

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
515 N. LADD STREET
PONTIAC, IL 61764



Growing the Family of God

Telling the Story

Serving the Community

Nurturing Believers

In a culture where it is increasingly unpopular to be a Christian and go to church I discover that I *need* the church. That statement sounds trite to those of us who have a long history in the church, however we live in society where a majority of people profess faith, but feel no *need* to participate in organized religion. The institutional church as many of us have experienced it is considered by many anachronistic and completely out of touch with contemporary reality. Whether the criticisms leveled at the church are valid is not the question. There is no value in defending ourselves or trying to legitimate our positions. When peoples' minds are made up it is highly unlikely that we are going to change them with apologetics or rhetoric. However where rhetoric fails, action may prevail. Hence, my opening statement: I *need* the church. I *need* the church to equip me to face the increasing apathy and downright hostility that is often expressed by those outside the church.

I *need* worship in the community of faith. Hebrews 10:25 serves as a reminder that we are not to neglect meeting together. It is often said, "I can be just as a good a Christian on the golf course as I can in church." True. But only if you have first assembled with the believing body for the purposes of study, praise and prayer. We were not meant to live an isolated existence. We belong in community. Corporate worship is essential to our growth as the people of God. We *need* worship and we *need* small group instruction and fellowship. I can be a great Christian at work or the coffee shop only when I have met with the community of faith which supports trains and equips me to meet the world.

I *need* someone to pray with me and for me. In Matthew 18:19 Jesus declares: "truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." We *need* prayer partners. Yes, it can be intimidating, but it is powerful. A prayer partnership holds us accountable for our life in Christ. A prayer partner allows us to share our heart with another person who loves us and intercedes for us in that most crucial element of our walk with Christ.

The world *needs* Christ-followers who are genuine in their walk as well as their talk. Each one of us has at least one acquaintance outside the church that *needs* our prayers and encouragement. We need to be meaningfully engaged in the life of at least one person outside the church. This does not mean that we beat them over the head with a spiritual tract that screams of eternal damnation. It may not even mean that we invite them to church-at least not immediately. It does however mean that we honestly engage with them in their lives: their joys, disappointments and frustrations. People *need* relationship-not condemnation. To accomplish this I *need* the church.

From the Pastor (cont)

To meet the world means I first *need* to encounter the Lord of life. Worship and prayer are the tools that equip us to be the people of God in a rapidly changing, unchurched world.

Personally, I *need* the church. I bet you do too.

Jim

SECURITY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board of Ministries takes seriously concerns involving security and risk management. At the November meeting of the Board a committee was appointed to assess security issues and make appropriate recommendations. Among the concerns being addressed are tornados, floods, fire, medical, and active shooter. Plans will be implemented and you will receive instruction as to how to respond in each of these situations. We take your safety very seriously.

One immediate step is the placing of LED lights around the perimeter of the building. This includes adding new light fixtures to segments of the building that are not well lit at this time.

Another priority is replacing the doors on the north end of the building. These doors are old, rusted, and very difficult to lock. Frequent attempts to repair the locks have failed and the doors will be replaced. As we move forward with changes to our ministry schedule and building updates this is the next project that will be undertaken.

As a matter of policy all doors will be locked fifteen minutes after the beginning of any regularly scheduled activity. The gym doors will not be unlocked on Sunday morning.

There are some basic things that we can all do to protect ourselves and the church property:

- ◆ Lock the doors when you leave. Do not assume that someone else will do it. Take a moment to check the door to assure that it is in fact locked.
- ◆ Do not share the door code with persons outside the church family.
- ◆ Do not share the church key with persons outside the church family.
- ◆ Do not duplicate the church key.

Circle Notes

Dear Church Family,

The Esther and Ruth Circles would like to thank you for your support of last year's projects. We couldn't have done any of it without your support. Our ongoing project of non-perishable items for the food pantry is going very well and we will be working on bandages to send to Africa beginning in March. If anyone has used bed sheets, either white or pastel, we will be needing them.

