



THE BUGLE

“Sound the Call”

ALEXANDRIA FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Volume 3 Issue 1 January 2010

Michael's Musings

Means vs. Ends

I think **one** of the primary problems we face in Western Christianity is the simple fact that so many people view going to church as an **end** instead of a **means to an end**. Let me try to explain. For those who subconsciously view church as **an end in and of itself**, going to church is the way they **do their religious duty**. They check church off the religious shopping list. It's like that list of items needed from the grocery store, you cross off each item you put into your cart. Well, many, too many, in fact the majority of Western Christians simply cross off church from their “to-do” list.

But stop and think or better yet, ask yourself and experience the answer in your heart, “do you really think God's **ultimate dream** for our lives is to sit in a pew for 60-75 minutes one time per week?”

Going to church isn't an end. It's a **means to an end**. The real test is how we live out our faith Monday to Friday. That's where the rubber meets the road. Church is the **locker room talk** or the **boardroom talk**. Choose your metaphor. It's not the game. It's not the business. It prepares us for the game or the business of life.

As we move into a new year, we tend to make resolutions we can't keep, but they sound good at the time. If you're going to make a resolution, make one which consists of a covenant with God. Make a promise which is between you and God, talk to God about how you will strive to grow and mature to be the person He wants you to be, not the person you want to be.

As we move into 2010, there are great opportunities right before us, but we must seize them, and the only way I believe this can occur is when we are unified as the true representation of the body of Christ. Folks, let me tell you something, this takes hard work.

It means you don't worry about satisfying your needs, you satisfy the needs of others. It means you serve and don't ask to be served. It means you don't complain, but you are part of the solution. It means you don't talk behind others backs, instead you honor and glorify God with your speech and conduct. It means if you have a concern or an issue to discuss, you go to the appropriate individual.

I sure hope this makes sense. It's maybe not as subtle as I intended it to be, but if we reflect on it enough, we realize the Spiritual power available which is not being experienced is partly or mainly because we are not being The Church. I think it is one reason why people go to church on Sundays but don't live like it on Mondays. It's not an end. It's a means to an end.

See you Sunday,

Pastor Michael

Thank-fest, Part Two

"I thank my God always concerning you..." I Corinthians 1:4

To the Faithful Alexandrians,

It's mid December and I thought that I would take a break from listening to Easter music to write you a note.

(Remember how the month of December snuck up on you? April will be here before you know it!)

In November, I said along with Bing Crosby: ***"I've got plenty to be thankful for."***

The Thank-fest continues! I am thankful for Pam Gorman and all the people who helped make our church look so beautiful, especially for the holidays. I am thankful for Linda Nelson and her organization of the church in the Alex Christmas Parade! I am thankful for all the carolers that we had on December 6 to go out and spread some Christmas cheer with our shut-ins and residents in the nursing homes! (This year we had a van full of youth go one way and a van full of adults go the other!) I am thankful for the wonderful singing done by the choir in their presentation this year of *"A Midnight Clear."* I am thankful for Tommy, Rebecca and all the Drama Team in learning and memorizing lines to give us a meaningful production! I am thankful for involvement of Pastor Michael and Pastor Rob in the Christmas presentation this year. I am thankful for Rita Carter and David Holmes and their creativity in coming up with original art designs for *"A Midnight Clear."* I am thankful for Vi Hiser and all her troops of the kitchen brigade for the hot chocolate, coffee, Christmas tea and the tasty goodies! I am thankful for all of you who allowed us to enjoy the poinsettias that you purchased in the sanctuary. I am thankful for the efforts of the Alexandra Community Band in providing us with some wonderful holiday music. I am thankful for all the beautiful Christmas carols and the Candlelight Service that we have on Christmas Eve.

But most of all, I am thankful for the Christ Child. You would expect a pastor to say that, right? Shouldn't all of us as Christians be saying that loud and clear, especially this time of year? We sing on a regular basis, *"You came from heaven to earth, to show the Way."* We have grown up hearing that heaven is perfection---why would ANYONE want to leave that? Jesus left heaven to show us the Way to the Father and to Him. Jesus left heaven to show us the Way TO heaven! Jesus came to earth, knowing everything about the cross, and He came anyway.

Saying "thank you" doesn't seem to be enough for what He did for me and for you.

Let us thank Jesus for this Gift with our lives on every day of the New Year.

See you Sunday if not sooner!

Pastor Doug

Thank you, Jesus



A.W. Tozer's Definition of a Christian

A real Christian:

Feels supreme love for One whom he has never seen

Talks familiarly every day to Someone he cannot see

Expects to go to heaven on the virtue of Another

Empties himself in order to be full

Admits he is wrong so he can be declared right

Goes down in order to get up

Is strongest when he is weakest

Richest when he is poorest

Happiest when he feels worst

Dies so he can live

Forsakes in order to have

Gives away so he can keep

Sees the invisible, hears the inaudible, and knows that which passes knowledge.

Pray For Your Pastor

by Perry Noble

"This particular post may seem a little self serving...but so be it...this needs to be said (AND...I don't mind asking people to pray for me!) :-)

Here are several areas where you can be praying for your pastor...

