



First Baptist Church
Grove City

3301 Orders Road
Grove City, OH 43123
614.991.9205 www.firstgc.org

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

THE LIGHTHOUSE

**NON-PROFIT
ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GROVE CITY, OH
PERMIT #6**

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

PASTOR'S MESSAGE



Dr. Dave Earley
Lead Pastor

Dr. Jerry Neal
Pastor Emeritus

Bryan Corbett
Worship Pastor

Dr. John Foster
Discipleship Pastor

David Berna
Visitation Pastor

Jeff Bane
Outreach Pastor

Mark Wimbish
Student Pastor

Joshua Wright
Children's Pastor

Brian Kinnett
Members' Minister

Robert Stroup
Business Administrator

Andi Earley
Office Manager

Visit us on the Web:
www.firstgc.org

Security training last Saturday was very instructive but fearful for the faint of heart. All the scenarios devised by our security trainers came from actual events that have occurred in real churches. Most of the ones we were learning to handle, happened in the worship auditorium. In the scenarios, Pastor Earley was preaching each time and was surprisingly shot or stabbed before help came.

That afternoon I was asked to take the pastor position, and the scene began to unfold. I am a Vietnam veteran and have heard my share of bombs exploding and weapons being fired. I was prepared for anything. Nothing was going to shake me! The scene took place during a preaching service. I was speaking when I saw a man with a black panther mask coming, causing confusion. I knew he was the terrorist and to keep my eye on him. Not to worry. He kept coming forward with a security member by his side. The security member took control. I thought it was all over and kept speaking. Then, from behind, a man rushed in and shot me in the back. That gun shot was the loudest one I have ever heard. Nearly scared me to death. For a time, I couldn't catch my breath.

Since Saturday, I've had time to think about our volunteers. They all are amazing. They teach adults, youth, children, and preschool. They feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit prisons. They mow grass, shovel snow, and help our widows. They lead people to Christ, visit the sick, and care for the dying. They do things to serve our church before we ever know we need them. For example: the automatic openers on our bathroom doors. I told Bob Hohn that it was a waste of money. But after I had hip surgery and had to use a walker I said, "Money well spent." We have not had a security breach. However, our volunteers are prepared, trained, and are on duty at every event in our church. And they are packing. Oh yes, even our women.

The intruder got behind me and shot me. It left me shaken. Then, the trainer began to ask the team, "How could we have saved the pastor?" Then a lady sitting in the direct line of view of the perpetrator said, "I would have drawn my gun and yelled to the pastor, "Drop and roll!" I had to interrupt. "I'm an old man with arthritis. I don't drop and roll. Just shoot me."

I appreciate this group of volunteers so much. The rewards are few and far between. But I believe they deserve our heartfelt gratitude. Thank them when you can for their service.

**Pastor Jerry Neal
Pastor Emeritus**

MEMBERS' MINISTRY

TRUSTEE MINISTRY

In my health struggles I hear God's voice call to me, "Don't fear, don't worry, don't be disheartened or discouraged, for I am with you. I will lift you on my wings and carry you. You will not stumble or fall. Trust me and I will safely lead you home."

For those who don't deal with chronic pain or sickness, you may not understand the physical part of constant agony, but you do know what pain is. Pain comes in many forms. Besides physical, it can be emotional, spiritual, or it can be mentally debilitating. Remember, none of us is immune to pain, suffering, sickness, life or death. They are reminders of how much we need God. My pain and sickness may mock my flesh, but it beckons my soul to long for more of God's strength, grace, and peace.

Pain and suffering can come from loss, disease, and choices we or others make. They can hinder us and cause us to surrender to our emotions or feelings, or push us into the arms of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We can choose to be bound by the chains of defeat, or we can choose to live in the victory God gives us daily in Jesus Christ.

C.S. Lewis said: "But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

Is God shouting to us in our pain? And are we listening?

We must learn to listen. Listen with our hearts, mind, and soul. He has more for us to do, and the world needs to hear God calling. How will they hear if you and I are chained in defeat? We need to surrender our pain, sickness, and suffering to Christ. Let Him be our strength so that others will see and hear the voice of God calling to them to take up His yoke and follow Him.

