



The Visitor

JUNE 2019

American Baptist Gathering

Most schools are now on break for the summer. Schedules shift, the weather warms, we travel more. In June, Christy, Levi and I will be traveling to Virginia Beach to attend the American Baptist Churches USA Biennial Mission Summit. We will gather with American Baptists from all over the country to celebrate all that God is doing in our denomination. I have never attended an American Baptist Biennial and am looking forward to connecting with other pastors and leaders within our denomination. Please keep us in your prayers as we travel this month.



I am grateful that Troy Hershman and Jim Sandberg will be filling in for me the last two Sundays in June. In this issue of the Visitor, you can read more about all that happening around First Baptist this month.

Worship Schedule

- ▷ June 02 - Ascension Sunday (Luke 24:44-53)
- ▷ June 09 - Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41)
- ▷ June 16 - The Call of a Father (Ephesians 6:1-4)
- ▷ June 23 - Poverty in the Bible (Various Passages)
- ▷ June 30 - Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray (Matthew 6:5-15)

Family Game Night

The Children's Ministry Team is hosting a family game night at the church on **Saturday June 22 from 4:30 to 7:30 PM** in the lower auditorium! Grab the kids and a game or two to share for a fun night of friendly competition! We will be providing dinner (pizza, drinks, and cookies!), so please make sure to register for this event to ensure we have plenty of food for everyone. An email with the registration link will be sent before the event. It's going to be a fun evening! Hope to see you there! — The Children's Ministry Team

We Are a Listening Community

You are about to open a great gift.

Thirty-five stories were submitted to The Story Project. The team has spent the month of May evaluating them and will meet in June to determine how best to share each story with our congregation. Perhaps you wrote one of those stories: if so, thank you! You probably have some feeling of having “put yourself out there”—you sense the discomfort that can come from wondering, What's next?



Between now and the end of the year, these stories will begin to trickle out into the life of our church. A few may show up in *The Visitor*; others may be shared on a Sunday morning. The bulk of them will be slated for publication in a book the team hopes to self-publish in December.

Those who sit near you in worship, who serve with you in the church kitchen, who study with you in Sunday school class—these are the ones who have taken time to chronicle some way God has been at work in their life. Some of them have written deeply personal, heartbreaking thoughts. Some have shared facts about themselves that they're unsure how you'll receive. They've done it, at least partly, hoping that you will be encouraged in your own walk with God and will believe even more strongly in His faithfulness in your own life. They have given of themselves to bless you. So right now is the time for us to think critically about how we want to welcome their gift:

Approach each story with humble curiosity – You may be surprised at what some people have experienced. Or perhaps you've been in similar circumstances, but you made a very different choice about how to handle them. That's okay. We're not here to pass judgment on other people's choices. Take each person's experience at face value and purposely cultivate gratitude that someone is trusting you with details of their life.

Treat the details of others' lives with respect – Obviously, The Story Project is about choosing to make these stories more public; this isn't a small group experience where

things must remain utterly confidential. Still, someone else's story shouldn't become fodder for gossip or small talk. Think carefully before you bring up conversation about someone else's story with anyone except that person.

If someone's story resonates with you, tell them – It can be very difficult to put a story out into the world and have no idea how it's being received. If you can relate, or you've been reassured about God's love, or you simply admire someone's courage in sharing, *tell them*. Don't keep it to yourself if someone's story has been a blessing to you.

Finally . . . enjoy the process! – Be amazed at the variety of life experiences and gifting that God has placed within First Baptist Church. Relish hearing the names of people you remember from decades past as they appear in the stories of some who've written. Discover the breadth of the ways God has worked and is working in the lives of those around you, and let it move you to praise Him all the more.

We are a listening community. Let's approach our task—our gift—with humility and love. May it draw us closer together as a church and closer to our God.

Upcoming Youth Event

June 9 (Lunch at Barking Cow & Scavenger Hunt Downtown 12:00–3:00 PM) – Meet in the church office at 12:00 PM. We will walk to the Barking Cow and have lunch. Youth will need to bring enough money to cover their lunch. We will then walk around downtown Muncie, staying within certain bounds and with an adult for each group, to follow clues in a Scavenger Hunt. The last clue will lead us to a special place where we will remain for awhile. We will then walk back to the church. Please pick up your youth at First Baptist at 3:00 PM. We will need several adults, so please let Christy know if you are able to join. If you have questions please contact Christy Allen at 765-717-5229 or Deena Green at 937-271-5968.

Joining God in the Neighborhood

A little while ago, we participated in Joining God in the Neighborhood. We did this through prayer walks in our neighborhood, volunteering at local ministries, and learning about community programs from guest speakers. If you recall, Joining God in the Neighborhood is a national program in which churches in the American Baptist Association are participating. We often focus on what our own church is doing for others and do not take the opportunity to see what is already occurring in our community. As we seek to help others and love our neighbors in the name of Christ, we don't have to do everything ourselves. It can feel like a daunting and overwhelming task, but God is already at work taking care of the needs in our community. Joining God in the Neighborhood helps us recognize that:

1. God is already ahead of us, and active in our neighborhoods.
2. All the clues for how to join with God in your communities are already among the people of a local congregation.
3. We continually ask: “Where are we being called to join with what God is up to in our neighborhoods?”
4. We are shaped by a desire to know and pay attention to the stories of the people in our neighborhood.
5. We are cultivating new practices of local Christian life that give us fresh insights into God’s work in our local contexts (American Baptist Churches USA 2015).

