



First Baptist Church  
**Grove City**

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# THE LIGHTHOUSE

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## JUNE NEWSLETTER

### PASTOR'S MESSAGE



Dr. Jerry Neal  
Senior Pastor

Dr. Dave Earley  
Lead Pastor

Bryan Corbett  
Worship Pastor

Dr. John Foster  
Discipleship Pastor

David Berna  
Visitation Pastor

Jeff Bane  
Outreach Pastor

Joshua Wright  
Children's Pastor

Robert Stroup  
Business Administrator

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[www.firstgc.org](http://www.firstgc.org)

Chewy has a slipped disc. The vet told me what he needed and what it would cost. I never hesitated. Take care of Chewy and I'll pay the bill. Why is that a big deal? I grew up on a dairy farm and every animal that needed a vet was considered what she was worth. The decision to ship her off was strictly a financial one. But Chewy is a pandemic pet.

During this crisis, people who have pets appreciate them more than ever as a companion. Many people who don't have pets are acquiring them. I never thought I could love a dog like I do Chewy. Love makes a difference!

The amount of time we spend indoors during this pandemic limits the contacts we have with pets and people. If we can learn to appreciate pets, we must learn to appreciate our family.

Some of us have a bigger family circle than others, but thank God for anyone and everyone who belongs to you. Love them more, enjoy them more, and forgive them more quickly. One lesson God is teaching us is that friends and family really matter.

One day we will be back in church shaking hands and hugging each other. Until then, thank God for the ones with whom you can be close. Social distance with those you must. But you don't have to social distance with God.

Enjoy your pets. You can bring them to *Drive-In Church*. Tell us their names on the live stream comments. I never know how much some of you love them.

God's Blessing!

**Pastor Jerry**

## MEMBERS' MINISTRY

It is definitely interesting times we live in; everyone, everywhere is looking for answers, answers to what is going on around us, answers the world will never come up with, and quite frankly there is no one-size-fits-all answer that will satisfy everyone's questions.

What we can do is talk about our hope: the hope we have found in Christ when people ask where is God in all of this? The answer is, He is here in the midst of this with His people. This doesn't mean we are exempt from this pandemic. What it does mean is we are not alone, and we are not without hope.

You and I are the very evidence of God the world needs to see. As we walk and live our lives by faith, we can share the grace of God and how He has rescued us from our past, and how He will deliver us in time of need.

There is no greater time to boast of the love and grace of God and what He has done in our lives. We should be living breathing testimonies of His greatness and goodness, period.

God did not save us so that we may sit in buildings, occasionally yell "Amen" and raise our hands in a worship service. He saves us so others may see His love, His glory, and His grace which is available to all.

We need to start today proclaiming what God has done for us, and in us, and what He is doing daily now, so that others may see the hope of Christ and eternity that we hold onto every day. How else will they know of God's goodness and grace unless we, His children, proclaim it.

God gives us the opportunity to proclaim His gospel message every day.

**Jesus said this concerning signs of His return:** *"There will be violent earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven. This will give you an opportunity to bear witness."* **Luke 21:11, 13, CSB**

Did you see that? This will give you an opportunity to bear witness!

Are we bearing witness of Christ in all we do and say?

If not, now is a great time to start! The world needs hope!

**Pastor Brian Kinnett,  
Members' Minister**

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## UPWARD FALL REGISTRATION

Flag-football, Cheerleading, and Soccer registration opens on Sunday, May 31. Flag-football and Cheerleading is for ages 5 years through 8th grade, while soccer is limited to 4th – 8th grades. If you are interested in coaching, officiating, or volunteering in any way, please contact Pastor Jeff Bane at [jeff@firstgc.org](mailto:jeff@firstgc.org). To register participants online go to the following links:

**For Flag-football and Cheerleading participants:**  
<https://registration.upward.org/upw70591>

**For Soccer:** <https://registration.upward.org/upw70592>

## TRUSTEE MINISTRY

We are experiencing a unique period in history during which we are blessed knowing our God is on the forefront abundantly nurturing his children with an ever-ending flow of blessings through prayer, calmness, love, caring, and humility.

