

The First Baptist Messenger

Established 1836

Dr. Fred A. Malone, Pastor

Volume 2011

FEBRUARY

Issue No. 1

“Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus”

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

In our fast-paced life it is too easy to get caught up in the “things of earth” so that eternal values become blurred and almost forgotten. In 1918, Helen Howarth Lemmel, the author and composer of this hymn, was given a tract by a missionary friend. As she read it, Helen’s attention was focused on this line: “So then, turn your eyes upon Him, look full into His face, and you will find that the things of earth will acquire a strange new dimness.”

From that moment, both the words and tune of the chorus came to her “without conscious effort to put word to word to make rhyme or note to note to make music.” The rest of the verses were written that same week, with a continued sense of the Holy Spirit’s leading.

Since then, Helen Lemmel’s hymn has been translated into many languages and used by God to challenge believers around the world with the necessity of living devoted lives for His glory.

[Information taken from Amazing Grace by Kenneth W. Osbeck]

*O soul, are you weary and troubled? No light in the darkness you see?
There’s light for a look at the Savior, and life more abundant and free!*

*Thru death into life everlasting, He passed and we follow Him there;
Over us sin no more hath dominion---for more than conq’rors we are!*

*His word shall not fail you --- He promised; believe Him and all will be well;
Then go to a world that is dying, His perfect salvation to tell!*

***Chorus: Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.***

Read: Isaiah 45:22; Matthew 6:33, and Colossians 3:1-4



FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

175th Anniversary Year!!
First Baptist Church
Clinton, LA

Jud 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

On August 20-22, 2011, First Baptist Church of Clinton, LA, will celebrate the 175th anniversary of its founding. Our special preaching guests will be Geoff Thomas of Wales and Bill Ascol of Oklahoma. Both would have been welcome to the pulpit of FBC in 1836 when it was founded because they both hold to the common faith of the founders.

We look forward to this special weekend in August. We are "sprucing up," painting rooms, and doing other things to prepare for the celebration. But the most important thing we are doing is remembering for the future. We are remembering "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" 2000 years ago, affirmed by our founders, as the foundation for our future ministry.

1. First, we are remembering the founders of FBC. Ezra Courtney was the pioneer missionary who founded churches many Baptist churches in southwest Mississippi and southeast Louisiana. In 1806 he led these churches to form the Mississippi Baptist Association which FBC joined when founded in 1836. He also helped write the Articles of Faith which all these churches held to. Elder J. B. Smith, a friend of Courtney, was the founding pastor of FBC in 1836. He served as pastor for the first 18 years of the church.

Now, we remember those hardy pioneers who had a vision to establish a Baptist church in a Catholic area once ruled by Spain. Only 25 years before, Courtney was threatened with arrest for preaching to a small gathering of Baptists just north of Baton Rouge. But the freedoms gained when the West Florida Republic joined the United States in 1810 enabled Baptists to flourish in the area. Thus, FBC Clinton was established in 1836 when it cost to be a Baptist church.

2. Second, we are remembering the founding beliefs of FBC. When FBC joined the Mississippi Baptist Association in 1836, there were nine Articles of Faith each church had to agree with. They are found recorded in the original minutes of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Liberty, Mississippi, only fifteen miles away, which

Courtney founded and pastored in 1806. This was the "mother church" of all Baptist churches in the area.

These nine Articles outline "the Doctrines of Grace" which are now being revived in the SBC and other Baptist groups throughout the country. For brevity, they are known as "The Five Points of Calvinism" which are identified in bold letters as follows:

1. We believe in one true and living God; and that there are a trinity of persons in the Godhead-the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the same in essence, equal in power and glory.

2. We believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, are of Divine authority, and the only rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe in the fall of Adam; in the imputation of his sin to all his posterity; in the total depravity of human nature; and in man's inability to restore himself to the favor of God.

4. We believe in the everlasting love of God to his people; in the eternal unconditional election of a definite number of the human family to grace and glory.

5. We believe that sinners are only justified in the sight of God, by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is unto all and upon all them that believe.

6. We believe all those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are, in time, effectually called regenerated, converted, and sanctified; and are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.

7. We believe there is one mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ, who by the satisfaction which he made to law and justice, "in becoming an offering for sin" hath, by his most precious blood, redeemed the elect from under the curse of the law, that they might be holy and without blame before him in love.

8. We believe good works are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, are evidences of a gracious state, and that it is the duty of all believers to perform them from a principle of love.

9. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a general judgment, and that the happiness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will be eternal."

These "Doctrines of Grace" gave Ezra Courtney a missionary zeal to go to the wilds of Mississippi to preach the gospel, knowing that God is able to save His elect people no matter the opposition. These doctrines enabled J. B. Smith to found FBC as a church where God is loved and worshipped for His undeserved and unconditional grace.