We are doing this by finding opportunities to discover our neighborhood in new ways and investing in what is going on. This is done through the following process:

Listen – To God and one another through Scripture (Dwelling in the Word) to your neighborhoods.

Discern – Bring your listening together to discern where God is already at work in your neighborhood and how you might join God in that work.

Experiment – Create several experiments in joining God in the neighborhood.

Reflect – Together as a congregation on what you have discovered in the experimenting.

Decide – To create new experiments inviting more people in the congregation to join with you (American Baptist Churches USA 2015).

This summer we will continue to Join God in the Neighborhood through new opportunities. In July we will have a two-week period, July 15-27, where FBC will provide opportunities for individuals, groups, and families to discover more of what God is already doing in our communities. There will be opportunities to do tours and gather information about community organizations. There will also be opportunities to join with some of these organizations and serve the community with them. It is our hope at FBC that everyone will participate during this event so that we can continue to serve God in our neighborhood in new and exciting ways. There will be more information forthcoming in the weeks ahead. If you have any questions or ideas regarding this, feel free to talk to James Heimlich or MaryAnne Bayer.

Outreach Updates

Our alternative Salvation Army Bell ringing in our church was a great success. Thanks to Sue Mutter and all her bell ringers internally. We raised \$779.74 which was as much as we ever raised at the mall. Thank you all who helped to make it a successful season of bell ringing. This year for the first time in several years we had an America for Christ offering in March. Brian Green took charge and, as of this writing, \$379.13 had been raised for this American Baptist Church fund. Thank you to all who participated. This year Joe Songer organized a table for 8 at the Habitat for Humanity breakfast in March. We had several people that shared about a new home thanks to the habitat volunteers along with their own 500 sweat equity hours. Our church supports this local agency. Individuals are also welcome to donate to this organization. Our donations for the YWCA women are so appreciated by the women. Please keep bringing clothing, twin sheets and blankets, and toiletries to the YWCA basket in the office. We thank you for your continued support to the women.

Ark Trip

Sue Mutter is leading an Ark trip on **July 10**. We will be leaving the Meijer parking lot at 7:00 AM. Cost is \$80/person, which includes ticket and coach. Food is on your own at the buffet located next to Ark. Prices for the buffet are seniors (\$10.99), adults (\$14.99), and kids 5–12 (\$6.99). Wear good walking shoes. There are electric scooters available to rent if you have problems walking (\$35.00/day). We will arrive back in Muncie by 7:00 PM. If you are planning to go, please make your check out to Sue Lawson Mutter, put on the memo for the Ark trip, and mail it to Sue Lawson-Mutter, 5600 S. Edgewood Dr., Muncie, IN 47302 you can Contact Suzy at 765-749-3484 with questions.

Volunteers Needed

The children's team is in need of volunteers to help with Sunday School this summer. We have teachers lined up, but still need "helpers" during first service during the month of July. Helpers will provide child care for ages PreK-2nd grade (there will be no lesson during this time!). Please see Britney Sue at 765-215-6586 or Colleen Massoth at 765-744-1350 if you're interested in helping out this summer! Thank you!

Visitor or Bulletin Information

If you would like an announcement in the July Visitor, please email it to wade@fbcmuncie.org by **Sunday, June 9**. You can also email articles for the weekly bulletin by Tuesday of each week.

Thank You Notes

Glenda Noblitt – Dear friends, I want to thank you for the many kindnesses you have extended to our family at this time of great loss in our lives. The cards of encouragement, sympathy, gifts of food, flowers, and visits have meant so much to us. A special thanks to Dana Davis and the women of the church who provided the hospitality and the delicious food for our friends and family after Woody's service. It was greatly appreciated. First Baptist Church will always hold a special place in our hearts. May God continue to bless you as you faithfully serve him in our community.

June Birthdays

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

06/02 - Cameron Pannell	06/13 - Julie Davis
06/02 - Kayonna Pannell	06/14 - Kelli Petroviak
06/03 - Simon Braswell	06/16 - Jim Hiatt
06/06 - Betty Arthur	06/16 - Samantha Ratchford
06/06 - Jeff Lemen	06/17 - Gail Grafton
06/06 - Jon Stinson	06/18 - Olivia Sue
06/06 - Waylon Shelton	06/19 - Eric Paille
06/06 - Wesley Shelton	06/20 - Jessica Fink
06/08 - Casey Braswell	06/21 - Joyce Cross
06/08 - Heather Barr	06/24 - Joe Songer
06/09 - Hunter Barr	06/24 - Sally Jones
06/09 - Wilma Neal	06/26 - Shelby Harris
06/11 - Anette Atterson	06/27 - Tory Pierce
06/11 - Dawn Dawson	06/30 - Emma Langdon
06/12 - David Cross	
06/12 - Marc Sue	