



THE BEACONLIGHT



Newsletter of the First Baptist Church of Fitchburg

1400 John Fitch Highway - Fitchburg, MA 01420

Telephone: 978-345-5622 - E Mail: fbcbeaconlight@comcast.net

church email: office@firstbaptistfitchburg.org - www.firstbaptistfitchburg.org

VOLUME 64

February 2019

NUMBER 02

Dear Congregation,

Welcome to winter! Perhaps it is no coincidence that at a time of such frigid temperatures, many minds turn to thoughts of the warmth that love kindles and heat that sometimes ignites in the human heart. Flowers are cut, valentines are sent and yes, there is even football for all those sports lovers. What a beautiful time, as we are trapped inside with one another, to remember our love for each other in all its varied forms.

In the book of John is found perhaps the most perfect of all love letters, given by God to each of us. It is the full expression of His sacrificial love, poured out in the redemptive suffering of His Beloved Son.

“¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

It was upon pondering this verse through study and prayer that George Bennard, a simple Midwest pastor born just after the Civil War, said he found was, “when the Christ of the Cross became more than a symbol...It was like seeing John 3:16 leave the printed page, take form, and act out the meaning of redemption” (Robert J. Morgan, *Then Sings My Soul*, pg. 275). Bennard continued that it was in watching the scene of the aforementioned verse play out that the full love of God and the words for the song, *The Old Rugged Cross* was inspired in him.

In bearing our sins on the cross, Jesus expressed a type of love for us that can hardly be comprehended by one who has never been in a position to offer their life in sacrifice for another, as those who fought in the Civil or other wars, as a parent who has covered their child with their body has, or as has one who in any way said, “I’ll go” that another may not have to suffer. In sending His precious Lamb, the Lord expressed that His love for us, for you, was more precious than the pain He would suffer in sacrificing His Child, Himself for the sake of you and *whosoever*.

I pray you feel the love of Jesus in this season, and if you have not already, fall deeply in love with the One who gave you life and showed you His unfailing love and preserved your life in His care (*Job 10:12, NLT*). The scripture of the cross is a love story. May the Holy Spirit warm your hearts.

Regards,
Pastor Meredith

Time to Think About



Register early and save \$ 25.00 on a week of camp, early registration ends, February 28, 2019. You must register on line at either www.grotonwood.org for Grotonwood or www.oceanwood.org for Oceanwood. Once registered as a camper you will qualify for a \$100.00 scholarship from Central Massachusetts Baptist Association plus a portion of all moneys raised for scholarships at First Baptist Church.



Please help send our members who want to go to camp this summer. Average cost this year is around \$ 600.00 per week for overnight camp. Please mark you check in memo line “Camp Scholarship” or place donation in envelope and mark it “Camp Scholarship”

March Is:



And they exceeded our expectations:

They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.

– *2 CORINTHIANS 8:5 (NIV)*

By the Rev. Dr. Bishop Donald Hilliard Jr.

Discipleship, stewardship, giving and offerings aren't exactly listed as the "Top 10 Topics of Church Life." It's not that we don't understand the necessity and value of our giving; we would just rather not talk about it, let alone be challenged to actually give.

The Apostle Paul's second letter to the Corinthians expresses Paul's deep appreciation to the Corinthians for their gift to his ministry. They gave out of their need and understood the value and the magnitude of their generosity.

The text makes it clear that "They gave themselves first of all to the Lord." When we give, it helps to first give ourselves to God unreservedly.

When Christ is in the forefront of our giving, it places our act of stewardship in proper perspective. 1 Chronicles 29:14 reminds us that "All things come from you, and of your own have we given you" (NRSV).

When we give to relevant institutions like American Baptist Home Mission Societies, we are not only giving in a way that has eternal value but also to that which has multiplied and multifaceted importance. Consider that when we give ourselves to the will of God, our talents and treasure follow. To be sure, the Philippian Church was neither the largest nor the grandest; however, their understanding of the significance of missions and generosity carries them to the top of the list.

