



February 2020

Tower Tidings

First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland



Celebrate



Black



History



Month



This



February



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God's World

Supernaturalism is a belief in an alternative realm or reality that, in one way or another, is commonly associated with all forms of religion. Within this realm, the natural order of the world can be altered and changed, typically by a higher being who presides within this alternative reality. Herein lies God, and His world is a place of miracles, purpose, and destiny.

In ancient times with limited knowledge, humanity reached into the realm of the gods to bring order and purpose to the world. Sickness was attributed to the displeasure of god or gods. Natural disasters were 'acts of god' and religion was the means to unlock the mysterious working of God among humanity. Our Christian faith in the God of creation, redemption, and resurrection provides the theological ground to build a worldview based on the merging of the supernatural work of God within the natural world.

The secularization of modern Western civilization has created a gulf between the natural and the supernatural because of the belief that the physical universe operates by scientific principles and predictable laws of nature which existing apart from the influence or control of deity or supernatural power. Hence, the world becomes wholly isolated from both the sacred and the supernatural. Philosophically, reality is devoid of significance in and of itself, and only when the individual provides meaning does purpose and significance take place in the natural world. In this, we have, in essence, become the gods.

This divide between science and religion has grown wider and more clearly distinct. It has been a prime reason for more people choosing to leave religion and divinity out of daily life. Within Christianity, this belief in the infusion of supernaturalism within our natural world provides the foundation for Jesus to be the Son of God, perform miracles with the greatest being his resurrection.

Philosophic arguments typically offered for supernaturalism include the cosmological, teleological, ontological, Scriptures, and religious experience. (These can be easily 'Googled' to see the nature of these arguments.) Yet, recently I heard a very persuasive argument based upon probability. "How

certain do you know there's NOT a God?" is asked of those who deny the role of the supernatural in our natural world. The follow up question is, "How much knowledge do we currently possess engulfing the entire universe?" After a bit of honest reflection, the respondent might suggest a percentage under 50%. A Christian therefore could easily reply, "Then we have a lot or room left for the possibility of God's existence!"

As a pastor, God's role within the natural world weighs heavy upon every aspect of our existence. "Where did we come from? Why are we here? What is our purpose in life? and Is there life after death?" are answered with greater clarity when we permit the realm of faith to engage our outlook. Science may be better at addressing the mechanics of our universe but certainly not its meaning.

During this season of Lent, our congregation will focus of the work of Christ among his followers within this realm of the supernatural. Our prayer to God is for transformation, healing, understanding and compassion, even being open to the miraculous. There will be opportunities for us to grow through a discipleship process of classroom instruction along with an internship in the application and use of spiritual gifts. On Ash Wednesday February 26th, a service is being prepared to assist in a 40 day journey as we together venture into the realm of the supernatural, culminating in the Resurrection. It will be followed by 50 days of service and ministry culminating with a commissioning of ministry service on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st.

We encourage you to join us on this journey. "Only the supernatural love of God through changed lives can solve the problems that we face in our world." -Billy Graham.


Pastor Gregg Burris
Senior Pastor

Music for Food Benefit Concert

Presented by the CIM Student Government Association

Tuesday, February 18 at 8pm

Please join us for this annual benefit concert, presented by the Student Government Association and in collaboration with Music for Food, bringing together CIM's distinguished faculty and exceptional student artists in performance, as they generously donate their time and talent so that all audience donations benefit the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

Jeanelle Brierley, Olga Dubossarskaya Kaler & Jaime Laredo, violin

Shannon Lee & James Thompson, violin, student artists
Joseph Skerik & Alyssa Warcup, viola, student artists
Sharon Robinson, cello | **Sarah Miller**, cello, student artist
Mary Kay Fink, flute | **Frank Rosenwein**, oboe
M. Isaac Ripple, oboe, student artist | **Afendi Yusuf**, clarinet

Marquise Lindsey-Bradley, clarinet, student artist | **Barrick Stees**, bassoon

Corbin Krebs, bassoon, student artist | **Richard King**, horn
Rachel Lauson, horn, student artist | **Melivia Raharjo**, piano, student artist

SAINT-SAËNS Havanaise, Op. 83

GOUNOD Petite Symphonie

MENDELSSOHN String Octet in E-flat Major, Op. 20

No tickets required. Admission by optional donation; money or food donations accepted.

