each. It's the perfect Christmas gift! They are available in the church office and will be available for purchase during the Fellowship Time on Dec. 9.

Guest Preachers

We welcome two pulpit guests this month, both familiar faces at First Baptist. To allow Pastor Dave to attend a family wedding, Rev. Gary Martin will fill the pulpit on December 23. Gary is a Regional Associate Minister for Mid-American Baptist Churches. On Dec. 30, we welcome Rev. Linda Hanson. Linda is practice manager at Primary Health Care and eth daughter of Johnie and Earl Hammond. Linda grew up at First Baptist and is an ordained UCC minister.

I've recently added several New Books in the Library!

Starting with our youngest readers:

Every Child Everywhere by Debby Anderson

From the book - "celebrates children as reflections of the joy and creativity of God. Bright illustrations and joyful narrative teach young children that though we are all different, uniquely designed by God, certain undeniable similarities unite us—things like play, family, and imagination."

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson

From the book - "Jacqueline Woodson's lyrical text and Rafael López's dazzling art reminds us that we all feel like outsiders sometimes-and how brave it is that we go forth anyway. And that sometimes, when we reach out and begin to share our stories, others will be happy to meet us halfway."

French Toast by Kari-Lynn Winters

From the book - "Phoebe—half Jamaican, half French-Canadian—hates her school nickname of "French Toast." So she is mortified when, out on a walk with her Jamaican grandmother, she hears a classmate shout it out at her. To make things worse, Nan-Ma, who is blind, wants an explanation of the name. How can Phoebe describe the color of her skin to someone who has never seen it? In *French Toast*, Kari-Lynn Winters uses descriptions of favorite foods from both of Phoebe's cultures to celebrate the varied skin tones of her family."

The Wonderful Things You Will Be by Emily Winfield Martin

From the book - "Emily Winfield Martin's rhythmic rhyme expresses all the loving things that parents think of when they look at their children. With beautiful, and sometimes humorous, illustrations, and a clever gatefold with kids in costumes, this is a book grown-ups will love reading over and over to kids—both young and old."

For our Youth (though anyone would enjoy these books!)

So Done by Paula Chase

From the book - "Jamila Phillips and Tai Johnson have been inseparable since they were toddlers, having grown up across the street from each other in Pirates Cove, a low-income housing project. As summer comes to an end, Tai can't wait for Mila to return from spending a month with her aunt in the suburbs. But both girls are grappling with secrets, and when Mila returns she's more focused on her upcoming dance auditions than hanging out with Tai."

Stef Soto Taco Queen by Jennifer Torres

From the book - "Seventh grader Estefania "Stef" Soto is itching to shake off the onion-and-cilantro embrace of Tia Perla, her family's taco truck. She wants nothing more than for her dad to get a normal job and for Tia Perla to be put out to pasture. It's no fun being known as the "Taco Queen" at school.

But when new city regulations are proposed, and her family's livelihood is threatened, she will have to become the truck's unlikely champion."

Orphan Train Girl by Christina Baker Kline

From the book - "Molly Ayer has been in foster care since she was eight years old. Most of the time, Molly knows it's her attitude that's the problem, but after being shipped from one family to another, she's had her fair share of adults treating her like an inconvenience. So when Molly's forced to help a wealthy elderly woman clean out her attic for community service, Molly is wary. But from the moment they meet, Molly realizes that Vivian isn't like any of the adults she's encountered before. Vivian asks Molly questions about her life and actually listens to the answers."

Finding Miracles by Julia Alvarez

From the book - "MILLY KAUFMAN IS an ordinary American teenager living in Vermont—until she meets Pablo, a new student at her high school. His exotic accent, strange fashion sense, and intense interest in Milly force her to confront her identity as an adopted child from Pablo's native country. As their relationship grows, Milly decides to undertake a courageous journey to her homeland and along the way discovers the story of her birth is intertwined with the story of a country recovering from a brutal history."



The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis

From the book - "The first book in Deborah Ellis's riveting *Breadwinner* series is an award-winning novel about loyalty, survival, families, and friendship under extraordinary circumstances during the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan. Eleven-year-old Parvana lives with her family in one room of a bombed-out apartment building in Kabul, Afghanistan's capital city. Parvana's father — a history teacher until his school was bombed and his health destroyed — works from a blanket on the ground in the marketplace, reading letters for people who cannot read or write. One day, he is arrested for the crime of having a foreign education, and the family is left without someone who can earn money or even shop for food. As conditions for the family grow desperate, only one solution emerges. Forbidden to earn money as a girl, Parvana must transform herself into a boy, and become the breadwinner."

