



First Baptist Church Newsletter

**SPRING 2008
EDITION**

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From Pastor Howard:

Sesquicentennial

As this issue of the Church's Newsletter comes out, I'm reminded of the busyness of the year before us, as well as the one on the horizon. In 2009, Cathy and I will be celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary, and our 25th anniversary of full time ministry! More importantly, our church will be celebrating 150 years of ministry here on this corner in Cedar Springs. This is called our Sesquicentennial! We will be formulating a committee of individuals from the church family to plan this special celebration for next year which has the potential to be a blockbuster event. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please see Pastor Howard soon.

Historically, our church was chartered on February 12, 1859 with 25 members as a plant from the Baptist Church of Laphamville, MI (now Rockford). It would be four years before the first pastor would be called in 1863 - and through to the present, 37 more pastors would arrive to shepherd the flock. There is much to our heritage that we should reflect upon, and should the Lord tarry, much that will be added in the years that are ahead. We will be looking at the spring of 2009 to hold this special celebration, sometime after Easter. Much help will be needed in the planning and implementation of this special time.

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From Pastor Crawford:

We as Christians have a the great privilege to come before the throne of God through our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:15, 16). This is one of the main purposes of the youth group having FHP's every other Tuesday. The **F** stands for food, the **H** homework, and the **P** prayer. The food is good and the homework is part of it, but each teen is choosing a friend who is not a Christian to pray for and being held accountable to witness to them and invite them to church. They pray for their salvation and the courage to speak the good news of Jesus Christ to them. We have also been doing some evangelism training.

There has been fruit! Two young men have come to Christ as their Savior through their own friends either bringing them to an evangelistic function or witnessing to them. One of the young men has moved out of the area and the other we are still praying that he can get some time off from farm work and attend church. We as a youth group ask you to join us in prayer. Please pray for these teens friends to come to a saving knowledge of Christ and that they would have the courage and wisdom when speaking the truth in love.



Adoption Service

Very soon, we will be enjoying an unique and special time in the life of our church. On April 20, 2008, we will be participating in a public recognition service of Bill & Natalie Taylor and Ken & Renee Dockery along with their families as we ceremonially *adopt* these dear folks and become their sending church. The Taylor's & Dockery's are missionary church planters with Continental Baptist Missions who are currently working toward planting a Baptist Church in the urban Cleveland area.

Several years ago we took the Taylor's and Dockery's on as a part of our missionary family and began financially and prayerfully supporting them. This past year, their sending church from Pennsylvania took a left turn (in more ways than one) and ultimately dropped these dear friends as missionaries, as their sending church, and their church membership. Within a few months, CBM informally contacted us on behalf of the Taylor's & Dockery's to determine if we would consider the possibility of becoming their sending church. Soon, we moved from informal contact, to the formalities of taking on the responsibilities of being their sending church and the place of their membership residency.

These dear friends and fellow members will be in town for the annual CBM Friends & Family Banquet the week of April 14th. Taking advantage of their proximity, we have scheduled to have them here the morning of the 20th and will have a special time of recognition, challenges, and special adoption. To quote John Den Boer the Director of Pre-Field Ministries with CBM, "...I believe God has intervened to remove them (Dockery & Taylor families) from an unfit home to bring them to a church home where they are loved, cared for and supported to undertake the mission He has called them to fill." God has graciously given us the opportunity and privilege to partner with these dear folks in the vital and challenging ministry of re-churching North America. Plan now to be here and share in this special service with these newest members of our church family!

Updated Constitution

For the past two years, a team of men have been working diligently to update our church's constitution, bylaws, and statement of faith. An incredible amount of hours have gone into this task and has finally come to a conclusion. This past month a final copy of the updated constitution was placed into our Deacon Board's hands for their review and recommendation. Over these last couple of years, periodic updates and versions were placed into their hands for their review as well. At our February meeting, it was unanimously recommended that this updated constitution be made available for review and ultimately, approval as our new constitution.

