

FELLOWSHIP BUILDER

The Newsletter of the
First Baptist Church of Beloit, WI

February 2010



*"Growing Spiritually
as Individuals and as a Church"*

Ministers Message

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny compared to what lies within us”

What lies behind us

To varying degrees, all of us are impacted by our past. When we think of the past we often go back to our childhood, but our past is also what happened yesterday. It is good and often nurturing to go back into our past and reflect on things that happened, people that we interacted with, events that we were part of, and to recapture a moment in time. What we can't do however is to let the past control us. No matter how badly that we want to go back to a more simple time or happier time, there is no way that we can live there. Memory allows us to travel back and it also allows us to draw upon our life experiences but it can't be our home. Life is moving on and so must we.

What lies before us

I recently was talking to a person my age and he was lamenting the issues of growing old and shared the names of many of our friends who were going through medical procedures. The aging process can certainly be daunting – all of us want to age gracefully and to maintain brain function. What lies ahead we can help to prepare for by getting in good shape and making wise choices, but even so we can't control what will happen. If we dwell in a negative way upon the issues that we face, it only makes it worse. The way to look at the future is stated in clearly in Proverbs 31.25, which is a proverb about a good wife who “laughs at the time to come” or another translation “is cheerful about the future”. We are not worry about that which we cannot control.

What lies within us

I believe that most people contain a much greater depth of character than what they give themselves credit for. Life is never “a walk in the park”- it is a series of steps forward and steps back, good decisions and bad decisions, positive and negative life experiences. Life presents on a daily basis opportunities and challenges. The Bible teaches that we are to live our faith by emulating as closely as we can the life and teachings of Jesus. The Transcendentalists of the pre- Civil War years taught that “each person has the inherent potential of mankind”. When potential is activated, great things happen. When Moses the stutterer stopped making excuses, he liberated his people from slavery in Egypt. When Saul allowed the Spirit to dwell within, he stopped killing Christians and became the most successful of all evangelists. When Nicodemus saw Christ, he climbed down the sycamore tree and changed his ways. We can be such a source for good in a world that is lacking leadership at almost every level. The best we have to offer Abraham Lincoln referred to as “the better angels of our nature”. Let us tap that spiritual reservoir that dwells within us and be proud of what lies within us.

“Someone has well said , ‘Success is a journey, not a destination’. Happiness is to be found along the way, not at the end of the road.”
Robert Updegraff

Sermon Summary

“A Bridge Over Troubled Waters”

Text: Romans 12.9-21

Commentary: Paul is sharing his version of Rules for Christian Living. His words are in response to questions about what it means to be a Christian. For those followers of “The Way”, it was critical that people who don’t know Christ might better understand what he expects of his followers. We are called “to be sincere in our love for others”. If we are sincere, we will do the right thing- we will act the right way. Essential to be a Christian is to have the gift of hope- we are a people of hope. Paul devotes a large part of the passage with words explaining how we are to treat people who either don’t like us or treat us badly. We are called to respond with kindness for we will not change people with revenge but with love. The word “respect” is at the very core of how we should treat ourselves and how we should treat others.

Major Points

1. Our world and sometimes our life know what it means to have troubled waters.

- Troubled waters come in many forms – earthquake in Haiti, loss of a job, relationship issues, health concerns, and the list goes on.
No limit to difficulties.
- There are times when we have to decide how we are to handle our troubles waters. There are times when we have to wade through and other times when we have to build a bridge. Different issues require different responses.
- Paul shares with us that in life our relationships with others will not always go well, but there is a way to treat people and Christians are to follow it.

2. A bridge is something that spans a distance and allows safe passage across.

- The distance between the two may be sizeable or may be relatively short. We know that it is better to start building the bridge earlier rather than later.
- Some people have trouble with bridges – they freeze up and are unable to continue. There are people however who are good with bridges and willing to help the frozen person along to complete the journey.
- The famous song “Bridge Over Troubles Waters” has a line which states that a friend is “on your side”. In the most difficult moments of life, we need help and we must be willing to accept that help.
- With help whether from friends or a professional, we can stay above the troubled waters and start to make our way back into what we know our life should be.

3. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. served as a bridge and moved our society to a much better place.

- To be Black in America for such a lone time was to be a second-class citizen without rights. Segregation was an insidious disease that robbed America of its greatness.
- MLK had a choice of pastorates and decided to take the one in Montgomery, AL. He could have had a much easier life up North, but he wanted his life to make a difference.
- Change is seldom easy and societal change is especially difficult. The 1960’s was a decade of great turbulence and violence. Older Americans wondered if America was heading in the wrong direction.

4. There are times when we are to help build the bridge and other times when we are to walk across it.

- Each experience can be some of the most important steps that we have ever taken. With God’s help we move forward to make our life and others better.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

CIRCLE OF CONCERN – Mary Clowes, Helen Collins, Doris Griffin, Al Huffman, Teri Kinsella, Cecil Montoya, George Smith, Ricky Thompson, Shirley Welsh, Jan Wenman, and Craig West.

