



“SoJourn in this land, and I will be with you, and bless you!” (Gen. 26:3)

A Word from Wes

Howard Thurman seemed to especially love Christmas. He was a pastor, writer, and theologian of many years ago. Yet his words have that timeless quality that speaks to us in the here and now. His perspective is one that comes from the margins just as does the true message of Christmas. I would commend this prayer that is found in my well worn copy of his book, “MEDITATIONS OF THE HEART”.

Against the Background of the Year

Our Father, another Christmas has moved within our ken and our minds linger over many moments that stand stark against the background of the year

Moments that filled our cup of fear to the brim, spilling over into the byways of our mind until there was no longer room even to know that we were afraid-

Moments of decision, when all that we were, seemed to hang in the balance, waiting for a gentle nudging of Thy spirit to break the tie and send us on with a new direction, a new desire and new ways of life—

Moments of sadness, brought on by the violent collapse or quiet sagging of a lifetime of dream-building upon which our hopes and aspirations rested I sure integrity—

Moments of awareness, when our whole landscape was invaded by the glow of Thy spirit, making dead things come to newness of life and old accepted ways turn into radiant shafts of beautiful light—

Moments of joy mingled with the deadly round of daily living, when all our inward parts clapped their hands and a new song was born in our heart-

Moments of peace amid the noisy clang of many conflicts within and without—

Moments of reassurance, when we discovered that our searching anxieties were groundless, without foundation—

Moments of reconciliation, made possible by a deeper understanding and a greater wisdom—

Moments of renewal, without which life would have been utterly impossible and for us this day there would be no Christmas and no day -

Moments of praise and thanksgiving when, in one grand sweep, the sheer wonder and beauty of living overwhelmed us—

Our Father, another Christmas has moved into our ken and our minds linger over many moments that stand stark against the background of the year.

Best wishes to one and all for the Seasons of Advent and Christmas!

- Wes

SENDING PRAYERS TO OUR FAMILY OF **FAITH**

Please remain in prayer for these people who are or have recently been under doctor's care: Patty Babian, Ray Sharp, Collin Trask, Kelly Kestel, Vicki Schettling, Sandra Paran.

Please also keep in your prayers our homebound friends: Alice Adams, Enid Holliday, Norma Moore, Ray Sharp, Evelyn Morrell, Phil Lett, Frances Bramblett, Patty Babian, Margaret Edgington.

Frances Bramblett passed away on November 20. We keep her family in our prayers.

Continue prayers for Gwen Bache who is not well.

We keep Collin Trask in our prayers as he continues to work with his doctors.

Phil Lett has moved to Colorado to be closer to his family. We keep him in our prayers.

Congratulations to Pastor Babian and his wife Patty on the recent birth of their new grandson Emmerson Wesley Babian born to Ben and Angie Babian of Ohio.

Congratulations to Dillon Horn who finished the regular (Allen Park Tennis Team) season with a record of 23-3. His only losses were one in the regular season, a second round loss at the league meet and a third round defeat at the regionals. Dillon is the grandson of Bob and Pat Washburn.



Happy December Birthdays!

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| December 1 | Archie Black |
| December 3 | William Chartier |
| December 4 | David Drake |
| December 7 | Jon Burleigh |
| December 8 | Mark Sackett
Wendy Schaffer |
| December 10 | Marilyn Lin |
| December 12 | Tonya Cheney
Ray Gardner |
| December 14 | Margaret Edgington |
| December 16 | Robert Washburn |
| December 17 | Myra Trask
Christie Camaiore |
| December 18 | Janelle Jones |
| December 19 | Kelsey Darin
Glenn Howard
Marjorie Eberly |
| December 20 | Joyce Griffin
Kirk McWilliam |
| December 24 | Harriet Stewart |
| December 26 | Harriet Kleinfelder |
| December 27 | Chares Griffin |

2009 Officers: Moderator: Joan Trusty Moore; Vice Moderator: Dave Brault; Financial Secretary: Glenn Craig;
 Treasurer: Carol Olsen; Recording Clerk: Harriet Stewart; Membership Clerk: Kathy Charbeneau
 2009 Ministry Team Chairs: Jerri Poet (Deacons); Jodi Bly (Educational); Larry Phillips (Human Resources);
 Carol McWilliam (Physical Resources); Myra Trask (Stewardship); Robert Washburn (Outreach)

Published on the last day of the month by First Baptist Church,
 300 Willits, Birmingham, Michigan 48009-3300. (248) 644-0550
 Second Class Postage paid in Birmingham, Michigan.
 Notices for the SoJournal should be in writing to the Church Office.

