



February 2021

Tower Tidings

First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Corinthians 13:11 NIV

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Start Anew And Become One

Hopefully, with our new leadership at the helm our country can begin to heal emotionally, physically, and spiritually. While we heal, most of our events will stay remote, including the FBC [children](#) and [youth](#). They will continue their virtual groups.

Here are some instructions for connecting with us during this COVID-19 pandemic. All of the purple underlined links are clickable. Bookmark our [Church Updates](#) page. Our worship service is streamed [LIVE Sunday morning on YouTube](#) while previous videos can be viewed anytime on our [YouTube Channel](#). Our [Wednesdays in the Word](#) classes are available through digital conferencing;

sign up to receive instructions via email. [Sunday Discipleship Hour](#) is available through Zoom conferencing. Our youth are active in their online [Zoom meetings](#) Sunday mornings.

Our children get together online Sundays so please sign up to get on the [children's email list](#). Our [Spiritual Gifts classes](#) are online, you can find them on the web page. If you have anyone who needs our prayers please [submit a request online](#) for our prayer team. Stay healthy! If you have any trouble accessing any of our activities or have challenges using technology call Pastor Kregg 216-882-8555 and he can connect you with someone who can help!



A New Pathway

They told the people, "As soon as you see the ark of the promise of Yahweh your Elohim and the Levitical priests who carry it, break camp and follow them. However, stay about half a mile behind them. Don't come any closer to them so that you will know which way to go because you have not gone this way before." Joshua 3:3-5 (Names of God Bible)

When the children of Israel were coming into the promised land, they were instructed to keep a safe distance behind the Ark of the Covenant, which represented the very presence of God. The command was to allow God to provide direction. It is a matter of trust or faith to believe that God was directing them to the place of His choosing.

Our daily lives are filled with uncertainty. The pandemic of 2020 lingers on as we begin 2021. The long-lasting impact of congregational life can not easily be predicted. Within a zoom meeting of local pastors, one, in particular, expressed his belief that the church will be filled to capacity as people miss the opportunity to regather as a people, while another pastor strongly disagreed expressing the belief that many parishioners have found new interests and opportunities on Sunday morning rather than attend church worship.

One thing is clear. We will never go back to congregational life as before. The introduction of technology has found its way into ecclesiastical life.

Dr. Douglas Estes, author of the SimChurch: Being the Church in the Virtual World (Zondervan, 2008), foresaw the coming of the virtual church. For him, the virtual church could not be successful solely on how technological it became, but how it could translate technology into relationships.

"When I wrote SimChurch, I was deeply concerned that people would miss the meaning of what church is the same way people today miss the meaning of what church is. Today, we tend to think of a building as a church. Likewise, people tend to think the online platform is church but neither of these are a church.

The church is a localized assembly of the people of God, dwelling, with a task."

Writing for the Center for Pastor Theologians in May 2020, he spoke of how the Covid-19 pandemic has forced the church to 'reinvent' itself into becoming a virtual or 'simchurch.'

"When my pastor called to speak to me about online church, this was the advice I offered: Don't worry about the technology right now (yes, it has to work and be decent, but most people will understand if it's not perfect), focus on building connections between people. Focus on making sure people can respond to worship, and respond to each other.

True worship must be dialogical, not monological. People need to speak to God, and God needs to speak back. People need to hear from God. Then people need to hear from each other and speak love to each other. That's what makes church church, not the building (platform)."

Joshua's charge "We have never gone this way before" indicates how our faith journey's most important goal is not to lose sight of the One with whom we are called to follow. The church is to be in a relationship with Christ as we follow Him and to interact with each other.

While this may be a time of transition for the congregational leadership, it is equally a time of transition for the members of the congregation. With a safe and widely distributed vaccine, we hope that our new pathway into this land of the virtual service will truly be a place where we can find peace, love, and joy—a land of God's choosing—like Israel-of "milk and honey" and refuge from the world.

