



# The Visitor

JANUARY 2014



## Joining Life Groups

Wade Allen

As we step into 2014, I am hopeful for the future of First Baptist Church Muncie. While we have undergone significant adjustments in recent years, we are experiencing new life in many areas. We begin our second year in our experimental ministry called Missional Communities. I would like to briefly discuss the progress of this ministry and encourage everyone to consider being involved on some level.

Eddie Gibbs in his book *ChurchNext : Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* describes the need for churches to attempt new models of ministry.

In a culture of chaos, experimentation and risk taking are the order of the day. p. 34

We began this ministry in February 2013. During a summer break and now winter break we are finding ways to adjust the program. In August, we experienced the dynamic of older congregates joining Life Groups. The intergenerational groups have been immensely rewarding for the group members (younger and older alike). We hope that the Spring groups will find additional members from all generations.

Also, we have found that our monthly Wednesday evening meeting has not been helpful for most participants. Weeknight obligations make it difficult for most to attend. Therefore, we are adjusting our monthly meetings to Sunday afternoons. We are designing social events on the first Sunday of each month for the intermingling of Life Groups. We will give this a try and see how it goes.

As we approach each coming year, we will likely find it necessary to shift ministry approaches. Our world is changing at ever increasing rates; we must be willing and able to adjust.

Missional Communities are a model of ministry that facilitates relationships. The purpose of social events, Life Groups and mission projects is to challenge the members of First Baptist Muncie to live in accountable connections with one another. Gibbs later describes the need for churches to build commitment of its members to one another. In other words, we must become a family of sorts.

The challenge facing the church is to move its members from a casual and contractual relationship to a covenant. A covenantal relationship entails a commitment to one another through thick and thin. p. 152



Missional Communities have the potential to do this. Are you currently involved in Missional Communities? Would you consider joining a Life Group in 2014? Please let me know if this is a step you would be willing to take in this new year.

## Article

*Matt Headley*

Merry Christmas! ... it's not too late to say that, is it?

Did you know that many Christians historically have celebrated Christmas for 12 days after December 25? These 12 days are referred to as the church season of "Christmastide." Many of you have likely heard the English Christmas carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" You know, it's the one that goes, "On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me..." When I was a kid, we would listen to John Denver and the Muppets' version of the song, where Miss Piggy enthusiastically celebrates "Fiiiive GOOLDEN Riiings!"



So I guess if you are reading this after the Twelfth Night on January 5, than my Christmas salutation is belated. In that case, **Happy Epiphany!**

January 6 marks the beginning of Epiphany, a season of the church year that celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles. Epiphany lasts through Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent (March 5 this year).

What comes to mind when you see or hear the word *epiphany*? The definition that's most familiar to me is "a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something, usually initiated by some simple, homely, or commonplace occurrence or experience." (Source: dictionary.com) In terms of theology, this is basically what happens when Jesus comes to earth. We are allowed to perceive the nature of God in the humble, yet glorious human form.

For this Epiphany season, the Worship Arts Team has discussed some ways to creatively engage in the meaning of this part of the Christian calendar. Every year in the lectionary (the scriptures that churches use to follow the Christian calendar), the story of the three Magi following the star to Bethlehem to worship Christ begins the Epiphany season Matthew 2:1-12. The star is a symbol of Christ, the light of the world. Throughout the Epiphany season, the Scriptures we use in worship will point us to Jesus as the Savior, i.e., the light of the world (John 8:12). While I can't flesh this out in an article, Jesus' arrival as the long-awaited Messiah, the Son of God, shines the light of God's love into creation.

Jesus also told us, "You are the light of the world." (Matthew 5:14). In other words, we are representatives of Christ, reflecting his light into the dark places of the world, like little mirrors.

There are many ways we can do this. On **Sunday, January 19**, in observance of the Epiphany season and its meaning, we will bring homemade star-shaped cookies in a sealed plastic bag to our worship gatherings. These will be given to the men at the Muncie Mission as a gift from our church to share the love of Jesus.

