



HIGH TIDINGS Online

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FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH
OF ROCKPORT

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The Disciplines

The bitter weather of January always reminds me of my days playing middle school basketball. My school had limited gym space, which relegated the youngest athletes to 6:00 am practices. For a middle school student, practicing before the break of dawn was a challenge, but practicing so early and tackling the bitter weather of mid-winter at the same time seemed to be unbearable. In retrospect, I today recall this time as a great lesson in the importance of discipline. The discipline required to attend these practices was necessary for the growth and cohesion of my basketball team. More importantly, I now recall this experience as teaching the value and necessity of discipline. There are many other examples from within our lives of areas where discipline was and is critical for achieving growth.

There are a number of disciplines that are featured in scripture and throughout the history of the church. These practices do not in themselves bring us closer to God, but they can help us be ready to hear his voice, to discern his will and to obey his commands. In Christ's life, for example, the gospels record a number of times when Jesus went off by himself to pray, to meditate upon God's word and to be alone. Jesus practiced the disciplines of fasting, prayer, worship, meditation upon scripture, and solitude. These are examples of a few of the disciplines which Jesus demonstrated and passed on to us as helpful tools in the journey of Christian discipleship.

Our society places immense value on disciplines that promote physical fitness, emotional wellness, academic advancement, economic stability and relational tranquility. While these objectives have value, if they are the only practices and pursuits that consume our time we are missing out on the daily vibrancy available in Christ. The Apostle Paul reminded his student Timothy "while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come (I Timothy 4:8 ESV)".

As we launch forward in 2011, it is a natural time to reflect upon our discipline or lack of discipline. Do we in our time, values and

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priorities indeed desire to grow as imitators of God (Ephesians 5:1) and truly live as Christ's disciples?

If we take seriously the invitation to know God through Christ and to be his disciples in the present we should grow in this call throughout our individual and corporate prioritizing of practices of spiritual discipline. One way to do to this is through participating in the Tuesday night Discipleship Group which has been going through Richard Foster's classic work *Celebration of Discipline*.

~~Matt Wigton, Pastor



A PSALM OF PRAISE

Lord I will praise you with all of my heart for you are everything,
You are the light that shines through my window,
You are the breeze that whispers in my ears,
You are the stars that dance in the sky at night,
You are the voice that I hear when all is quiet,
You are the song that I sing when I am filled with joy.

Lord I will praise you with all of my soul, even in despair I will
praise you,
You are my guide when I wander on the wrong path,
You are my comfort when I am in pain,
You are the hope that flows within me every day,
You are understanding and compassionate when I doubt and fear,
Lord I will praise you forever and ever.

by Danielle Sturgeon

February, March and April Scripture Selections and Sermon Titles

Date	Old Testament Reading	New Testament Reading	Sermon Title
February 6	Psalms 112:1-9	Matthew 5:1-15	Beatitudes Prologue II
February 13	Deuteronomy 30:15-20	Matthew 5:21-26	Anger Management
February 20	Psalms 119:33-40	Matthew 5:27-30	Lust of the eyes
February 27	Exodus 34:1-9	Matthew 5:31-37	Covenant Keeping
March 6	Exodus 23:1-9	Matthew 5:38-48	Loving Enemies
March 13	Psalms 99	Matthew 6:1-4 & 16-18	Motivating Factors
March 20	Psalms 121	Matthew 6:25-34	Anxiety
March 27	Exodus 6:1-13	John 12:27-36	Abolition
April 3	Exodus 12:43-50	John 13:1-20	The First Passover
April 17	Psalms 31:9-16	John 19	The Last Passover
April 24 (Easter)	Jeremiah 31:1-6	John 20:1-18	Empty Tomb

* Texts in bold denote the text that will be used for the sermon

Ron Aines

On Wednesday, January 12, Ron Aines went to be with the Lord. Our prayers go to his wife of fifty years Louise, daughter Marsha, and son Marshall and their extended family. Louise remains at their winter home in Northbrook, Illinois, where a service was held celebrating Ron's life on January 18. A memorial service will also be held this summer at First Baptist, Rockport. Ron and Louise have been 'summer members' in Rockport for many years and Louise grew up on School Street in Rockport.

