



The Visitor

FEBRUARY 2016

New and Goods

Wade Allen

Adam Fink has served faithfully for the past four years and has done a tremendous job. Thank you, Adam for your steadfast leadership through times of uncertainty and change. At the same time, I am thankful for our new church moderator, Molly Flodder.



We held our first CCT meeting under Molly's leadership in January. On the agenda was a new item that will remain throughout Molly's tenure. It is labeled "New and Goods". This is an exercise that is conducted at the beginning of each Circles (Teamwork for Quality Living) meeting. For those living in poverty, this practice requires them to think of something positive happening in their life. Positive thinking is not easy when you are faced with economic hardship day in and day out. The members of the the CCT went around the room and shared something positive. We were able to get to know each other a little better as we shared about the good that God was doing in our lives.

As I think about the "New and Goods" of our church, I am thrilled that God continues to call leaders toward fresh ministry initiatives. As you read through this edition of the Visitor, you will see several areas of ministry that have not been going on in recent years. From a marriage retreat to men's ministry to a Scripture engagement workshop, this Visitor reflects innovative opportunities for the equipping of the believers at First Baptist. I am grateful for the leaders who serve each week in various areas of ministry. Certainly the ongoing work of the church never gets old. However, I am also appreciative for the "new and goods" we are experiencing this year.

Worship in February

The February schedule is:

- February 07 - The Glory of God (Luke 9:28-36)
- February 14 - Temptation (Luke 4:1-13)
- February 21 - Healing Words (Luke 9:37-43)
- February 28 - Engage Scripture, Engage God (Psalm 119:105)

Robert's Ramblings

Some exciting things are happening at Riverside. The church recently voted to designate the four ordained ministers in our church fellowship, Mona Dale, Charles Gilbert, Jan Largent, and myself as the Pastoral Team with me being the Senior Pastor. I will normally be in the pulpit all but one Sunday each month. A member of the Pastoral Team will fill the pulpit the remaining Sunday each month on a rotating basis throughout the year. This arrangement allows for the church to be a good steward of its many gifts. As the church has experienced growth in recent months, we will be better able to respond to the pastoral needs of the church and to be more innovative in our church programs.



Lydia and I visited Riverside when we first moved here as we investigated all of the American Baptist Churches in town before joining First Baptist. (As an American Baptist endorsed chaplain, it was important for me to be active in an American Baptist Church.) There were about 35 people at Riverside that Sunday. With our new members and the people from the group home, we now sometimes exceed that number.

An air of excitement is being felt among the membership. We recently held a “WOW” event, a time to dream of what our church is to become in the future. One member commented that, “After the church almost disbanded nine years ago we were in a survival mode. Now we are in a growth mode!”

In the past I spoke of Riverside as ‘a small church with a big heart whose doors are open to everyone in Jesus’ name.’ We have dropped the word “small!” However, we are still a church with a big heart whose doors are open to everyone, in Jesus’ name!

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

Mona Dale, one of the pastoral team members at Riverside, will be leading a bible study at **7 PM** on Wednesday evenings at Riverside Baptist Church beginning on **February 17**. Everyone is invited to participate.

Youth Camp Barnabas Sign Up

Teens from First Baptist are planning on taking a mission trip to Camp Barnabas this summer. Camp Barnabas offers life-changing opportunities to people with special needs and chronic diseases. Our teens work hard to make the camp experience for people with special needs possible, in turn their lives are greatly impacted. You can get sign up forms at <http://fbcuncie.org/barnabas>. Deadline for sign up is **March 1**.

Salvation Army Pantry

The Salvation Army food pantry is in need of volunteers. First Baptist Church has been assigned certain dates to supply volunteers. There is a signup sheet in the lower hallway on the bulletin board, along with a sheet that explains what the Salvation Army is requiring. Please consider signing up individually or as a small group, no more than four please, to help fill those dates listed. If you have any questions, please direct them to James Martin, Outreach Coordinator, at baronjlm@aol.com.

