

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

Remember with Love ~ Give with Gratitude

Dear Friends,

“Thank You” check recipients and others who received financial assistance from the 2011 Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering were over whelmed by the generosity of American Baptist congregations in the midst of the most severe recession since the Great Depression.

George and Charlotte Gillespie, Moorestown, NJ wrote: “We deeply appreciate the members of our ABC congregations—many of whom may have been dealing with their own financial problems—who contributed to the RMMO out of their love, loyalty and faith.”

Thirty-eight percent was made available to people with emergency and other heavy financial needs, and 5% was used for administrative expenses.

Please join me as we *Remember with Love and Give with Gratitude* to those who have dedicated their lives to Christian ministry. Please make a generous contribution to the RMMO on Sunday, January 8, 2012.

Your gift makes a difference. Please use the enclosed envelope to share your gift.

Sincerely,

Robert Washburn, Chair
Outreach Ministry Team

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, and Esther Houstina.

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

Barbara Diederich passed away peacefully earlier this month. Please continue to keep her family in your prayers.

We continue in prayer for the Trask Family.

We keep Patty Babian and her family in our prayers.

Please keep our snow birds in your prayers: Phyllis Bourgois, Jack and Sally Casement, Dave and Shirley McEwen.

Sandy McMurray, Hazel Boltwood's daughter is receiving treatments. Please keep the family in your prayers. Her address is 95 Maplefield, Pleasant Ridge, MI 48069.



Happy January Birthdays!

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| January 1 | Eve Tyson |
| January 2 | Fran McEvoy |
| January 3 | Paul Arnegard |
| January 6 | Erik Arnegard
Jackie Nixon Turner |
| January 11 | Sue Charlick |
| January 13 | Leta Rensahw |
| January 15 | Elaine Blocher |
| January 16 | Collin Trask |
| January 19 | Paul Tyson |
| January 27 | Jonathan Nabors |



Annual Offering ...

We continue to collect our annual Christmas offering throughout the month. Please prayerfully consider your gift.



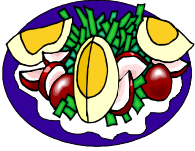
A Look at the Financials

As of November 30, 2011

Pledged Income Actual	\$158,581
Pledged Income Budget	<u>\$ 165,239</u>
Pledged Variance	(\$ 6,658)
YTD Total Actual Income	\$247,818
YTD Total Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 266,805</u>
Variance	(\$18,987)

For Your Information: Our Visioning Timeline

- January 2010: Church Council and Congregation set out on the visioning endeavor
- February – April 2010: Initial exploration of resources and planning.
- May 2010: ASK – a time devoted to prayer and discernment in May for visioning
- June 2010: SoJournal articles began to be written
- July 2010 – August 2010: Planning and preparation for Vision Sunday in September
- September 26, 2010: Vision Sunday was held
- October – November 2010: Council received preliminary data from Vision Sunday.
- December 5, 2010: A special session of Council met to work with the 230 statements, eventually identifying and organizing them into 31 sets
- January 2011: The report of the work of Church Council was distributed to the congregation
- February 2011: Ongoing communication with the congregation; the Council worked on the further consolidating other data from 31 to 5 items that were most affirmed by the congregation.
- March – April 2011: Lenten Prayer emphasis prominently includes Visioning
- May 2011: Council affirms presenting updates to the church at the June meeting a plan to hold summer Socials to build fellowship and to discuss the Visioning process
- June 2011: An update was given to the congregation as planned.
- July – September 2011: Summer Socials were held that gave further opportunity for input and assessment
- October 9, 2011: Learning Community time given to hearing the progress and for further input
- October 23, 2011: Vision Statement and three areas of focus presented to the church.
- November 2011: SoJournal article presents the Vision Statement and Focus Area. Further input was received at the Loyalty Dinner
- Council agrees to meet for further clarification as to the next steps.
- December 1, 2011: Special session of Church Council and staff met to select an action plan and Vision Statement to be voted on by the congregation in January.



ABW Lunch!

Tuesday, January 9 at
noon at the Clawson
Steak House!

