



HIGH TIDINGS Online

FIRSTBAPTISTROCKORT.ORG

MARCH 2009

FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH
OF ROCKPORT

4 HIGH ST.
ROCKPORT
MA 01966

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Pastor's Message

PREPARING FOR EASTER AND SPRING

The rhythms of creation continue. After a long and serious winter, the calendar tells us that spring will soon come. O, for the warmth, and light, and promise. The church calendar says that we are in Lent, those days and weeks in which we pay a little closer attention, and move once again with Jesus toward Jerusalem.

What will Lent be like for you? The regular stuff of your life will go on. Some days will be light, bright and joy-filled; some will be heavy, dark and hurt-filled. What ever kind of day we may be having, Jesus can be our friend and companion. Especially in Lent we have a chance for a more focused walk with him. The choice is always ours. We can muddle through each day as a rugged individual, sufficient in our own strength. Or we can walk with a lighter step if we know our dependence is on the one who walks toward Jerusalem.

If we decide to travel along with him it will be helpful to be intentional about taking time for quiet, reading, reflection and prayer. We also know that it is not just "me and Jesus". We are part of a fellowship of Jesus followers here at First Baptist. Worshiping, studying, praying and being together will help our Lenten journey to be richer, fuller and maybe even life-changing.

You have heard me speak of Fredrick Beuchner. In a word about Lent he says, "It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sack cloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end."

Skip



From White Frustration to Spring Creation

Even though it's been cold, snowy, and generally a dormant time of year, I know that there is new growth waiting to burst forth beneath the almost 80" of "white frustration" we've had this winter! I'm excited about what's to come just as I am excited about the growth I see in just a few short months as the Board of Deacons at FBC reorganizes and considers potential areas of **new growth in God's fellowship** here at the corner of High and Broadway. There's a lot to tell, but for this particular issue of the High Tidings, I'd like to mention three areas that indicate our willingness as a board to grow with God and serve this congregation.

Lead us, O God, to deepen our faith, understand your plans for our church and transition to doing Your work with a passionate spirituality.

- The first area is **leadership**. We have benefited as a Board from Pastor Skip's insightful and seasoned leading in terms of where we've been and where we should be going as a church. We have also been blessed by the gifts and talents of our mentored pastor Matt Wigton. He received a very favorable three-month review in February and has taken the lead in many of the activities/ministries of FBC. We also welcomed the fresh new leadership style in our newest deacons, John Malcolmson and Diane Lynn.

- The second area is about our wanting to **deepen our faith and understanding of God** in terms of stepping out in faith with "new" ministries like a planned Vacation Bible School for the community in July and a mini deacons retreat to envision God's direction for the future of His flock. We've begun to read a book suggested by John M. entitled, Be-coming the Answer to Our Prayers. It's a book that teaches the importance of prayer in terms of living in a Christian community and engaging in social activism. This will help us to take a renewed look at our missions and the budgets that go along with them. We're also building on the insights gained as a result of the past two church retreats.

- The third area is one that will be with us for awhile -- **transitioning**. This includes a professional "staff" team including the calling of a full time pastor and a church secretary and the welcoming of new members into our congregation.



We are ever striving to embody a "passionate" spirituality and with God's help work towards the goal of a thriving church. We welcome you to journey with us!

Jim Koerth
For the Board of Deacons

July Vacation Bible School Announced

Come Explore in the WILDWOOD FOREST!

First Baptist Church of Rockport is excited to announce plans for VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL in 2009. During the week of July 13-17 the church will transform into Wildwood Forest! Come explore the wonder of God in our woods! The event is open to any elementary age child and will run from 9:00 am to 11:30 am. There will be a closing program on Friday, July 17, 2009 at 6:30 pm. If you would like to help please contact Matt Wigton or Sheryl Reed. Parents may register their child or children at vbs@firstbaptistrockport.org.

Candidate Pastor Matt Wigton will begin holding weekly office hours in March. If anyone would like to stop in the church to talk, pray or just hang out, he'll be there Tuesdays 6:30-8:30 am, Wednesdays 1:00-3:00 pm and Thursdays 7:00-9:00 pm.