Ministers All Members of this Church
 PastorRev. Dr. J. Wesley Babian
 Office Manager/PublicistLeslie Eldh Jaquez, M.P.A.
 Director of Music & OrganistJack E. Ellis, M.M.



Playground Progress!

Take a look at the progress we have made on the south

side playground. In the spring the children of Gateway Montessori School will plant a vegetable garden and flower beds!

Thank You!

Many thanks for all the cards, gifts and good wishes given to me on the occasion of my birthday. Thank you all for attending the party, too. I was so blessed to be surrounded by such wonderful family and friends.

Sincerely,
Virginia Brisendine

GLOBAL GIFT SHOP

We continue to receive new merchandise. Please be sure to stop by to see all the great items. Remember, your small purchases make a Big difference in the lives of many.



December Communion Offering Designated to ... The Detroit Baptist Manor



A Look at the Financials

As of October 31, 2009

Pledged Income Actual	\$158,627
Pledged Income Budget	<u>\$167,626</u>
Pledged Variance	(\$ 8,999)

Our pledged giving is behind.

YTD Total Expense	\$234,212
YTD Total Income	<u>\$231,827</u>
	(\$2,386)

Our spending is exceeding our income.

World Renowned Theologian Speaking at Birmingham Church

Walter Brueggemann, Professor Emeritus, Columbia Theological Seminary will be offering lectures at First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham.

Brueggemann is perhaps best known for his appearances with Bill Moyers in the PBS series "Genesis: A Living Conversation." The series explored stories found in the biblical book of Genesis and their possible meanings in today's world. Considered one of the world's foremost experts on the Old Testament, he has written or contributed to over 70 different works.

- Friday December 4, 9:00 AM
Practicing a Culture of Interpretation
- Friday December 4, 7:00 PM
Telling Tales of Agility
- Saturday December 5, 9:00 AM
Remembering Our Names
- Sunday December 6, 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM Worship
A Love Letter...Concerning a Work in Progress,

Lectionary texts: Luke 1:68-79; Luke 3:1-6; Philippians 1:3-11

All sessions are free.

For more information, contact Cindy Merten at 248-644-2087 x145

CONTEST

Calling All High School Students in the Classes of 2010 and 2011

Write the grand-prize-winning essay in the Baptist Joint Committee's fifth annual religious liberty essay contest—open to all high school students in the 2010 and 2011 graduating classes—and win a trip to Washington, D.C., plus \$1,000. The second place prize winner takes home \$500; the third place prize is \$100. All entries must be postmarked by March 1, 2010.

Here's the essay assignment: 2010 marks the 50th anniversary of presidential nominee John F. Kennedy's speech to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association about the relationship between his religion and his politics. The Roman Catholic politician spoke to the group of Protestant ministers about the ways his religion would—and would not—affect his decisions as president.

Discuss whether or not Kennedy was correct in advocating an absolute separation of church and state. Also consider the implications of his speech and how the principles he laid out are—or are not—followed by politicians and other leaders 50 years later.

Winners, who will be announced in the summer of 2010, will be featured in the BJC's flagship publication, Report from the Capital. The grand prize winner will also be recognized at the BJC board meeting in Washington, D.C., in October 2010. Guidelines, suggestions, requirements and contest forms are available from the [BJC Web site](#).

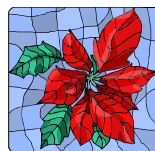
For more information, contact Cherilyn Crowe at (202) 544-4226 or ccrowe@BJCOnline.org.

GLOBAL GIFT UPDATE

Sitting in church reading about our Baptist Liberties on the cover of our church bulletin had me thinking about another liberty we have that we sometimes take for granted, Freedom of Speech. I am grateful that in the past two weeks three newspapers have chosen to mention Global Gifts. They had a choice to write about anything they wanted, and they chose our Fair Trade Shop. One article in particular was in depth and has generated tremendous support from the community.

