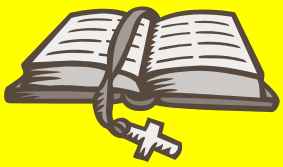
First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa

The Messenger

Volume 7, Issue 11

November 2015



We are a body of believers united in Christ to proclaim, live, and love according to God's Word.

Inside this issue:

Book Bound	3
Birthdays and Anniversaries	4
Budget & Finance	4
Calendar	7
Church Mouse Nursery School	5
Deacons	4
Dessert Hour	2
Election Day BBQ	3
First Friday Christmas Celebration Cookies	3
Greening of the Church	2
Library	5
Operation Christmas Child	6
Prayer for the Church	2
Stewardship Sunday	2
Thanksgiving Bag Ministry	3
Thanksgiving Dinner	3
Youth Groups	3

Being Prepared

By Bob Staulters

1 Peter 3:15 reads, *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."*

Recently I traveled to Qatar to perform some work. I left my hotel and upon arriving at the power plant where I was to do the work, I was required to attend the plant's safety training class before I could enter the plant. As with most plants the class lasted about 4 hours. After completing the class I had to fill out the normal required paperwork. As I began to fill out my paperwork another man who I didn't know asked if I had another pen that he could borrow. I reached into my bag and innocently pulled a pen from my bag and handed it to him, not noticing the pen, other than the color of the pen I had given him.

We both completed our paperwork and received our necessary documents and were about to leave for lunch when the man turned to me and said, "I like this statement." I thought to myself, "What statement?" He pointed to the pen which I had handed him. Without realizing, I had handed him a pen that the Deacons had given out during Father's Day. Here I am in a country where the majority of the people are Muslim being asked about a statement on a pen. How was I to respond?

As Christians living in Ballston Spa or anywhere else for that matter the verse from 1 Peter challenges us all to live our lives in a manner that causes those that we come in contact with to ask, "Why?" It may be as innocent as unknowingly handing out a pen with Christian Scripture printed on it. Whatever it may be that causes the question, just think about it for a minute. It leads me to think, "Wow, I don't have to wonder or struggle with how I will begin the conversation about our faith." Somehow by the words that we speak or the things that we do or the manner of our living the people around us will automatically ask.

Is it that simple? Well, maybe since all is possible with God, but I have a feeling that God requires just a little bit more of us. In Colossians 4:2-6 we read:

> *"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ… Be wise in the way that you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."*

Continued on next page

Then the Apostle Paul in writing to the church in Thessalonica wrote:

> *"As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us."* I Thessalonians 2:7-8.

What we learn from these passages is that the question, if it is to be asked, must be preceded by our praying, our preparation and our participation. In this way sharing the reason for the HOPE that we have is not just words but a way of life, a life that engages, entangles and encourages all those we come in contact with.

To be honest I don't know the final outcome of my contact with this man in Qatar, but I am confident that God does. He did keep my pen!

As we approach Thanksgiving and the Christmas season my prayer for our church is that we will prepare ourselves through prayer, through meeting together and through the study of God's Word, to meet the needs of those in our church as well as those outside the church. And because we have prayed and we have prepared and we are participating we will be given the privilege of being asked to give the reason for the HOPE that we have in CHRIST.

May God bless us all and lead us in a manner worthy of the grace that we have freely received through Christ our Savior. AMEN.

Preparing and Serving together,
Bob

Dessert Hour

On Tuesday, **November 3** at 6:45 p.m. we will have a Dessert Hour to fellowship and to meet Rev. Dr. Bill Tatum. We will also review the process for our Interim Ministry and the Transition Team Selection.

Please Join Us!

A Paryer for the Church Family

Father
I know that no church is perfect,
so help me not to be surprised
when problems arise.
Keep me from pointing
a finger of blame at others;
Guard my tongue
from shameful remarks.
Grant me the courage
to do my part
to make our church a better place.
And thank you
for graciously allowing me
to be a member
of your wonderful family.
Amen.

Speaker Schedule

November 1	Mark Chaffin
November 8	Rev. Bruce Johnson
November 15	Mike Saccocio
November 22	Rev. Bruce Johnson
Advent Season	Rev. Wallace Cromwell

Stewardship Sunday

On November 15 we will have a time of commitment during our worship when we will commit our pledges, tithes and offerings together as the body of Christ.

Stewardship involves a commitment of our time, gifts, talents, money, resources and priorities in relation to God and others. Pray and listen to how God is calling you to give.