Mysteries of the Hymnal #2

Where's the Music?

About six or so weeks ago, one of the hymns in the morning service had words but no music – but the organist played something and the congregation sang. What was going on?

The hymn was "Wind Who Makes All Winds That Blow," number 294 in the hymnal. On the bottom left corner of the page were the words 'suggested tune' and under that was a hymn tune name ABERYSTWYTH and a page number. That is the music the organist used to accompany the hymn. It would have been possible to use another tune if the other tune had the same number of syllables. The number of syllables in that hymn is: 7.7.7.7.D (D means 'double' – another 7.7.7.7).

To find a different tune that would fit those syllables; you could look in the Metrical Index on page 742 of the hymnal to find 7.7.7.7.D. Under that listing are three other tunes with that same number of syllables: EVERLASTING LOVE, MENDELSSOHN, and ST. GEORGES, WINDSOR.

What are hymn tune names and how does a tune get a name? Look for the answer in the next issue of High Tidings.



Reflections on the Cross



In his book, [The Cross of Christ](#), John Stott reflects upon the centrality of the cross throughout the global history of Christianity. He writes that it is quite astonishing that the cross, a symbol widely recognized in ancient history as a gruesome image representing brutal torture and death, should come to represent Christianity. Like many other churches, First Baptist highlights the cross in many ways: in visible reminders, hymn selections and throughout Scripture readings. Especially in the season leading up to Easter, it is important to reflect on why the cross retains such a primary place in Christianity.

The cross is of supreme importance because it was the central point in Jesus' ministry and lay at the foundation of the identity and mission of the individual Christian. On the cross, the blood of Christ was shed for men and women, so that it is possible to have a reconciled relationship with God. The cross offers eternal and lasting atonement for sins. The book of Hebrews reminds us that the Old Testament sacrificial system was incapable of accomplishing what occurred through the blood of Christ. There are many other implications of what the cross means for the life of the individual and corporate Christian. Jesus instructs that to be his follower means to pick up one's cross and follow him. These are a few of many, vast and glorious implications of Christ's work on the cross. In these coming weeks may we further ponder the many implications of the cross and its centrality for the church.

Matt Wigton



Scripture Guide

The following scripture passages are listed in the Lectionary for the Sundays from March 15 through May 10, 2009. Our scripture readings will come from these words.

March 15 (Third Sunday in Lent)	Ps 19; Ex 20:1-17; 1 Cor 1:18-25; Jn 2:13-22
March 22 (Fourth Sunday in Lent)	Ps 107:1-3, 17-22; Nmb 21:4-9; Eph 2:1-10; Jn 3:14-21
March 29 (Fifth Sunday in Lent)	Ps 40:1-11; Jer 31:31-34; Heb 5:5-10; Jn 12:20-23
April 5 (Palm Sunday)	Ps 118:19-29; Mark 11:1-11; Jn 12:2-16
April 12 (Easter Sunday)	Ps 118:1-2, 14-24; Acts 10: 34-43; Jn 20:1-18; Mk 16:1-8
April 19	Ps 133; Acts 4:32-35; 1 Jn 1:1-2; Jn 20:19-31
April 26	Ps 4; Acts 3:12-19; 1 Jn 3:1-7; Lk 24:36b-48
May 3	Ps 23; Acts 4:5-12; 1 Jn 3:16-24; Jn 10:1-18
May 10	Ps 22:24-30; Acts 8:26-40; 1 Jn 4:7-21; Jn 15:1-8

*Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the Earth.
Matthew 5:5*



March 2009 Word Scramble

Unscramble the following words. Each word is related to the celebration of Easter.

1. rtsEea 2.sCsor 3.sJesu 4. ulPmaySdna (2 words)
5. tuaSsrLpep (2 words) 6. nLet 7. ecrunsRioert
8. obmT 9. remsulaeJ 10. rddGaioyFo(2 words)

Answer Key: 1.Easter 2.Cross 3. Jesus 4.Palm Sunday 5.Last Supper 6. Lent 7. Resurrection 8. Tomb 9. Jerusalem 10. Good Friday

Where Do We Fit -- As Individuals and As a Church?