Compassion and appreciation for loved ones has been overflowing, while empathy for those "heroes" giving of themselves and working long hours on the frontlines flows through our minds with unceasing benevolence.

*"Our God never gives us more than we can handle. He helps us handle what we are given."* **Author Unknown**

While most of us have been at home the last few weeks, the Trustees have been involved in the following projects:

The yard care equipment has been serviced and is currently being used on campus. Snow equipment has been stored for the season.

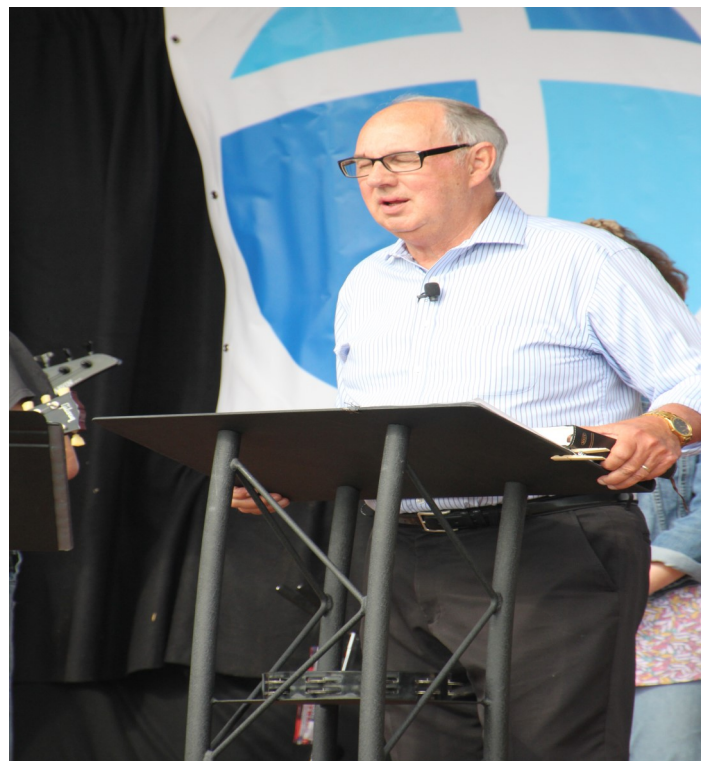
A few of our FBC parking-lot lights were recently damaged by strong winds. The Trustees have either repaired or replaced them.

FBC pond fountains were recently taken out of storage, serviced, and installed in the ponds located on either side of the church entrance.

Volunteers and Trustees have been managing parking for FBC *Drive-In* services; both regular church services and funerals.

Trustees and Baptist Builders built a stage on a flatbed which has been used for recent *Drive-In Church* services.

**Phyllis McCloy,  
Trustee Ministry Secretary**



**Pastor Jerry Neal leads in a time of prayer during  
*Drive-In Church* at FBC on Sunday, May 17th.**

# Women of FBC

Dear Women of FBC,

Slowly but surely, restrictions are being lifted and we will be gathering together again. We want to assure you that we want you to be comfortable during the transition back to church, and our Life Group Leaders will do everything we can to make it smooth. No doubt there will be many stories and testimonies of God's work to tell, and I can't wait to hear them all!

## Blessings, Ronda Kinnett

Recently I texted a message to our women's Bible study teachers. I'm looking forward to the time we can say, "Remember when" -- we weren't running every day; we really talked and listened to the hurting, fearful acquaintances; we saw so many church services from so many places and could do on-line Bible studies; and God's and Jesus's names were said in reverence by government officials without any backlash. Right now, we feel separated, alone, frustrated, fearful -- and I hope that is not what takes over our memory. We have seen God at work in many ways during this time.

The Ladies' Sunday Life Group has been a real blessing to me and all the members. When I make my calls, I am encouraged by the number of people who have let me know whom they are checking on. Our caregivers are not only putting out our prayer requests, they are making routine calls of concern. Our teachers -- Mindy, Kathy, Phyllis, myself -- are ministering to our members as much as our members are ministering to us.