Greening of the Church

We are looking forward to our Christmas season. Save the date to help with the Greening of the Church on Nov. 21, 9:00 a.m. Join us as we take an opportunity to make our sanctuary and church building a beautiful offering of worship to celebrate our Lord's birth. This is a huge undertaking but also a rewarding one. If you would like to help **please sign up** or contact Cynthia Pritchard, Cynthia@cpeventcompany.com.

Support Local Families this Thanksgiving

First Presbyterian Church is once again organizing an ecumenical Thanksgiving Food Bag ministry and we invite you to be a part. Families sign up through Ballston Spa food pantries. Last year we provided over 200 dinners to families in need and we anticipate more this year.

Here's how you can help: **Take one or more bags** (provided in the Welcome Area), fill them with the items suggested on the attached list. **Deliver the bags and turkeys to First Presbyterian Church** on Sunday, November 22 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Your donation can be tax deductible if you save your receipts and attach them to a church receipt available on the 22nd. **Volunteer to help on distribution day** Monday, November 23 from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Call or email the church to sign up, 885-5583, ballstonpres@yahoo.com.

Thank you for your help as we seek to be a blessing to those in need this Thanks-giving! If you have questions contact the First Presbyterian Church, 885-5583.

Election Day Brooks Chicken Barbecue

Tuesday, November 3, 4-7 p.m.

at First Presbyterian Church 22 West High St.

Don't miss out on the locally famous Brooks Chicken Barbecue! Carry out or eat in, seating is available. Reservations are recommended. Call 885-5583 on Nov. 3. All proceeds go to FPC Deacons Fund and the Ballston Area Clergy Association Fund which support families in financial crisis in the Ballston Spa area.

Youth Groups

HS Bible Study meets every 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.@ Episcopal Church, 15 W. High St. (Nov. 3 & 17)

MS Youth meets every 1st and 3rd Thursday, 5:30 p.m. @ Presbyterian Church, 22 W. High St. (Nov. 5 & 19)

Girls Group meets every first 1st and 3rd Sunday, 1 p.m. @ Baptist Church (Nov. 1 & 15)

BookBound!

The First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa Book Club

BookBound! will meet on Nov. 9. We will discuss People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks.

BookBound! meets on the second Monday of each month from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. in the Upper Room. Read the book for the month and come join the discussion. Snack and beverage provided. All are welcome (but if you haven't finished the book, be prepared for spoilers!) Childcare is available; please let us know if your child will be attending so we may provide care accordingly. Contact Laura Wright, tigerlily913@yahoo.com. December's book is: The Christmas Joy Ride by Melody Carlson

First Friday Christmas Celebration Cookies

The Board of Christian Education is looking for volunteers to bake cookies for our First Friday Celebration at FBC. There will be a sign-up sheet in the church lobby for anyone who would like to bake 2-3 dozen of their favorite holiday cookies. Cookies will need to be dropped off at FBC by Thursday night, December 3rd. Please contact Cailin Rabideau if you have any questions or would like to help out.

Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Thursday, November 26, 2015

12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Come and join your community, family and friends at the Annual Community Thanksgiving Day Dinner at the Union Fire House, Milton Ave., Ballston Spa. Dinner is served from noon to 3:00 p.m. Take home meals are available.

Call Flo Bouchard, 884-0607 to donate a pie, volunteer on Wednesday evening, to reserve a dinner or to request delivery. Call the Fire House for reservations only, 885-7121.

Sponsored by the community for the community. There is no cost and all are welcome.

Board of Deacons

The blessings that fall upon us daily by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, are like the many diverse and colorful leaves that are now falling as we embrace the autumn season.

Our church family is blessed by the fact that we are together, a beloved community, singled out by God's loving hand to receive grace from Him as we move forward to welcome our Interim Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Bill Tatum. Pastor Bill will be meeting with us on Nov. 3 for a dessert hour and informational meeting on how the process of receiving his ministry will begin and how our transitional team will be formed.

We are also blessed as we ponder the beauty of the changing season in anticipation of our upcoming Advent season. Pastor Wallace Cromwell will be assisting First Baptist Church in preparing the worship program for Advent. God has truly given us blessings as we have welcomed many Pastors in assisting us with our worship throughout the summer and early fall – we have all learned so much from hearing each of those individuals who have helped us to continually realize who we are and why we are together in God's family.

