

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
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Place
Stamp
Here



The Visitor
MARCH 2013

Jesus and Change

Wade Allen

As we walk through the season of Lent, we are reminded of the difficult journey of Jesus. We often romanticize Jesus's earthly ministry. Sure, it would have been glorious for those He healed. The demon possessed, the lepers, the sick would have been overwhelmed with joy when Jesus showed up. Yet an element of discomfort characterizes the ministry of Jesus.

Certainly, he did not enter a comfortable world. He spends much of his time walking around in sandals in the arid, hot Middle East countryside. He does not own a car, a house nor does he have the support of a wife and children. Through the season of Lent, we are challenged by Jesus's lifestyle.

Not only was Jesus's lifestyle unconventional, but His message disquiets his would be followers. He often challenges them in improbable ways.

(Luke 9:23 NIV) If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Can any of us honestly say that we live up to this? When we really think about the implications of Jesus's message, we get edgy. We live in a world that teaches us to work hard in order to succeed and to win at all costs. Jesus reminds us, however

(Mark 10:31 NIV) But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

I don't know about you, but this sort of talk makes me uneasy. Throughout Jesus's ministry, he disturbs the status quo. The religious leaders are so threatened by him, they seek to crucify Him.

It is only in hindsight that we begin to understand Jesus's purpose. As Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, (Ephesians 1:7-8 NIV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

God, through Jesus, was doing a great work. But at the time, people had trouble understanding what He was up to. God was prompting them out of their comfort zones, into His mission. How tragic for those who failed to join him! As we make our way toward Easter, may we be reminded that God continues to challenge us in uncomfortable ways.

As a church, we continue to transition. In the coming months, we may be challenged to rethink how we do ministry; budgetary constraints may force us to change the way we operate. While such talk may make us anxious, we can be sure that God is in control. While no one likes change, the season of Lent reminds us that Jesus was an agent of change and how can we as Easter people fail to follow His example?

May we be open to God's movement. May we continually seek his direction as we navigate the challenging waters of this age. May we understand that our circumstances are not coincidental; God continually prompts us to follow him in new ways. And just like the early followers of Jesus, we will discover the joy of following God into the unknown.

Opening Doors

Matt Headley

The past few months have brought some encouraging developments on the ministry front in my work with YFC (Youth for Christ). My initial plan to establish a ministry presence at Muncie Central High School was to begin leading a weekly gathering on campus. After learning of concerns that this could potentially compete with the FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) presence on Central's campus, I remembered some advice that I gleaned while in seminary: "Watch to see where God is working and join Him." (see John 5:17, 19-20.) [1]

Rather than starting a new Christian group at CHS, I decided to look more closely at what Christian students were already doing. I learned that FCA was started by Central's current Principal, Tom Jarvis, a few years ago when he was still the athletic director. Since then, the FCA Thursday morning gatherings have grown to a weekly attendance of several dozen students. I've made a point to be at nearly every FCA Thursday morning gathering since last October, and this has provided some great opportunities for forming relationships with CHS students and faculty.

You may be wondering, "Isn't YFC about outreach? Why is Matt spending most of his time hanging out with the Christian kids?"

Yes, YFC is about outreach. Being among the unchurched is vital. However, as I wrote in my last update, I intend to focus my energy on discipleship. My reasoning is this: Can't outreach be done more effectively by a team of Spirit-filled students who spend all day at school than by one 28 year-old dude on 15 hours a week?

In this vein, I've been encouraged to see what God has been up to among the FCA group through the past few weeks. God appears to be prompting the student leaders to create opportunities for more relational time outside of the large-group Thursday morning event. Because of this, I've discovered an opportunity to help the guys start a Bible study group soon after the girls did, and this week we met for our first study in Paul's letter to the Romans. In addition to digging into God's Word, we will be sharing with each other what God is doing in our lives, praying together, and discovering how God is calling us to respond in concrete ways.

I'm excited about what is to come, but I still need clarity in what the next steps should be. Please pray that God will continue to open doors as I look for opportunities to promote a culture of discipleship among the CHS community. How might he be calling you to participate in what He is doing?

Peace!