49ers Program

by Fran Leanza

February, 16 Lunch \$5 at 12:45AM

Doug Kusak's topic; Great Lakes Cargo Ships



Cleveland is a port city and ships are vital to our economy. Since before William Gordon (of Gordon Park and Gordon Square Arts District fame) orchestrated



the first shipment of iron ore from Lake Superior to Cleveland, we've been receiving raw materials by bulk cargo ship. Historical Interpreter Doug Kusak will help you understand how these behemoths of transportation work and where you can go to see them in action.

Doug Kusak is an engaging speaker who will bring to life for us the action that takes place daily in our Cleveland ports.

We will meet in Spahr Center following the Traditional Worship service. Our catered lunch (\$5) will be served by 12:45 followed by our program.

COME & BRING A FRIEND, YOU WILL BE AMAZED AT WHAT YOU WILL LEARN!

Save the date, March 22 for lunch, pre-show talk and attending the HELP production of Matilda firstbaptistcleveland.org/forty-niners



(Infants-4th grade)

Preschool & Elementary Children's February Schedule

Sunday mornings drop off Preschool in room 103 prior to worship service.

K-4 are dismissed from the worship service with Carly to Wheaton Center from 9:00 a.m. - 12 p.m.

WEEK ONE JOHN 4:1-30

Jesus is a friend to a Samaritan woman, even though she is different than Him.

WEEK TWO LUKE 19:1-10

Jesus loves Zacchaeus and wants to spend time with him, even though he has done wrong things.

WEEK THREE JOHN 8:2-11

Jesus is a friend to a woman who has done wrong things and saves her from being publicly punished.

WEEK FOUR JOHN 15:12

Jesus tells us to love each other the way He loves us.



REMEMBER THIS:

"Love each other as I have loved you."
JOHN 15:12, NIV



SAY THIS:
Who does Jesus love?
JESUS LOVES EVERYONE.

BASIC TRUTH:
JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.



WEEK ONE JOHN 15:12-13

No Greater Love

SAY THIS:
Love others because Jesus loves you.

WEEK TWO LUKE 10:38-42

Jesus at the Home of Martha and Mary

SAY THIS:
Love others with your time.

LOVE:
CHOOSING TO TREAT OTHERS THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED

WEEK THREE MATTHEW 5:43-47

Love Your Enemies

SAY THIS:
Love others because they matter to God.

WEEK FOUR MARK 14:1-9

A Woman Pours Perfume on Jesus at Bethany

SAY THIS:
Love God with everything you've got.



REMEMBER THIS:

"Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins."
1 JOHN 4:10, NIV

Christian Education Schedule

Come join us in these upcoming Sunday and Wednesday classes to grow in God's Word.

Mid Morning Bible Study

Every Wednesday 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Study the Bible

Led by Pastor Gregg

Facilitated by Rev. Dr. Gregg Burris

In the Fireside Room

"The Gospel is God's Good News for humanity." It is a message about the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is a message that is both personally transformational to those who accept it, as well as communally transformational as its kingdom principle shapes culture and society. Our ongoing study is walking through the entire Bible. We began in Genesis and are currently in 2 Kings. It is open to anyone to come and join our small group study.

Wednesdays in the Word

Every Wednesday 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Dance, Stand, Run – Women's Group

by Jess Connolly

Led by Martha Lant, Sandra Alexander-Haynes,

Tobili Sam Yellowe, and Charmie Scott

In the Fireside Room

As daughters of God, let's come together to discuss our relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The author of this study, Jess Connolly, writes, Dance, Stand, and Run is an invitation to step into the movements of abundant life, dancing in grace, standing firm in holiness, and running on mission. Let's spur one another on as we develop a deeper understanding of the outcomes of true grace, the implications of standing our Holy ground in the world, and accepting our mission from God. This Bible study is indeed for women who by the grace of God long to change the world rather than to be changed by the world. Please join us in this life shifting discussion which will leave you eager to dance, stand, and run in your purpose on earth for the glory of God.