#1 – His Walk With God – Pray that his relationship with Jesus isn't one out of obligation...but of OBSESSION for HIM!!!! It is VERY tempting for a pastor to read the Bible for sermon prep and NOT to know Jesus. Pray that His relationship with Jesus will be FRESH and that he will be filled with vision and passion like never before.

#2 – His Integrity – It takes YEARS to establish integrity...and it can be destroyed in seconds. Pray for your pastor to keep his eyes on Jesus and OFF of anything that might lead him astray!!!

#3 – His Marriage – Pray that your pastor just doesn't preach about a healthy marriage...but LIVES it out. I promise you the enemy comes STRONG after his marriage...and his kids!!!! Lift up his wife and children by name as well!!!!

(Continued on page 4)

Deacon Data

2009 Recap

2009 has been a busy year in which we had a calling of a new youth/children's pastor, dealt with internal struggles and helped to support our Pastors needs. We welcome in 2010 with a new focus of serving the church spiritually and making First Baptist a 21st century church. I want to thank Andy Nichols, Randy Williams and Jim Nelson for their service to the church as Deacons the last three or more years and I want to welcome the new Deacons Reid Hensley, Tim Herniak and Kevin Thompson who start their 3 year terms on January 1st. We look forward to the coming year to see how God will lead us and the great things He has in store for Alexandria First Baptist Church.

John W. Breckenridge
Lead Deacon 2009

Pray for Your Pastor *(continued from page 3)*

#4 – **His Sanity** – He deals with critics, he deals with unrealistic expectations, he deals with accusations, and he deals with pressure that is intense. Pray that he will keep his sanity. I recently heard of a survey that said only 10% of the men entering the ministry actually retire...the others either get disqualified OR drop out! That is a 90% failure rate!!! THE STAKES ARE HIGH!!!

#5 – **His Health** – I was in a meeting of pastors a few years ago...everyone of us were leading large churches...everyone of us were under 35...and over HALF of the men in the room (remember, we were under 35) had been hospitalized in the past two years because of serious medical problems (most likely brought on by stress and anxiety!) Good health is so vital for ministry...and I can promise you that physical, emotional and spiritual health do not just “happen!” Do not assume that just because your pastor is young that he is healthy...lift him up.

Whoever your pastor is...seriously...I would ask that you lift him up. No matter who you are...no matter who your pastor is. I don't care if you are reading this site and hate me...don't hate your pastor. Cover him...and pray that Jesus will speak to him and through him in ways that he has never experienced.

Rick Warren once said that he believes pastors are the most underrated changes agents in the world...and I believe that!!! SO...let's lift him up before God...and pray that Jesus will have HIS way in his life!"

January Sermon Series

For the month of January we will be looking at **ANGER** and **FORGIVENESS**.

Anger seems to carry a great deal of power with it, while forgiveness is often equated with weakness. Is that really how we view them? So, what are they? Is it okay to be angry? If so, how do we demonstrate appropriate anger? Should we forgive? Who do we forgive? How do we forgive? Lots of questions, and we'll talk about these and many more issues regarding these two crucial issues. Invite a friend and be prepared to grow in Christ!

News from the Board of Trustees

As the year 2010 begins the Board of Trustees would like to express our great appreciation to members Bob Crousore and Phil Prophet as their terms of service came to an end. We all know that each will continue to serve our Lord here at First Baptist Church. The board would also like to thank each and everyone who donate their time and gifts to helping the trustees. It is impossible to name each person because we know we would miss someone. The last thing we would ever want to do would be hurt the feelings of someone.

The trustees look forward to the next year and will be organizing and making plans to continue to serve. Please keep the board members in your prayers during the year as we seek God's guidance in everything we try to accomplish.

Tim Watson
Trustee Chairman



Happy New Year!

As I look back to all that has been going on, I am reminded that it has only been two and a half months since we arrived in Alexandria. Truthfully, it feels as if we have been here for two years. We have seen many positive changes in both the Children's and the Youth ministry. As I look back and count the many service projects that the youth have taken part in, I lose count. Some of the service projects include "Rake and Run, Will Work for Food for Others, participated in the Christmas Parade outreach, caroling at nursing homes, and babysitting during class Christmas parties, to name a few. You should be real proud of the youth, because, they truly have a servant's heart.

The New Year brings many changes and much anticipation. We have many new program changes to both the youth and children's programs. Such as: Children's Church, Children's Sunday Night Program, Youth Sunday Night Program, and Youth Worship Service on Wednesday night. As with any progress we need much prayer, and much help.

We need Volunteers! I wholeheartedly believe that we could have a children's and youth ministry that would make an eternal impact on this City, State, and Nation. We cannot do it alone, we need your help. Would you join me in praying to ask God to send laborers into His harvest? Would you also join me in much prayer to consider God using you as part of this ministry? I believe you will be eternally blessed, and be able to see first-hand how God is using these Children and youth for His Kingdom.

In Him,
Pastor Rob

HOOPS 2010



SIGN UP NOW!