Affiliated faiths

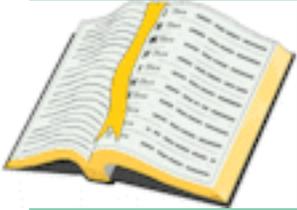
A new survey shows more Americans say they have no religion.

Adult religious tradition*



*Figures don't equal 100 due to rounding

SOURCE: Trinity College AP



According to a survey recently published by the Associated Press and attributed to Trinity College, fewer Americans identify themselves with organized religious groups, than did seven years ago. Whatever the conclusions various authors may draw, the survey contains food for thought.

Baptists are not clearly identified as to their sub-divisions but we know that our belief structures vary widely. American Baptists might more properly fit within the "Christian (mainline)" category. Individual members of our church range from describing themselves as born-again or Evangelical Christians to non-denominational.

Perhaps First Baptist's greatest strength is that we hold diverse beliefs within our Christian faith, yet have managed for 200 years to be a church family. The full article is worth reading and can be found at www.americanreligionsurvey.org/

2009 Leadership of the Church

Merle (Skip) Pimentel,
Matthew Wigton,
Ruth Bowers,

Interim Pastor
Candidate Pastor
Music Director

Karen Koerth
Andrea Brown
Elizabeth Malcolmson
William Brown
Suzanne Blake
Gail Zeman
Sheryl Reed
Louise Marshall
Barbara Sawyers

Clerk
Treasurer
Collector
Benevolence Treasurer
Head Usher
Moderator
Christian Education Chair
Music Committee Chair
Nominating Committee Chair

Board of Deacons

Jim Koerth
Janet O'Donnell
Laura Ferazzi
Kay Bannon
John Malcolmson
Diane Lynn

Board of Stewards

Anita Scatterday
Terry Schwenk
Nancy Pallazola
Jason Moore (Sub to ratification)

The Honor of Your Presence is requested at
a Dinner celebrating the
**200th Anniversary of the
First Baptist Church of Rockport**

Saturday, March 28, 2009

5:30 PM

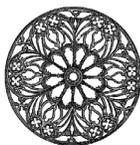
Ventres Chapel

First Baptist Church

Rockport, Massachusetts

Please bring:

- Memories and momentos of your experiences at First Baptist Church and with the First Baptist Family
- 'Sunday Best' dinner place settings for yourself and your guests



RSVP if Attending

to Gail Zeman at 978479-5302

or zemang@verizon.net

**Give
us this
day our
daily
bread.**

Mt 6:11

The 20th Anniversary Committee has planned a very special evening for the family and friends of First Baptist, on Saturday, March 28. In addition to bringing memories and thoughts to share with others, please bring plates, flatware, cups and glasses for yourselves and guests. (No cost, no waste, no dishwashing!) We look forward to a great evening!

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

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



Calendar and Events

For full church calendar, see CALENDAR tab on website.

Sundays: Sunday School (all ages)	9:30AM
Worship	10:30 AM
Fellowship	11.30 AM
Mondays: Choirs Rehearse	7:00 PM
Alternate Tuesdays: Bible Study	7:30 PM
Wednesdays: Bible Study	9:30 AM

Sunday, Mar 15	Worship	10:30 AM
Sunday, Mar 22	Worship	10:30 AM
Saturday, Mar 28	Anniv. Dinner	5:30 PM
Sunday, Mar 29	Anniv. Worship	10:30 AM
Palm Sunday, Apr 5		10:30 AM
Maundy Thursday, Apr 9	Service	7:30 PM
Good Friday, Apr 10		
	Sanctuary Open	10 AM - 5 PM
EASTER SUNDAY, Apr 12		
	Headlands Sunrise Service	6:30 AM
	Easter Worship	10:30 AM
Tuesday, Apr 14	Board Mtgs	7 & 730 PM
Sunday, Apr 19	Worship	10:30 AM
Sunday, Apr 26	Worship	10:30 AM
Sunday, May 3	Worship	10:30 AM
Sunday, May 10	Worship	10:30 AM

Return Address:
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