During these next few weeks, as we reflect on the meaning of the Epiphany season, may we discover ways to shine the light of Jesus into the world.

## Worship in January

As we begin a new year, we move into the season of Epiphany. You may want to read the Scriptures ahead of time. The January schedule is:

- January 5 - Following the Spirit (Matthew 2:1-12), Betsy Whaley

- January 12 -To Forbid Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17), Wade Allen
- January 19 - (John 1:29-42), Matt Headley
- January 26- (Matthew 4:12-23), Wade Allen

## Midweek Bible Study

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A midweek Bible study meets at Riverside on first and third Wednesday of each month (10 AM). Due to a lack of interest, we will no longer meet on the second and fourth weeks. If you are interested in participating in a weekly Bible study group, please sign-up for a Life Group. As of now, we have four groups meeting throughout the week at various times.

## Camp Barnabas Fuels High Schoolers in Mission

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The summer mission trip to Camp Barnabas has been more than a get-away for our teens. It has inspired them to be involved in mission in their local high school. In October, Anna Allen and Kayla Cooper envisioned a school club that bridged the gap between mainstream students and special education students. They went to their principal at Yorktown High School with the idea. She enlisted them to present their idea to the Special Education board; the club was approved. Last month, 81 students showed up for the first meeting. On Wednesday, December 18, they held their first event (a Christmas party). Students who attended Camp Barnabas with First Baptist were part of the event. Anna Allen, Kayla Cooper, Dawson Allen, Daniel Morency, Alex Childs and Anna Ratchford all have connections with First Baptist Church. It is exciting to see them involved in the club.



You can follow the club (YHS Project US) on Twitter at @ProjectUS\_

## Missional Community Update

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Missional Communities at First Baptist Muncie began at the beginning of 2013. The ministry runs from February-May (taking a two-month break in the summer) and from August-November (taking a two-month break in the winter). This month, we begin our winter break. Life group leaders will meet during this time to evaluate and discuss the Spring term plans. Please keep this team in your prayers as they work through December and January to prayerfully consider God's leading for 2014. If you have not been a part of the Missional Community, let me encourage you to consider being involved in 2014. Missional Communities are for anyone in the church, young and old alike. If you would be interested in being a part of a group in the Spring, please let Wade know.

## New members

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Over the last year, a number of people have joined First Baptist. We would like to highlight those who took this exciting step forward and introduce them in the newsletter. We had a total of 21 new members

throughout 2013 – the highest number of new members in one year since 2000. We highlighted several in the December Visitor. We also have a few more to highlight next month.



Michelle and James Martin stepped forward to join the congregation on October 27. They met at Ball State University and have been married for 12 years. They have six children, Andy, Joshua, Eliana, Isabel, Danielle, and Gabrielle Heimlich. Michelle is a stay-at-home mom and has a photography business, Maganda Photos. James is an archeologist. Michelle works on the editing team for the Visitor and the weekly bulletins at the church. James helps run projector and video and recently became a deacon in the church. James' sister and brother-in-law, Renee and Tory Pierce and his mother Brenda Cox are also members of the church. Welcome to First Baptist!



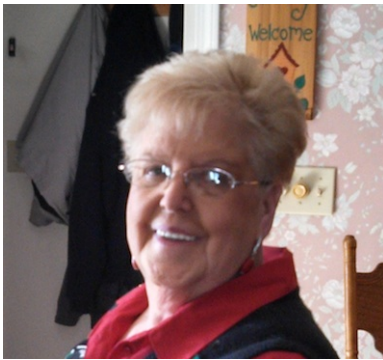
Brenda Cox stepped forward to join the congregation in May. Brenda is a nurse practitioner at Open Door Health Services. She and her husband, Glenn, have five children between them. They have a total of 25 grandchildren and one on the way. Her daughter, son-in-law, son, and daughter-in-law are also members of First Baptist, Renee and Tory Pierce, and James and Michelle Martin. In her free time she enjoys quilting, snuggling with her two Scottie dogs, and spending time with family. Welcome to First Baptist!