Our prayers for Myles Mason and all people serving in the military.

Our heartfelt prayers and sympathy go out to the family of Allen Gummow who passed away January 7th. May his wife Naomi, sons Stephen and Kevin, daughter Susan and daughter in law Sara feel the love of the Lord and friends during this difficult time.

Our heartfelt prayers and sympathy go out to the family and friends of Jessie McClure who passed away January 13th in Katy, TX.

*To our Friends at First Baptist Church, We are most grateful for the condolences, plant and expression of caring by the congregation. Foremost to our minister, Rev. Gene, for the years of visiting and encouragement. Our Christian Love,
Naomi, Steve, Kevin and Susan Gummow*

2010 Worship Bulletin Recognition – To purchase a Sunday bulletin(s) in memory or honor of a loved one or a special occasion. Dates are available throughout the year. Please fill out the white form that is on the narthex table and leave it in the office with your check for \$15 in the tray on the back counter labeled Office Administrator. Kathie will notify you the date(s) you have chosen are taken. **If there is a specific date you would like be sure to request it early.**

The people in your life are like the pillars on your porch. Sometimes they hold you up, and sometimes they lean on you. Sometimes it's enough to know they are standing by.

Merle Shain (1935-1989) Writer



Dear Church Family, Don and I wish to thank you for the many ways you have helped us during our health problems. We appreciated the many prayers, cards, visits, Christmas gifts, and Rev. Gene's going the extra mile to help us also.

Aline and Don Koebernick

Dear Christian Family, As Al continues his journey with his knee infection and healing we want to thank you for your prayers and concern. When his infection is cured he'll have a new knee inserted again and by spring walking on two legs. We look forward to being among our church family soon. Words are again so inadequate for expressing our feelings for all of you!!

Judy and Al Huffman

I would like to thank my church family and friends for making my 80th Birthday Celebration on January 3rd such a happy occasion for me. I am especially grateful for my extended family of the Smiths.

Una Shultz

To Rev. Gene and all my Friends from the First Baptist Church, I want to thank you for all the visits and gifts while I was recuperating at Beloit Memorial Hospital and Fair Oaks. It made my time more enjoyable while I was there. The diaconates gift was especially appreciated.

God Bless, Isabelle Francis

Dear Church Family, Thank you so much for your continued support through the scholarship that you have provided me. My classes are nearing the end and to have peace of mind in knowing that you are helping me to attain this goal is heartwarming to say the least. Thank you again and God Bless, Mark D. Maxted

Dear Church Family, Once again I am overwhelmed by your generosity your scholarship gift has greatly relieved the stresses of funding my education at Beloit College and my studies of peace and justice abroad. Words cannot express my gratitude.

Amanda Ward



Coffee Hour - Do you enjoy the wonderful fellowship in the Gathering Room following our worship service? If so, would you be willing to provide refreshments for this time of renewal just once during the coming year? Perhaps your family has a special occasion you would like to honor. Thanks to all who have done so in the past. Thanks to American Baptist Women and the church boards, committees and groups who share regularly. Several Sundays from April through December are available. Please call Kathie, 365-8455 or Sandy, 752-0095 if you are willing to help. Thanks to all.

Helen May Olsen Recognition/Farewell on Sunday, January 10, 2010



Helen May Olsen has moved to Crookston, MN to be closer to her family. Her new contact information is:

Helen May Olsen
The Summit
516 Walsh Street Apt. 105
Crookston, MN 56716

FEBRUARY MEETINGS

Wednesday Bible Study – meets weekly from 6:45-7:45 PM
in the Church Gathering Room

Rachel Circle – Tuesday, Feb. 2nd, 7:15 PM
Hostess: Jonnie Egleston, 1153 Hindsdale Ave.

Ruth Circle – Wednesday, Feb. 3rd, 9:30 AM at Max's Restaurant on Gardner St.
Hostess: Arlene Masear

Martha Circle – Wednesday, Feb. 3rd, 1:30 PM at church
Hostess: Connie Van Galder

BYKOTA – Saturday, Feb. 6th, 7:00 PM

AB Women's Ministry – Wednesday, Feb. 17th, Noon
Luncheon, Program and Meeting. Serving: Martha Circle

Board Meetings:

All Meetings at Church unless otherwise noted

Christian Education Bd– Monday February 1, 6:30 PM

Church Council – Monday, February 8, 7:00 PM

Diaconate – Tuesday, February 16, 7:00 PM

Missions Board – Sunday, February 14, 8:30 AM

Music Board – Sunday, February 28, 9:00 AM

Trustee Board – Sunday, February 14, 8:30 AM

GREETERS for February

February 7 Pat Fleming and Una Shultz

February 14

February 21 Una Shultz and Connie Van Galder

February 28

COMMUNION SERVERS for February

Carol Egleston, Connie Van Galder, Vivian Parker,
Ron Parker, Sue Strickler

COFFEE HOUR SERVERS for February

February 7 Allen, Sanders, Walsh Families
February 14 Rachel Circle
February 21 Gordy and Carol Alexander
February 28 Steve and Chris Woodard

TRUSTEES for the month of February

February 7 Bill Mentele
February 14 Dan Wright
February 21 Jodine Saunders
February 28 Jim Clowes

Trustee Area Assignments

Each Trustee has been assigned an area of the church to be responsible for, please contact the appropriate Trustee with your concerns. A list of the Trustee Area Assignments is posted on the Narthex and office bulletin boards.