America for Christ Offering 2016

The America for Christ Offering is an annual American Baptist USA offering. It is a response to the needs of home missions, and donations go directly to projects in the United States. Gifts go to fund home mission, education, and local community ministries. Collections of gifts will be throughout the month of March. America For Christ envelopes can be found in the pews to make it easy to donate. Please consider giving to this important ministry.

Marriage Retreat

A group will be traveling to Nashville, Indiana (The Artists Colony Inn) on **February 19-20** for a marriage retreat. Please keep these couples in your prayers as they strive to strengthen their marriages.

Team Seeks Funds for Potential Pastoral Sabbatical

This time last year everyone learned of a team working to help Pastor Wade look into a Sabbatical. In the interim, the Allen family decided that a 3-3 month respite might work well for Summer 2017. A committee has been working on this, and the Church Coordinating Team has recommended that the project continue.

The Sabbatical Team is working to apply for the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program. This opportunity, if FBC is selected, will bring to Wade, his family and the whole church a time of renewal and reflection as well as rest. Should First Baptist Church of Muncie be a recipient of this grant, we could receive up to \$50,000 to support Wade and his family and our congregation. Up to \$15,000 of the amount granted can be used to provide an interim pastoral role as well as funds for church renewal while the pastor is away.

Wade's tentative plans involve taking a 3-to 3 month respite that will allow the family to rest, travel, and rejuvenate while studying and examining an issue. Wade's interest lies in what scholars have called, "the Waning of Christendom," a slow-eroding of the importance of church in modern day society. This issue began decades ago among Christian churches in the United Kingdom, and first in our country in the northeast region of the United States with the South being a slower holdout. Wade plans to observe in these three areas what the strongest churches left are doing to remain a central core of their communities. Wade's studies at Northern Seminary and other reading have helped him formulate this idea for study and reflection and for areas where he will travel to observe the issues. He plans to use what he learns in sharing with our church, local churches and the Indiana American Baptist churches when he returns.

The grant proposal is due in mid-April. One stipulation of the funding is that the selected congregations should expect their pastor to stay with the church a minimum of one year after the sabbatical ends.

Members of the team supporting Wade in this effort are Molly Flodder, principal grant writer, along with Mary Ann Bayer, Bill Eidson, Dan Lemen, James Martin, Shirley Pittenger, Joe Songer, and Mark Sue. Special thanks to Bill and James for their work in discovering and editing the church policy on pastoral leave.

The first draft of the grant proposal crafted by Wade and Molly will be available for the committee by mid-March and those in the church interested in seeing the document will be able to view it just before Easter.

If anyone has questions or concerns, please contact anyone on the Sabbatical Team.

Men's Ministry

The Men's Ministry continues to meet on select Saturday mornings at **8 AM**. Just to remind you of the schedule, the first Saturday is a breakfast. Everyone is invited, even if you do not participate in the Bible study. The second and fourth Saturdays are a Bible study. The third Saturday of the month is off. If you have any questions, please contact Wes Russell at 765-480-9500. The response so far has been tremendous. We hope you will consider joining this group.

Walk A Mile

Muncie Mission's 12th annual Walk a Mile in My Shoes event is **February 13**, inclement weather date 2/20.

The funds you raise for the walk are vital as we help build hope... hope for a better tomorrow... one step at a time. Funds are used to address physical and spiritual needs through food, shelter, Christian counseling and other long-term programs. Raising \$100 provides 48 meals, \$50 provides 24 meals and \$25 provides 12 meals. Why not ask 10 friends/family to give \$10 each to reach 48 meals.

Registration begins at **8:00 AM**, Muncie Fieldhouse, followed by an opening ceremony at 9:00am, walk follows. Complimentary refreshments available during registration and after the walk. This is a noncompetitive walk that begins at the Fieldhouse and finishes at Muncie Mission.

Register you team(s), or if you can't walk, but want to donate to a team or walker, visit www.walkformunciemission.com. Start fundraising today on your own webpage!

Lenten Services

Every year Christian Ministries hosts Lenten Services beginning with **Ash Wednesday, February 10 at 12 PM (Noon)**, and continuing each Wednesday for six weeks leading up to Easter. Shaffer Chapel AME, 1501 E. Highland Ave., Muncie will be hosting our community wide Lenten Services for 2016.