Daniel Morency stepped forward to join the congregation on July 14. Many of you already know Daniel. He is the son of Roger and Julie Morency. He's been attending First Baptist Muncie with his family for about 16 years. He's a Yorktown High School senior and has lived in the Muncie area for most of his life. You'll find Daniel in front of the church playing bass guitar on occasion. He is on Yorktown's swimming and tennis teams. Welcome to First Baptist!



Ken Nicola stepped forward to join the congregation on August 4. Ken moved to Muncie in 1999. He has three daughters and is retired and has lived in many places, including Iowa, Florida, Madrid (Spain), Louisville, Evansville, Michigan, and Muncie. In 1999, Ken originally joined First Baptist. He is very happy to be back after some years away. Welcome back to First Baptist!



Sue Lawson-Mutter joined the church this past year after having attended since 2009. She and her husband, Archie, just celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary, and she had attended with him for several years. "I finally realized I needed to just become part of the church family," Sue said. She hails from Sunbright, Tennessee and has been in Indiana since 1965. She retired from Ball Memorial Hospital in 2003. She is the mother of two daughters and has six grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Many at FBC know about Suzy's Fun Trips. For four years she has been organizing and sponsoring tours, and people in the church have joined her for shows at Bearcreek Farms and Beef 'n Boards. She loves coordinating the trips and looks forward to longer trips to Dallas and Lancaster, PA, in 2014. Welcome to First Baptist!



Ethan Brooks is a busy eighth grader who came forward in August, and was baptized a few weeks later. He is the son of Diane Brooks and has two sisters and four brothers. He was born in Guatemala and became part of the Brooks family just before his third birthday. Ethan sings in the choir, is a member of Boy Scouts and plays clarinet in the Northside Middle School band. A little known fact about him is that he has recently learned how to change oil and has practiced his skills on his brother's van! His grandmother is Jan Largent, a member of Riverside. Welcome to First Baptist!



After attending for almost a year, Marc and Britney Sue joined FBC on October 6, 2013. They have been married four years and have found the last six months to be a whirlwind since the birth of their daughter, Olivia. Both hail from Delaware County. Marc is a graduate of Delta High School and Britney of Southside High School. They both hold bachelor's degrees from Ball State University, and Marc is a manager at Sallie Mae and Britney is a K-2 special education teacher in Anderson. The Sue's are Colts and IU fans, and Marc says he is converting Britney into a Notre Dame football fan. Welcome to First Baptist!



Ryan Swayer is a Ball State University student who hails from Orleans in southern Indiana. He joined First Baptist Church on September 22, 2013. Ryan is studying construction management and plans to work in Chicago in the healthcare construction business after graduation in May of 2015. In his spare time, Ryan mountain bikes and enjoys bluegrass music. Ryan Swayer is a Ball State University student who hails from Orleans in southern Indiana. Welcome to First Baptist!



## Epiphany Cookies for Muncie Mission

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One of the symbols of the season of Epiphany is a star. On **Sunday, January 19**, in observance of the Epiphany season and its meaning, (the revelation Christ as the light of the world) please bring homemade star-shaped cookies in a sealed plastic bag to our worship gatherings. These will be given to the men at the Muncie Mission as a gift from our church to share the love of Jesus.

## Kitchen Matters

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Would you please look to see if you might have accidentally picked up Irene Hiatt's round glass "Tea Rose" plate. The plate was washed and dried in the kitchen after sporting an assortment of deviled eggs on Tuesday, November 26. It is about 12-inches round and has a pink and green floral pattern (Tea Rose). It is part of a complete set that is no longer made and can not be replaced. Please drop the plate off at the church or call Irene at 215-9650.