We are always happy to welcome new members!

Again, thank you so very much and may God bless each of you.

In Christ,

Brenda Dodd, Chairman
Ruth Circle

IMPORTANT!

***The Board of Ministries
WILL NOT meet in
March.***

***Board of Ministry
meetings are scheduled at
seven 0'clock pm on the
second Thursday of each
month. This represents a
time change.***

***Meeting reminders WILL
NOT be sent unless there
is a change in the
schedule.***

To Know and Be Known

***Making our churches know and attractive
to our communities.***

Area III GRR Annual Meeting on

Saturday, April 14th
9:00 am - 3:00 pm

First Baptist Church of Peoria
401 W. Lake Ave.

Dr. Gene Crume, President of Judson University will deliver the keynote speech. Cost to attend this event is \$25 before April 1st.

After that the cost is \$30 per person. Registration forms are available at the church office, in the adult classrooms or by going to the abcgrr.org website.

Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the April newsletter must be submitted to the church office no later than Friday, March 16.

You may submit your items by phone (815.842.4321), fax (815.844.6943), e-mail (Rhonda@fbcpeoria.org), or by leaving them in the black box outside the church office door.



Know Your Branches



Name: Karen Nyi

What was the last thing you ate? Chili

If you could speak another language what would it be? Spanish. Our teenagers talk in Spanish and we have no clue what they are talking about. It only know the Spanish I learned from Sesame Street and they are way past that.

What is your secret talent? I can paint walls and don't need to tape the trim. Shai was impressed (which I considered to be a major accomplishment!)

Favorite Jim moment? Where to start...he is so ornery. Does that come as a surprise? His orneriness reminds me of my late grandpa, but Jim does not seem to appreciate the 'grandpa' reference.

Favorite singer of all time? Can't pick one, but favorites include Carole King, James Taylor, the Eagles.

Do you remember drive in movies? Yes, saw "Benji" at Tuscola drive in when my sister and I were small...we had to sit on stacks of catalogs to see over the front seat.

What makes you happy? 1. Enjoying the gift of each day. WE don't know when our last day is here. I try to make each day a good one. I like the idea of not waiting till I reach heaven to experience peace. Why not try to make it more like what we envision heaven is like while we are here? 2. A peaceful life. A favorite quote is "peace, it does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart".

Favorite place to pray? Outside. Hiking

Who would you talk to in the Bible if you could? Jesus on the topic of forgiveness and Cain and Abel. Cain especially. He has a lot of explaining to do.

Have you ever swallowed a bug? Yes and they have gone up my nose too.

Food Pantry Notes

The Esther and Ruth Circles are working on a project for the food pantry. They will be collecting an item (toothpaste, shampoo, soap, etc.) each month to share with the people who come to visit our food pantry. One item each month.

In March we will be collecting hand soap. If you would like to make a donation, please bring the specified items and put it in the box in the Narthex or in the gym.

On Our Volunteers and Support Systems!

One of the greatest assets to our church is the strength of our lay leaders and volunteers. As a congregation we compensate only six people. The vast majority of ministry is accomplished by volunteer laypersons who remain unsung and unacknowledged. Take a look around on any given Sunday and note how many lay folks are providing service. It's winter and you walked in on sidewalks cleared by a volunteer. Another volunteer handed you a bulletin. If your car was valet parked that too was done by a volunteer. Volunteers collected the offering. Every small group and Sunday Morning Connections group is facilitated by a lay member of the congregation. Laypersons commit themselves to visit homebound and hospitalized parishioners. The food pantry, one of our most vital outreach ministries is staffed entirely by volunteers. Simply stated: Ministry would not occur if not for a strong core of committed disciples who freely share their time and talents in ministry.

