



High Tidings Online

FIRSTBAPTISTROCKPORT.ORG

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FIRST
BAPTIST-
CHURCH
OF
ROCKPORT

2 HIGH ST.

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Presence, Prayer and PURSE

Pastor's Message

With November comes leaf raking, voting, Thanksgiving, and a sure sense that winter is not far away. In many churches November also brings a fresh thinking about stewardship and how well we, as persons, are doing in terms of responsible giving to help sustain the life and mission of the church.

Here at First Baptist it is especially important as we continue in transition. We have chosen a specific direction in which to move by our calling of Matt Wigton as mentoring student with the plan to call him as pastor next spring. At that time there will be a specific increase in the cost of pastoral support.



Pastor Skip reads from the hymnal.

We have a couple of options. We can sit back and

(Purse, cont. on pg 2)

Meet Matt and Megan

The Board of Deacons and Interviewers is delighted to introduce to the congregation, Mr. Matthew C. Wigton and his new bride Mrs. Megan (Campbell) Wigton. Following a two-month interview process, the Committee selected Matt by acclamation to be our new Candidate Pastor. He enthusiastically accepted.

The role of candidate pastor is described by the Deacons as being different from the traditional student pastor. Matt will be compensated by rent-free use of the parsonage and will perform additional duties for our church. The Deacons hope that upon graduation and ordination, the Lord will bless a continuation of Matt's work in the full role of Pastor. Meanwhile, our Interim Minister Skip Pimentel will continue in his position, with the added duty of mentoring Matt. The one-year contract between the Deacons and Matt calls for periodic evaluations that will include input from the congregation

Matt grew up in Columbus, Ohio and received his Bachelor's degree from Ohio State University in political science in 2005. He expects to earn his Master of Divinity degree from Gordon-Conwell early next year. His stated objective to the (cont. on page 2)



We are a
COMMUNITY
CHURCH that is a
COMMUNITY.

VISITORS ARE
EXPECTED!!

....PURSE Cont. from pg 1

let the interest and principle of our endowment cover us until it is gone, or we can take more seriously our faith and claim to be followers of Jesus, and give a larger percentage of our income to move the life and mission of First Baptist into a lively and hopeful future.

The challenge looks something like this: to seriously pray and discuss with God what God thinks is a right amount for me to give; to figure the percentage of my income that I now give to First Baptist and to commit to an increased percentage in 2009.

There is a lot of passion about money around the globe these days. There is passion about money in our communities and in our families. It would be a good sign if we became passionate about money at First Baptist.

Your friend and interim pastor,

Skip

Rockport Baptist Church members are those who support our mission through their Presence, Prayer and Purse.

Matt and Megan, Cont. from pg 1

Deacons was to renew the church in New England, through biblical teaching, evangelism and discipleship.”

Megan is employed as Administrative Assistant to the Dean of Chapel at Gordon College. She expects to receive her Master of Theology from Gordon-Conwell in 2009. Megan was raised in Alaska.



Matt and Megan at their wedding, October 17, 2008.

Having originally looked toward a career in law and politics, Matt worked during college for a political consulting firm in Columbus. He explained that his call to ministry took place over time, as he came to realize that it's not possible to make a difference in the souls of men and women, and thereby effect fundamental change in our society, through governmental institutions. Working with Campus Crusade for Christ at Ohio State, at Brown University and in Nice, France, he became aware that people's receptiveness to the Word was very different in different parts of the country and Europe. He views New England as being in need of missionary work, as much as other parts of the world, though of a different kind. That's why he chose to come to Gordon-Conwell and to begin his life of ministry in New England.

We welcome Matt and Megan and look forward to Matt's leadership, vision and encouragement in our walk with the Lord.

1808-2008: Two Hundred Years of Christian Faith

Our anniversary year, 2008, is a special time when we celebrate the cross-over between old and new, tradition and transition, familiar and unfamiliar. As it happens, several things in the life of the church are changing this year.

- We have an interim pastor, Skip Pimentel, and have just brought into the church family a new candidate pastor, Matt Wigton.
- The church leadership held two retreats to discern God's purpose for First Baptist, Rockport as we move into our third century..
- We renewed a long tradition in the spring of holding a Ladies' Tea using our elegant and historic cup and saucer collection.
- We have new Bibles in the pews.
- We dedicated new hymnals on October 19 at an old fashioned hymn sing and ice cream social.
- The Choir and Bell Choir have a new look with fresh blue robes. (Forty years was enough to expect from any piece of clothing!!!)
- Late last year we learned of a bequest that puts the church's finances in better shape for the near future. If we use these funds wisely and improve our current giving, this fund will help us into the future.
- The church building has undergone structural repairs and now wears a beautiful new coat of white paint with our traditional green trim..
- The church has a website at: firstbaptistrockport.org/ and
- THE HIGH TIDINGS** goes online. We will continue to distribute or send The High Tidings to members and friends for whom we don't have email addresses.



