



The Visitor

SEPTEMBER 2014



Discernment Process Update

Wade Allen

In May, we began a discernment process on the issue of church staffing. This was in response to the resignation of our associate pastor. As many of you know, this process was halted in the summer as we were faced with the possibility of hiring an interim minister of worship. As we enter the fall, Clifton Davis (Interim Minister of Worship) is in place. Clif's presence allows us to relax a bit. His leadership provides stability in our worship ministries; God has met our needs in this area.



It would be easy to sit back and take it easy. Yet we must continue to actively discern God's leading in the area of church staffing. On Monday, August 18, the CCT met. The team resumed the discernment process it began in May. With the **explore** stage completed, it was time to develop a **listening strategy**. As we reflected on Clif's calling to First Baptist, we were thankful for God's provision. We now have more time to work through the process. I would like to share with you the next steps in the process. Here is our listening strategy:

Finances – One of the first questions to ask is *what can we afford?* This summer, we are grateful that our income is exceeding our expenses. Given the number of facility improvements this spring, our financial condition is considered healthy. However we plan to continue to assess our financial position through the remainder of the year. Additionally an evaluation of giving patterns for the past three years is part of the plan. We hope this work will help us determine what we can afford in terms of staffing.

Ministry Activity – Another area of listening has to do with the types of ministries we are doing at First Baptist. Several of our CCT members will be working this fall to analyze the ministries at First Baptist for the past 24 months. This team will examine newsletters, the church calendar and church budget to create a snapshot of our ministries. This team will also query our church database for membership/attendee demographics. As we consider staffing, this picture will help us discern God's leading.

Listening Sessions – We plan to organize listening sessions in homes this spring. Since we are Baptist, food will be involved. Once the financial data and ministry snapshot is complete, we will gather in small groups to discuss the findings. Everyone will be invited to participate in this portion of the process. The discernment process we developed in 2011-12 intentionally involves the entire congregation. At the same time, it structures input so that powerful personalities do not have undue influence. Our hope is that these

in-home sessions will provide a relaxing atmosphere for everyone to express their understanding of God's direction for our congregation.

Outside Survey – Finally, considering other churches in our region and throughout the country will be a part of the mix. How do churches with similar resources staff? What ministry trends do we need to consider as we discern our staffing? Conversation with regional and denominational leaders will help us as we discern.

Prayer – There is much work to do. You might ask the question *How can I help?* I am glad you asked. The first and foremost way that everyone can assist is through prayer. Please make this discernment process a part of your daily prayers. Ask God to lead us by the power of His Spirit. We are often surprised at the result of our discerning. The outcomes frequently surprise us. There is no agenda in this process. We are authentically open to God's direction. We trust that He will reveal His plan to us. Prayer is an essential aspect of our listening.

Time Frame – We are reminded in James to plan cautiously. James writes,

(James 4:13–14 NIV) Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow.

He instructs us to rephrase our plans.

(James 4:15 NIV) Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.

Certainly, this is our intent. We are trusting God to lead and direct. At the same time, we do have a time frame in mind. We hope to complete our initial assessments by the first of the year, hold listening sessions in the spring and arrive at a decision around May. We will keep you updated along the way.

Worship in September

As we begin the month of September, you may want to read the Scriptures ahead of time. The September schedule is:

- September 7 - Trouble at Home (2 Samuel 13)
- September 14 - Friends of David (2 Samuel 14-19)
- September 21 - Forgive (2 Samuel 16:5-13; 19)
- September 28 - Pride (2 Samuel 24)

Life Line Screening

Life Line Screening will be available to our First Baptist family on **Tuesday, October 7** in the Fellowship Hall. These health screenings might possibly save lives or prevent a serious disability caused by stroke, vascular disease, or osteoporosis. For more information or to register, pick up a pink registration sheet in the church office.

Riverside/FBC Fall Picnic

The annual First Baptist and Riverside Avenue Baptist Fall picnic will be **September 28** at Riverside at **4 PM**. Meat, drink, and table service will be furnished. Please bring a dish or two to share and lawn chairs. Music will be provided by Paul White and Audey Murphy. A freewill offering will be taken for them. Special guests will be Riverside Friendship class.

Judson Choir in November

We will be hosting the Judson Choir, **November 6 at 7 PM**. On the Thursday evening (Nov. 6), we need volunteers for a meal and lodging, and sack lunches for their tour, on Friday. Please contact Dana Davis, Barb Eidson, Lydia Burton, Joe Songer, or Shirley Pittenger if you are available to help in any way. Keep this group in your prayers for a safe journey and uplifting repertoire.

Update on Aaron and Cynthia Smith

Dear First Baptist Church Family,

We are so blessed. God has been good to us this past year. Switzerland is a beautiful country. We found a supportive English-speaking church family in Basel at Basel Christian Fellowship. Worshipping with Christians from all over the world gives one a sense of the greatness and power of God.