In my diary of this time, I am pleased to have Scripture passages. On a particularly hard day, I delighted to read this: *The Lord your God is among you, a warrior who saves. He will rejoice over you with gladness. He will be quiet in His love. He will delight in you with singing.* **Zephaniah 3:17.** God is with us, nudging us to minister to one another. Thank God for those who do and receive a blessing themselves.

## Barb Lovingshimer

A note for the Tuesday Night Ladies' Group. Who could have ever imagined that we would be sheltering in place to avoid an invisible foe? It's easy for us to focus on all the negative: no toilet paper, restaurants are closed, businesses are shut down, no large gatherings and no place to go. But God has shown me over and over that He's still the same. This virus did not take Him by surprise. He's still our refuge, our shield, our defender, the One who loves us beyond all measure. Hold onto God's hand, precious ladies. He's going to show us some amazing things. I love this verse from **1 Samuel 12:16.** *Now, therefore, present yourselves and see this great thing that the Lord will do before your eyes.* God is still doing great things. Wait expectantly and watch Him do what only He can do. He loves

to delight us. I miss you all and am looking forward to the day when we can gather again to study, pray, and grow together.

## Love, Debbie Watts

Participants of Craft Day can't wait to gather together again. Vicki Brooks has some great dinner ideas. Many of our crafters have been busy making masks for those who need them. Can't wait to see everyone gathered together in the same room. In the meantime, continue to practice safe, protective measures!

## Kyle Ann Williams

Missing Girls' Night? Me too! I have been thinking of you all. Can't wait for the day we can feel safe to get together again. I am missing our time of fellowship. Stay safe and trust in our Lord and Savior to see us through all this.

## God Bless, Jodi Butcher

## Ronda Kinnett, Women's Ministry Director

## FROM OUR DISCIPLESHIP PASTOR

It has been very encouraging during this past few months to hear how Life Groups are staying connected! We always talk about how important community is, but now we have really experienced this truth!



As the church prepares to "open up" for corporate worship, we may not be able to resume on-campus Groups as quickly as we would like on Sunday mornings. In order to provide on-campus Groups with the opportunity to meet, we will be providing specific rooms/areas in the church that can be reserved throughout the week based on the size of your Group. Once all the details are in place, I will be communicating this opportunity with all the Group leaders. In the meantime, keep doing what you are doing to stay connected and please let me know if you have any questions as we move forward.

You can always reach me at [john@firstgc.org](mailto:john@firstgc.org) or call or text me at **614-795-6637**.

**Our church family is staying engaged in worship! We hope you are too.**

**Sunday Morning Worship** can be viewed live on our *Facebook* page and website at 9:15 and 10:45 AM. These messages are also available on-demand on our website the following Monday.

**Drive-In Church** will continue until we are able to meet in our auditoriums once again. Please stay tuned for more information!

**A Time of Prayer and Bible Study** is also live streamed on *Facebook* and our website on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM.

**Our Student Ministry** posts daily video devotions on *Instagram* led by Student Ministry leaders and other students.

**Our Children's Ministry** led by Pastor Josh Wright also provides live, interactive lessons for kids on both *Facebook* and our website on Wednesdays at 6:00 PM and again on Sunday mornings at 10:10 AM in between morning services.

## Pastor John Foster, Discipleship Pastor



## MEN'S CORNER

### The Men's Fellowship Breakfast & Workday is Saturday?? (We WILL be back—SOON!)

The men of FBC are a very active group. Brian Kinnett and I share in the leadership of the men's activities in our church.

A Men's Life Group that began 25 years ago at the Kingston Avenue church meets each Sunday morning. Mark Wells and I originally led this class. When our church moved to two Sunday morning services, we divided the class to accommodate the new arrangement. Many changes have occurred over the years, but there is still a Men's Life Group that meets on Sundays at church at 9:15 AM.