A quartet of Tea Ladies:
(clockwise from left) Barbara Sawyers, Sue Blake,
Mary Rees and Pat Terry.

**A two
hundred
year old
church
celebrates
two
thousand
years of
faith in Our
Lord Jesus
Christ.**

**May the Lord bless our church, our church family
and all who do the work of Christ.**

Stewards at Work



*We will not
neglect the
house of
our God.*

Neh 10:39

The following is a brief summary of the works completed, in progress or about to be started which have been overseen by the Board of Stewards for the period of June through September of 2008.

The following work was done to the exterior of the church prior to painting.

- Repair or replacement of all visibly rotten siding
- Replacement of rotten gutters
- Replacement of missing or non-functioning downspouts
- Replacement of all visibly rotten trim
- Repair of all noticeably damaged flashing

The exterior painting of the church is completely finished!

Other issues regarding the church include the following.

- Work on the upstairs bathroom entailed mold removal, painting, and preparing the floor for tiles.
- A ventilation problem in the attic is being fixed.
- After meeting with a web designer, John and Elizabeth Malcolmson offered to create and maintain the website.
- The pulpit floor has been repaired and we are no longer in danger of losing the choir in the baptismal.
- The roof was fixed and repair of the water damaged ceilings and walls will begin in the upcoming months.
- Many small jobs have been addressed such as fixing windows, doors, thermostats plumbing and so on.
- Extensive repair of the parking lot including fixing the drain under the parking lot and major leveling of the parking surface.
- The Parsonage was made ready for the Wigtons to move in.
- All exterior lights of the church will be replaced as needed.
- The "Letter Sign" at the front of the church was repaired.

A special thanks goes to our anonymous gift givers. The congregation would be astonished to know how many needs are met by these silent disciples.

Advent Event

- WHAT: Crafters' Fair, Gently-used Gift* Swap and Decorating Party
- WHEN: Sunday, December 7, right after worship
- WHERE: Ventres Chapel
- WHY: Because it's the CHRISTMAS SEASON
- HOW: With hearts and hands and voices we'll make ornaments, sing carols, refresh with a light lunch and be a community that knows how to really celebrate HIS coming!

*We all have more **THINGS** than we need, or even want. However, your gently used winter scarves, children's clothes, a nice (but too small) sweater, or note paper that you'll never use.....could be someone else's treasure. Bring a thing and take a thing; bring two and take two; bring some and take none – it's your choice. The only rule is to bring something of a quality you'd like to receive....as in "*give unto others as you would have them give unto you*". One of the Crafter's Tables will be set up to display our swapping items. We hope it will be empty by the end of the afternoon, but if not our unneeded things will go to the Salvation Army for those who do need them.

Other Crafters' Tables will feature Christmas Tree decoration making, bow tying, jewelry stringing, and MANGERS. (Come, if you're curious.) During the Fair we'll also put up our wreath and the trees and lights, and make our church festive or the season.

**Now thank
we all our
God, with
hearts and
hands and
voices!**

Save the Date, December 7

Hymn Sing and Ice Cream Social

On October 19th it was a cold Autumn day outside and not quite the day for ice cream but inside the First Baptist Church it was very warm with good cheer as a small group gathered to dedicate our new hymnals, enjoy a good ice cream sundae with all the fixings and sing all our favorite hymns and to learn some new ones.

Skip Pimental opened with a word of prayer and dedication and music filled the sanctuary for over an hour. Thanks to the Music Committee and 200th Anniversary Committee for putting on the event and to Ruth Bowers who played the organ and Laurie Tuck who played the piano . A good time was had by all!



Louise Marshall serves ice cream — always a favorite.

Concerning the relevance of Seminary and the Church...

For many today spending three years studying ancient writings, church history, counseling and other aspects of ministerial preparation would seem to be a dreary affair. At times it has been hard work, but overall my three years at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary have been a tremendous experience. There are several key principles that the last three years have taught me and that I trust will serve as central in future ministry.

God's Grace

The Bible paints the picture of the Triune God who is patient with his people, time and time again withholding his judgment, desiring our repentance and worship. In Jesus we see the ultimate revelation of God and the hope for humanity. In my years of study I have been continually confounded by the marvelous nature of God's grace in my own life and believe that this is to be the impetus for ministry.