Cynthia's US Fulbright Student Award allowed us to visit six countries (Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy), while living in Switzerland. Also, Cynthia's research went very well. Her desk at the archive sat at a window with a view of Basel, the Rhine River, and the German Black Forest. Aaron coordinated with International Students Basel-Stadt. (Stadt is "city" in German.) This group ministers to international students through various country presentations at international evenings, outings, and small group Bible study. We presented the USA last February at an international evening. Cynthia finished her doctoral studies at Ball State on August 19. Now, we have been bitten by the wanderlust bug and are moving to Chennai, India. Yes, that is India. Cynthia has accepted a one-year renewable contract to teach voice lessons, ear training, and new history at KM Music Conservatory (www.kmmc.in), starting this September. This music school is the only Western music conservatory in all of India. Cynthia is excited to teach what she loves to enthusiastic students. Aaron may be able to find work in Chennai's film industry. He will be playing bassoon with the KMMC faculty and spouse woodwind ensemble.



Overall, we rest assured in the fact that, despite the saying, all countries are God's country. We cannot escape his presence. God has gone before us into India. We do covet your prayers as we make this transition. Thank you for all your support.

In Christ, Aaron & Cynthia Smith

Missional Community Update

The Fall Missional Community Session continues in September. We continue to have social events, mission projects and life groups as a part of this ministry. Each month, we will have a social event on the first Sunday

of the month. On the second and fourth weeks of the month, life groups will meet in homes. The third week of each month will be a time of mission for all life groups. Life groups are now closed to new members until next session. However, everyone is invited to join in the social events and mission projects.

Life Groups – Life Groups are meeting in homes.

Leaders	Day	Time
Allen	Sunday	2 PM
Rodriguez	Saturday	6 PM
Fink	Monday	6:30 PM
Stigers	Sunday	5:30 PM

Social Event – This month’s social event will be **September 7** at Prairie Creek Reservoir directly following the Sunday morning services at **12:30 PM**. There is a playground, open green space, basketball courts, a small beach, and you may fish if you have a fishing license. You can also use the grills, but you will need to bring charcoal. Please bring your own picnic as there is a large shelter house. We look forward to seeing you all there! We will be meeting at the beach playground area.

Mission Project – This month’s mission project will be **September 20** from **9 AM-3 PM**. Lunch will be provided. We will be helping out at The Oasis on Ball State’s campus. It is located at 1400 W. Abbott St. We will be working outside (weather permitting) doing general maintenance at the house (i.e. cleaning gutters, general yard work, cleaning out, and organizing sheds). There is also some inside work that can be done as well. Whether you stay the whole time or just a little while, please come help out!

Providing hospitality to students of all backgrounds, the mission of The Oasis Campus Ministry is to open its doors as a home-away-from-home environment; giving students spiritual support and emotional guidance through Christian leadership in an open and non-judgmental way. For more information, check out the ministry’s website at <http://www.bsuoasis.org/>.

Friendship Class

The Friendship Class for special-needs adults will begin its fall programing **Tuesday, Sept. 16**. Volunteers will be needed to help with the classes. If you have questions about the class, call Jane Patton 759-8276. You will be blessed if you decide to volunteer!

Discover First Baptist

“Discover First Baptist” is the title of a one-day class for:

- individuals who have joined since Wade Allen became our pastor (2008),
- those considering joining First Baptist, and
- persons who just want to learn more about our church.

Bill Eidson will talk briefly about the history of First Baptist, Pastor Wade will lead a discussion on Baptist beliefs, and Adam Fink will explain the church’s organizational structure and opportunities for service. This class will be **Sunday, September 14** from **noon to 2:30 PM**. Lunch will be served, and childcare will be provided. You may register for the class by calling the church office at 284-7749 or by going to <http://bit.ly/discover-fbc> to register online by **September 8**.

Shut-In Baskets

On **November 22** we will be assembling fruit baskets for our shut-in members. If you know of someone who needs to be added to the shut-in list, please contact Cheryl Flaherty at 765-520-7260 or c1.flaherty@comcast.net. If you would like to volunteer your services for assembling and/or delivery, please contact Cheryl.

Noted Author to Speak at Riverside

Dr. John Killinger to speak here in memory of Barbara Wilson

Noted preacher and author Dr. John Killinger will be in Muncie for a two-session event the weekend of **September 13-14**. The first event will be **10 AM to noon** at First Baptist on Saturday, September 13. His topic that morning will be A New Way to Understand The Gospel Of Mark, based on his book *Hidden Mark: Exploring Christianity's Heretical Gospel*. He will do a textual study which he promises in his words to be "lively, not boring" followed by questions and answers. Then he will deliver the sermon the next day at Riverside Avenue Baptist Church. The title of his message will be "Coming Out of Our Tombs" using the text John 11:1-44 (the raising of Lazarus). This event is offered in memory and in honor of the late Barbara Wilson, former member of Riverside.