I choose hope over hopelessness; I choose victory over victimhood; I choose to live each day in Christ to the fullest, no matter what.

God's Word says:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Pastor Brian Kinnett
Members' Minister

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Blended: 3:30 PM, 5:00 PM & 6:30 PM

Contemporary: 3:30 PM & 5:00 PM

Putting Christ in Christmas: Evergreen represents eternal life. Holly refers to the thorns in His crown. Candles reflect Christ as the Light of the world. Gifts are a reminder of the three Wise Men and their offerings to the baby Jesus. Bells ringing out represent the good news of the birth of the Christ Child—our Savior, our Joy, and our Peace. Blessings this Holiday Season!

FBC Campus

Mowing has been completed for the year and the mowers have been cleaned and oiled. Snowplow installations have also been completed.

The Trustees replaced a broken window in the Children's Wing. In the Neal Auditorium, two additional cameras have been mounted for live streaming. The remote lockdown system is in progress. The outdoor stage has been moved; however, the final location has not been determined.

Baptist Builders

The Baptist Builders are always busy. Too numerous to mention throughout the year are the FBC tasks they volunteer to help with; the quiet assistance given to our FBC families; and the ever-ready support given to outside projects. A sincere thank you goes out to our hard-working Baptist Builders. You're the Best!!

KKDC

Air Quality Solutions recently serviced three furnaces at KKDC. Two furnaces would not run. One furnace was part of a twin set of furnaces, noncommercial grade, installed in 1995 (approximate date), used to heat the gym located in the old sanctuary. Both furnaces are being replaced. It was decided not to replace the third furnace since the air conditioning part of the unit is still functioning.

A fencepost at KKDC was run over and has been replaced. The Trustees will be picking up KKDC lawn service in the new year. The playground (spongy area) in front of the building on Kingston Avenue is scheduled to be replaced.

From your Trustee Ministry, Wishing You and Your Families a Joyous Christmas and a New Year filled with God's Amazing Love!

Phyllis McCloy
Trustee Ministry Secretary

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

Dear Pastors and Leaders,

Thank you for leading lost souls to Christ and for trusting in the infallible Word of God, with the wisdom to know, "*All Scripture is breathed by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (2 Timothy 3:16).*

Thank you also for encouraging and challenging followers of Christ to become humble and impartial vessels focused on the Savior and His Great Commission. I am thankful I have the opportunity to attend services at First Baptist Church-Grove City where the Holy Spirit is invited and prayer is essential.

Celeste A. Bronson

Women of FBC

Please visit the **WOMEN'S MINISTRY KIOSK** for information about groups and activities. You can also pick up a family-life calendar or a declutter calendar. We are here to assist you in becoming connected and also to be supportive in prayer.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST is Saturday, December 14th at 9 AM. We will be assembling Blessing Bags and delivering locally. This ministry is for FBC member shut-ins, the elderly, nursing home or assisted living residents, recent widows, those recuperating from surgery, or families in need of encouragement or sustenance. For the safety of those receiving the bags, we will NOT be receiving any home baked goods this year. We are accepting fruit, individually pre-wrapped cookies/cakes, and candy. Stop by the Women's Kiosk to sign up or contact Debbie Watts at 614-530-1463.

PAINTING NIGHT: Come, join us on December 8th at 6:00 PM in the old Student Wing. We will be enjoying a fun night of painting. The cost is \$5 for supplies. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Contact Jodi Butcher at 614-620-6380 for more information.

LADIES' CLASS UPDATE: Our Thursday night classes are continuing in the Fellowship Hall from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. We are planning to meet again on December 17th. If you wish to bring your dinner and eat there, you can. Or you can come and listen to the lesson. We are finishing our study of *Love for One Another* using John, 1 John, and Acts. In January, we will begin to meet every Thursday. Our study will be on *The Calls* in our lives—as we study in the New Testament. We welcome guests and new members to these classes. Contact Barb at 614-551-9781 for more information.