First, we are planning to distribute a copy to each member family by the end of March. When you receive your copy, you will find two colors of print. The black print represents that which was left untouched, and the red print represents that which has been updated or added. If you desire an additional copy beyond the family copy, please contact the church office. Included in your documents are two policies that will require congregational approval: a. A policy related to *Church Discipline*, and b. A policy called *Standards of Christian Conduct*.

Second, on April 20th during the PM service and Quarterly meeting we plan to spend our time going over the document explaining the process and rationale behind the updates and additions...if time permits, we can have some questions that evening.

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Third, for the next four weeks, the committee that worked on this document will be available at the church at 5 PM each Sunday afternoon to deal with any questions or concerns. Fourth, these same Sunday evenings, I will be preaching through a four part series dealing with the Standards of Christian Conduct. Fifth, Lord willing and if there are no further questions, we will schedule a special business meeting in which we, the congregation, will act upon the Board's recommendation. It is not our desire to rush into this, which is certainly reflected in the painstaking process that we have gone through these past two years. We will take however much time is required!

I would add here as well, a policy manual is being developed in which all the policies that govern the decision making processes and the procedures here at the church are being reviewed. Each of these will then be brought together into a manual which would then be maintained and reviewed on a regular basis. These policies would include all those which are congregational approved and Board approved.

Thank you for continuing to pray as we work through all of this. All of these things will obviously make for a busy schedule over the next year or so and we certainly do not desire to be distracted from what the Lord has us here for, namely, reaching souls for Christ. However, as you review the three things I mentioned above, you can easily see that these either will be opportunities in the making, or organizational in nature which should free the time and concerns to allow for more effective outreach. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at your convenience. If you are interested in helping in any of these areas, please let me know that as well.

Just one of the sheep!

Pastor Howard

Easter Week Events

Palm Sunday - March 16th

During the morning service, our choir will be presenting the Easter cantata, "Once Upon a Tree" by Pepper Choplin. Listen and prepare your heart for the celebration of our Savior's atoning death and resurrection.

Good Friday - March 21st

First Baptist of Cedar Springs has invited twenty-one area churches to attend a Good Friday Service, which will begin at 6:30 p.m. in our auditorium. Rev. Tom Logsdon will be bringing the message and the puppet team from Maranatha Baptist Church will be participating. Following the service, a time of fellowship will be held downstairs in Tower Hall; 30 dozen cookies will be needed. If you would like to help provide cookies, please sign-up on the bulletin board.

Easter Sunday - March 23rd

A Sunrise Service will be held at 8:30 a.m. followed by a breakfast at 9:30 a.m. in place of Sunday School. To help with planning for the meal, an attendance sign-up is posted on the bulletin board. There is also a sign-up posted for those willing to make egg casseroles and/or sweet breads (*recipes will be provided*). Our Morning Worship Service will be held at 10:45 a.m. as usual; **no** Evening Service is scheduled.





On the Spring Calendar ...

MARCH



1	Awana Games practice - Gym reserved	9-11 AM & 1-3 PM
3	Music Committee Meeting @ McDonald's Gym reserved	7 PM 7 - 9 PM
7-8	Basement reserved	10 PM - 8 AM
7 & 8	Church Ministries Conference @ Calvary Baptist, GR	
8	Awana Games practice - Gym reserved Sr. High Progressive Game Day - Van reserved	9-11 AM & 1-3 PM 11:30 AM - 8 PM
9	Daylight Savings Time begins—spring forward 1 hour Middle School Orchestra Rehearsal Christian Ed. Committee Meeting	Noon 7:05 PM
10	Gym reserved	7 - 9 PM
11	P&P Meeting Youth FHP @ Church after school	8 AM until 5 PM
13	LLBYC Banquet @ West Cannon Baptist	6 PM
15	Choir Rehearsal Sojourner Class Fellowship @ the Grifhorst home	10 AM 5:30 PM
16	PALM SUNDAY / Easter Cantata Jr. High SNAC @ the House home	AM Service 7:15 PM
17	Gym reserved	7 - 9 PM
20	Ladies' "Banana Split" Night Out @ Earla Alber's	7 PM
21	GOOD FRIDAY / Service & Fellowship [30 dozen cookies needed—see posted sign-up]	6:30 PM
22	Awana Games @ Comstock Park H.S.	
23	EASTER SUNDAY Sonrise Service [see posted attendance & food sign-ups] Breakfast AM Service NO Evening Service	8:30 AM 9:30 AM 10:45 AM XXXXXX
24	Board Meeting Gym reserved	7 PM 7 - 9 PM
25	Youth FHP @ Church after school Deaconess Meeting	until 5 PM 7 PM
29	Basement reserved Jr. High to Craig's Cruisers - Van reserved	Noon - 4 PM 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM
30	Sr. High SNAC @ the Sommer home	7:15 PM

