



## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ROCKPORT

4 HIGH ST.  
ROCKPORT  
MA 01966

978-546-6121

### CONTENTS

|                             |          |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| <b>PASTOR'S MESSAGE</b>     | <b>1</b> |
| <b>SERMON SCHEDULE</b>      | <b>2</b> |
| <b>ADULT STUDY AT FBC</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>LOCKED IN!</b>           | <b>4</b> |
| <b>SPRING EVENTS</b>        | <b>5</b> |
| <b>HOPE IN MY SAVIOUR</b>   | <b>6</b> |
| <b>FBC &amp; TECHNOLOGY</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>CALENDAR</b>             | <b>8</b> |
| <b>ABOUT OUR CHURCH</b>     | <b>8</b> |



# HIGH TIDINGS Online

FIRSTBAPTISTROCKORT.ORG

MARCH 2010

### EASTER REMINDS US.....

March and April 2010 are important months in the life of the First Baptist Church of Rockport. In the beginning of April we will celebrate Easter, the recognition of Christ's resurrection. The resurrection of Christ is the central event of Christianity. The claims of Christianity rise or fall upon the veracity of the resurrection. Churches meet on Sunday, because it was on Sunday that Christ burst out of the tomb. It is for this reason that Sunday is often called "The Lord's Day."

It is because of Easter that Peter who had previously denied Christ three times could, in Acts 2, boldly proclaim the following:

Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power.

Easter reminds us why we worship and proclaim Christ. It demonstrates to us why Christ's life and message are worth following. It shows us the hope of future resurrection in Christ. The celebration of Easter also profoundly unites us with the Church of the past.

It is because of events of Easter that our church was founded on March 30, 1808. Earlier this month our church recalled our founding through Heritage Sunday. On Heritage Sunday we looked back at several events that occurred in the storied 202 year history of the First Baptist Church. Heritage Sunday gave a good opportunity to praise God for his faithfulness to this church, to reflect on the hard work and dedication of those who have gone before and to recall those values and missions that have held the church together for the centuries.

During the sermon, I re-preached a sermon originally given by Ernest E. Ventres, pastor of the church from 1922-1938. He was instrumental in the building of the posthumously named "Ventres Chapel." The early part of the twentieth century marked a time of great vibrancy and activity at FBC during a volatile period fraught with two World Wars and the Great Depression. This was Ventres' last sermon as pastor at FBC and was subsequently reprinted in the *Gloucester Daily Times* on September 26, 1938.

Ventres' sermon began by highlighting the rapidly declining state of the

*Continued on pg 2*

## Easter Reminds Us..... (continued from page 1)

American Protestant Church. He proceeded to utilize the text of Romans 12:1-2 and exhorted the church to remember Christ's life, work and mercies and as result live their lives "as living sacrifices" as this is the only "reasonable act of service." Ventres reflected upon the early church martyrs and the way in which they very literally sacrificed their lives for Christ. He continued to remind the congregation of the importance of resisting the allure of the world and to instead engage in "cooperation and consecration" of the great work of the church. Ventres' sermon is remarkably applicable seventy-two years later.

In this last Heritage Sunday we recalled a few events and people in the life of the First Baptist Church. They represent hundreds of others who worshipped and served at this little white church in the park. Heritage Sunday also reminded us of the God who has been faithful and provided for the church throughout many seasons.

In the celebrations of Heritage Sunday and Easter we are reminded that we are a people who have been profoundly shaped by history. In these celebrations we should be encouraged by the significance of the present and the hope of the future.

*Our own Ruth Bowers recently celebrated her 75th birthday. Some of her friends wrote limericks in her honor. Happy Birthday, Ruth!*

There once was an excellent ringer  
A striking, and fine tower-swinging  
She helped me excel  
When ringing a bell  
To me she's a swinging' hum-dinger.

A talented lady is Ruth!  
For honestly, this is the truth:  
She can ring a mean bell,  
And play organ as well,  
But not at the same time, forsooth!

Ruth's grandson William, budding lawyer at left, is a frequent visitor to FBC.