“My View” continued from Page 4

I am sure there will be future challenges for us. Some may make the prayer list. Hopefully, none will make the evening news.

I thank you for letting me share through this page. I have “viewed” quite a lot from the back pew over the years. I cannot wait to see how God blesses our church in the years to come and I want a front row seat for that.

**Blessings,
Cindy Matlock**



Jeff Arn testimony continued from Page 4

Then it all changed! My daughter wanted to play soccer and the head coach needed an assistant, so what else did I have to do? A couple of weeks in, the other coach asked me if I went to church with my daughter. I kind of looked on that question with suspicion. Why would you ask me that? Now remember my aunt in my childhood and church? Well the coach wanted to invite me to a local church, the very same church I grew up in and was also baptized in, sang in Christmas plays, and attended VBS. My response to him was, “Oh yeah. I grew up in that church.” His response was, “I’m the pastor of the church.” Yay God!

A couple of weeks later I began attending there again and that pastor showed me who God was, and I learned who my Father was, and that my dad in the flesh may have never been there for me, but my Father will always be there and that my mom did her best and to honor her is to honor Christ and His holy Word in all I do.

I was soon influenced by this passage from the book of Romans.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to Jew first and also the Greek. Romans 1:16

I began attending First Baptist Church about 5 years ago beginning with a Men's Summit and so began feeling love with the men of God there. I was re-baptized in 2017 and later married in the same year. God has also blessed me with a daughter that has forgiven me and a son in need of a father figure. God's grace has allowed me to be forgiven for yesterday's mistakes so that I don't have to live ashamed of whom I once was but to now live unashamed of who I am in Christ.

God's grace has allowed me to turn the page on who I once was to become who I now am. I am living a life unashamed of the great I AM. I have learned to forgive. I've made peace without judgment with my mom and I have also forgiven my father. I am now able to trust men and seek counsel for my life, knowing that this life in Christ cannot be lived alone. I've learned to love without expectations and receive with gratitude. Christ and the body of believers here at First Baptist Church have humbled me so that I will grow in Christ. Through all this, I think I have finally started living a life for God and always remembering what He has done and not focusing on what I want Him to do. I try to pray in terms of thanks instead of my wants. I do my best to love my wife as the gift from God that she is and love my children in the same manner. I live life as if every breath is a blessing. Thank you again for this opportunity and may we all glorify God in all we do.

**God Bless,
Pastor David Berna**

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

I would like to thank everyone for your prayers since my eye surgery on April 19th. The healing/recovery process has been very long and painful. I praise God for the healing that has occurred and His answer to our prayers. Unfortunately, the eye is blind and human medicine cannot restore it. Please pray that at some point, God, Himself will intervene and restore the eye to have vision again. Thank you and God bless you for your prayers, phone calls, messages, letters, and cards.

Tim Suhayda

MEN'S CORNER

There will be no December breakfast this year! We look forward to seeing you on January 2nd at 7:30 AM. Below is the testimony of Jeff Arn from our November breakfast.

I first want to thank Pastor Berna for offering me this opportunity and everyone here for allowing me to share my story with you.

My mom and dad divorced by the time I was a year old. My mom did every thing she could to provide the best life for me. She wasn't perfect, but who is? I attended a Christian school until I was in the 4th grade. When I started going to public school, I began hearing stories about my mom. I spent a lot of time at my grandparents' house because mom liked to work hard all week and party on the weekends. Now I'm not saying that she never missed work, a school function, or a sporting event. There was even a time when she was my Little League coach. I was always first, and then it happened. I was old enough to go with her to a party and hang out with her friends and be the "good son." NOW here is where the story of my life really begins.

I went to Christian school as a child, but what I didn't tell you is that I would often stay with my aunt and uncle who were both Christians, and through them I learned to love the church and God and understood what Jesus did for me on the cross. I was saved and baptized when I was 9 years old. My mom was at my baptism and at church with me, usually on Easter and Christmas. I loved the thought of honoring my mother. Mom knew who Christ was even though her life did not always reflect it.