South Oakland Shelter: Coming to FBCB in February

We will host this traveling shelter program again next year during the first week in February. There are many opportunities for the congregation to play a part of this important ministry of the church. Breakfast helpers, dinner helpers, building hosts and monitors, laundry duty and drivers are all needed to make this effort a success. Sign up sheets are outside the church office.

Global Gift Shop News

Our retail hours have ended for the year. We remain open after church and by appointment. First, I would like to thank Jackie for scheduling the volunteers this season. Second, I also would like to thank the volunteers who gave their time and attention to our Fair Trade shop. Thanks go to Carol Olsen, Carol McWilliam, Harriet Stewart, Katy Gentry, Barbara Campbell, Wendy Schaffer, Jodi Bly, Nancy Sharp, Doris Myers, Keely Tyson, David Brault, Eva Heugh, and Paige Moore. On our sub-list were Jerri Poe, Doris Myers, Nancy Nabors and June Nykanen. We would not have this mission without the commitment from our volunteers. Next, I would also like to thank all of you who made a purchase, told your friends and neighbors and promoted this mission!

Finally please remember the shop does not close throughout the year. If you are a member of a group that would like to meet and shop we would be happy to schedule a time to meet you at the church. Please remember to share the shops mission throughout the year to your friends, family, and neighbors. As soon as the final results are in for the 2011 year I will let everyone know. Blessings, Leona

Status: Capital Campaign to Replace Education Building North Entry Doors and Glass

As of December 20th, pledges for \$19,825 have been received toward the goal of \$21,640. **Additional pledges of \$1,815 are needed.** The project will commence when there are pledges to cover the cost of the project.

Please prayerfully consider making a contribution to help cover the cost of this important project. The replacement will provide much needed maintenance on the Education building and will improve the heating efficiency significantly. Additional project information and pledge cards are available at the Church Office or by talking to Jerry Mills, Physical Resources Ministry Chair.

Pledges can be made to Glenn Craig by an email message, a phone call, a text message or a contact on Sunday morning. All contributions should be made to FBCB with a memo: "Doors" on the check. Contributions should be sent to the Church Office or placed in the collection plate on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in transferring equity assets or IRA distributions to cover your contribution, please contact Glenn Craig.

Best Regards,

Glenn Craig, FBCB Financial Secretary - 248 842-0237/gfcraig@comcast.net
Henry Nabors, FBCB Stewardship Ministry Team/Assistant Financial Secretary – 248 258 5502
Jerry Mills, Physical Resources Ministry Team Chair - 248 540-3304/Jerry@millspills.com

Glenn Craig - 248 842-0237/gfcraig@comcast.net
Henry Nabors - 248 258 5502/hhnabors@ameritech.net
Jerry Mills - 248 540-3304/Jerry@millspills.com

Capital Project Seeks Your Support

We continue to seek financial assistance in replacing the Gateway door/wall project. Information about the project as well as giving / commitment envelopes are available in the Welcome Center. Please prayerfully consider your gift to this critical building improvement. Thank You!

Join Together for A Wonderful Exhibit: Detroit Institute of Arts ~ Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus

This program brings together for the first time many of Dutch master Rembrandt van Rijn's finest paintings, prints and drawings that portray Jesus and events described in the Bible. The exhibition of 64 works includes approximately 52 small, intimate paintings, prints and drawings by Rembrandt and his students that illustrate how Rembrandt broke from traditional 17th-century representations of Jesus. (ref: DIA.org)

Join us on Saturday, January 14, 2012 for lunch at the Traffic Jam restaurant nearby and/or the exhibit. The cost of the exhibit and general admission to the DIA is \$16 for adults and \$8 for youth 17 and under. If we have a group of 15 or more the cost will be less. We will eat lunch at noon and be admitted to the museum at 2PM. The under ground parking is closed so the parking location for the DIA is across John R. The parking fee is \$5.

Car pooling will be available and please don't let transportation come between you and experiencing this wonderful cultural opportunity in our area.



The Race Relations & Diversity Taskforce News

The Race Relations & Diversity Taskforce invites the public to its January 11 program "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" at 6:30PM. We will view this documentary film followed by a facilitated discussion with Rev. Sr. Daniel Buttry, Global Consultant for Peace and Justice for International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches. The movie chronicles the remarkable story of the courageous Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country. Free and open to the public. Meeting at the Community House in Birmingham.