## Youth Ski Trip to Wisconsin

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The youth will be traveling to Green Lake, WI, on **January 17-20** to join students from Indiana and Illinois for a Winter Ski Conference called SKWIM (ski and swim). Please keep them and their adult leaders in your prayers as they travel.

## Suzy's Fun Trips

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On **June 18-24, 2014**, there is a 7 day, 6-night trip planned to Dallas-Fort Worth. The cost is \$609. During the getaway, you will be taking a tour of George Bush's Presidential Library, Sixth Floor Museum, South Fork, and lots of other sites. If interested contact Suzy Mutter at 765-749-3484

## Visitor and Bulletin Information

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If you would like to place an announcement in the church bulletin please email it to [wade@fbcmuncie.org](mailto:wade@fbcmuncie.org). If you have an article for the February newsletter, please email it to [wade@fbcmuncie.org](mailto:wade@fbcmuncie.org) by **Sunday, January 19**.

## Thank You Notes

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**Helen Peirson** – To my beloved First Baptist Church family, Thank you so much for thinking of me at the holiday season. The basket of goodies was beautiful to look at, but more importantly delicious. I miss the church very much, but the DVDs Duane Davis delivers to me help a lot. Again, I thank all of you for your thoughtfulness. I love you all. God is so good. God Bless you.

**Vicki Conley Family** – The Conley family would like to thank everyone who showed us support during this difficult time. From the beginning of her illness, to the fundraiser, to the people who brought food, visited Vicki while she was at home, and sent their thoughts, love, and prayers, we can't thank you all enough. With all of you, it has made this difficult time easier. We love you all!

**Jane Patton** – Operation Christmas Child update: THANKS to ALL who filled a Christmas box or two. Our church donated 76 boxes to the children. What a blessing this was to the children who received a box.

**Salvation Army Ringers** – Thank you so much for ringing the bells for the 48 Salvation Army at Macy's and/or J.C. Pennys. We won't know until later in the month what the First Baptist folks have raised for the Salvation Army. Thanks for giving your time.

## Calendar

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**Sundays** – 9:15 AM Early Gathering/Early Sunday School (Intergenerational Class, K-5th grade, Junior & High School), 10:15 AM Fellowship Time (enjoy coffee, donuts, and fellowship), 10:45 AM Late Gathering/Late Sunday School

**Tuesdays** – 7:00 PM - Friendship Class at Riverside Baptist Church

**Wednesdays** – 6 PM Handbell Rehearsal, 7:10 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

**January 8** – Open Door Food Distribution (7:30 AM)

**January 9** – Band Rehearsal (6:30 PM)

**January 12** – Life Group Leaders Lunch at Massoth Home (1 PM), Muncie Mission Chapel Service (2 PM)

**January 13** – CCT Meeting (7 PM)

**January 17-20** – Youth Ski Conference to Green Lake, WI

**January 19** – Phoebe Reid 90th Birthday party (1 PM)

**January 22** – Open Door Food Distribution (7:30 AM)

**January 27** – Muncie Mission Chapel Service (7 PM)

**January 29** – Band Rehearsal (6:30 PM)

## January Birthdays

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We would like to say Happy Birthday to the following people in the month of January. Please let them know that you are thinking of them on their special day.

1/2 Jillian Barr	1/18 Marjorie Wright
1/2 Jennifer Hudson-Roberts	1/21 Sharon Jackson
1/3 Dale Stone	1/21 Katie Shutters
1/8 Bob Oisten Jr.	1/21 Annie Wright
1/10 Dale Jones	1/25 Gene Carr
1/10 Phoebe Reid	1/26 Veda Massoth
1/10 Marsha Venable	1/26 Ann Siverly
1/10 Julia Whaley-Jones	1/27 Kelly Rodriguez
1/14 Grace Hahn	1/28 Pam Kistler
1/17 Andrew Heimlich	1/31 Patty Stigers
1/18 Lester Bryars	1/31 Bill Turner