[1] Experiencing God by Henry & Richard Blackaby and Claude King

Robert's Ramblings

Robert Burton

There will be an organization meeting for ministry to Senior Adults from our two churches on **April 7, 4:00 PM** at the Riverside location. Everyone from First Baptist and Riverside who is over 55 is invited to be there. We are asking for your ideas for an ongoing ministry to Senior Adults, not just for our two churches, but for the Muncie community as well. Some of the ideas being considered include period trips to various points of interest in short driving distance and a regular meeting each month at the Riverside location. Several have suggested that Riverside would be ideal as the building is accessible, it is conveniently located, and is well lit at night when needed.

The Riverside/First Baptist committee will be overseeing our ministry to senior adults. Members of the committee include Terry Harke, Shirley Pittenger, Bill Stevens, Barbara Wilson, and Mary Harry. I serve in an advisory capacity. We have tossed around a number ideas like those mentioned above. We have reached the point where we believe we are ready to have an organizational meeting and seek suggestions from all our senior adults.

I am excited about this. I hope all who read this are too, whether or not you are senior adults. So please mark your calendar for **Sunday, April 7, 4:00 PM** at Riverside. Be there or be square. The last thing any of us would want to be would be a square senior adult!

Missional Community Service Project

On **Saturday, March 23**, we will serving at Blood and Fire (300 N Madison St) from 4:00-6:00 PM. We will be helping move food, clean and perhaps play basketball with neighborhood kids. Please let Brad Rogers (bdrodgers2@gmail.com) know if you are planning to attend.

First Baptist to Participate in Personal Care Items Drive

As part of Delaware County's Poverty Awareness Year and, in keeping with the church's focus on poverty, FBC will participate in the April Personal Care Items Drive.

"People qualifying for Food Stamps can't spend those dollars on personal hygiene, household cleaning supplies or diapers," said Debbie Gregg, outreach coordinator for the Church Coordination Team. "This is a way to help out as our whole community gets involved in this collection. It's easy to buy an extra bottle of shampoo, a pack of toilet paper or box of laundry detergent every time you go to the store," she said.

"Until last year Delaware County had a personal care give-away system, but since that went out of business, people have struggled to get the supplies they need," said Molly Flodder, facilitator of the year-long focus on poverty. "Everything that our church, other churches and businesses and organizations collect will be given away at Christian Ministries and the Salvation Army."

Items will be collected in the hallway outside the sanctuary during the two weeks after Easter. Later in March a complete list will be available to assist in purchasing items for the drive.

Senior Adult Day in April

Senior Adult Day is on **Thursday, April 11** at First Baptist Church in Martinsville, Indiana. All Seniors welcome. Please contact Shirley Pittenger at (765) 282-0632 if you are interested in attending. Cost is \$10 per person if registered by March 16. Please make checks payable to Shirley.

Cooking for a Cause

Cooking enthusiasts who might be interested in helping low-income families cook healthier on a budget are well-suited for this opportunity. Attend a “train the trainer” session and learn to teach a module that you and small teams of trained friends can share with families in poverty later in the year. Either two-hour session will give you information on working with people in poverty and materials for teaching others.

What: Cooking for a Cause “Train the Trainer” Sessions

When: Monday evening, March 11, 6-8 PM -or- Saturday morning, March 16, 9-11 AM.

Where: Both sessions at IU Health Ball Memorial Hospital, Jackson Street Center (in Bariatric Conference Room) 2901 W. Jackson (just west of Jackson/Tillotson intersection)

Group Discerns Strategy for Use of Music in Worship Gatherings

In the past 18 months, First Baptist Church work teams have used the discernment model that takes a multi-step approach to making decisions, two key steps of which are listening to the church and listening to God’s leading.

Discernment strategies have helped to formulate the 2012 change in worship schedules, the need for an associate pastor focusing on music and outreach, and the missional group approach to study and service.

In the past 15 years, declining attendance and financial support at churches across the nation have forced the need to look at the use of staffing and participant realities that are forcing new approaches to managing worship. According to Joe Songer, a member of a new team that is focusing on the use of music in worship gatherings, “Gone are the days of being able to have multiple choirs and musical ensembles. We don’t have a large staff or countless volunteers that can keep all those kinds of activities going. We have to look to the resources that we have and think creatively to manage them while using our gifts for God that enhance worship in the best way possible.”

Currently, for the team developing an overall strategy for the use of music in our worship gatherings, the following criteria require strategies that will enable:

1. Participation in music ministries of excellence,
2. Creation of a manageable rehearsal schedule that considers time, space, participants, and resources.
3. An understanding of our limited resources (stewardship), and,
4. Unity across styles and preferences.