So as years went on, I began working in the family business on Sundays and soon found myself at parties and exposed to alcohol and drugs. Before I knew it, I was drinking and using drugs at 16. I fell into this trap of Satan and didn't know it yet, but the serpent had me wrapped up and I was in for the fight of my life. After graduating from high school, I chose to work as a mechanic in the family business and make my Grandpa proud. At 19, I experienced a nervous breakdown. I couldn't work, didn't eat; I even was afraid to go outside. I didn't drive for over a year due to the paranoia. By the time I was 21, I was no longer drinking, but still using drugs and had even begun to deal drugs. I had made the decision that I was not going to take medication because I didn't need it, and as long as I was high I believed I was okay. I was right were Satan wanted me to be. I thought I was in control! That's when I experienced my first line of cocaine, and after that my life appeared over. I was soon engaged, had a house, was working, doing good...BUT NO GOD.

About 10 years later I found myself living back at home with my mom, no job, no car, 2 DUI's, and still sneaking around to get high and drunk. I was an addict and alcoholic and couldn't stop. BUT GOD NEVER, I MEAN NEVER, LEFT ME!!

Ok, by now my daughter and I were living at my mom's and my daughter had figured out what dad was doing, just as I had many year's before about my mom. Over the years my mom quit drinking and began going back to church and living her life for Christ. I began to realize that as a father and a son, I had no respect for myself anymore. I soon began to pray. I began to pray to God to KILL ME or KEEP ME. I was a waste to my daughter and did not deserve that blessing, and I even prayed that prayer sometimes as I was walking into a bar.

Jeff Arn testimony continued on Page 3

MY VIEW FROM THE BACK OF THE PEW

"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it."

Twenty years ago, I began helping in the church nursery. We had two small rooms in a back hall at Kingston for the infants and toddlers. Shortly after beginning, I was told I would need to submit a newsletter article every month to tell members about our nursery. My first few articles were "just the facts." And a call for volunteers. As I developed relationships with the other moms, I tried to soak up any knowledge they would impart for raising my infant daughter. The more we talked while changing diapers and cleaning toys, I found all of us felt subpar. "Everyone else" seemed to be a better mom. I felt relief that I was not the only struggling mother, yet sad that so many of us believed the worst of ourselves as parents. I always pray and think about what I am writing and I felt nudged to include a story about one of my struggles.

Several people told me they were dealing with the same issue. A couple gave me some advice that I put to good use. I realized that a little vulnerability here may help others realize everyone struggles. Few are so naïve as to write about it for all FBC members to see! The nursery saved me in a thousand different ways. There is a reason we are encouraged to attend church on a regular basis and to join a ministry. I really got to know people just by showing up and trying to serve. I also got to meet your children. I leave you with one last "view" from the nursery. One Sunday, I was helping with a craft. A little boy put his three-year-old hand on mine. He told me my face reminded him of his birthday wrapping paper. I laughed and said, "Because it's so shiny and smooth?" He said, "Not that kind. The crunchy paper that came in my gift bag. It's wrinkly and gray." I started a new skincare regimen that afternoon. There is no room for ego when serving others!

Shortly after FBC moved to Orders Road, I became a single mom. New struggles arose as I dealt with co-parenting and the pain of a failed marriage. Again, my sanctuary became the nursery along with my Wednesday night Bible study. I am amazed at God's timing. When I needed friends the most, He had already placed them in my life. Pouring out some of my personal hurts mixed with the constant antics of my second child in my articles became an outlet for me. I have met and gotten to know so many people in the church through this ministry. My hope is that someone will be encouraged or at least take heart that they are not alone. This church is full of God's people. This is where God will take you, just as you are, and do exceedingly, abundantly, above all you could think to ask.

I stepped away from the Preschool ministry almost two years ago to spend more time with my new husband. He is a Godly, loving, nerdy, technical genius. My struggles these days consist of googling Star Wars references. My "baby girl" is now a junior at OSU and one of my best friends. My son still alternately makes me laugh or pushes me to the brink of insanity. Rick also brought two bonus sons into my life and my cup now "runneth over."

"My View" continued on Page 3