Blessings,

Pastor Kregg Burris
Senior Pastor

HERO HEADQUARTERS

Preschool & Elementary Children's February Schedule

Preschoolers and K-4 are meeting with [Carly Marino](#) online.



FEBRUARY 2021

Elementary WEEKLY CUES

YOU GOT THIS!

Theme

Super Fan: Cheer Each Other On

Kindness is showing others they are valuable by how you treat them.



REMEMBER THIS

"You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient." Colossians 3:12, NIV

Week One

Ephesians 4:32
God Was Kind to Us

SAY THIS:
Be kind to others because God is kind to you.

Week Two

The Book of Ruth
Ruth and Boaz

SAY THIS:
Be kind to your family and friends.

Week Three

Matthew 5:41
Go the Extra Mile

SAY THIS:
Be kinder than you have to be.

Week Four

Luke 10:25-37
Good Samaritan

SAY THIS:
Be kind to people who are different from you.



Divine Dialogue

HOW WILL I KNOW
FEBRUARY 27TH 7:00 PM

A discussion about stress, anxiety, and social emotional wellbeing and connection to opioid addiction in youth and adults

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Juleta Craig, K-12 School Psychologist
Jessica Venditti, SAY (Social Advocate for Youth) Counselor
Ashen Ward, Special Education Interventionist



Scan the QR code to access more information, webinars, and concerts!

First Baptist Church
OF GREATER CLEVELAND
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Colossians 3:12, NIV

Hero Headquarters
Virtual Meetings – Sundays at 4:30 PM

Fill out the form at firstbaptistcleveland.org/children-youth/childrens-ministries if you would like to join us!

Christian Education Schedule

Come join us in these upcoming Sunday, Wednesday, and Thursday classes to grow in God's Word. All of our Christian education activities have gone virtual. Email Rev. Sandra Alexander-Haynes – salexander@firstbaptistcleveland.org to receive login instructions.

Wednesdays in the Word

Romans 8-16 For You – Men's Group

by Dr. Timothy Keller

Led by Eddie Wills

Starting at 7:00 PM via Zoom conferencing

Join the Men's Bible Study group as they explore and discuss the book of Romans starting at chapter 8. In his description of the book, Dr. Keller stated, "The book of Romans is one that changes the world by changing the people." So, on Wednesday evenings, examine the transformative power of the Word of God as you dive into the biblical book that reads like a "course in theology, with an essential characteristic of God at the core of the curriculum--His righteousness." Indeed, this study will engage your mind, encourage you to reexamine your commitment to Christ, and enhance your understanding of God's abounding grace.

The Screwtape Letters – Women & Men's Group

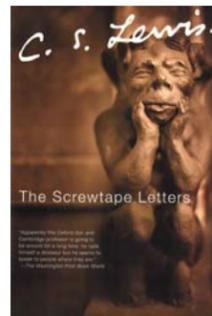
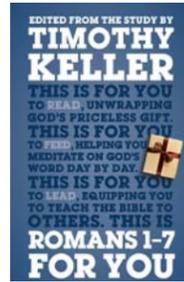
by Clive Staples Lewis

Led by Pastor Jeff and Tammy Gordon

Starting at 7:00 PM via Zoom conferencing

Come join Pastor Jeff and Tammy Gordon as they facilitate this delightful and engaging discussion about our typical flawed human experiences which are only changed by the grace of God.

The Screwtape Letters is a fictional, satirical, novel written by C.S. Lewis in which he depicts a series of realistic lessons of faith through the failings of human nature. Lessons that resonate with the Word of God and reflect the critical necessity that we put on the whole armor of God, so that we can stand against the devil's schemes (Ephesians 6:11). In The Screwtape Letters, Lewis composes 31 letters creatively written by a senior demon named Screwtape to his nephew, Wormwood, a younger and apparently less experienced demon, charged with steering a man (called "the patient") toward the pitfalls of sin. Through the development of these characters, Lewis' reflection, and intent sound a familiar scriptural alarm for the reader. "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8-9). Another profound lesson contained within the pages of The Screwtape Letters is that becoming a Christian does not propel one above the fray of sin. Clearly illustrating the profound differences between Satan and our Heavenly Father, this novel serves as a platform for a thought-provoking discussion. Join us on Zoom #857 6010 6720.