As we celebrate our 175th anniversary in 2011, let us rejoice that God sent Pastor Bill Ascol to restore these founding beliefs which established FBC in the wilderness, which empowered her missionary zeal to send others to the mission fields and pastoral pulpits, and which assures us that Jesus Christ has been and will be successful in His mission: "I will build My church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

-- Pastor Malone



ARBCA Missionary Focus: Two reports from South America

CHILE – The Ramoses: Omar and Susana, Valentina, Daniel, and Nadia

Omar writes:

In October, we started a series of sermons on the book of Ephesians. As I began to analyze the book, the expression “grace and peace” in Paul’s greeting to the church jumped out at me. These words not only expressed the good wishes of the Apostle for them, but also contained a profound message of encouragement as he reminded them what, as believers in Christ, they already possessed. “Grace” reminded them of the great work of salvation that our Lord had done in their lives, that gift that they did not deserve but that God gave them in His infinite love. The expression “peace” had the purpose of reminding them that the enmity between them and God had been removed by Christ’s work of reconciliation for them.

What a marvelous privilege we have in Christ – this encourages and strengthens us to persevere in the work, carrying this message of hope to the lost. As a church, already constituted before God’s eyes and now legally recognized just last month by the Chilean government, we want to express our gratitude to God for His blessing and to all our brothers and sisters for your prayers and support. We are deeply grateful for the spiritual and numeric growth God has granted during this time and for the many contacts that we trust will bear fruit in new members for His glory. Our joy grows as we see many young people studying the doctrines of grace each Wednesday, desiring to apply them to their lives and to the lives of others around them. We ask your prayers for the upcoming conference with Pastor Tedd Tripp in March of 2011 in several cities in Chile – that God would cause this to bring blessing to many. I also beg your prayers for my wife Susanna and her health, which has been somewhat complicated recently, and for my entire family – that our testimony would be honoring to God and have profit for those who see us. We send our affectionate greetings. May the grace and peace of God rule in your hearts. *(Translated by Pastor Jim Adams, Cornerstone Church in Mesa, Ariz., sponsoring church for the Ramoses. Taken from the ARBCA Update, Fall 2010)*

ARGENTINA – The Molinas: Jorge and Bilma

Jorge writes:

The stream of God’s truth is becoming a river of grace. We are thrilled with some new people and a new outreach into our neighborhood. God is establishing His church in Argentina. What a privilege and joy it is to preach the Doctrines of Grace – the Gospel that is the power of God unto salvation!

Two new families have recently begun to attend. The Brito and D’avia families have embraced the teaching and taken ownership of the church’s vision. We look forward to adding them to our church membership and sharing with them in the Gospel labor in our neighborhood and families.

With the addition of these new families we have also begun a men’s discipleship ministry and a study through Tedd Tripp’s book “Shepherding a Child’s Heart” with the couples. This is in view of Ted Tripp’s visit and Shepherding Conference here in Argentina in March 2011.

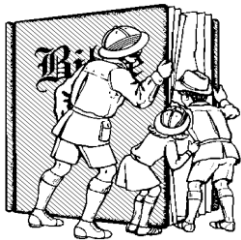
We ask prayer for our dear sister, Virginia Vagni, a member of our church who suddenly lost her husband, Bacilio, on Oct. 6. As I write, in these coming days, Bacilio’s funeral will be held and many unconverted family and friends will be present. Pray that the Gospel would penetrate their hearts and that the Holy Spirit would comfort Virginia in this difficult time ahead.

We are excited to have recently come in contact with a new congregation 550 km. (340 mi.) to the north of us that also holds to the 1689 Confession of Faith. The pastor of that work, Samuel Manfrotto, is coming down to meet with me and to speak in the church. An additional encouragement and blessing to us has been the fellowship with nearby church in Cordoba, where Sam Masters ministers.

I continue in my studies of “The Apostolic Foundation” and “Eschatology” (books by Dr. Jose Grau) under Dr. Jim Adams. Also available to me are the good theological courses offered by the William Carey Seminary in Cordoba. Pray for the retreat that is being planned for the end of March 2011 in Chile and Argentina and for the reformed leaders to work and pray together for an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon us.

Greetings to all our wonderful brothers and sisters of ARBCA. We love you and thank God for you! Please visit www.carlospazcordoba.blogspot.com for monthly updates, photos, prayer requests, and Spanish sermons.