## Scripture and Sermon Schedule for April and May

| Date     | OT Reading                                   | NT Reading          | Sermon Title                 |
|----------|--|---------------------|------------------------------|
| April 4  | Isaiah 65:17-25                              | <b>Luke 24:1-12</b> | He has risen!                |
| April 11 | Psalms 118:14-29                             | <b>John 21:1-14</b> | Breakfast Visitor            |
| April 18 | Psalms 30<br>Bring a Friend To Church Sunday | <b>Acts 1:1-11</b>  | The Charge                   |
| April 25 | Psalms 23                                    | <b>Acts 1:12-26</b> | Recovering from the Betrayal |
| May 2    | Psalms 148                                   | <b>Acts 2:1-13</b>  | Pentecost                    |
| May 9    | Psalms 67                                    | <b>Acts 2:14-41</b> | Preaching Peter              |
| May 16   | Psalms 93                                    | <b>Acts 2:42-47</b> | Radical Fellowship           |
| May 23   | <b>Genesis 12:1-11</b>                       | Romans 8:14-17      | Father Abraham               |
| May 30   | <b>Genesis 12:10-11</b>                      | Romans 5:1-5        | Fearing Pharaoh              |

Sermon focus shown in bold

# Opportunities for Adult Study at First Baptist

## Wednesday Morning Bible Study at 9:30 AM

This group meets every Wednesday and has been studying the New Testament gospel book of John, wherein they have reached the events leading to the Crucifixion. Currently four-to-eight people gather around the conference room table for an hour and a half of good dialogue surrounding ideas that flowed from reading a few verses. Some of the attendees are from outside our congregation and are able to provide a variety of perspectives from their different traditions.

## Tuesday Evening Bible Study at 7:30 PM

This group usually meets twice a month on the first and third Tuesday nights and has been studying the New Testament gospel book of Mark. About five people gather to discuss a section or two of the scripture, with Jesus' time in the Garden of Gethsemane next to be considered. As we settle in at the conference room table, there is time to talk about concerns and celebrations followed by prayer, before diving into the night's text.

With both Bible Study groups, the camaraderie and fellowship enhance the learning immensely. There is almost always much laughter and banter, and the end of the hour and a half frequently comes as a surprise.

## Sunday School at 9:15 AM

Every Sunday a group of about a dozen "regulars" meet to discuss church history, working from a book by Justo Gonzalez entitled "The Story of Christianity." This study began last Fall and we prepare each week by reading a short chapter prior to class, if possible. Pre-reading is never a requirement to join in with the class, so we hope you'll pull up a chair any Sunday you can. More copies of the book are available. We are delighted whenever someone new joins the group, and Matt, with input from everyone, quickly brings them up to speed with where we are in history. After six months, we have progressed through about 400 years since Jesus' death and resurrection. It has been fascinating to experience the beginnings of our Christian faith and to witness the creation of today's belief system in the activities of the first Christians. Rather than "duller than dust" history, "The Story of Christianity" is told through the lives of the main characters of each time period, and because we're all different people, different characters have seemed to have special appeal to the various members of the group. We now have appreciation for the contributions and influences of people like Athanasius, Ambrose and Augustine as well as Constantine, Julian and Arius and dozens of others. Through it all, we are asked to search for the significance of these historical times to our lives today — it's never hard!

While Sunday school continues on without a break through Easter, we are taking a short hiatus from the study to focus on the events of the Passion of Christ and then resuming our course on April 4th with the early 400s and the beginnings of Medieval Christianity.

More participants are ALWAYS welcome at any of these groups. You might be new THIS week, to a particular study, but by NEXT week, you'll have a friend saving you a seat and passing you the day's worksheet. (Note: Sunday School WILL be held on Easter.)

Elizabeth Malcolmson





## LOCKED IN

High and Middle School overnights at the church apparently were not spent sleeping. Check with Ben, Mel, Ari, Danielle or any of the others to find out what really went on!



# **Easter and Spring Special Events**

|                      |   |                   |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Thursday, April 1    | Maundy Thursday Service                               | 7:00 PM           |
| Good Friday, April 2 | Sanctuary Open for Prayer                             | 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM |
| Sunday, April 4      | <b>EASTER</b>   |                   |
|                      | Sunrise Service                                       | 6:30 AM           |
|                      | Easter Breakfast                                      | 7:15 AM           |
|                      | Easter Service  | 10:30 AM          |
| Sunday, April 18     | Bring a friend to church Sunday                       |                   |
| Sunday, April 25     | FBC Leads Worship Service at<br>Den-Mar Rehab. Center | 3:00 pm           |
| Saturday, May 1      | Youth Outreach  | 1:00-3:00 PM      |
| Saturday, May 15     | Spring Work Day                                       | 9:00-11:30 AM     |
| Saturday, May 22     | FBC Participates in Motif #1 Day                      | 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM |
| Sunday, June 13      | Thirdly Meeting                                       | Noon              |
| July 19-23           | Vacation Bible School                                 | 9:00 - 11:30 AM   |