God's Word

In the rapidly shifting culture, there exists a myriad of voices calling for our allegiance. A vital aspect of the uniqueness of the "Church" is that we view the Scriptures as "God's self-disclosure in human history and as the authoritative basis for its doctrine and practice." Seminary has given me valuable tools in the study of Greek, Hebrew, Theology and Church History which will guide me in the teaching of the Bible. Dr. Tony Pappas (executive minister of TAB-COM) sums it up well when he writes "I believe that the secret to our future glory in service to Christ's Kingdom—as a denominational family and as a local congregation—is more to be found in the Scriptures than in our past activities!"

God's Mission

Through studying the history of the Church, the global Church and its present state I am more convinced than ever of the important role that the Church is to play in the world. The reason I entered Seminary is because of a profound conviction that the Church finds its identity in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is the good news of Jesus that the church is called to proclaim and live out in the world.

Throughout the many long nights of studying in Seminary, these three truths have continually resonated as imperative in my service to the Church. In the days ahead, I am aware that there will be many occurrences for which Seminary did not specifically prepare me, but I am certain that in that in these times I must rely on God's grace, word and mission.

Matthew Wigton
November 2008



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Rockport, Massachusetts**

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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 Ave. in Rockport on your right.



**Barbara Pimentel and Sheryl Reed sing
(or talk) at summer Choir gathering.**

**2008 Leadership of the
First Baptist Church,
Rockport, Massachusetts**

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Merle (Skip) Pimentel, Interim Pastor
Matthew Wigton, Candidate Pastor
Ruth Bowers, Music Director

Board of Deacons

Jim Koerth, Chair
Kay Bannon
Suzanne Blake
Laura Ferazzi
Janet O'Donnell
Benjamin Reed
Mary Rees



Board of Stewards

Jim Rees, Chair
John Malcolmson
Anita Scatterday

Officers

Andrea Brown, Treasurer
Bill Brown, Benevolence Treasurer
Elizabeth Malcolmson, Collector
Karen Koerth, Clerk
Gail Zeman, Moderator
Louise Marshall, Music Committee Chair,
Barbara Sawyers, Nominating Committee Chair
Sheryl Reed, Church School Chair

Ministers and Fellowship

The Congregation

Calendar and Events

See CALENDAR tab on website for details.

Sundays: Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Fellowship 11:30 AM

Wednesdays: Bible Study 9:30 AM
Sunday, Nov. 23 Thanksgiving Service
Sunday, Dec. 7 Advent Event
Sunday, Dec. 21 Christmas Service
and Caroling

Wednesday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service,
7 PM

Wednesday, Dec. 31 First Night Celebration

Retreats to the Beach

Rockport Baptists found a special way to enjoy God's world during two retreats, hosted by Andy and Louise Viestra at their summer home on Long Beach. In May, and again in October, day-long gatherings of our fellowship met 'at the beach' to study and discuss how God is working in our church.

Using the church building guide The ABC's of Natural Church Development, participants spent the May retreat day identifying the top three priorities for First Baptist. They decided upon:

- 1 Becoming and staying more Christ-centered
- 2 Working at discovering gifts and using them in the life and mission of our church
- 3 Working at making disciples who are learning and growing

Following a lunchtime break, the group returned to develop the strategies for achieving these priorities.

1. To be more Christ-centered we will
 - Beef up Christian Education
 - Maintain Christ-centered worship
 - Develop during-the-week devotional times
 - Encourage study and fellowship groups
2. To develop and use gifts we will
 - Create a website
 - Get to know each others' skill and interests better
 - Create opportunities to use members' gifts
 - Create settings in which to try these gifts
 - Organize an active library
3. To make disciples who are learning and growing we will
 - Look to additional church support
 - Develop camping opportunities
 - Include a discipleship moment in worship
 - Consider accountability groups.



During the October retreat members spent time discerning God's future for First Baptist and identifying our passions to make His will live in our fellowship. The brainstorming session that followed this charge was exciting. Dozens of ideas flowed from the group of about 15 people that they were organized into four categories:

- 1 First Baptist's Life is characterized by a welcoming fellowship, vibrant music, the joy of His presence, and making the word relevant in the congregation including families and youth and in the community.
- 2 First Baptist's worship includes scripture, prayer and meditation, music, and a lesson to serve us during the week.
- 3 First Baptist's education will be guided by a Board of Christian Education and will include Bible study and memorization and will serve all ages in small group settings.
- 4 First Baptist's mission is to reach out to new and old residents, encouraging them to join our worship and activities, use the church building and follow the teaching of our Lord.

Some of the ideas have already brought fruit: the First Baptist website is up and running and many members' and friends' talents are being tapped in the celebration of our 200th anniversary.

The Pastor and Deacons hope to hold church retreats in the near future to continue the development of ideas to grow our faith and work.