Wednesday Lenten Services culminate with a Good Friday service on **Friday, March 25** to be held at High Street United Methodist Church, 291 S. High Street, Muncie at **12:00 PM**.

Everyone is invited to our community-wide services each week. During each service an offering will be taken for CMDC programs & services. Donations received at community events helps Christian Ministries to reach more people in need. See below for a listing of Pastors participating in this year's Lenten Services:

- February 10, Rev. Tonda Bell (Shaffer AME)
- February 17, Rev. Katherine Rider (St. Andrew Presbyterian)
- February 24, Rev. Wade Allen (1st Baptist Church)
- March 2, Rev. Kathleen Wright (Bethel AME)
- March 9, Pastor Bill Bruneau (The Compass Church-Yorktown)
- March 16, Rev. Jonathan Mitchell (Kirby Ave. Church of God)

Missional Community Update

The spring session of missional communities is underway this month. There are two in home life groups meeting this session along with a men's and women's life group. The men's group is meeting at the church on select Saturday mornings. A women's lunch group is currently meeting downtown every other Monday at noon for lunch, prayer, conversation and support. If you would be interested in attending the women's group, you can contact Molly Flodder at 765-760-1134. If you have questions about the men's group, you can contact Wes Russell at 765-480-9500.

Scripture Engagement Workshop

Mark your calendars for a special workshop presented at First Baptist on **Saturday, March 5 from 9 AM to noon**. Phil Collins, Ph.D. (A Taylor University Professor) will be presenting a highly interactive workshop, helping participants to:

- Develop their thinking (theology) and skills (practice) in engaging the Bible.
- Learn from Scripture about reflecting on God's Word.
- Practice different methods of reflecting on Scripture (e.g., praying Scripture, "storying," journaling, hand copying, Lectio Divina, memorizing, visual arts, singing, etc.) both as an individual and in small groups.
- Encounter landmark research about Scripture engagement.

Participants will receive a workbook that equips them to reflect on Scripture (the workbook explains the foundation of Scripture engagement, provides training on a variety of Scripture engagement practices, and includes numerous resources for further study).

Dr. Collins will be preaching at First Baptist on Sunday, February 28 (the week before the workshop). Look for registration forms in the coming weeks.

Visitor or 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 March newsletter, please email it to wade@fbcmuncie.org by **Sunday, February 21**.

Thank You Notes

Florence Arnold – I appreciate the cards and notes that so many of you have sent to me. Since I have had difficulty with my right shoulder and arm I have not been able to write and send cards as I normally do. Thank you for remembering me in this way.

Calendar

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 at Riverside

Wednesdays – 6:00 PM Praise Team (Sanctuary) and Children’s Choir (Second Floor), 6:30 PM Handbells (Choir Room), 7:40 PM Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

February 6 – Men’s Breakfast

February 8 – Life Group Leaders Meeting

February 10 – Lenten Service at Shaffer AME

February 13 – Men’s Bible Study

February 14 – Children’s Ministry Team Meeting

February 16 – CCT Meeting

February 17 – Lenten Service at Shaffer AME

February 19-20 – Marriage Enrichment Retreat

February 24 – Lenten Service at Shaffer AME

February 27 – Men’s Bible Study

February 28 – Dr. Phil Collins in worship

February Birthdays

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

2/1 - Trentin Temple

2/4 - Florence Arnold

2/4 - Jeff Jones

2/5 - Brandy Say

2/5 - Pam Williams

2/6 - Ryan Swayer

2/7 - Marge Manor

2/7 - Linzi Rodgers

2/7 - Ernestine Shields

2/9 - Bracken Petroviak

2/10 - Betsy Whaley

2/11 - Gary Henderson

2/14 - Brenda Cox

2/16 - Melanie Graham

2/18 - Micah Braswell

2/20 - Jo Boyce

2/21 - Haylee Mathis

2/21 - Penny Morris

2/23 - Joe Johnson

2/23 - Daniel Morency

2/24 - Wes Russell

2/27 - Christy Allen