Save the Date!

All are encouraged to attend the annual Camp Lael/Friendship House Comedy Fundraiser, Thursday, February 16, 2012, 8 p.m. at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle. Headliner will be Rocky LaPorte. Details to follow.



**Adult Learning
Community News**
Jim Poe will teach
again on January 8th.



Communion
Our January
Communion
Offering will go
in support of the Retired
Ministers and Missionaries
Offering.

The Giving Wreath

Many thanks to everyone who supported the Giving Wreath program this year for Judson Center. Sharing God's gifts with those less fortunate is truly a two-way blessing!

Warming Center Needs Donations

Once again this January, First Baptist Church, Ferndale, will open their doors for the first weeks of January for their annual Warming Center. The Church is in need of gently used blankets and socks.



Visioning

The FBCB long term visioning effort of the 2010 and 2011 is reaching its final stages. Following a special meeting of Church Council Team Leaders and church staff in December, we were able to select the action items that we believe God is directing us adopt. Assignments were made for the Ministry Teams and staff. The necessary budget changes to accomplish the action plan will be presented with the 2011 annual budget for approval by the Congregation at our January Annual Meeting. Everyone will have opportunity to discuss these items and their costs at that time. By presenting them here, you will have time to reflect and pray about your involvement in, and commitment to, the Action Plan activities shown below. Your continued prayer about the future outreach of this church and Gods' plan for the future activities of this congregation are urgently needed, and greatly appreciated by all involved.

Visioning Implementation Plan

Vision Statement: What God Would Have Us Do As A Congregation

The First Baptist Church of Birmingham will be a disciplined focused and prayerful congregation that is energized and mobilized by the spirit of God, so that lives are changed through sharing our love of Jesus Christ and our resources in our community and around the world.

Cultural Theme Actions

1. Host regular lectures or speakers bureau, at least quarterly, on both Biblical and Social/Cultural themes including such topics as urban development, environmental concepts, New & Old Testament issues, and even art topics and slide shows.
ASSIGNED TO EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY TEAM.
2. Host regular Sunday musicals in addition to B'Jazz, including organ recitals as an outreach to the entire community; this could be monthly or quarterly. ASSIGNED TO OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM AND STAFF.

Spiritual Development Actions

3. Create several volunteer missions teams to help out at various local mission, food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc. or even at our own church, on at least a monthly basis.
ASSIGNED TO DEACONS AND OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAMS.
4. Develop a special Bible based training session for youth and adults on numerous church topics by moving forward with "Journey's in Faith and Values". ASSIGNED TO EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY TEAM.
5. Conduct an evening Bible Study at the church with a paid promotional effort to attract participants from the whole area. ASSIGNED TO DEACONS MINISTRY TEAM AND STAFF.

Expand Youth Programs and Music Actions

6. Hire a Youth Leader to enhance and promote Christian learning. ASSIGNED TO EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY TEAM AND HUMAN RESOURCE MINISTRY TEAM.
7. Further expand existing efforts to engage our youth with mission activities and educational trips to various local and regional Christian endeavors. ASSIGNED TO EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY TEAM.
8. Modernize, update and utilize our use of electronic tools and applications on computers and cell phones including our website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, texting, e-mail, etc. and various apps that keep church members informed and connected. ASSIGNED TO OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM.

(The Visioning Timeline is available elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Living Water International Update

I received the following stories about the meaning and value of clean water from Living Water International and wanted to share them with you. They come from a special program started by LWI called "Choose Life". It is designed to collect money and drill wells to provide clean water that can reduce infant mortality in third world countries around the world.

"Intelligent, frisky and troublesome!" That is how Shekah Kargbos's school principal describes him. "He speaks five languages", his sixth-grade teacher adds with pride: Timini, Limba, Krio, Soso, and English. Shekah claims he's also a kung-fu master. He says he once walked to China to fight Jackie Chan; and won! While his kung-fu stories might be tall tales, Shekah really is a life-saving superhero. He fights baby killers, and he needs your help.