Bring your completed registration form and fee to the church during the following times:

Sunday, Jan. 17th – 9:30 am – 12 pm

Monday, Jan. 18th – 10 am – 5 pm

Wednesday, Jan. 20th – 1 – 8 pm

Thursday, Jan. 21st – 10 am – 5 pm

Sunday, Jan. 24th – 9:30 am – 12 pm or 6 pm – 8 pm

Or send in your completed registration form and fee postmarked by January 22nd to:

HOOPS
First Baptist Church
2107 S. Park Avenue
Alexandria, IN 46001

Game Dates:

Saturdays

Feb. 6, Feb. 13, Feb. 20, Feb. 27, Mar. 6 & Mar. 13
9 – 11 a.m.

Awards Sunday – March 14th 10:30 a.m.



Reminder from your Parish Nurses

Coping with After Holiday Blues

What to Do When the Excitement is Over

The holidays are fun! They are a time when old friends get together to catch up and families reunite from their scattered locations. Some people suffer from post Christmas/holiday blues and the sense of being “let down” after the festivities have ended and this is not unusual. Here are some strategies to cope with post holiday blues.

- Do nice things for yourself. Do things that make you happy. Have a to-do list ready so you won't have time to feel lonely. Make plans to watch a movie, see a friend, take a long hot bath, make a scrapbook of the holiday photos or simply listen to comforting music.
- Be positive. Try focusing on happy memories.
- Stay healthy during the holidays. Get enough rest and sleep, exercise regularly and avoid overeating
- Do something for others. Helping others in need is rewarding. Donate generously to churches, a charity of your choice or to missions. **Volunteer** your time at the church or a shelter. Don't limit your contributions of time and money to only the holiday period. Spread it out all year round.
- Keep in touch with loved ones after the holidays. Saying goodbye to loved family and friends after the holidays is often hard. Ease the emptiness and keep in touch throughout the year.
- Most of all remember the “let down” does not last forever. Things return to normal. And don't worry – Valentine's Day is just around the corner.

Parish Nurses,
Pam Blake and Nancy Chastain

GOAL SETTING & PLANNING MEETING

On Thursday, January 7, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. we will have our annual goal setting and planning meeting for all committees. If you are currently on a committee, please plan to attend this important time of planning for the future of our church. We will meet in the family life center.



January Mission Memo

Happy 2010!!! A new year and new service opportunities are in store. Before sharing some ideas, we would like to thank you for your participation in the past few months. Our church family was able to send Jim King \$400 for the emergency fund plus money donated on November's 5th Sunday. Linda and Alan Erwin transported 150 Christmas shoe boxes. Our award winning presence in the parade was a wonderful community outreach, with many reading Pastor Robs tract right there on the spot. If you go to town, drive by Church Street Commons and see the tree that Kathy Hill provided. The white gifts were received and distributed. Blessings to ALL that participated.

We are excited to share several service opportunities for this month. January will be our first 5th Sunday. People have seemed to enjoy this fellowship and offering opportunity; therefore, we would like to "kick it up a notch or two". During one of my morning devotions, the following scripture was the focus:

"Then Jesus said to his host, 'When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors...But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'"

Luke 14:12-14 (NIV)

We thought that this would be a good time to invite someone to come with you to join in on our fellowship. As we read James in December there was an important passage in James 2:1-10. Reread that passage and then let's make our 5th Sunday casual dress. Also, if you bring a guest, please bring an extra dish. The branch class will sponsor this 5th Sunday with donation being evenly divided between ERF and Bob Downey's Kairos ministry.

Speaking of Bob, he has another weekend in February. He has made some orange folders that explain this ministry and they are on the mission table. If you take one home to study it, please return it. The mission team will be having a cookie baking fellowship for this purpose. Watch the bulletin for the date and time and join in the fun. If you would prefer to bake cookies in your home, there are copies of the cookie guidelines in the orange folder.

We have another member who is answering a calling. Morgan Smith will be continuing her missionary training. Pray for her and ask her to share ways that you can support her endeavors.

As we begin a new year, setting goals for becoming more Christ-like, if God lays a plan or an idea on your heart, bring it to the Mission Team and we will help.

In His service,
Gerry Cloncs

CHURCH STAFF E-MAIL ADDRESSES

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Rob Bratcher, Youth & Children's Pastor
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Rita Carter, Office Secretary
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Please feel free to use the e-mail addresses
for church and family related communication.

No junk e-mail please.

CHURCH WEB SITE:
alexabc.com

HEAVEN'S WEARHOUSE

A ministry of Church Street Commons
Offering gently used clothing and toys for those in need.
Currently accepting winter coats.

Operating Hours:
Monday – 4 to 7 p.m.
Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Location:
202 W. Church St./Canal St.
Alexandria, IN
(Annex of Old Baptist Church)

Head of Operations: Marilyn Pierce, Lutheran Church of Our Blessed Savior

CHURCH STREET COMMONS

CHICKEN NOODLE DINNER

JANUARY 11th – 11:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.

\$6.00 per person

Proceeds go to Heaven's Wearhouse, Campus Life,
and Church Street Commons

Happy New Year 🍷 Happy New Year 🍷 Happy New Year