Potential strategies will include altered rehearsal schedule, less-frequent performance schedule, periodic rehearsals to learn new music, seasonal performing groups, training of aspiring musicians, and/or a more formal evaluation process of how things are working.

A listening strategy has been created that will afford opportunities for hearing from leading groups and ensembles, sound technicians, the congregation and the staff. Questionnaires, studies of schedule limitations, rehearsal preparation inquiry, focus groups, and interviews will be potential tools for gathering information.

At the same time internal listening is occurring, there is a focus on gathering information from other churches and how they operate given similar size and resources.

Finally, and most importantly, prayer, discovering and studying related scripture, and fasting are other important parts of this and every discernment process. We will be working through the book of Ephesians following Easter. The first six weeks of this study (Ephesians 1-3) will speak to the topic of worship.

The rest of the spring will be used for approaching all the discernment steps ranging from collecting information to prayer and study. The discernment team will decide this summer where God is leading in this matter, and implementation of altered approaches will occur in the fall.

Members of the team led by Associate Pastor Matt Headley are: Adam Fink, Jessica Fink, Molly Flodder, Cynthia Smith, Jim Hiatt, Daniel Morency, William Nealy, Joe Songer and Wade Allen (ex-officio).

YFC (Youth for Christ) Spring Banquet “Join the Story”

Since 2000, Muncie Area Youth for Christ (Campus Life) has served Delaware County, building a rich history of reaching middle and high school students with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ, and with the goal of plugging students into local churches and youth groups. Each spring, we celebrate and support our ministry and our achievements with our annual banquet. Here is everything you need to know concerning the 2012 banquet themed “Join the Story.”

- When: **Thursday, March 14th, 2013** from 7 PM to 8 PM.
- Where: Cornerstone Center for the Arts (Colonnade Room) 520 Main St.
- What: A fundraising event including powerful stories of change and living examples of how God is moving in our community.
- What else? A dessert and coffee buffet!
- How Much? Seats are \$5

RSVP to: Matt Headley
Muncie Central High School Ministry Director
matt@fbcmuncie.org
(765) 405-0536

Salvation Army Donations

Salvation Army needs our help. The best way to help is to write a check to our church and designate the money to Salvation Army. Joe Songer will see that the money gets to second harvest who in turn provides for 25 times the amount to Salvation Army in the way of canned goods or meat. Please be generous and thank you. - Jane Patton

Youth Camp Barnabas Registration

A group of youth will serve at Camp Barnabas this year. They will be going on **July 5-12, 2013** (Teas Trail Heros Week). Anyone interested should sign up as an individual for the camp. Please sign up ASAP as space is limited. Simply go to <http://campbarnabas.org/individualcas> and be sure to select the July 5-12 week.

Once you have registered, please let Wade know.

Church Business Meeting

There will be a brief time of business following each service on **Sunday, March 17**. We will approve Bylaw changes that bring the Bylaws into line with the constitutional changes adopted in January. You can pick up a copy of the new Bylaws in the church office.

Recital and Reception

Cynthia Smith

Dear First Baptist Family,

I will be researching Viktor Ullmann's vocal music composed while he was imprisoned at Theresienstadt. My research must take place at the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel, Switzerland where a majority of the manuscripts are held. You are probably asking, "Who is this Ullmann guy and why are he and his music so important?" I am so glad that you asked! Viktor Ullmann (1898-1944) was a Czech composer and victim of Holocaust.

I have applied for a Fulbright U.S. Student Program Research Grant to complete this research and have been named as a finalist in this highly competitive program. The Fulbright Grant will take care of many of my expenses; however, not everything will be covered by the stipend I will receive. Additionally, my husband, Aaron, and I will need to pay for half of my plane ticket and for all of his expenses. If I am not awarded the Fulbright Grant, we will travel to Switzerland to complete my research in one month starting in May, after the semester's end. If this is the case, we will need to raise all the funds for our expenses. No matter the outcome, we have a fundraising goal of \$2,500.

I will be performing a voice recital, "An Exploration of Peace," on **Monday, March 25th at 6:00 PM** in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church of Muncie assisted by Dr. Galit Gersenzon Fromm on piano. A reception will follow in the lower auditorium. At this dynamic recital, I will present a variety of pieces, some of which are directly related to my research.