## **Regular Events**

|            |                               |          |
|------------|-------------------------------|----------|
| Sunday:    | Sunday School                 | 9:15 AM  |
|            | Worship Service               | 10:30 AM |
|            | Fellowship                    | 11:30 AM |
| Monday:    | Choir or Bell Choir Rehearsal | 7:00 PM  |
| Tuesday:   | Bible Study                   | 7:30 PM  |
|            | (First and Third Tuesdays)    |          |
| Wednesday: | Morning Prayer                | 6:30 AM  |
|            | Bible Study                   | 9:30 AM  |
| Thursday:  | High School Youth Group       | 7:00 PM  |
| Friday:    | Middle School Youth Group     | 6:30 PM  |

## **Pastor: Matt Wigton**

Website: [FirstBaptistRockport.Org](http://FirstBaptistRockport.Org)

4 High Street Rockport, MA 01966

Church Office: 978-546-6121

### **Office Hours:**

Monday - Wednesday 8:30 -11:30, 12:00-3:00

Thursday 12:00-3:00, 6:30-8:00 PM

E-Mail: [MattWigton@](mailto:MattWigton@)

[FirstBaptistRockport.Org](http://FirstBaptistRockport.Org)





## HOPE IN MY SAVIOUR

*Following is the text of a letter received from FBC member Pvt. Alonzo Lowe while connected with the 35<sup>th</sup> Regiment Massachusetts Volunteers. It is dated December 30, 1862, shortly after the Civil War Battle of Fredricksburg, during which he was wounded. He died in September, 1863 at Camp Dennison, Ohio. During it's three years of active service, more than one quarter of the Regiment was killed in battle, or died from wounds or disease. Pvt. Lowe was baptized at First Baptist Church, Rockport, on May 11, 1862 by Pastor Phineus Stowe (see photo).*

Dear Friend,

I received a paper from you and it seemed more like home, when I read it, than it does out here in the enemy's country.

There is not much news here at this time. Every thing seems to be still here at this time. We expect to move to Washington tomorrow and to go into quarters for a time.

I have been into four Battles since I left home. I think that I have seen about fighting enough.

The last battle that I was in was at Fredericksburg. I tell you it was a hard one. It was like carrying men to slaughter. The Rebels had all the chance of us. We had to march right in front of their Batteries, and the way that the shell and grape-shot and canister flew it was hard to dodge them. But to see the dead and wounded lay on the Battle Field it was hard for one to get along without stepping on the dead and wounded.

Dear Friend, I will now tell you how I am getting along. I enjoy myself very well I think.

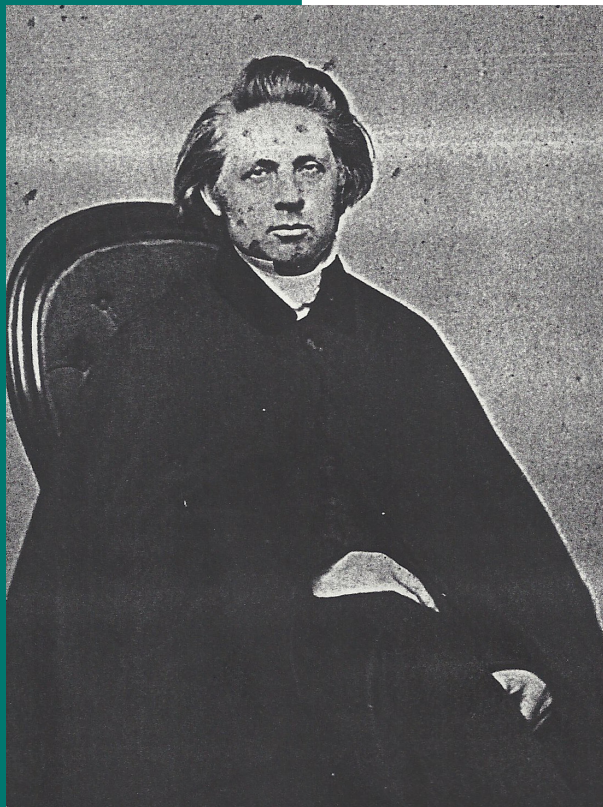
Without this hope I have in my Saviour I should be most miserable. I can say that I think that I have done my duty since I have been in the army. There has not been a day but I have read my Bible and prayed to God that he would convert this Army.