Into the Word – Women's Group

by Anne Graham Lotz

Led by Martha Lant and Sandra Alexander-Haynes

Starting at 6:30 PM via Zoom conf.

Led by Tobili Sam-Yellow

Starting at 7:30 PM via phone conf.

Thursday Mornings

Women's Bible Study Class

Led by Sandra Alexander Haynes

Starting at 10:00 AM

via phone conferencing

Thursday Evening Bible Study

Into the Word – Women's Group

by Anne Graham Lotz

Led by Sandra Alexander-Haynes

Starting at 7:30 PM via telephone

conferencing

The Women's Bible study group is focused on lessons from a study titled Into the Word. This study includes 52 life-altering Bible lessons. As noted by the author, "These fifty-two weekly studies emphasize personal application and will draw you directly into God's Word...to love Him more."

This book is described as a "roll-up-your-sleeves look at Scripture." Each lesson contains a short reflection that considers our present-day way of life, but the richness in the lessons stem from the connections to Scriptures in the Old and New Testaments.

As explained by the publisher, the author does not attempt to explain her interpretation of the Scriptures, but through questioning leads the reader to personally dig into Scripture. So please join the Women's Bible Study on Wednesday or Thursday to discover God's message for yourself!

Sunday Discipleship Hour

Lessons from Esther-From Providence to Purpose

by Dr. Tony Evans

Led by Marty Capers

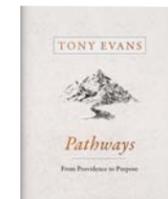
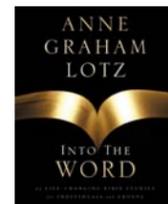
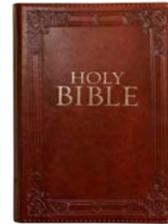
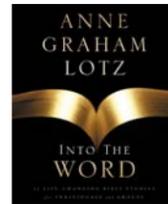
Starting at 12:00 PM via Zoom conferencing

As stated by Dr. Evans, this Bible study will help us take an in-depth look at the Book of Esther. The Book of Esther is the only one that does not directly refer to God. However, God is there guiding Esther on her "pathway to purpose." As noted by the author, this Bible study will help you:

"Recognize the power of providence amid your personal pain, fear, gain, loss, and love. Realize that God has a purpose for your life. Understand how God uses every action and event that occurs in your life to make His purpose a reality."

What an incredible Bible study, for a time such as this!

firstbaptistcleveland.org/wednesdays



Are You Not Enjoying The FBC Sunday Virtual Worship Services?

MAYBE WE CAN HELP!

by Mike Skerritt

This COVID-19 pandemic has prevented the members and friends of First Baptist from gathering together each Sunday for the better part of a year to enjoy either a contemporary or traditional worship service. If you are like me, you really miss the in-person experience, the power of the music and message of the services when held in our magnificent Gothic Sanctuary, the joy of catching up with friends in a safe setting after a busy and sometimes stressful week at work, and the informality and warmth of the coffee hour following each service.

Our weekly 10 AM Sunday FBC Virtual Worship Service has been a blessing. The dedicated staff does a great job of presenting a program that includes the best part of our traditional and contemporary worship traditions. Remote attendance has been great according to Greg Beckner who can track the number of people who tune in each Sunday, or watch the service later on YouTube.

HOWEVER, we have learned that some of our members and friends have not been able to watch the virtual services. There are many reasons of course. Some of us are just not tech-savvy who can figure out to get the service on their computer, tablet or phone. Others of us don't have, or have access to, a computer or tablet, or a phone that can receive the service.