Your Board of Deacons continues to develop worship plans that will enrich our faith and help us express our joy in being part of this marvelous family, but we also realize we need to be open and transparent to the needs, thoughts and ideas our congregants may have. We continue to encourage you to come to us with your needs for prayer, as well as your ideas for keeping us moving in the positive way we have set forth throughout the summer. We want to continue to be present for you and we are open to your comments and suggestions at all times.

As we continue to sustain our church, we also need to nurture our congregation and your Deacons are ready to serve those needs. We also encourage each of you to consider your own gifts and help us to serve others in our church. We welcome new people to serve and need help in many areas as we prepare for the ultimate celebration of our Lord's birth. Each of your Deacons thanks you all for your continued support throughout our interim period and beyond as we gather together to work with Pastor Bill and each other to ultimately find a permanent Pastor.

Your Board of Deacons consists of: Vallee Albert, Diane McGarry, Pat Rogers, Keith Sprenger, Bob Staulters, Terry van den Heever, and Sherry Wardell.

Blessings to all… Vallee Albert

Budget and Finance Committee

Through the month of September we continue to have a surplus of income over expenses, and a very healthy checkbook. However, our Pledged giving remains behind (by $24,338), and shows no signs of catching up to where we expected it to be. While this may be a bit disconcerting, it is a reminder to us that *our* plans do not always work out exactly as we would like, and that God has his own plans for us; as individuals and as a church family.

At the Budget & Finance Committee's most recent meeting, there were preliminary discussions about the 2016 budget, and some of the various Boards handed in their 2016 budget worksheets. Remember that our church's annual budget is based on our estimates of giving, and the reason for our Pledges is to ensure we do not propose a budget (expenses) that are unreachable. With that said, believe God has wonderful new things in store for our church as we head into the holiday season, and into 2016.

Please feel free to share your thoughts with me regarding what you would like to see in the Messenger regarding Budget and Finance, going forward. Your comments and questions are always welcome.

Troy Filburn

November Birthdays

1st Karen Kersch
2nd Lynn Anderson
3rd Adriane Juracka
7th Tammy Townson
8th Frances Whitehouse
12th Paul Pelliccia
12th Susan Ginngreen
15th Lily Hoffman
17th Emily Hoffman
19th Ashlyn Kersch
20th Judy Finigan
20th Jay Mullin
23rd Liam O'Connell
25th Elvira Cox
26th Kevin Schroder

November Anniversaries

1st Fred and Linda Uline
2nd Jerry and Vallee Albert
6th Sanford and Mary Ann Becker
7th Bill and Sherry Wardell
19th Chris and Donna Wright
20th George and Delores Leber
27th Raymond and Evelyn Marshall
28th George and Susan Ginngreen

Church Mouse Nursery School

As usual, the fall is flying by. The children enjoyed our fall field trips to the Ellms Family Farm, the Union Firehouse, and Brookside Museum. We are so fortunate to have these great educational opportunities in our backyard. There will be many discussions this month about what we are thankful for and how we can bless others by giving.

We will once again be participating in Operation Christmas Child, collecting boxes filled with gifts, reaching children worldwide. This is a wonderful project for our families. There will be a bulletin insert and a display where you can learn more about this amazing project. Boxes will be provided for the church family, or you may pack the items in plastic containers the size of a shoebox, as they can be used to store their special gifts. The boxes need to be returned no later than Nov. 8.

The teachers introduce exciting new centers each year. They cover all subject areas, including math, science, and language. These centers provide opportunities for the children to explore, experiment and create. The teachers have also been busy working on their initial evaluation of each child. This helps them to get to know each child better, and see if there are any needs they should be aware of.

The Church Mouse Parent Organization held their first movie night of the year on Friday, October 23 in Fellowship Hall. The movie was **FROZEN.** The children enjoyed fresh popped popcorn as they relaxed on their blankets and snuggled with their favorite stuffed animals while wearing their P.J.'s.

Before we know it, the classes will be rehearsing for their Christmas Pageants. This is such a special time, as we share the story of Christmas with the children and their parents. The pageants will be held on December 17 and 18 in the sanctuary. We will need some extra help serving refreshments after each program. If you are interested in serving, please call the Church Mouse office 885-8362. Thank you.

I have so many things to be thankful for: an outstanding staff, amazing parents, a very supportive Church Mouse board, the Board of Trustees, and the church family. Thank you for partnering with us to make this school the best it can be.