Ron was born in Rhode Island and grew up on a Vermont dairy farm. Valedictorian of his high school class, Ron earned his B.S. from UVM, was honorably discharged from the Air Force, earned his M.S. in agricultural economics from the University of Massachusetts, then pursued his doctorate at Harvard.

He taught at Rutgers University, and moved on to work for the USDA in D.C., moving his family to Virginia. He accepted a corporate role with IMC, a global fertilizer company in Illinois, then became VP with International Harvester and after retiring, became a consultant, traveling with his family to many exotic places including Russia, Africa, Egypt, Europe and Australia. He circumnavigated the world twice.

Ron met Louise after hearing her sing at the Middlebury (VT) Baptist Church. They taught their children and grandkids that salvation comes from a personal belief in Jesus Christ, by the grace of God. A survivor of pancreatic and prostate cancer, Ron's faith sustained him through much adversity.

"I wait quietly before God, for my victory comes from Him. He alone is my Rock and my Salvation, my Fortress where I will never be shaken." Psalm 62:1-2

2010 Church Annual Report

In Brief

The Life of the Church....

Is embodied in the church's new motto: **FOLLOW JESUS AND PROCLAIM HIM TO THE WORLD.**

Pastor Matt Wigton described in his report how this was done month by month during the year within the church family, by participating and showing a more active presence in the Rockport community, and by learning from and supporting missions in the larger world. Focal points came in a variety of ways:

- In response to the tragic earthquake in Haiti in January, a continuing challenge;
- By celebrating the church's 202nd anniversary with an eerily relevant sermon originally delivered by Pastor Ernest E. Ventres eighty years ago;
- By taking dozens of opportunities to learn and be in fellowship in small groups and large including potluck parties, community hymn sings, youth groups, excursions to hear speakers and assist in regional mission work and celebrate birthdays;
- At the vacation bible school, which was preceded by a 50-person 'float' in the 4th of July parade, and the VBS week featuring the theme "Cosmic City";
- Through at least five Sunday schools and study groups held at various times each week;
- During Pastor Matt's preparation and examination for ordination (where the mock ordination council within the membership was more rigorous than the real thing);
- In choral and instrumental events both during services and held at the church for the community;
- At a moving Thanksgiving service where congregants spoke out loud the many ways in which they were blessed during the year;
- In a new Weekly E-Mail sent by Pastor Matt to keep the church community current with events, celebrations and needs;
- And in regular worship and the many activities that take place at the church and among its members and friends.



The Business of the Church....

Takes place in the physical form of maintenance and upgrade of church properties and in the stewardship of financial support that underpins church activities.

Work continues every week in regular maintenance of the church building and the parsonage. Special projects currently underway are cleanup of the basement, replacement of the parsonage deck and exterior trim, improvement of the narthex with new lighting, and re-

placement of tables, smoke detectors, and a ladder. The folding screen next to the piano at the front of the church was rebuilt into shutters attached to the windows. The large, cast iron gas stove in the kitchen was removed and plans are in process for upgrading the kitchen.

First Baptist is blessed to have an endowment, now close to \$700,000 since the growth of financial assets during the year. However the expenses of operating the church and it's ministry continued to exceed the annual giving of members and friends by about \$35,000. Of that amount almost \$20,000 came from income (interest and dividends) generated by the church's investments and the balance came from growth in the principal of the portfolio.

Full and detailed reports (14 pages) by the treasurer, benevolence treasurer, collector and investment management firm are in the printed Annual Report.

The Leadership of the Church....

Gained three new members as others retired from service. Marjorie Dyksinski was tapped to join the Board of Deacons and Chris Dyksinski and Frank Levesque have been nominated to serve on the Board of Stewards. Jim Koerth begins a new three-year term on the Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons has five members, Stewards have four members and all of the officer categories are filled with the incumbents except for auditor, historian and church school superintendent.

The Body of the Church...

Is the congregation – members and friends – who gather to worship, work, play and support each other and the overall mission of spreading the Word. Our membership number increased by three at the annual meeting and our attendance and participation has grown, particularly in special events. During the spring, summer and fall we average about 70-75 at Sunday worship and even during the cold and snowy winter when many have flown south, or are housebound, 50-60 have been attending. Nominally, First Baptist had 82 members on January 1, 2011.