No More Excuses: Be The Man God Made You To Be – Men's Group

by Tony Evans

Led by Eddie Wills

In the Montgomery Room

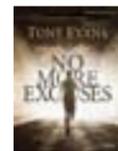
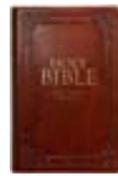
Sometimes trials and circumstances make it challenging for men to be all God has called them to be. In this powerful perspective changing Bible study, Tony Evans encourages men to stop looking at their setbacks, hardships, and failures as excuses and instead to view them as opportunities for success. As stated by Dr. Evans, this Bible study will help you fight for purpose and meaning in your life. Also, this study will help you learn to lead with strength and godliness. Furthermore, it will help you learn to overcome obstacles on the path to spiritual growth.

The Holy Land Revealed

by Professor Jodi Magness

Led by Betty Meyers

In the Livingstone Room



Come and discuss the historical and archaeological implications of regions in the Bible. This course will cover the ancient history of the Holy Land, a geographic area that includes Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian regions. This course will also explore other regions in the ancient Near East, including Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. The timespan of this study begins with the First Temple period through the Second Temple period, the time of Jesus, and the destruction of the temple.

The Financial Peace Planner

by Dave Ramsey

Led by Tammy Gordon and Kim Kidd Collins

In the Library

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Malachi 3:10

Using Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace Planner, learn to assess your financial situation, create a realistic budget, dump your debt, clean up your credit rating, and more. The Financial Peace Planner comes in a workbook format, allowing you to frequently monitor your progress and most importantly, to face your situation honestly. This book contains many inspirational insights that come from personal experience.

Sunday Discipleship Hour

Every Sunday 10:10 AM - 11:00 AM

Praying At the Crossroads: Learning from the Prayers of Old Testament Leaders

General Editor Ken Coley

Led by Marty Capers and Wendy Chaney

In the Fireside Room

Prayer is vital to our spiritual growth, yet few of us pray as frequently or as fervently as we would like. We turn to God only in moments of desperation and crisis. God wants us to turn to Him at every moment of our lives. The Bible is filled with the prayers of God's people. Often these prayers come at critical moments of their journey—"at crossroads of decision". This study will help you pray regarding everyday matters and at those critical, sometimes unpredictable crossroads of life.

Spiritual Warfare a Biblical & Balanced Perspective

Starts January 5th, 2020

by Brian Borgman & Rob Ventura

Led by Alwin and Tondra Miller

In the Livingstone Room

Let's continue this empowering discussion about the realities of Spiritual Warfare. In the preface of this text, Borgman states, "Awareness and vigilance are critical for survival. It is sad that we, as followers of Jesus, so easily forget that we are in a war—an invisible war, but a real one nonetheless." The authors of this book want to help equip Christians to fight spiritual warfare biblically and in a practical way. This is definitely an important study for such a time as this!

firstbaptistcleveland.org/class-schedule



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day A Day Of Service by Fran Leanza and Annette Szalay

"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve...You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love." Those are the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.

On January 20, 2020, approximately 30 people showed their hearts of love by celebrating MLK Day at FBC with a morning of service. We opened with a morning prayer and light breakfast then divided into four groups for our service projects. This was followed by fellowship and a delicious lunch as we gathered around tables in Spahr Center. We ended our time together with Pastor Gregg leading us in some reflections of the powerful teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Annette Szalay as the organizer of the day, found the leaders and made various necessary arrangements for the day to be successful. Our group was made up of about 30 people ranging in age from 8 to 82. We even had four volunteers from outside of FBC arrive to serve with us for the morning.

Our first group of four was led by Carly Marino. They went off to nearby Family Promise to spend time with families living at that shelter. They engaged the children in crafts and activities and had a great time interacting with the parents and children.



Another group followed Ed Szalay to the church kitchen to bake cookies. They were then frozen and ready for Brian Broadbent to take to the next Kairos retreat at the Trumble County men's prison. Lucky for us they made a few extras along with a delicious lunch for our group.



A third group went to the church sanctuary. Under the guidance of Pastor Jeff and the help of lots of Murphy's Oil Soap the volunteers quickly went to work giving the pews a much needed cleaning.

Gwen Dyer and Liz Gockel led the fourth group in a hymn sing at Judson Park. Some of the residents sang along with the group and others showed their appreciation with a smile of thanks. The group especially enjoyed solos from Mary Alexander and Dave Cumming.



