



# THE BUGLE

“Sound the Call”

ALEXANDRIA FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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## **Michael's Musings ...**

The comedian George Carlin wrote these words . . .

“The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings, but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees, but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch too much TV, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things.

We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

Remember, spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever. Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side. Remember to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent.

Remember, to say, "I love you", but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you. Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again. Give time to love, give time to speak, and give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind.”

I don't have all the answers. Honestly, I'm not sure I have any. But you know what, that is okay. The fewer answers I have, the more I must rely on God. Some guy named Paul once said, “for when I am weak, then I am strong.” What does God expect of me? More than I have ever imagined. It's causing me to change, it hurts, it's that pruning season, read John 15 and you'll see the reference from Jesus. Ultimately, Jesus comes to the point and reminds us of this great truth, one you have heard from me

many times in the past . . . “*I am the vine; you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.*”

May we always abide in the Master!!

Blessings and hope to see you Sunday,

*Pastor Michael*

## **The Story**

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I've been amazed at the responses to “The Story”. . . so many positive comments. The people of FBC have purchased over 300 copies of “The Story”. Isn't that amazing?! I can't wait to see what happens in 2011 as we start back up in “The Story” on January 2, with chapter 12, and continue until May 22. Thank you for your participation, active listening and learning.

## **2011**

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Growing up in Chicago, as a Cubs fan, hall of famer Ernie Banks always had a saying for the upcoming season. I remember 1969's slogan well, “the Cubs will shine in sixty-nine.” Almost. Well, as each new year approaches I wonder what a good slogan is for FBC. Of course, not many words rhyme with eleven. There is one biblical word which rhymes, heaven. To say, we'll be in heaven in 20-11 isn't overly encouraging. So, this is what I thought, ‘**shoot for 11 in 20-11.**’ What does it mean? I don't know. But what I do know is this; can you invite 11 people to church in 2011? Can you share with 11 people the difference Jesus has made in your life? Instead of giving a tithe (10%), will you give 11%? God wants more from us; that never ends. So, in what ways will you give more of you to the building of His kingdom on earth?

*Thank  
You!* 

*I would like to thank the church family for the generosity over the Christmas season. Your gifts were so very much appreciated. From the Deutsch family we sincerely and gratefully give you thanks. Thank you for your love, blessings and grace.*

*Pastor Michael and family*

## Remaining in the Season

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Oh oh. I'm in trouble!

Beth Ann came to me and said, *"What?!? You're not singing my song this year?!?"*

You see, for the many years that I have been in full-time ministry and also directing choirs, I have given my choir the last Sunday off in December. It was in part to thank them for all the great Christmas music that they have prepared for and have sung! Many times I have decided to take their place and sing an "After Christmas" carol. (There are not a lot of those out there!)

This year I had a number of people to choose from to sing on the last Sunday of the year! What a wonderful blessing it is to have such a talented church family, willing to share the musical gifts that God provides. I am also blessed to have a wife who loves all of me, including my singing voice! "Her song" is called, *"After December Slips Away,"* and yes, I have sung it here in Alexandria, along with other churches that we have served. I especially like the chorus of this song and what it has to say:

*"After the carols fade away, after the Yule fire dies down, when there are no longer dreams to open and see, because You are Hope and Joy and Peace--- 'cause You are the only gift I need, in my heart the season will remain after December slips away."*

December is a wonderful time of year as we prepare our hearts for the Baby in a manger. It's great to get together with friends and family, doing things maybe that we have traditionally done for years, or coming up with new ideas that will become the new Christmas traditions that we will want to continue. Then the decorations come down and we get back to "routine" in January - December slips away.

I thought it was funny when Matt Lauer of the Today Show was showing us this year's Christmas tree in Rockefeller Center. As camera pointed towards the tree he said, "Let's bask in the glow." *Huh?* Maybe he was referring to slowing down and to focus on the spirit of the Season. As Christians, we know something about "basking in the glow" if we focus on the true meaning of Christmas---that Jesus came to be our Hope, our Joy and our Peace. The Gift of Jesus is the only Gift that you will ever need, lasting a lifetime here on earth and then for eternity.

We realize that with God it's always a heart issue. Once He truly has your heart, He truly has you. The Season of hope, joy and peace will remain if Jesus is in your heart. Do you want to "remain in the Season?" It begins with Jesus offering us an everlasting Gift. All we have to say to Him is "yes"; even if December slips away.

See you Sunday if not sooner!

*Pastor Doug*

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## **Mission News: The journey begins with a shoebox...**

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During the month of December, I went with my daughter, Aubrey, my sister and a group of 17 from Kokomo to Charlotte, North Carolina to work in the processing center for the Samaritan's Purse Christmas Child shoebox ministry. It was a little overwhelming when we first walked in to see a building probably the size of a football field with thousands and thousands of shoeboxes everywhere. We were immediately welcomed with a hug from the greeter at the door, a little lady who is there every year to welcome volunteers.

We were there for 3 days and worked 6 hours each day. They have probably 40 stations with about 10 people working in each station. Our job was to inspect each box to make sure that there was nothing in them that shouldn't be. Some of the numerous things that we had to take out were liquids, chocolate, food items, toys that pertained to war, Pokemon items, used toys, used clothes, and breakables. The rule was that if you take something out, you have to put something back in from the filler items they had. In the 3 days we were there, we processed over 400,000 boxes! We never ran out of boxes and never stopped to take a break other than a half hour lunch.