Church Office

March Fellowship Builder information should be in the church office by Monday, February 15th. Thank you for your cooperation.

Recycle your Inkjet Cartridges - Please save your empty inkjet cartridges. We will turn them in for credit towards office supplies for our church. You may put your empty inkjet cartridges in the "Deposit" box under the hall table by the office door. Thank you.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember the Lord in everything you do, and he will show you the right way."
Proverbs 3:5,6

CHURCH EVENTS

Rachel Circle will meet on Tuesday, February 2nd, 7:15 PM. Hostess is Jonnie Egleston, 1153 Hinsdale Ave.

Ruth Circle will meet on Wednesday, February 3rd, 9:30 AM at Max's Restaurant on Gardner St. Hostess is Arlene Masear. Shirley Swanson will be doing devotions.

Martha Circle will meet on Wednesday, February 3rd, 1:30 PM at church. Hostess is Connie Van Galder.

American Baptist Women's Ministries – All women are invited to join us on Wednesday, February 17th at noon. Martha Circle will be serving lunch. The program is entitled "Becoming a Life Long Learner" SLU. Hope to see you there, and invite someone to come with you.



Youth will be doing the worship service on Sunday, February 28th.

30 Hour Famine will be March 12-13. Beginning at 6:00 PM on Friday, March 12 and concluding on Saturday at 5:00 PM.

Meetings are scheduled for:

Sunday, February 14 after church for a half-hour meeting to discuss the Youth Service.

Saturday, February 27 from 6-8 PM – Preparing for Youth

Service on Sunday, February 28th.

Youth Group continues to collect cans. Please contact Kent Maxted, 608-751-2886, if you have cans to donate.



COMMUNITY



First Baptist Church Blood Drive with Rock River Valley Blood Center will be Wednesday, February 17 from 1-6 PM. Please call Chris, 608.365.0934 to schedule an appointment.



February 21st is on the giving schedule as the day that the MISSION BOARD will focus on a local charity's needs. Our focus will be on the **Beloit Domestic Violence Center**. Below is general wish list of ongoing needs for this organization. A more detailed list will be posted on the church bulletin board. Please peruse this list and bring any items that you want to donate to the church on or before February 21st. A donation box will be located in the Gathering Room for your convenience. Questions can be directed to Jana Maxted at 728-1829. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Beloit Domestic Violence Center's Wish List of Ongoing Needs

Cleaning products, paper products, babies' needs, feminine hygiene products, toiletries, pain relievers, first aid supplies, school supplies, non-perishable packaged foods, and used cell phones with chargers for emergency use.



First Baptist Church Radio Outreach

Rev. Gene's radio program entitled "Pulpit Talks" airs on WGEZ (1490 am) on Sunday mornings from 8:00 -8:30 AM. Talks may also be heard at our website www.firstbaptistbeloit.org Please consider a gift to support our radio ministry (mark radio in the memo).



Library Corner by Jana Maxted

The parlor houses the books for adults; High School students and teenagers are located in the middle school classroom; Grade school and preschool books are located on the bookcase across from the nursery.

Check out procedure: Each book has a card in it which you can remove, sign, and place in the small file box. You can keep the book for as long as you like. When you return the book, place adult books in the basket in the Parlor all other age groups place on an empty bookshelf downstairs. This same procedure applies to movies/videos available for check out.

For Adults:

God Allows U-Turns by Allison Gappa Bottke

We all have faced tragedies, struggles, and heartaches. Through God's grace, we can all turn it around. This collection of stories, the third in the God Allows U-Turns series, focuses on stories by, about, and for women. Reading these stories will give you encouragement to know that your struggles are understood and that circumstances can, by God's grace, change for the better.

The Power of a Praying Husband by Stormie Omartian

Stormie helps men pray effectively for their wives and marriages. By sharing stories and examples from her own marriage, Stormie encourages men to lovingly intercede for their wives in every area of their lives, including priorities, emotions, motherhood, fears, and sexuality. With comments from well-known Christian men as well as a foreword by Stormie's husband, multi-Grammy winning music producer Michael Omartian; this is an ideal study for men wanting to develop the discipline of prayer.



Service Cancellation Procedure

In the event that the weather conditions are not the best, the Minister and Chair of the Trustees will decide whether to hold Sunday services. **The decision will be made by 8:00 AM**

You can find out about services by dialing our church phone number (608-365-8455) and listening to the message on the answering machine.

1. If the announcement states that the service is cancelled, then the phone tree will be implemented and we ask you to contact family and friends.
2. If the normal announcement plays after 8:00 AM, then we will be having services.
3. If we are having services and if you don't feel comfortable driving to the church, then you should stay home.