At the same time that we started the Men's Life Group, we began the Men's Fellowship Breakfast and workday. Until the Corona-virus, we had been "going strong" every first Saturday of the month. We will be back!

There is also a Group of men who meet every Monday morning at 9:00 AM. They meet in one of the men's homes. They spend their time in Bible study, fellowship, and prayer.

On Wednesday night at 6:45 PM, a group of 12-20 men meet for Men's Fraternity at FBC. This Group meets for an hour and begins with a time of prayer. Brian Kinnett or Tony Brown then lead in a discussion about a topic from the Bible.

Thursday morning at 7:00 AM, a Group of primarily retired men meet for Bible study. It is open to all men to participate. This Bible study was started by Pastor Jerry shortly after he began his ministry at our church. After a few years he turned the teaching over to a team of mostly four men. They each take turns in sharing the lesson. The Bible study is led by chapter with group participation. Over the years, the Group has studied through the entire Bible, one chapter at a time. These men meet each week, rain or shine, except at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The lesson is always followed by a trip to a local restaurant for breakfast.

The men of our church are also very involved in all other activities at FBC **EXCEPT** for the ladies' activities! Some lead Life Groups, some serve as deacons and trustees, and others are involved in a variety of other ministries and committees at FBC. Men are especially active in FBC building care, campus care, and snow care. They also have a very large presence in the ministry of Baptist Builders.

This is a thumbnail sketch of the Men of FBC.

What would we do without them?

### God Bless, Pastor David Berna

Please continue to follow the FBC *Facebook* page and website for updates on AWANA and other children's ministry activities throughout the period of the COVID-19 crisis.

We wish to thank all of our leaders, volunteers, parents, and children for their faithful commitment during the challenge-filled 2019-20 AWANA school year. We pray for your continued safety and look forward to seeing you all back in AWANA this fall!



## 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."*  
Proverbs 22:6

My parents have been doing driveway visits over the last few weeks. It is not unusual for them to call us to announce they are, in fact, in our driveway. Of course, we go out to chat from the safe distance of our yard. Most of the time, they also bid me to greet my "brother." I have two brothers. Neither is named "Chewy." Yet, there I stand, saying hello to their dog while he happily munches on yet another treat from Tim Horton's.

It's not that I don't like my furriest sibling; I adore the little dog. Yet, I have two of my own. I've had my miniature pinscher, Dexter, for almost five years. For the most part, he is a good boy. I am fully aware, though, that Dexter has flaws. He likes to bark at anyone or anything that dares to appear in his view from our front window. Trespassers include other dogs, geese living in the park across the street and the occasional leaf. He also likes to run away from home as often as possible. Though he is showered with loads of affection, food, and warm bedding, including my own, Dexter always tries to flee. The worst part is his perspective. A stray leaf in the yard is cause for major concern, but heavy traffic is not. He does not look both ways before crossing the street. He does not realize the geese at the park hate him and will do him harm.

Honestly, though, they hate us all!

Every time I have to walk the block looking for my free-range dog, I say a prayer for his safety. I don't want anything bad to happen to him and though his disappearance causes great inconveniences, I just want him home.

It was during the last such prayer-walk that I recalled running away myself awhile back. I remember God pursuing me and seeking my return to Him. I remember my parents' prayers for God's protection on me even as they were sure I was making foolish choices. Much like my dog, I did not see the danger. I thought God was trying to stifle me, kill all my fun, and burden me with a bunch of "Do not's." I still make the occasional choice as though I'm sharing the same walnut-sized brain with Dexter. However, it occurred to me that God has not stifled who I am, but has built me up into a much better version of myself than I was before I knew Him. He has continually brought me joy that passes all understanding.

Furthermore, following His "rules" would have saved me a lot of heartache.

Dexter is lying here while I type this; a flawed dog being a good boy at this moment. He is currently being held by a flawed girl trying to be more Christ-like every day.

And she is being held daily by a Savior who is great all the time!

Blessings,  
Cindy Matlock