One of the things that amazed us was that some people put very little in their box and then some boxes were 16" x 16" x 10" tall and crammed full. One box just had a box of dominos in it and another, a bottle of Coke and a t-shirt. Some of the things that are a must to put in your boxes next year are a toothbrush, toothpaste, bar of soap and washrag. One story told was that in some areas, 20 people may share the same toothbrush!

We went to the Billy Graham Library on Tuesday evening and I would encourage everyone to see this. Billy's childhood home has been reassembled on the grounds and the library built behind. You take a tour and can see Billy's ministry over the years. This was an awesome stop!

We will be going back next year – I'm hooked!! If you're interested, let me know as I would like to organize a group from our church. Thanks to those who contributed with donations to the trip!

In His Service,  
Elaine Bronner

## **From the Board of Christian Education!**

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A big THANKS to Kenny Hand for the awesome new book bin in the Nursery!!! Please stop by and take a look! If you have some gently used or NEW children's Christian books, we would appreciate them!!

We had a great time at our Birthday party for Jesus!

## **A children's ministry for you!**

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Now is the time to sign up to be a volunteer worker in Pre-school and Nursery during Sunday mornings throughout the year. The 2011 schedule is posted on the classroom doors. If twelve people to volunteer for two Sundays in 2011, we could fill the remainder of the calendar. Please help the Board of Christian Education meet the need in this vital ministry!

## Reminder: Winter Blah Blaster

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Are those long, dark winter days something you dread? Then join the fun and learn to make a Mystery Quilt with the Needle and Thread group. They will be starting a Mystery Quilt project in January. This will be something you can make, take home, and snuggle up with on those cold February days. All skill levels are welcome, from beginner to pro and everyone in the middle.

Don't know how to buy fabric? We will be going on a group shopping trip to buy fabric for our projects. We have lots of coupons saved just for this big day. Of course, out to lunch is mandatory for this trip! Don't know how to sew? Some of the best seamstresses in Alexandria will be on hand to guide you through every step.

The pattern for the Mystery Quilt will be given out in clues. Complete one clue to get the next. The excitement will build as you start seeing your quilt come together and look forward to the surprise at the finished project.

We will be meeting every Wednesday in January, starting with our shopping trip on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Meet at church at 9:00 am on January 5<sup>th</sup> for our shopping trip. Then back to church to cut and sew. Additional weekdays can be added if there is interest.

Contact Vi Hiser or Donna Crousore with questions and to let them know of your participation. They will give you the first clue.

## Let's All Smile

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Frown and you frown alone, but smile and the whole world smiles with you. Smiling is an incredibly important part of our lives. It's fun, fast, and easy. But best of all, it's a natural way to make yourself and others feel really good. A smile can bring many benefits.



- Smiles improve your appearance.
- Smiles create trust and rapport.
- Smiles make you feel good.
- Smiles make other people feel good.
- Smiles make you appear more approachable.

Make your smile genuine. A genuine smile is detectable by others because it is accompanied by a general glow & comes from drawing your feelings from the heart. Love people and your life. Smile with your eyes. A wholehearted smile will naturally show in your eyes. Your eyes light up, twinkle, and reflect your happiness. You have probably heard of "contagious" or "infectious smiles. There's a reason because it tends to make others around you smile. People of all ages need smiles. Even in the most stressful times, a smile brightens everybody's mood.

Expect smiling to be difficult in some situations. But try to draw on thinking happy and offer a smile & you might be amazed at the impact it may have on others.

Your Parish Nurses – Nancy & Pam

## **Family Life Center Celebration**

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WOW!! What a great accomplishment! We believed God was calling us to do something huge at the end of 2010. We were obedient and followed Him and within 4 months we paid off \$90,000 on our mortgage. On December 19, 2010 we received offerings which allowed us to write a check to pay off the mortgage.

GREAT! I am very proud of you. You should be proud, as well. You did it! You did what some thought couldn't be accomplished. It's amazing what we can do when we seek God's wisdom and presence. We are planning a Mortgage Burning Celebration in January. We will keep you posted.

*Pastor Michael*

## **Reminder from Pastor Michael**

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Tell a child you are proud of them. Then help them to be proud of themselves. Ask them if they are proud of themselves!

**WISHING YOU  
BLESSINGS  
and a**





# YOUTH NEWS

## Happy New Year!

I pray that 2010 was a great year for you. For some it may have been the best year ever; for others it may have been the worst year ever. Whatever 2010 brought you just remember one thing: it is the past, and it is time for a new beginning in 2011.

The first major event which is being planned is the **Valentine's Banquet**. It will be held on Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 P.M. in the Family Life Center. Please come and support the youth as we share in their joy.

With new beginnings comes change and it is with sorrow that I must announce my resignation as Youth and Children's Pastor at First Baptist Church. My last official day will be January 14, 2011. My resignation is solely based on family and personal health issues which need to be addressed. On January 15<sup>th</sup> we will be moving back to Michigan where Sarah will work at Henry Ford Hospital as a nurse, I will drive a truck and seek pastoral work at the same time.

It has been a privilege to serve with you and for you. I wish you God's blessings and hope to stay in touch over the years.

Blessings in Christ,

**Pastor Rob**

### Children's classes and activities

**Sunday Mornings:**

Sunday School -9:15

Children's Church - 10:30

**Sunday Night:**

Nursery Provided

Youth 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 6:15-7:30

**Wednesday Night:**

Nursery Provided

Youth Small Groups (Grades 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>)  
6:30-7:30

*“Go into the world and be a difference maker!”*