We had one delightful surprise, a volunteer who had just

arrived in town for her first visit to Cleveland. While in flight from Atlanta she searched websites for churches doing something to celebrate MLK Day and found us. She took a LIFT ride from the airport directly to FBC. She quickly joined in with the others working in the sanctuary. At the close of the day she was ready to call LIFT again but since she was visiting friends in Euclid, Fran had the pleasure of giving her a lift to her destination.



Our Mission and Social Concerns Cluster will again be sponsoring a MLK Day of Service next year and welcome you to join us. We all had fun in a meaningful way.

Koinonia Camp Discounts

Register by March 1! by Mike Skerritt

See the full summer schedule and new camps for 2020 along with the prices and discounts! firstbaptistcleveland.org/camp-koinonia

We own it! Let's Use It!

You can register for camps online at christiancampohio.org/summer-registration-form.html

Kairos Prison Cookie Ministry by Brian Broadbent

Sunday, March 8

Attention All Cookie Bakers!

We are preparing for another prison ministry visit and need cookies by Sunday March 8. Please place them in the volunteer office. Your cookies make a difference.

Before you bake get more information, requirements and recipes at

firstbaptistcleveland.org/kairos



Music Notes

The Chancel Choir rehearses on Thursdays from 7:15PM - 8:30 PM in the sanctuary and the choir room.

Gospel Choir meets Thursdays at 6:30PM and will perform Sunday Feb 23 at the 11AM service.

The Children's Choir meets Thursday evenings from 5:15PM - 5:45PM.

More Info - firstbaptistcleveland.org/choirs



February Birthdays

5th Marlene Cooper
6th Tobili Sam Yellowe
6th Pam Schneider
6th Kathy Skerritt
7th David Meil

9th Dana Capers
13th Marty Capers
13th Phyllis Peterson
14th Anne Eickmann
14th Christine Ann Marr

16th Angela Fielding
16th Marvin Hamdan
18th Charles Cicco
19th Jerome Williams
20th Star Knuckles

23rd Bonnie Humphrey
24th David Chapman
24th Tine DeBlaey-Cicco
24th Christopher Smith

Annual Meeting Recap

by Mike Skerritt

Our Annual Meeting has always been one of the highlights of the church calendar, and this year was no different.

Chaired by Moderator Kim Kidd-Collins the meeting got off to an auspicious start at about 11:20 AM with a beautiful prayer by Reverend Burris. Kelley Pernicone honored a long tradition of presenting a song from the upcoming annual Happy Ending Lyric Players production of Matilda, singing the song herself to recorded music. This delightful piece will be sung by the girl who ultimately plays Matilda in the production that runs March 20 thru March 29. This youngster will have to do a masterful job to top Kelley's performance.

For many one of the highlights of the Annual Meeting is the delicious dinner provided by Faith Arnold. They were definitely not disappointed this year. Delicious BBQ chicken and beef were augmented by wedding and chicken dumpling soups, corn chowder, croissants, salad and desserts to die for.

Following dinner, the business meeting got underway with a positive Clerk's report that shows 349 members, an increase of five over last year. At a time when most churches are losing members, that report is most welcome.

All staff and cluster reports are included in the 2019 Annual Report of which all attendees received a copy, but two reports were given at the meeting. The first was Pastor Burris' report which he presented electronically on a screen at one end of Fellowship Hall. A bit hard to see and hear from the other end of the room, Pastor Gregg said a copy of the report would be available from the church office to anyone unable to see it on the screen. Very positive in nature, the report reflects Pastor Gregg's vision of a very productive 2020 when the church family works together on common goals to further God's Kingdom here on earth.

Ralph Hise did a masterful job in describing both First Baptist's and the Children's Center's operating performance in 2019, and their goals for 2020. IF all goes well, both budgets, which essentially represent two million-dollar enterprises, should end 2020 with small surpluses. Both budgets were approved.



FBC Women's Retreat

by Fran Leanza

Saturday, May 2, starting at 9:30 a.m.