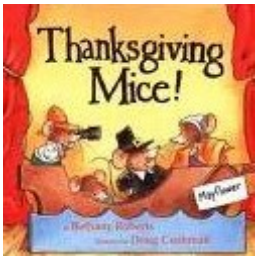
Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Serving Christ together,
Cheryl Dunkelbarger, Staff Administrator

Church Library

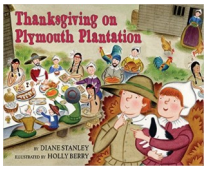
Children's Books:

1. Biscuit Is Thankful by Alyssa Satin Capucilli
2. Curious George Says Thank You by Margaret & H. A. Rey
3. Thanksgiving Mice! by Bethany Roberts
4. Kindergarten Kids Giving Thanks by Catherine Hapka
5. Hello Kitty Gives Thanks by Paul Coco
6. Thanksgiving for Emily Ann by Teresa Johnston
7. Thanksgiving Day Thanks by Laura M. Elliott
8. Thank You, Thanksgiving by David Milgrim
9. Give Thanks to the Lord by Karma Wilson



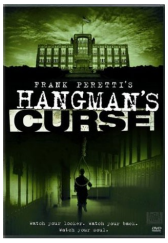
Children's Books & CDs:

1. The Littlest Pilgrim by Brandi Dougherty ~ Not too little to make a friend!
2. Thanks for Thanksgiving by Julie Markes ~ A modern day rhyming story about Thanksgiving.
3. Thanksgiving on Plymouth Plantation by Diane Stanley ~ An interesting adventure about Thanksgiving in the past and present.
4. The Best Thanksgiving Ever! by Teddy Slater ~ A whimsical tale in rhyme.
5. The Great Turkey Race by Steve Metzger



Children's DVD:

1. Toby Adventures with Jesus



Teen's Books & DVD:

1. Hangman's Curse (DVD also available) by Frank Peretti ~ Watch your locker. Watch your back. Watch your soul.
2. Nightmare Academy by Frank Peretti

Adult Books:

1. Baptists in America: A History by Thomas Kidd & Barry Hankins
2. Come Rain or Come Shine by Jan KIaron
3. The Auschwitz Escape by Joel C. Rosenberg ~ evil, unchecked, is the prelude to genocide.

DVDs:

1. Love Finds You In Sugarcreek ~ the past was dark… but in this town, they found the light.

Enjoy!
Mary Morelock

Operation Christmas Child

Once again The Church Mouse is participating in the Operation Christmas Child shoebox project. OCC demonstrates God's love in a tangible way by partnering with churches worldwide to deliver gift-filled shoe boxes and the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Shoeboxes are available from the Church Mouse Nursery School and by the entrance to the sanctuary.

Please return your filled box to the Church office by November 8, with a check for $7 (to help with shipping), payable to *Samaritan's Purse*. *No liquid items of any kind.* Thank you.

Visit their website at *samaritanspurse.org* for more info and watch some of the videos showing children receiving the boxes, as well as other inspiring stories.

Unsolicited Advice about Shoeboxes

Here is some good advice to consider when packing our next Operation Christmas Child shoebox. Corey and Katie Garrett are Missionaries in Senegal, Africa with SIM (Serving in Mission):

Let me say that I know that each of these gifts is prepared with love and given from hearts full of generosity, compassion, and a desire to share Jesus' love. And each one is SO appreciated! For the local kids here, this is so unexpected, so unusual… Kids here do not get presents on Christmas or on their birthdays (if they are even aware of those days!) And most are only rarely given new things or presents at all. So to receive a box of gifts like this is such a treat.

Now, given all that, can I offer some feedback to those of you who will prepare shoeboxes this Christmas? We have been involved here in Senegal with the distribution of shoeboxes over the past 15 years. I have watched little people I know well open their boxes. Every year, I have thought of giving some advice on this topic, but I don't want to seem ungrateful or critical. I just want to offer my advice, based on our experience in this one context:

BEST GIFTS:

- For any age boy here, what they really want is a soccer ball. Get the best quality mini soccer ball that you can fit into the box when it is inflated (or a deflated ball with a pump) and you can basically forget about anything else!
- Brand new nice short-sleeved shirts with no writing on them. Kids here have few clothes and often wear old, ripped, hand-me-downs, so nice new shirts are really appreciated and will probably fit. (I don't know any obese Senegalese kids.)
- Small flashlight with batteries (Most families don't have electricity so a working flashlight is gold!)
- Good quality melamine plate, bowl, and/or cup (Practical and also special.)
- Soap AND a plastic soap dish that has a cover. When you bathe standing on a big rock in the dirt as kids do here, you really need the soap holder. Toothbrush in a toothbrush holder. Again, the plastic case is really great.
- Pencils, erasers, colored pencils, and sharpeners for all school-aged kids. Good quality pens for older kids.