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
233 S. MAIN STREET
CEDAR SPRINGS MI 49319**

**Phone: 616-696-1630
Fax: 616-696-3820**

Email: fbccedarsprings@charterinternet.com
Website: www.fbc-cedarsprings

Sharing Christ's Love and Word

Pastor Howard
Home 696-3129
Cell 788-9659

Pastor Crawford
Home 696-0899
Cell 799-2788



GROUNDS KEEPING

Our grounds keeping is done on a weekly volunteer basis from May to October; (volunteers must be age 16 and older). Equipment and fuel are available. A sign-up is posted on the bulletin board in April; stop by then and see if there is a week or two that will fit with your summer schedule.

On the Spring Calendar ...

APRIL

6	Lincoln Lake Baptist Youth Camp - SS & AM	
8	4-6th grade Spring Break Party @ Church	5 - 9 PM
9	Youth Day—Van reserved	
13	SS Teachers' Meeting	7:05 PM
	Jr. High SNAC @ the Sommer home	7:15 PM
15	Youth FHP @ Vhurch after school	until 5 PM
16	Awana Awards Night	7 PM
17	CBM Banquet @ Calvary Baptist Church	6 PM
19	Youth / FBBC Ensemble - Basement reserved	3 - 9 PM
20	Dockery/Taylor Adoption Service - AM	10:45 AM
	Fellowship Meal after AM Service	Noon
	Quarterly Business Mtg. - Constitution Review	6 PM
21-24	Coach Trip to Millennium Theatre, Lancaster Co., PA	
22	Deaconess Meeting	7 PM
24	Ladies' Night Out "Spring Cleaning" - Tower Hall	7 PM
26	Sr. High Activity - Van reserved	
27	Constitution Q&A Open Review - Tower Hall	5 PM
	Sr. High SNAC @ the Bower home	7:15 PM
28	Board Meeting	7 PM
29	Youth FHP @ Church after school	until 5 PM

MAY

1-3	Men's MARBC Retreat @ Lake Ann Baptist Camp	
4	Child Dedication during AM Service	10:45 AM
	Constitution Q&A Open Review - Tower Hall	5 PM
6	Pine Ridge Bible Camp's Golf Marathon @ Pilgrim Run	
10	Jr. High Video Scavenger Hunt - Van reserved	
11	MOTHER'S DAY	
	Constitution Q&A Open Review - Tower Hall	5 PM
13	Youth FHP @ Church after school	until 5 PM
17	Ladies' Tea	2 PM
	Sr. High Dinner - Van reserved	
18	Graduate Recognition during AM Service	10:45 AM
	Basement reserved	Noon - 4 PM
	Constitution Q&A Open Review - Tower Hall	5 PM
	Special Business Meeting - re: ratifying our constitution	7:05 PM
	Youth SNAC @ the Sommer home	After mtg.
19	Board Meeting	7 PM
20	Ladies' Trip to Shpshewana - Van reserved	6 AM - 8 PM
26	MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY	
27	Youth FHP @ Church after school	until 5 PM
	Deaconess Meeting	7 PM
31	Gym and Kitchen reserved	All day