“How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!’” Romans 10:15



Book Room Review

Jesus Loves the Church And So Should You

Studies in Biblical Churchmanship

By Earl M. Blackburn

From the back cover, by our own pastor, Dr. Fred Malone:

It is with the voice of thanksgiving that I commend Pastor Earl Blackburn's Jesus Loves the Church and So Should You. There is a warm recognition of the love of Christ for each of His individual sheep all the way through the book. But, with biblical clarity, Pastor Blackburn shines the light of Christ's love on His church, both universal and local. This latter emphasis is just what is needed by professing Christians all over the world, but especially in America. The rugged individualism and emphasis upon personal freedom in our country has seeped into the mentality of American Christians so as to diminish the importance in their thinking of belonging to and being faithful to a local church. This book challenges both pastor and people to have the same attitude toward the church that our dear Lord has as Head of each one. For "Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her," and so should we.

Dr. Tom Nettles adds:

I am impressed with the scope, depth, relevance, biblical fidelity, and infectious spiritual fervor of Earl Blackburn's Jesus Loves the Church and So Should You. Every pastor should lead a congregational study of this book; he should make this a priority for the health of the body itself, and personal growth of each person in the membership. Blackburn has dealt with an amazing number of questions concerning a proper view of the church of Jesus Christ. Naught but good could come from engaging the entire church in a determined, week-by-week reading and discussion of the principles set forth with such expert exposition.

[You may purchase this book from our Book Table for \$6.50]



"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Proverbs 17:22

Newsbytes and Announcements



Congratulations to:

Ben and Donna Lee, on the birth of their second daughter, Olivia Renee. She was born on 01/11/11 at 11:11 a.m.!!! She weighed 8lbs. 9 oz. Robert and Carol Lee are the proud and thankful grandparents!!!



Update on North Korea: As North Korea paves the way for its next leader, groups working to end Christian persecution are hoping that the change of leadership will mark a turning point for the country's Christians, who are forced to hide their faith or face arrest, imprisonment, torture and even death. During what was said to be the largest military parade ever staged by North Korea, the nation was officially introduced to Kim Jong Un, the youngest son of current North Korean leader Kim Jong II. Little is know about Kim Jong Un – expected to be the next leader of the country – including his age, which is estimated to be around 26. Christian groups are holding out hope that the next leader will somehow improve the situation of believers in the communist nation. Presently, the North Korean government severely restricts religious activity. Though little information comes out of the reclusive country, its government is known to deal harshly with all opponents, including those who engage in religious practices deemed unacceptable. Up to three generations of Christian families are rounded up and thrown in prison camps to try to eliminate the faith. In addition to religious persecution, North Korea's government has also been criticized for the treatment of its lower-class citizens, large numbers of whom are starving. "The North Korean society is falling apart," Open Doors reported last year. "The economy has come to a complete standstill, people in at least three provinces are dying of hunger and civilians openly protest decisions made by the government." Watchdog groups are urging Christians to pray for believers in North Korea, which for the eighth consecutive year has topped Open Doors' annual World Watch List of countries with the most severe persecution of Christians. [Church Around the World, Jan. 2011]



Hope for Pro-Life Legislation in Pennsylvania: The horrific conditions in a Philadelphia abortion center may help Pennsylvania pro-lifers push legislation that would require officials to inspect abortion facilities. Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell has been charged with eight counts of murder – one for killing a woman and seven for killing living, breathing babies – after running an abortion business the grand jury report describes as "a filthy fraud." [Gosnell's center contained evidence too grisly to report here]. Despite numerous complaints from women, a doctor, and a medical examiner, Pennsylvania health officials failed to inspect Gosnell's center after 1993. Denise Wilcox, Pennsylvania director for the National Right to Life Committee, said that Pennsylvania pro-life activists have been trying for years to pass legislation that would classify an abortion businesses as "ambulatory surgical centers" and require regular inspections. Now, with new pro-life leaders in the legislature and governor's mansion, she said, "I think the days for these horrible inner-city clinics are over. I think it also lets people know that this abortion business is not so sterile and pretty as they imagined it to be." [World – February 12, 2011]



Higher Education? Tuition prices keep rising, but a survey in January suggests that college students (and their parents) may not get what they pay for. Sociologists using data from the Collegiate Learning Assessment tracked more than 2,300 undergraduate students at 24 schools – and found that 45 percent show little improvement in critical thinking, reasoning, and writing skills after two years of college, and 36 percent show little improvement after four years. Critics say the study doesn't take into account knowledge gained in specialized majors, but 70 college and university presidents have pledged to take public steps to improve learning. Edwin Welch, president of the University of Charleston, told the Associated Press that higher education needs transparency: "I think a student at a private institution who might go into debt...has the right to know what he can learn at the institution." [World – February 12, 2011]



Serious Need: The post of ambassador for international religious freedom remains vacant two years into President Obama's term after his previous nominee, Suzan Johnson Cook, failed to make it out of committee at the end of the last Congress. Cook's nomination gained little attention, but religious freedom advocates were critical of her lack of experience (she has served as a pastor in New York City and chaplain to the police department) after a botched confirmation hearing where she could not answer a question on foreign policy. A hold was put on her confirmation, and her nomination expired. Tom Farr, the director of the State Department's International Religious Freedom office under President Bush, condemned the Obama administration's "utter indifference" to the post. "Bottom line: there is virtually no pressure—public or private—for the White House, the State Department, or the Democrat-controlled Senate to treat religious freedom policy with any seriousness," he wrote in an email. [World – February 12, 2011]



On the Light Side:

A little boy was attending his first wedding. After the service, his cousin asked him, "How many women can a man marry?" "Sixteen," the boy responded. His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly. "How do you know that?" "Easy," the little boy said. "All you have to do is add it up, like the pastor said, 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."