Funds, in any amount, for my project are being accepted with all proceeds funding my research. Everyone who contributes will receive updates on my research progress and time in Switzerland. You can contribute now by visiting my website (<http://cynthialucilesmith.wix.com/mezzosoprano>) and using the PayPal button or by attending the recital. If you have any questions about Viktor Ullmann or contributing to my research efforts, please contact me at cynthialucilesmith@yahoo.com or 828-553-7203.

Easter Music

The worship arts ministry is assembling a choir to lead us in gathered worship on Easter Sunday. If you are interested in singing or participating in any other way, please contact Matt Headley. Below is the rehearsal schedule.

Wed 3/13, 6:30-8 PM - Rehearsal 1

Wed 3/20, 6:30-8 PM - Rehearsal 2

Wed 3/27, 6:30-8 PM - Rehearsal 3

Sat 3/30, 9 AM-Noon - Dress Rehearsal

Sun 3/31, 9:30-10:15 AM - Warm up for service at 10:45 AM

Organ Recital

Raul Prieto Ramirez, **3:00 PM, Sunday, March 3** at St. Lawrence Catholic Church (Free will offering)

Acquire the Fire in April

Youth interested in attending this year's *Acquire The Fire* conference in Muncie, please contact Roger or Julie Morency. The event will be held on **April 5-6, 2013** at Worthen Arena.

Read more at <http://www.acquirethefire.com/christian-youth-conference-events/muncie/>

Community Lenten Services

You are encouraged to attend the community Lenten services at noon on Wednesdays at the Northside Church of God. The services will be 30 minutes and a meal is provided afterwards. The Good Friday service will be at St. Lawrence Catholic Church.

Easter Sunday Brunch

An all church Easter brunch will take place on **Sunday, March 31**. The brunch will begin at 9:30 AM in the lower auditorium. Combined worship will take place at 10:45 AM. We hope that everyone will join us as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord.

Sermon Series Update

During the month of March, we continue in the season of Lent through most of the month. Easter Sunday is March 31. We hope that you will take a few minutes to read through the text each week as you prepare your heart for worship.

- March 3 - Repentance and Restoration (Luke 13:1-9)
- March 10 - The Day God Ran (Luke 15)
- March 17 - Broken and Poured Out (John 12:1-8)
- March 24 - Palm Sunday
- March 31 - Easter Sunday

Coat Found

A Ladies EX black coat (FS Limited) was turned into the church office. If this is your coat please stop by the church office to pick it up.

Calendar

Sundays – 9:15 AM Early Gathering/Early Sunday School, 10:15 AM Fellowship Time, 10:45 AM Late Gathering/Late Sunday School

Wednesdays – Wednesday evenings are a time for various programs, rehearsals and a shared meal. Prayer Shawl (4:30), Meal (5:30), Children Program (6:00), Handbells, Bible Study, other special meetings (6:30) and Choir Rehearsal (7:40).

On the first Wednesday of each month (March 6), Missional Community Large Group Gathering will take place at 6:00 PM. Life Group Leaders Meetings are on the first and third Wednesday at 7:00 PM (March 6 and March 20).

Community Lenten Services are each Wednesday through the month of March at Northside Church of God.

March 11 – Church Coordination Team Meeting

March 17 – Brief Business Meeting following each service to approve Bylaw changes

March 23 – Missional Community Project at Blood and Fire (4-6 PM)

March 25 – Cynthia Smith Recital & Reception

March 29 – Good Friday Community Service at St. Lawrence Catholic Church

March 31 – Easter Sunday (Brunch 9:30 AM, Combined Worship 10:45 AM)

March Birthdays

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

1 Justin Earls	21 Wade Allen
3 Luke St. Myer	Adam Fink
6 Adalyn Cummins	Jim Petroviak
Virginia Gill	22 Matthew Fink
10 Sherri Papp	Bob Ratchford
12 Nina Oisten	24 Cindy Hershman
13 Julie Kirklin	Susan Randolph
14 Lisa Earls	Ian Reid
15 Louise Head	26 Dan Lemen
Katie Beth Richardson	27 Christian Chamboneth
16 Shala Pugh	28 Dennis Londt
Erik Redmon	29 Heather Headley
20 Dick Morrow	