We will return to the Intergrove Lodge in the North Chagrin Reservation, Willoughby Hills

Mark Your Calendar Now So You Can Attend!

firstbaptistcleveland.org/womens-retreat-registration

Ralph also indicated that 2019 was very good to our church endowments, particularly the cell-site portion which was invested more aggressively with Key Bank. No one can predict the future, of course, but the belief is that the collaboration between the Endowment Committee and our Key Bank investment advisor was very profitable in 2019.

Julie Mizener introduced the nominations for slate of candidates for open positions in the church government, and all were approved. Kim took a moment to thank all the retiring office holders for their service, Dana Capers, Julie Mizener, Monica Sturgis, Jim Ankenbrandt, Jessica Chapman-Martinez, Mike Skerritt and Tony Peebles.

A highlight of the meeting for many is always the naming of two volunteers for the G. Michael Skerritt Service Award. Kim presented them to Tina Marr (absent) for her work at Calvary and with the Mission Cluster, and to Monroe Goins for his efforts with the Property and Finance Cluster and as leader of the Security Team. Both honorees received a rousing round of applause.

Pastor Gregg closed the meeting with a prayer at about 1 PM. Many attendees helped clean up and put away the tables and chairs, demonstrating once again the power of love and commitment to each other, and to the success First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland!

Remembering Jane Maier Smith

by Mike Skerritt

August 9, 1929 - December 24, 2019

As a mother, assistant librarian, musician and artist, Jane led an active and interesting life. See her art in the Fairmount Hall Gallery.



Read more about Jane at firstbaptistcleveland.org/jane-smith



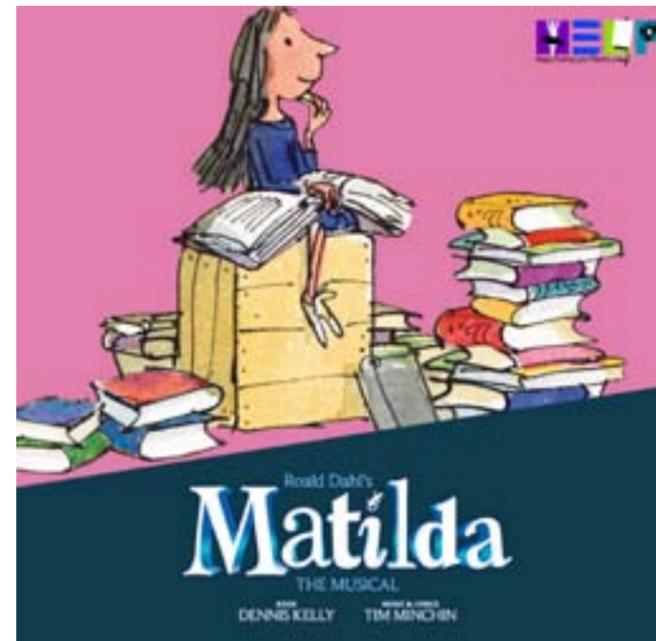
Women's Conference

Saturday, May 16
Registration starts at 8:00AM

Save the date! You don't want to miss the First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland Women's Conference. Danita Harris will be our keynote speaker. Danita is a WEWS News 5 anchorwoman and an Emmy-Award winning journalist. She uses her profession as a main anchor to reach many people. She feels blessed to work in the broadcasting industry because it partners well with her commitment to community service.

Danita is also an ordained and licensed minister who was born in Chester, Pa. Her favorite scripture is Luke 12:48 "For everyone to whom much is given, of him shall much be required." She currently attends Church on the North Coast in Wickliffe.

firstbaptistcleveland.org/womens-conference



Matilda the Musical is a stage musical based on the 1988 children's novel of the same name by Roald Dahl. It was adapted by Dennis Kelly, with music and lyrics by Tim Minchin and directed for the stage by Matthew Warchus. The musical's narrative centers on Matilda, a precocious 5-year-old girl with the gift of telekinesis, who loves reading, overcomes obstacles caused by her family and school and helps her teacher to reclaim her life.