What I find interesting is so many of the people we are supporting come from parts of the world where there is little freedom, of any kind. To be in this church, and to be an American Baptist is a great part of who I am. I do not take these liberties for granted. I am grateful for all who have volunteered to serve in the shop, and all who spend their dollars in the shop. You are making an incredible statement of faith. May God Bless us as we try to serve and empower those we do not know.

Blessings, Leona



Poinsettia Plants

Christmas plants can be purchased in honor or in memory of a loved one. The plants will adorn our sanctuary beginning Sunday, December 20th. Plants cost \$7.50 each. Cards are available in the Welcome Center.



Good Work!

Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard on our Fall Work Day. We accomplished much! Well Done!





Plans for Advent

Sunday, November 29 ~ First Sunday in Advent

December 5 ~ ABW Christmas Tea. We will host many in Fellowship Hall. 9AM to 1PM. Program, crafts and lunch. Please call the church office to RSVP.

Sunday, December 6 ~ Second Sunday in Advent. Special music in worship: "Holly & Ivy"

Sunday, December 13 ~ Third Sunday in Advent, Special Christmas B'Jazz Vespers, 6 to 8PM

Sunday, December 20 ~ Fourth Sunday in Advent, 10:30AM worship service, "Blue Christmas Service" in the evening

Christmas Eve Services, Family Service at 4:30 PM and Beautiful Candle-Light Service at 11PM

Giving Tree will be up soon. Please prayerfully consider your gift as we work to help the families at Judson Center this Christmastime.

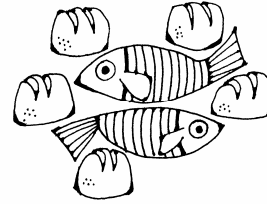
Potluck Christmas Dinner at Jim & Jerri Poe's December 19. Please sign up in the Welcome Center. Please bring a dish to pass. 6PM.

Advent Devotionals, Calendars Available in the Welcome Center.



Discipleship Journey

We had a good group in attendance at the first Discipleship Training session on November 13. Participants traveled to Southfield and experienced a Jewish worship service at temple Emmu-el. A second event is in the planning stages. Stay tuned.



Stewardship Campaign

If you have not submitted your annual commitment card to our Financial Secretary Glenn Craig, please do so soon. Thank You.

Thanks!

Many thanks to all who donated pantry items to Judson Center on Will Olsen Sunday.



JUDSON PRESS TAKES HOME NATIONAL BEST BOOK AWARDS

On October 20, 2009, USABookNews.com announced the winners of its National "Best Books" 2009 Awards. Among the winners and finalists in over 140 categories, three Judson Press titles were included:

- Profiles in Black: Phat Facts for Teens by Marvin A. McMickle won in the African American Studies category;
- Addicted to Hurry: Spiritual Strategies for Slowing Down by Kirk Byron Jones won in the Audio Book: Spiritual category; and
- Crazy Faith: Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives by Susan K. Williams Smith was a finalist in the Religion: Christian Inspiration category.

Ladies of FBC Birmingham

Dec. 5th from 9:30 to 12 our church will serve as host for the MDA Women's Advent Luncheon. Women from all over the Metro area will gather in Fellowship Hall to learn about Chrismos, visit the Global Gifts Shop and to enjoy fellowship over a light lunch.

The ABW Food Committee will prepare the luncheon, but we need your help. We are hoping each of you will come not only to enjoy the fellowship, but to serve as hostesses AND to bring 2-3 dozen Christmas cookies to use as dessert.

Several of our young women and girls will be helping serve the meal. This should be a wonderful way for us to move into the Advent season.

Registration is \$8...that includes the luncheon, program and a gift Chrismos kit. You can pay your register fee on Saturday morning, but please call the office to let us know you plan attend **and bring cookies**, so that we know how many meals to organize.

We hope that you will all join us and that you invite a friend as we Celebrate the coming of God's son.

CROP Walk Report

The final figures are in for the CROP Walk held in October. Thanks to all of you who helped by walking and or raising pledges. Sadly the walks numbers were down \$10,000 from last year and almost \$35,000 from two years ago. First Baptist Church turned in \$1665.00 in funds raised. This is down almost \$1000.00 from the year just past. The money raised at the Birmingham - Bloomfield Walk will go to assist people all over the world and right here at home. Remember twenty-five percent of what was raised will stay and help Friendship House, South Oakland Shelter, Cass Community Social Services, Baldwin Center, Pontiac Lighthouse, and Grace Centers of Hope. Approximately \$1400. will be sent to each group. Please keep all of these organizations in your prayers as they work so hard to help so many in our community. If you have suggestions or connections with corporations or individuals who may be able to sponsor CROP Walk at the corporate level for the 2010 walk please let me know. Now is the time of year many corporations and businesses plan their future giving.