Fourteen individuals participated in the fall four-session *Exploring Christianity* class and 25 middle and high school students participated in youth group events during the year. Several times during 2010 the sanctuary was filled for holiday services, Christian concerts and special celebrations. Under Ruth Bowers' leadership, more than twenty-five members and friends sang, rang and provided special music for worship and events. Over eighty children and adults participated in Vacation Bible School in July.

Clearly, the body of members and friends is active, growing and everyone has a place to be and do the work of the church.

New Deacon and Steward
Marjorie and Chris Dyksinski, respectively.



Weekly Schedule

Sunday 9:15 am God's Family, Children and Adult Sunday Schools

10:30 Worship Service

11:30 am Fellowship

Monday 7:00 pm Bell Choir or Adult Choir

Tuesday 7:00 pm (second) Deacons' Meeting
(fourth) Stewards' Meeting
(first and third) Discipleship Group



Wednesday 6:30 am Morning Prayer

9:30 am Bible Study (Bible Study will not meet February 23.)

7:00 pm Middle School Group

Thursday 7:00 pm High School Group

Announcements

Winter Potluck

The church community is invited to a potluck in Ventres Chapel on Saturday, February 12 at 5:00 pm. You are encouraged to also invite a friend who does not have a church home. If you are able, you are invited to bring food to share. Sign-up sheets for the potluck will be located on the table in Ventres Chapel.

VBS Planning Meeting

A general information meeting for individuals interested in helping with Vacation Bible School will occur in Ventres Chapel on Wednesday, February 16 at 7:00 PM.

Save the Dates

Vacation Bible School 2011 will occur from 9:00-11:30am the week of July 18-23. More information will be included in future editions of the *High Tidings*.

Serving Meals at the Boston Rescue Mission

The church will be sending 3-5 volunteers to assist in serving meals at the Boston Rescue Mission on the fourth Monday of the month, starting on February 21. Volunteers will meet at the church at 12:30 pm and return by 6:30 pm. The Boston Rescue Mission is a Christian Mission that has been helping individuals in need since 1899. The Mission is located in the Downtown Crossing region of Boston.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

During the Winter Quarter, the Wednesday Morning Bible Study will be looking at the book of Ephesians. The precise schedule for the class can be found on the church website under the Education tab.

Annual Reports Available

The full edition of the 2010 Annual Report (summarized in this newsletter) has been published and is available at the church. If you would like to be mailed a copy of the Annual Report, please contact the church office.

Kitchen Upgrade Initiative

In 2011 the Board of Stewards plans to make upgrades in the kitchen, which will most likely include adding new linoleum on the floor, adding a new stove and a dishwasher. The current goal is to complete the project by June 2011. The Board is currently researching the plans and values the questions and suggestions of the church community.

Recognition of Service

In January 2011, Terry Schwenk and Janet O'Donnell retired from their positions on the Board of Stewards and Board of Deacons respectively. Terry and Janet have both served the church for many years in several different capacities. Thanks Terry and Janet for your work on these Boards!

Exploring Christianity

Exploring Christianity, the exciting four part series that was offered in the autumn will again be offered in the early spring of 2011. Exploring Christianity is a class that is part of becoming a member of FBC but also open to anyone else. The class seeks to cover A) the basics of Christian Doctrine B) the basics of Church History and C) the history and mission of the First Baptist Church of Rockport. The class will occur on Sundays on March 27 and April 3, 10 and 17. The classes will run from 7:00-8:30 pm and are taught by the pastor and Board of Deacons. For more information on church membership and the Exploring Christianity Class, please read the informational brochure available on the church website or at the church.

Welcome New Members!

During the January 30, 2011 Annual Meeting the Church officially recognized Kristine Carlson, Jose Oliveira and Arvilla Wass as new members.

Pastor's Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

8:30-11:30 AM & 12:30 -3:30 PM

And by appointment

MattWigton@FirstBaptistRockport.Org

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Christian Men's Choir, including several Rockport Baptists, performed to a full sanctuary before Christmas.



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

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Email:

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FBC Mission Statement
***Follow Jesus and proclaim
Him to the world***

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