“My friends, we can’t afford to let the church go under,” I spontaneously said a few months ago, while preparing to pray over the Sunday morning offerings at Cathedral International.

I meant this statement with every fiber of my being. In these days in which more time is spent with iPads, iPhones and iPods than with the “I AM;” in which we would rather text than talk; and in which the “Nones” are growing at a faster pace than the Christian affiliated, we are reminded that we have a charge to keep. And maintaining the financial stability of a church or missional organization is part of the charge.

Growing churches are tithing churches, and tithing is a bedrock principle of the economy of God’s kingdom. Churches that emphasize the principle of tithing recognize the sovereign rule of God over every dimension of life, including the material and financial.

When we tithe or give offerings to a church or missions program, we acknowledge God as the creator and owner of all things and as the One who, alone, is worthy of all our praise, love and devotion. Giving helps us to keep our priorities straight and our focus sharp by constantly reminding us from where our strength and provision, power and prosperity come and to whom we are accountable for our stewardship.

The act of giving deliberately has great value. Giving, stewardship and serving become much easier when we first commit ourselves to the will of God by the power of the Holy Ghost!

The Rev. Dr. Bishop Donald Hilliard Jr. is senior pastor at Cathedral International, Perth Amboy, N.J.



***In Concert
The Beatles for Sale***

First Baptist Church of Fitchburg

1400 John Fitch Highway, Fitchburg, MA
Adams Fellowship Hall

**Saturday, March 23, 2019,
3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.**

Doors open at 2:30 P.M.

To Benefit Kitchen Restoration Fund
Light Refreshments will be served

Suggested Donation:
\$10.00 per person

\$ 7.00 per person for seniors **(65 and over)**

For more information call: 978-345-5622

Snow Date: Saturday, March 30, 2019 same time

St. Pauly Used Clothing Drop Off Shed

Sponsored By:
First Baptist Church
of Fitchburg

Location:
1400 John Fitch Hwy
Fitchburg, MA 01420



Benefits:

- Send Clothing to people who can use it all over the United States and the world.
 - Help the environment by keeping your clothing out of a landfill.
- Receive a tax deduction for your donation. Receipts are available on the shed.

THE LORD'S PRAYER - In Dialogue

Our Father Who Art In Heaven.
YES?

Don't interrupt me. I'm praying.
BUT -- YOU CALLED ME!!

Called you? No, I didn't call you. I'm praying. Our Father who art in heaven.
THERE -- YOU DID IT AGAIN.

Did what?
CALLED ME. YOU SAID, "OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN." WELL, HERE I AM. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

But, I didn't mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the day. I always say the Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel good, kind of like fulfilling a duty.
WELL, ALL RIGHT. GO ON.

Okay, Hallowed be Thy name.
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

By what?
BY "HALLOWED BE THY NAME?"

It means, it means... good grief, I don't know what it means. How in the world should I know? It's just a part of the prayer. By the way, what does it mean?
IT MEANS HONORED, HOLY, WONDERFUL.

Hey, that makes sense. I never thought about what 'hallowed' meant before. Thanks. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.
DO YOU REALLY MEAN THAT?

Sure, why not?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT?

Doing? Why, nothing, I guess. I just think it would be kind of neat if you got control of everything down here like you have up there. We're kinda in a mess down here you know.
YES, I KNOW... BUT, HAVE I GOT CONTROL OF YOU?

Well, I go to church.
THAT ISN'T WHAT I ASKED YOU. WHAT ABOUT YOUR BAD TEMPER? YOU'VE REALLY GOT A PROBLEM THERE, YOU KNOW. AND THEN THERE'S THE WAY YOU SPEND YOUR MONEY -- ALL ON YOURSELF. AND WHAT ABOUT THE KIND OF BOOKS YOU READ?