Children's Corner



A Love Letter

In the New Testament, John writes a letter about God's love and the love we should show to other people.

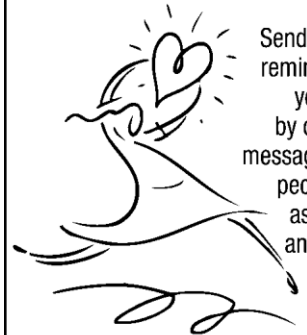
DIRECTIONS: Working from left to right, write down all the 1's in the word blanks. Continue with the 2's and finally the 3's. Then read about love, from 1 John 4:11-12, NIV.

lives 3	in 3	us 3	Since 1	and 3	God 1	so 1	loved 1	his 3
us 1	love 3	we 1	If 2	also 1	is 3	made 3	we 2	ought 1
to 1	love 2	love 1	one 1	complete 3	one 2	another 1	in 3	us 3
another 2	God 2							

1 John 4:11-12, NIV

Answers: Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

PIECES OF LOVE



Send special reminders of your love by creating messages that people can assemble and enjoy.

What you need:

- Large wooden craft sticks
- Tape
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Zippered sandwich baggies

What you do:

1. Make a rectangle out of seven craft sticks by placing them next to one another, long side against long side.
2. Tape the sticks together.
3. Turn the sticks over and draw a special picture or message. You can include this Bible verse: "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19, NIV).
4. Cut through the tape to separate each craft stick.
5. Put all the sticks in a baggie.
6. Give your special messages to family members, friends or teachers — along with directions for viewing them.

Let the little children come to Me...



FEBRUARY 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1 Ladies' Evening Study @ Suzanne Daniel's 6:30 p.m. (K. Roddy)	2 6:30 p.m. Prayer Mtg. "PraiSing Him" for children (P. R. Roddy)	3 (J. Rogers)	4 (W. Sager)	5 (B. Schindler)
6 LORD'S DAY Sunday School Morning Worship Fellowship Meal 1:30 Lord's Supper (D. Sevier)	7 (M. Smith)	8 (H. Spolar)	9 6:30 p.m. Prayer Mtg. "PraiSing Him" for children (A. Town)	10 Ladies' Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Hall (M. Vargo)	11 (B. Walker)	12 (F. Walker)
13 LORD'S DAY Sunday School Morning Worship Fellowship Meal Evening Worship (G. Alexander)	14 (B. Andrews)	15 Ladies' Evening Study @ Suzanne Eschete's 6:30 p.m. (W. Andrews)	16 6:30 p.m. Prayer Mtg. "PraiSing Him" for children (C. Axsom)	17 (M. Axsom)	18 (A. Barnett)	19 (N. Town Bennett)
20 LORD'S DAY Sunday School Morning Worship Fellowship Meal Evening Worship (D. Blades)	21 (R. Boudreaux)	22 (J. Carline)	23 6:30 p.m. Prayer Mtg. "PraiSing Him" for children (M. Carline)	24 Ladies' Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Fellowship Hall Deacon's Mtg. 6:30 p.m. (W. Carruth)	25 (R. Clark)	 (Rachel Clark)
27 LORD'S DAY Sunday School Morning Worship Fellowship Meal Evening Worship (N. Covington)	28 (S. Creasy)					

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS:

2 – Willie Sager	12 – Will Andrews	23 – Chris Dighton
4 – Frank Walker	12 – Mark Singleton	24 – Suzanne Daniel
5 – Heather Mayeux	12 – Tabitha Johnstone	24 – Rachel Sevier
6 – Willie Johnson	14 – James Kennedy	28 – Betty Hurst
6 – Cathy Town		
10 – Brenna Phares		

Where We Meet

12329 Jackson Street
Corner of Jackson & Church St.
Clinton, LA 70722

Visit our website:
www.fbcclintonla.com

When We Meet

Sunday Schedule

9:30 a.m. - Bible Study
10:45 a.m. - Morning Worship
12:15 p.m. - Fellowship Meal
6:00 p.m. - Evening Worship

Wednesday Schedule

6:30 p.m. - Bible Study & Prayer Meeting
Children - "PraiSing Him"

First Baptist Church

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