The professional staff is fortunate to be supported by a Staff Relations Committee who donate their time to liaise with staff members to assure that their spiritual concerns are addressed and provide support if conflict arises. The Staff Relations Committee has agreed to broaden their scope to include volunteers as well as paid staff. Members of the Staff Relations Committee will be available to listen to your concerns and offer support and encouragement as you serve in ministry. When difficult or conflicted situations arise members of the Staff Relations Committee will be available to mediate and attempt reconciliation. Volunteers are essential to the ongoing ministry of the church. This is an effort on the part of the Staff Relations Committee and the Board of Ministries to offer support and encouragement to all who serve in ministry.

Members of the Staff Relations Committee:

Mary Frobish
Patty Gray
Dorley Dodd
Clyde Francis
Don Schiff – Chair

SUNDAY MORNING CONNECTIONS

Sunday Morning Connections begins at 9 am and concludes at 9:45 am. Please be prompt in arriving on time and dismissing by 9:45 to allow participants adequate time to make their way to worship. If you are a leader and need to be absent please notify the Sunday Morning Connections Coordinator Joanne Perkins in time to secure a substitute leader.



March

- 2 Jim and Rhonda Hodges ♥
- 3 Jayme Soule
- 3 Patricia Shoop
- 6 Matt Highland
- 6 Robert Brackney
- 6 Donna Brackney
- 7 Rhonda Hodges ♥
- 10 DeWayne & Trudy King-Beller
- 11 Bethany Miller
- 12 Tyler Stewart
- 16 Todd Miller
- 17 Barry Schell
- 17 Aaron Waschle
- 17 Julia Bonnivier ♥
- 19 Erik and Chayla Mitchey ♥
- 22 Sheila Ferguson
- 23 James and Janice Letsos ♥
- 24 Amanda Krueger
- 27 Micah Hurd
- 29 Farrell Porter
- 31 Barry and Sue Schell ♥

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:00 pm Covered with Prayers 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Nyi) 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Tholen)	2 1:00 pm Lent Sm Group 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Gray Home)	3 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
4 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 4:00 pm Jr. ABY 5:00 pm ABK 5:30 pm Sr. ABY 6:30 pm Lent Sm. Group	5 7:00 pm Lent Sm. Group	6	7 9:00 am ROMEO Club 9:00 am Ruth Circle 10:30 am Grief Group 1:00 pm Esther Circle 6:00 pm Lent Sm. Group	8 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Nyi) 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Tholen)	9 1:00 pm Lent Sm Group 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Gray Home)	10 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
11 DST Begins 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 4:00 pm Jr. ABY 5:00 pm ABK 5:30 pm Sr. ABY 6:30 pm Lent Sm. Group	12 1:00 pm Single Women of Faith 7:00 pm Lent Sm. Group	13	14 9:00 am ROMEO Club 6:00 pm Lent Sm. Group	15 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Nyi) 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Tholen)	16 Newsletter Deadline 1:00 pm Lent Sm Group 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Gray Home)	17 St. Patrick's Day 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
18 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 4:00 pm Jr. ABY 5:00 pm ABK 5:30 pm Sr. ABY 6:30 pm Lent Sm. Group	19 7:00 pm Lent Sm. Group	20 First Day of Spring	21 9:00 am ROMEO Club 6:00 pm Lent Sm. Group	22 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Nyi) 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Tholen)	23 1:00 pm Lent Sm Group 6:30 pm Lent Sm Group (Gray Home)	24 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC
25 Palm Sunday 9:00 am SMC 10:00 am Worship 4:00 pm Jr. ABY 5:00 pm ABK 5:30 pm Sr. ABY	26 1:00 pm Single Women of Faith	27	28 9:00 am ROMEO Club	29 Maundy Thursday 6:00 pm Soup and Sandwich Dinner 7:00 pm Maundy Thurs. Svc.	30 Good Friday	31 7:30 am PK Fellowship at FBC 8:00 am PK Study at FBC