Now hold on just a minute! Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of the rest of those people at church!
EXCUSE ME. I THOUGHT YOU WERE PRAYING FOR MY WILL TO BE DONE. IF THAT IS TO HAPPEN, IT WILL HAVE TO START WITH THE ONES WHO ARE PRAYING FOR IT. LIKE YOU, FOR EXAMPLE.

Oh, all right. I guess I do have some hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I could probably name some others.
SO COULD I.

I haven't thought about it very much until now, but I really would like to cut out some of those things. I would like to, you know, be really free.

GOOD. NOW WE'RE GETTING SOMEWHERE. WE'LL WORK TOGETHER -- YOU AND ME. I'M PROUD OF YOU.

Look, Lord, if you don't mind, I need to finish up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does. Give us this day, our daily bread.

YOU NEED TO CUT OUT THE BREAD. YOU'RE OVERWEIGHT AS IT IS.

Hey, wait a minute! What is this? Here I was doing my religious duty, and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my hang-ups.

PRAYING IS A DANGEROUS THING. YOU JUST MIGHT GET WHAT YOU ASK FOR. REMEMBER, YOU CALLED ME -- AND HERE I AM. IT'S TOO LATE TO STOP NOW. KEEP PRAYING.

... pause ...

WELL, GO ON.

I'm scared to.

SCARED? OF WHAT?

I know what you'll say.

TRY ME.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

WHAT ABOUT CAROL?

See? I knew it! I knew you would bring her up! Why, Lord, she's told lies about me, spread stories. She never paid back the money she owes me. I've sworn to get even with her!

BUT -- YOUR PRAYER -- WHAT ABOUT YOUR PRAYER?

I didn't -- mean it.

WELL, AT LEAST YOU'RE HONEST. BUT, IT'S QUITE A LOAD CARRYING AROUND ALL THAT BITTERNESS AND RESENTMENT ISN'T IT?

Yes, but I'll feel better as soon as I get even with her. Boy, have I got some plans for her. She'll wish she had never been born.

NO, YOU WON'T FEEL ANY BETTER. YOU'LL FEEL WORSE. REVENGE ISN'T SWEET. YOU KNOW HOW UNHAPPY YOU ARE -- WELL, I CAN CHANGE THAT.

You can? How?

FORGIVE CAROL. THEN, I'LL FORGIVE YOU; AND THE HATE AND SIN WILL BE CAROL'S PROBLEM -- NOT YOURS. YOU WILL HAVE SETTLED THE PROBLEM AS FAR AS YOU ARE CONCERNED.

Oh, you know, you're right. You always are. And more than I want revenge, I want to be right with You... (sigh). All right... all right... I forgive her.

THERE NOW! WONDERFUL! HOW DO YOU FEEL?

Hmmmm. Well, not bad. Not bad at all! In fact, I feel pretty great! You know, I don't think I'll go to bed uptight tonight. I haven't been getting much rest, you know.

YEAH, I KNOW. BUT, YOU'RE NOT THROUGH WITH YOUR PRAYER ARE YOU? GO ON.

Oh, all right. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

GOOD! GOOD! I'LL DO THAT. JUST DON'T PUT YOURSELF IN A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN BE TEMPTED.

What do you mean by that?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

Yeah. I know.
OKAY. GO AHEAD. FINISH YOUR PRAYER.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD BRING ME GLORY -- WHAT WOULD REALLY MAKE ME HAPPY?

No, but I'd like to know. I want to please you now. I've really made a mess of things. I want to truly follow you. I can see now how great that would be. So, tell me... how do I make you happy?
YOU JUST DID!



Recipe of the Month

Buffalo Chicken Dip

Ingredients:

8 ounces cream cheese

1/2 cup blue cheese dressing

1/2 cup buffalo wing sauce

2 cooked chicken breasts, shredded
(rotisserie, grilled or poached)

1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
or cheddar cheese



Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. In a saucepan over low to medium heat, melt the cream cheese and stir until smooth. Add blue cheese dressing and wing sauce.

Stir in chicken until well combined.

Transfer the mixture to a small casserole dish, pie plate or cast-iron skillet.