Other great gift ideas: jump ropes, Band-Aids, hard candy and gum, comb, hair elastics or bands, marbles, harmonica, socks. For young kids a baby doll with light brown skin and no hair (good for a child of any color), toy car, truck or airplane (the ones with bigger wheels work better in dirt). For older kids a simple watch, solar calculator, sunglasses.

NOT AS GOOD items we have seen kids receive:

- Anything with instructions in English, even if it seems simple to you (We tried to explain to one girl who got a cool pair of markers that came with a clip so you could draw with them both at the same time and a set of 3-D glasses you then used to see what you drew in 3-D, but it didn't make sense. How do you even say 3-D in Wolof??)
- Any toy that is not universally recognizable (We have seen kids receive matching memory card games – a great idea but with no one to explain it to them, they are wasted.)
- Yo-yo's (They don't know what it is here.)
- Gloves, winter hats (You don't know whether your box will end up in Siberia or Senegal.)
- Play-dough (Kids here have no idea what it is for.)
- Stuffed animals (Young kids here usually burst into tears when presented with stuffed animals from their shoeboxes. The kids who are old enough not to be scared are not interested. Animals carry meanings here that are culturally specific. One of our kids got a cute stuffed owl and an older sibling told me that he himself is terrified of owls. They connote evil and shapechangers. You can't know what the animal will signify in the culture it reaches.)
- Stickers or temporary tattoos (Kids don't have anywhere to stick the stickers, and often the pictures don't make sense or connect with their world. Cute puppy stickers won't make much sense in a Muslim country because dogs are considered unclean in Islam.)
- T-shirts with words or pictures on them (Would you want to wear a shirt with something unknown written on it? Pictures have different meanings in different cultures. Stick with solid colors, stripes, or pretty designs.)
- Anything cheap or fragile (One box had a white skinned, red-haired porcelain doll in it…)
- Two of the 10-year old boys in our class got adult sized XL t-shirts in their boxes that were obviously left over from an event. Approach filling a shoebox like you would approach picking out a gift for a friend's child, not as an opportunity to unload stuff you don't want.

That's my unsolicited advice on this topic; I hope you find it helpful!

November 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 **Daylight Saving Time Ends** 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 5:00 p.m. Girls Group **@ Baptist**	**2**	**3 Election Day** 10:00 a.m. Food Pantry 6:00 p.m. HS Bible Study **@ Episcopal** **6:45 p.m. Dessert Hour & Business Meeting**	**4** 6:00 p.m. Cherubs Choir 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**5** 9:15 a.m. Moms Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship & Coffee 4:30 p.m. Food Pantry 5:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group @ **Presby**	**6**	**7**
8 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 2:15 p.m. Saratoga Center for Rehab Worship Service	**9** 4:30 p.m. Book Bound!	**10** 10:00 a.m. Food Pantry 7:00 p.m. Board Meetings	**11** 6:00 p.m. Cherubs Choir 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 	**12** 10:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship & Coffee 4:30 p.m. Food Pantry	**13**	**14**
15 Stewardship Sunday 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service 5:00 p.m. Girls Group **@ Baptist**	**16**	**17** 10:00 a.m. Food Pantry 6:00 p.m. HS Bible Study **@ Episcopal**	**18** 6:00 p.m. Cherubs Choir 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**19** 9:15 a.m. Moms Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship & Coffee 4:30 p.m. Food Pantry 5:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group **@ Presby**	**20**	**21** **9:00 a.m.** **Greening of the Church**
22 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service	**23**	**24** 10:00 a.m. Food Pantry	**25** 6:00 p.m. Cherubs Choir 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	**26** 	**27**	**28**
29 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship Service *First Sunday of Advent*	**30**					

The First Baptist
Church of Ballston Spa

202 Milton Avenue
Ballston Spa, NY 12020
(518) 885-8361
www.BSpaBaptist.org

Church Office Hours:
Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Church Staff

Darryl Drew, Director of Music	dddmusik@nycap.rr.com
Rita Drew, Choir Director	dddmusik@nycap.rr.com
Justina Danison, Office Administrator	bspabaptist202@gmail.com
Charity Buckbee, Church Sexton	charitybuckbee@yahoo.com
Kate Dashiell, Youth Worker	k8dashiell@ymail.com

The First Baptist Church of Ballston Spa
202 Milton Avenue
Ballston Spa, NY 12020