Diarrhea kills far more people in Shekah's native Sierra Leone than the country's infamous blood diamond wars. The victims are mostly babies, so Shekah is fighting back. He's taking the hygiene and sanitation lessons Living Water International taught him at school back to his village. Shekah works hard because he has a lot at stake; like his baby brother and his mom, whose heart he can't stand to see break.

Research shows that just a few strategies like hand-washing with soap, eliminating open defecation, and using oral rehydration solution can more than double the number of infant lives saved by safe drinking water. Working with schools and clinics enables Living Water to empower children and mothers to fight infant mortality with sanitation and hygiene efforts in their own villages. Nothing is more effective to save babies' lives and we need your help. We believe in the people we serve. We have seen their efforts transform their villages in ways that an outsider cannot.

In a nearby village we met Ayishatu Kamara. She is 26 years old, has a son named Ali, a daughter named Mary, and five friends who have watched diarrhea kill their babies. Ayishatu is not a victim. She is a life-saver and a hero. We need your help to work with more mothers like her.

In the developing world mothers work the fields, haul water, buy, sell, trade, chop, grind, cook, and save babies' lives every day. They deserve to know everything experts know about reducing infant mortality. Today, Ayishatu shares simple lessons about hand-washing with soap, oral rehydration solution, and other strategies proven to save babies' lives. She learned these life saving techniques at her local clinic where Living Water conducts workshops with hundreds of mothers like her.

Please celebrate mothers' love by helping us work with moms around the world to reduce infant mortality. Women already shoulder most of the burden of the world water crises. No mom needs the added heartache of losing an infant child. What mothers like Ayishatu need is the good news that God's love has so transformed us that it is spilling over to them. You can empower mothers to reduce infant mortality in their own communities through your giving. We know that every dollar invested in clean water and sanitation yields \$8 worth of time, productivity and health.

For pictures of Shekah and Ayishatu, and more stories about clean water wells, as well as ways you can help, go to www.water.cc/chooselife.



Our next B'Jazz Vespers
will be held on
Sunday, January 15,
5 to 7PM

Winter Weekends at Camp Lael

The theme for the 2010 Winter Weekends is "Leave Yourself Behind" based on Romans 12:1-2

February 3-5 Family Camp
February 10-12 Junior weekend for 3-6 grade
February 17-19 Junior/Senior High (7-12 grades)
February 24-26 Junior/Senior High (7-12 grades)
Speakers and Music leaders to be announced.

Cost: \$78 for students, \$68 for adult Chaperones.
Camp Lael is located in Lapeer about 60 miles north of Detroit. Cost includes two overnights, four meals, snacks, lodging and program.

Join in the Winter fun!



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.

December 25, 2011

We offer you a new song, God. It is a song of thanksgiving, a song of regret, a song of passion, a song of praise, a song of lament, and sometimes it is a song of joy. We thank you for the ways in which you hear our prayers, whatever their tone. Amen.

January 1, 2012

Thank you, Creator God, for the epiphanies you give us, generated from our recognition of your expansive and inclusive love for us, and for all creation. Teach us to serve you and one another as wise ones following the direction of your light. Amen.

January 8, 2012

Thank you, Parent God, for the stories we have of Jesus' life as a child and as an adult. Today we are reminded of the origin of our sacrament, baptism, which draws us together as brothers and sisters, part of families. May we learn to live in ways that are pleasing to you. Amen.

January 15, 2012

Help us understand, Gracious One, so our response to your call is clear. When we don't hear or heed you the first time, may you be patient with us, calling us again and again until our understanding is clear and our spirits ready to act in your will. May we see the wonderful creation that is us. We pray in the name of the Christ. Amen.

January 22, 2012

You seek us, Holy One, to be participants in the building of your reign on earth. When we hear your call we sometimes respond with "I can't" resounding in our hearts. May we remember, always, that with your call comes the promise of you being with us always. Amen.

Upcoming Sunday Morning Worship at 10:30 AM

Christmas Sunday
December 25, 2011
“Sing with Joy” ~ Psalm 98

January 1, 2012
“Called to Gift” ~ Matthew 2:1-12

January 8, 2012
“New Beginnings” ~ Mark 1:4-11

January 15, 2012
“Called and Recalled” ~ I Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)

January 22, 2012
“Moving Forward” ~ Mark 1:14-20

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

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

Periodical

December 25, 2011