Sprinkle with shredded cheese.

Bake until the cheese is melted and bubbly, about 20 minutes.

Serve with chips, crackers or celery sticks.

Chef's Notes:

You can also make this dip in the slow cooker! Simply combine the ingredients as directed above and transfer the mixture to a small slow cooker. Sprinkle 1/2 cup shredded cheese on top and heat on low until warm and bubbly.

Local News

Ten Ways to Love

1. Listen without interrupting. (Proverbs 18)
2. Speak without accusing. (James 1:19)
3. Give without sparing. (Proverbs 21:26)
4. Pray without ceasing. (Colossians 1:9)
5. Answer without arguing. (Proverbs 17:1)
6. Share without pretending. (Ephesians 4:15)
7. Enjoy without complaint. (Philippians 2:14)
8. Trust without wavering. (Corinthians 13:7)
9. Forgive without punishing. (Colossians 3:13)
10. Promise without forgetting. (Proverbs 13:12)



***First Baptist Church of Fitchburg
Adams Fellowship Hall***

***Every Monday Night
7:00 P.M. to 8:30 P.M.***

Careful Planning Makes a Difference

**ANTHONY V. FEROCI, JR.
ATTORNEY AT LAW**

114 Merriam Ave - Suite 204
Leominster, MA 01453
978-466-5011

Elder and Disability Law
Medicaid Planning
Estate Planning

February 2019: Office hours Tuesdays 1-4pm and Thursdays 9-12pm

February 3, 2019: Meeting with Beatles For Sale after services, 11:15am

February 17, 2019: Pastor Meredith Away. Services will be presided over by Rev. Phil Goff.

Please consider signing up for...

**Worship Leader
Usher**

**Door Greeter
or Coffee Hour**

We all enjoy these services!



637 Lancaster Street (Route 117) - Leominster, MA 01453 - Phone: 978-227-5556

Email: restore@ncmhabitat.org



FEBRUARY Birthdays

- 3. Barack Labah
- 3. Jeff Poole
- 3. Humphrey Mutindwa
- 6. Debi Cross
- 6. Hazel Mutindwa
- 8. Roberta Poole
- 8. Glenn Dawson
- 16. May Goff
- 17. James Hope, Jr.
- 18. Cyprian Labah
- 20. Amanda Blake
- 25. Bette Adams



Happy Anniversary

FEBRUARY Anniversaries



IF YOU'RE BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY IS NOT HERE, LET US KNOW AND WE'LL INCLUDE IT IN THE BEACONLIGHT! REMEMBER TO NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE WITH ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO YOUR ADDRESS OR TO OUR MONTHLY LISTING OF BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE

978-345-5622

E-MAIL: FBCBEACONLIGHT@COMCAST.NET

PRAYER LIST

Anoura Rose Angelini

Atera Ngange

Bette Adams

Cindy Beck

Connie & Will Gariepy

Daniel Bascomb

Kathy Gosselin

Kim & Katie (Bette Adams daughter & granddaughter)

Linda Gosselin

Mark & Diane Bigelow

Marsha – return of lung cancer

Nancy Peters

Renee Brideau - Crohn's Disease

Roberta Poole

Susan Force (Bette Adams daughter)

Tom and Karen Adams

Karen Simpson

Marilyn Carter

Roger Steward

Karen Knowles

James Hope

Roberta Steward

Roger Abell

Pastor Becky

John Mim

Elaine Corzine

Martha Quinn

Brady, Amy Giordano / Weeks

Pastor Garcia & his ministry

First Baptist of Wakefield

Our Missionaries

Rovaungha Richardson

Marilyn Raatz

Daniel Auguste and the Haitian

Missionary Team



IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST, PLEASE, LET US KNOW AND WE'LL INCLUDE IT IN THE BEACONLIGHT!

REMEMBER TO NOTIFY US WITH ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THESE LISTINGS.

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE

978-345-5622

F-MAIL · FRCBEACONLIGHT@COMCAST.NET