I have talked to the Soldiers about their souls salvation, but they would laugh at me, and tell me to go into my tent and not be out there spending my breath for nothing. But I tell you that I told them that there is a day coming, that they will wish that they had taken my advice. I

tell them that the Bible tells me that except you repent and are born again, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ you cannot be saved.

I have talked to some with tears in my eyes, but it seemed to do but little good. This Army is a hard place for a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to live, he has to undergo a good deal more than he would if he was at home.

As soon as you talk with one soldier about his souls salvation, there will be about from ten or twelve get around you and make all the fun they can. But I tell them they hurt themselves more than they do me. That they will have to answer for this at the Bar of God, at the last day.



## The Church and Technology

In the 1450's Johannes Gutenberg's development of the printing press lead to the proliferation of Bibles and other pieces of the literature throughout the world. His work contributed to the Protestant Reformation and the western renewal of individual study of scriptures and literature. This is one example of ways in which the Church has benefitted from evolving forms of technology.

The church boards have also gained from recent technological advances. Skype is a computer program that allows individuals to communicate virtually through a computer. If each person or persons have compatible computer programs, it is then possible to talk to and see the other party as if they are in the same room. Skype relays both picture and sound with remarkable quality from places all around the world. During the winter months two members of the Board of Deacons reside in Florida. In spite of their distance of nearly 1500 miles, they have been able to virtually attend and participate in the meetings of the Board.

Skype may not transform the world in quite the same fashion as Gutenberg's Printing Press. Nonetheless it is exciting to incorporate the "old, old story" that is central to the Church with the ever changing forms of communication and technology.

M.C. Wigton

First Baptist Church at Harvey Park was built before there was a Harvey Park, but it faced High Street. This photo shows the sanctuary before it was turned 90 degrees to face the sea and the Ventres Chapel, parlor, kitchen and restrooms were added. A legacy of it's original orientation is the address, which remains 4 High Street.



### **Hope in my Saviour, continued from page 6**

Please to write soon. Direct your letters to Com. F. 35<sup>th</sup> Reg. Mass. Vol. Washington D.C. or elsewhere. Please to give my love to you Wife and tell her my health is good, all I got was my side hurt in the last Battle, but it is getting better. Please to give my love to the Church. I will close this by wishing you good bye.

From you Brother and Friend

Alonzo Lowe, in the Lord and

Savior Jesus Christ.

May God bless you all.

**Boston Area Directions**

Take Rte. 93 North from Boston to Rte. 95 North. Follow Rte. 95 toward Gloucester. Route number changes to Rte. 128. Continue to end of Rte. 128 and turn left at traffic light at Eastern Ave. in Gloucester. Proceed on same street to Rockport. The Church is at the end of Broadway in Rockport on the right.

High Tidings Online is published by the First Baptist Church of Rockport, and is edited by Gail Zeman and friends.  
Email: [newsletter@firstbaptistrockport.org](mailto:newsletter@firstbaptistrockport.org)

We are an American Baptist Church. Visitors are expected and welcomed.

**Regular Schedule**

For full church calendar, see CALENDAR tab on website and on pg. 5 of *High Tidings*.

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Sundays: Sunday School (all classes)                      | 9:15AM   |
| Worship   | 10:30 AM |
| Fellowship  | 11:30 AM |
| Mondays: Choirs rehearse                                  | 7:00 PM  |
| Alternate Tuesdays: Bible Study                           | 7:30 PM  |
| Wednesdays: Morning Prayer                                | 6:30 AM  |
| Bible Study   | 9:30 AM  |
| Thursdays: High School Group                              | 7:00 PM  |
| Fridays: Middle School Group                              | 6:30 PM  |
| Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month |          |

**Editor’s Note**

For the next issue of *High Tidings*, we encourage any and all of you to send along a few words describing an event or moment in which you knew God was working in your life. The overall topic will be “the Lord works in mysterious ways’. Please call, email or write a note to Matt or Gail before May 9 and we’ll take it from there.

Return Address:  
First Baptist Church, Rockport  
c/o Zeman  
3 Penzance Road  
Rockport, MA 01966