Friday, March 20 from 7PM – 9PM
Saturday, March 21 from 7PM – 9PM
Sunday, March 22 from 2PM – 4PM
Friday, March 27 from 7PM – 9PM
Saturday, March 28 from 7PM – 9PM
Sunday, March 29 from 2PM – 4PM

Tickets From \$10 - \$20
VIP Tickets and Group Rates Available

Tickets are available online firstbaptistcleveland.org/matilda

Calvary Meals For The Homeless

by Tina Marr

Friday, February 28, at 4:00 PM

Our next meal service will be on Friday, February 28, 2020, from 4:00 to 6:30 p.m. at New Life at Calvary, located at the corner of East 79th Street and Euclid Avenue. We hope you can join us for part or all of the time. If you are not able to attend, no worries. Maybe you'd like to donate a food item. You can find a sign-up sheet in Swasey Tower with all the details. If you have any questions or interest in assisting with this ministry, please contact Tina Marr – firstbaptistcleveland.org/calvary



Nicaragua Mission Trip

by Annette Szalay

June 20th – June 27th Sign Up Now!

This summer we will be planning a mission trip back to Nicaragua. The country has been fairly stable and 15 or more teams from all over the USA have been back. Much work is needed right at the AMOS center so many teams have stayed right there except for occasional trips to the outlying communities.

The price varies slightly according to flights but will be about \$1700.00 per person including all meals, lodging and transportation. There are a few scholarships available. The team leader this year will be Jeremy Bull. He has been to Nicaragua many times as a qualified team member. He also has medical training. He has been a great asset to all our teams in the past.

You must have a valid passport good for at least 6 months after returning to the US. For questions or to sign up please contact Nancy Wheaton, Fran Leanza or Annette Szalay at firstbaptistcleveland.org/nicaragua.



Jazz-Poetry Night Returns!

by Mike Skerritt

Friday, February 21, 2020 at 7:30 PM

We Need Poetry Readers

Yes, we are bringing back the very popular Jazz-Poetry Night to First Baptist. The original format of alternating poetry readings with jazz numbers related to each poem performed by the Demetrius Steinmetz Jazz Trio will be followed again. Goodies will be provided at the event.

This is an opportunity for you to share your favorite poems with an eager and appreciative audience. Up to two poems per person suggested.

Please contact Mike Skerritt through the form at firstbaptistcleveland.org/jazz as soon as possible and let him know of your interest and availability.





Tower Tidings

First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland
3630 Fairmount Blvd.
Shaker Heights, OH 44118

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Dated Material: February 1, 2020
Thanks for prompt delivery!

Church Office – 216.932.7480
The Children’s Center – 216.371.9394

FirstBaptistCleveland.org
office@firstbaptistcleveland.org

Facebook/First Baptist Church of
Greater Cleveland



Watch Sermons Online

Miss a sermon
or want to hear
one again?

firstbaptistcleveland.org/watch-sermons

2020 FBC Lay Leadership

Moderator: Kim Kidd-Collins
Vice Moderator: Carolyn Neal
Treasurer: Ralph Hise
Clerk: Tammy Gordon

Children’s Center: Frank Marino

Communication & Outreach: Debra Hegler
*Greeters, Welcome Center, Marketing,
& Communications*

Discipleship: Ship Collins
*Discipleship Classes, Children’s Ministry,
Youth Ministry, & Covenant Groups*

Fellowship and Nurture: Iris Goins
*Stephen Ministry, Deacons,
& New Member Orientation*

Stewardship: Dan Mizener
*Property and Finance, Stewardship Campaign,
& Endowment and Audit*

Missions & Social Concerns: Annette Szalay

Worship and Fine Arts: Carole Negus

Serving in Ministry

Ministries

Rev. Dr. Gregg F. Burris - Senior Pastor

Rev. Jeff Gordon - Associate Pastor/
Business Administrator

Rev. Dr. Sandra Alexander-Haynes -
Associate Pastor/Christian Education

Carly Marino - Director of Children’s Ministry

Music Ministries

Stephanie Price - Director of Music

Betty Meyers - Associate Director of Music

Brian Kozak - Director of Contemporary Music

The Children’s Center

Jane Pernicone - Director

Office

Star Knuckles - Executive Assistant/Office Admin.

Greg Beckner - Web Design/Publicity/Marketing

Content deadline for next Tower Tidings: **Feb. 15th**
The next issue will be mailed March 1, 2020

Please e-mail articles or news to Greg Beckner:
office@firstbaptistcleveland.org