Thank you, Leona

The Wild Rice Moon

The Global Gift Shop has been carrying two products from Native Harvest for a few years now. Googling them online brought me to an article written in Smithsonian Magazine In 2007. A few excerpts follow.

"Come September in northern Minnesota, on lakes on the Ojibwa lands, harvesters, two per canoe, pole through thick clusters of wild rice plants growing along the marshy shores. One stands in the stern like a gondolier, the other sits midships and uses a pair of curved cedar sticks top sweep the tall grasses over th bow."

This is fall on the White Earth Indian Reservation, where 50% of the people are unemployed. This is not commercially grown wild rice, this rice grows naturally in muddy shallow waters. Some of the people claim to be able to tell which lake it came from. I have a friend who lives in Duluth. A few years ago he spent the day gathering wild rice in this way. He beat a stick over the grain into the canoe for eight backbreaking hours. He claimed it was some of the hardest labor he had ever done.

Being out on the lake during the "wild rice moon" has been a custom of the Ojibwa people in this region for over 600 years. Many of the people on this reservation patch together a living from the earth. Their maple syrup and their wild rice are both offered for sale in the Global Gift Shop. Visit their website www.nativeharvest.com for other items offered for sale directly.



MERRY JAZZMAS

A special Jazz Christmas Concert

featuring:

- Paul Keller leader/string bass
- Paul Finkbeiner trumpet and flugelhorn
- Ben Jansson soprano, alto and tenor saxophones
- Terry Kimura Trombone
- Ellen Rowe Piano
- Jesse Kramer Drums
- Susan Chastain Vocalist

Dearborn Church Reaching Out to Muslims this Advent Season: Invites Community to Participate

First Baptist Church of Dearborn invites carollers to join in ANCHOR's Carolling Outreach Evening to the Muslim community on Saturday, December 12, 2009, at Dearborn Covenant Church, 18575 W. Outer Drive, Dearborn, MI 48128. Arrive no later than: 5:45 PM. All are welcome: Saturday, December 12, 2009, Dearborn Covenant Church 18575 W. Outer Drive, Dearborn.

Please arrive no later than: 5:45 PM. Return to the church for refreshments by 8:30 PM. Please bring your desserts to share with the other carolers.



Daily Prayers For This Month

Each morning when you get up, take a brief moment to say the prayer written below. See if, by the end of the week, having made this time for God's word, somehow, your life has changed for the better, your outlook has become brighter, your spirit, stronger. These prayers are taken from the "Seasons of the Spirit" lectionary materials.

November 29, 2009

Help us, O God, to discern the signs of our times with trust and hope. When everything seems confused, may we stand firm in your purpose and mercy. When nothing seems to change, may we move freely toward the coming of new days and new ways. Amen.

December 6, 2009

Prepare us to embrace your presence and your leading, O God of promise. Open our hearts to the words of your prophets, who bid us to journey in your wise ways of justice and peace. Amen.

December 13, 2009

Show us the way, O God, to reshape our lives to reflect your reign of justice and peace. Open our hearts to rejoice in renewed relationships, and send your Spirit to help us find direction and purpose in all that each day brings. Amen.

December 20, 2009

Teach us to sing your praise, O God. Teach us to sing with notes formed by hopes and acts of justice. Teach us to sing with harmonies shaped by mercy's wide embrace. Teach us to sing Mary's song of birth and rebirth for all creation in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Upcoming Sunday Morning Worship at 10:30 AM

November 29, 2009 ~ Advent I
“Sign of Things to Come” ~ Luke 21:25-36

December 6, 2009 ~ Advent II
“Make Ready” ~ Luke 3:1-6

December 13, 2009 ~ Advent III
“Look Forward” ~ Luke 3:7-18

December 20, 2009 ~ Advent IV
“Moving with Mary’s Song” ~ Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

SoJournal
First Baptist Church
300 Willits
Birmingham, MI 48009-3300
(USPS 528-560)

*Postmaster: Address correction requested within
30 days of mailing.*

Periodical

November 29, 2009