If you are one of those people, please contact the church office at (216) 932-7480 with your name and phone number. We may be able to help. If you have the right equipment we can either talk you through learning how to access the

FBC Virtual Service, or perhaps send someone over to show you. If you don't have the right equipment we may be able to find a piece of donated equipment you could use, help you get it set up, and show you how to use it.

In that regard, if you have a computer, tablet or phone you are no longer using, please consider loaning or donating it to the church. We will eliminate all your personal information from your device before sharing the device with someone else.

For Christians, worshiping in community is a fundamental tenet of our religion. We don't want anyone to miss out. Waiting until the pandemic is over is, of course, an option. But if we can help you stay engaged with your church family, that would be better.

February Birthdays

5th Marlene Cooper	7th David Meil	14th Anne Eickmann	18th Charles Cicco	24th David Chapman
6th Tobili Sam Yellowe	9th Dana Capers	14th Christine Ann Marr	19th Jerome Williams	24th Tine DeBlay-Cicco
6th Pam Schneider	13th Marty Capers	16th Angela Fielding	20th Star Knuckles	24th Christopher Smith
6th Kathy Skerritt	13th Phyllis Peterson	16th Marvin Hamdan	23rd Bonnie Humphrey	

Tom Zak Selected as FBC's New Facility Supervisor



Following the retirement of Steve Rosen after 9 years of service, we are pleased to announce that Tom Zak has been chosen as the new Facility Supervisor for the church. Tom will be responsible for the preventative maintenance, repair, safety and improvements of the church facility, campus and equipment.

Tom has a strong background in project management. He has significant experience working for companies specializing in the design and construction of trade show exhibits and permanent displays for museums, universities and corporate clients. For seven years, Tom was the Director of Exhibits for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, where he also managed a multi-million dollar renovation of the Reinberger Hall of Earth and Planetary Exploration. Tom graduated from the Cleveland Institute of Art with a BFA in 1984, and now lives in Cleveland Heights.

We're delighted to have Tom join our staff! His experience and skill set meshes well with the needs of our 92 year-old building, and if you have the chance to meet Tom, you'll quickly discover that Tom has a warm and thoughtful personality. Tom is tall – if you happen to meet him around the church, be sure to stop and introduce yourself to him.

Our House To Your Home Livestream Worship - Sundays at 10AM

Every Sunday we join together virtually for our worship service. It is the next best thing to being here. It is a blended service with contemporary and traditional music. We may be separated but we can come together with everyone around the globe. We welcome you to tell a friend to join us no matter where they are. Visit our site or youtube.com/channel/UCGPcB14N9TRe50jES6uHK7Q.

Looking Forward to Camp Koinonia

by Mike Skerritt



We look forward to seeing you for another wonderful summer of Changed Lives!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office at 440-

466-1278 or by email at offmgr@christiancampohio.org

Register Online! - <https://christiancampohio.org/summer-registration-form.html>



Tower Tidings

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Dated Material: February 1, 2021
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?

youtube.com/channel/UCGPcB14N9TRe50jES6uHK7Q

2021 FBC Lay Leadership

Moderator: Kim Kidd-Collins
Vice Moderator: Carolyn Neal
Treasurer: Ralph Hise
Clerk: Melinda Burns

Children's Center: Frank Marino

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

Discipleship: Dana Capers
*Discipleship Classes, Children's Ministry,
Youth Ministry, & Covenant Groups*

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

Stewardship: Dan Mizener

Finance and Property: Monroe Goins

Missions & Social Concerns: Annette Szalay

Worship and Fine Arts: Carole Negus

Serving in Ministry

Ministries

Rev. Dr. Kregg 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

Ship Collins - Director of Youth Ministry

Office

Star Knuckles - Executive Assistant/Office Admin.

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

Marketing/Photography/Video

Greg Beckner - Web Design/Publicity/Social Media

Send content for the next issue by **Feb. 15th** to Greg
gbeckner@firstbaptistcleveland.org Issue mailed Mar 1