Dr. Killinger has written over 50 books, including *God, The Devil, and Harry Potter* and *Bread for the Wilderness, Wine for the Journey*, a classic on Christian meditation. A former pastor in Baptist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches, he also taught for 15 years at Vanderbilt Divinity School and was Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Samford University in Birmingham.

He has been one of my (Robert Burton) favorite authors since the days I was a young minister. I had the privilege of meeting him several years ago when he spoke in Evansville while we were living there. I reconnected with him when the late Barbara Wilson discovered his writings when learning he, like she, was originally from the same community in Kentucky. That contact led eventually to an invitation for him to come to Muncie. Personal conflicts for both him and us led to delays in bringing him here, but now the way is clear for him to come. It is a privilege and honor to have him now as a guest in our community.

Ray and Paula Raines Retirement

First Baptist has enjoyed a long and close relationship with the Muncie Mission. Rev. Eddie Thomas opened a Mission with a religious service and warm meal in the basement of the old First Baptist Church. The first clients were men, some women and children seeking food during the Great Depression.

Reverend Ray Raines was called to be the Executive Director in 1985. He and Paula have faithfully served the mission for 29 years. Ray and Paula are retiring. Please join Muncie Mission Ministries as Ray and Paula are honored on **Friday, September 19**. There will be a reception from **4 to 7:30 PM** with tributes at **7 PM**. For more information, contact Missy at 765-288-9122 extension 225.



Poverty Simulation

TEAMwork for Quality Living will present a poverty simulation on **Tuesday, September 16**, from **6-8:30** at the BSU Student Center. If you'd like to understand more about what life in poverty is like, you would find this exercise very valuable. Call 747-7158 or email team@teamworkq1.org to make a reservation. This activity is suitable adults and for middle school and older kids.

Lost Proof (Book)

I have loaned my proof (a pre-publication book) to someone, and I don't remember who I loaned the book to. The book is *Eleanor's Story: an American Girl in Hitler's Germany*. It is signed to me by the author. I will be gone until September 15. You can call and leave a message on the machine (765-289-5593) or bring it to church September 21. Thanks for your help. *MaryAnne Bayer*

Address Change

Lois Craig has moved to Linton, Indiana. Her new address is: Lois Craig, 3654 N 1100 W, Linton, IN 47441.

Visitor and Bulletin Information

If you would like to place an announcement in the church bulletin please email it to wade@fbcmuncie.org. If you have an article for the October newsletter, please email it to wade@fbcmuncie.org by **Sunday, September 21**.

Thank You Notes

Betty Arthur – Dear First Baptist family, thank you for all the prayers, cards, visits, and flowers during my recent battle with cancer. I am still a work in progress but with God's help, your support in the medical profession's expertise, I will make it! Thank you so much.

Edith Flaherty Family – Thank you so much for the beautiful Peace Lily plant and the family dinner. It meant so much to all of us.

Early Worship Planning Team – Thanks to all who volunteered their time and talent for special music this summer while the Choir and Handbells took a break.

Calendar

Life Groups will be meeting at various times throughout the month.

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

Tuesdays – 7 PM - Friendship Class (beginning September 16)

Wednesdays – 6 PM Praise Team (Sanctuary), 6 PM Children's Choir (Elementary Room), 6:30 PM Handbells (Choir Room), 7:40 PM Sanctuary Choir (Choir Room)

September 7 – Missional Community Social Event at Prairie Creek

September 13 – Event with John Killinger

September 14 – Discover First Baptist Class

September 19 – Parent's Night Out

September 20 – Missional Community Mission Project at the Oasis Campus Ministry

September 21 – Life Group Leaders Meeting

September 22 – Muncie Mission Chapel Service

September 28 – FBC/Riverside Fall Picnic

September Birthdays

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

9/1 Monty Stinson	9/14 Kimberly Lewis
9/1 Sam Stinson	9/16 Joshua Heimlich
9/2 Tim Brooks	9/16 Elizabeth Ratchford
9/2 Harry Irwin	9/17 Chloe Durke
9/4 Ella Dawson	9/17 Meagan Fountain
9/4 Mallory Flodder	9/18 Gene Warner
9/4 Nancy Stinson	9/21 Gabrielle Heimlich
9/5 Edith Ford	9/21 Ella Mae Lemen
9/7 Bethany Brooks	9/23 Kimi Dahl
9/8 Hannah Headley	9/24 Makayla Butler
9/8 Cathy Henderson	9/24 Tyler Cummins
9/10 Alex Harker	9/24 Sarah Gough
9/11 Heath Brooks	9/24 Polly Ratchford
9/11 Helen Heath	9/24 William Smith
9/11 Arch Mutter	9/25 Lynn Sciscoe
9/12 Noah Headley	9/27 Mary Van Deventer
9/13 Will Drumright	9/28 Anna Ratchford
9/13 Austin Martin	