If you love the book, let me know and I can add others from the series.

New in adult non-fiction:

Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes by Kenneth E. Bailey

From the book - "Beginning with Jesus' birth, Ken Bailey leads you on a kaleidoscopic study of Jesus throughout the four Gospels. Bailey examines the life and ministry of Jesus with attention to the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes, Jesus' relationship to women, and especially Jesus' parables. Through it all, Bailey employs his trademark expertise as a master of Middle Eastern culture to lead you into a deeper understanding of the person and significance of Jesus within his own cultural context."

And several new titles in fiction:

The fifth book from Julianna Deering, *Murder on the Moor*.

The Lady of Tarpon Springs by Judith Miller

Keturah by Lisa T. Bergren

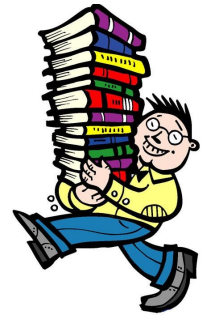
Egypt's Sister by Angela Hunt

More Than Meets the Eye by Karen Witemeyer

The Accidental Guardian by Mary Conneally

The Lady and the Mountain Man by Misty M. Beller

A Christmas Heirloom, Four Holiday Novellas of Love Through the Generations



Other Christmas books for young and old are in the Library and some will be in the hallway display. New books will be on the tops of the bookcases throughout the Library.

- Catherine Parrish

AMOS "Housing First" Proposal





AMOS research teams addressing mental health care and affordable housing have joined together to support Housing First, a strategy to address long-term homelessness among persons with mental illness. Housing First means providing stable, long-term housing with no preconditions to the most vulnerable of the homeless population with mental illness.

Housing First projects in many communities around the country have shown much better outcomes for individuals in terms of health, quality of life, and staying in housing while saving taxpayers a significant amount of money through fewer emergency room visits, fewer hospitalizations, less jail time, less police time and resources, etc.

At the AMOS Assembly on October 18, the proposal for a Housing First Strategy in Story County was presented. All candidates for Story County Supervisor and the Iowa House who were present endorsed our proposal. Each AMOS institution is collecting signatures to show that there is public support for such a project. By our signature, we are simply showing support for the strategy; a detailed proposal including funding (public, private, grants, etc.), types of housing, number of individuals in the program, etc. is being developed. You can show your support by signing the poster in the Fellowship Hall.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 (December) 9:45a Worship	31 (December) 	<div> Regular Office Hours Monday—Closed Tuesday—8am-Noon Wednesday—8am-Noon Thursday—8am- Noon Friday—8am-Noon </div> 				1 
2 9:45a Worship 11a Church School 12p Hanging of the Greens 12:30p Executive Council	3 5p Women United 	4 8a Men's Break-fast, Perkins	5 6:30p Choir 7:30p Yuletide Orchestra	6	7 	8 6p Christmas Dinner and Children's Program
9 9:45a Worship 11a Fellowship Time 11:15a Church School 12p Budget/Election Business meeting	10 5p Women United	11 7p Trustees	12 11:30a Women's Lunch, Mandarin 6:30p Choir	13	14	15
ISU Finals Week						
16 9:45a Worship 11a Church School 2p Prayer Shawl Circle 5p Vespers at Northcrest	17 	18 8a Men's Break-fast, Perkins	19 6:30p Choir	20	21	22
23 9:45a Worship 11a Church School	24 Church Office Closed 5p Social Hour 6p Christmas Eve service	25 Church Office Closed Christmas Day 	26	27	28	29 



First Baptist Church

AMES

200 Lynn Avenue

Ames, Iowa 50014-7188

Our Church Staff:

Rev. Dr. David Russell	Pastor
Mindy Phomvisay	Director of Music
Patricia Izbicki	Accompanist
Janelle Keltgen	Office Manager
Kathy Greiner	Custodian

May God's Blessing Be With You in This Holy Season



The First Baptist Staff

Pastor Dave

Mindy

Patricia

Janelle

Kathy

Hanna

Emily