

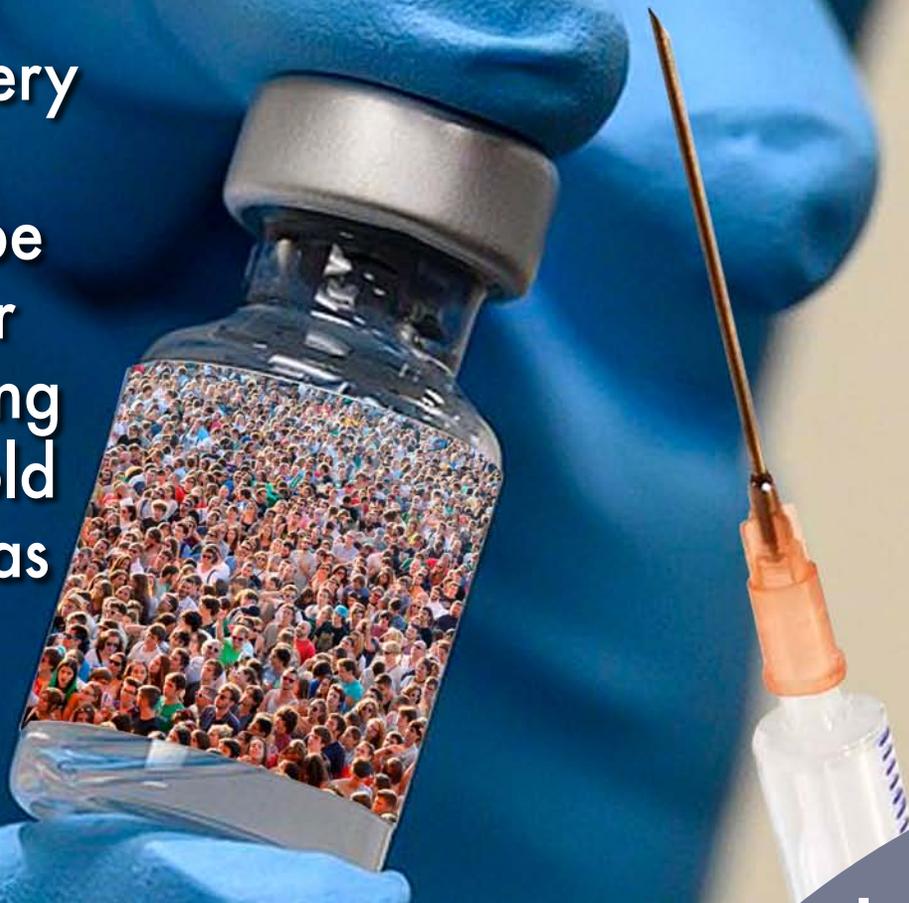


Tower Tidings

First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland

“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

Revelations 21:4



New Year, New Leaders, & New Outlook

We're on our way to healing physically. As we come back together globally will we be better and wiser from this experience? We will remain remote until everyone is comfortable with our return. We will keep everyone apprised of our opening plans.

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 conferencing](#) Sunday at noon.

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!

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A New Pathway

As a young pastor, I recall a particular visit to see a member of our church living in a residential care facility. The building was an old hospital repurposed to be what we called then a 'nursing home.' Entering the main floor, the residents were lined in wheel chairs along the hallways or placed in a small TV room watching hours of old Westerns or monitoring morning talk shows.

While waiting to enter the room, an old man in a wheel chair spoke up and said, "I use to drive a big rig all over the country. Now I push my chair back and forth down this hall." I looked at him, but he wasn't looking at me. Holding a blank stare at the wall it appeared that he was talking to himself. I wasn't sure how to respond but felt the need to say something to acknowledge that I heard him.

"How many years did you drive the big rig?" Was the best thing which came to my mind. That got his attention, he then looked up to me and paused replying, "for years, I drove for Roadway Trucking." Our conversation went on for a few more minutes before entering the room of my waiting member of the congregation. I sat down and turned just in time to see him rolling his chair past the door and down the hall.

"You met Charlie I see," said the person I came to see. "He is the loneliest person I've ever met. His wife died last year and his children never visit. He had a stroke so he can't use the left side of his lower body. I think he's here waiting to die."

Even years later, that brief conversation has lingered on my mind, 'waiting to die.'

We are once again observing another season of Lent, the forty day countdown beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending at sunset on the Saturday before Easter beginning the Easter vigil until sunrise on Easter morning. In many ways we are counting down the day until the death and burial of Jesus- 'waiting to die.'

The blank look on the man was the look without hope. I've seen 'the look' many times over my life on countless faces of people of all backgrounds and ages. It's the look when the game is out of reach at the end of the season. It's the expression on the face of those who have lost their job or received devastating news of a family member or loved one. I'm sure it was found on the faces

of his beloved disciples following the crucifixion.

Yet, Lent is a time in preparation for celebration. Christianity's greatest day follows the period of Lent-Easter or Resurrection Sunday. Easter is a day of the fulfillment of hope's expectation. The declaration, "He is Risen" combines faith and hope to transform despair, redirects our purpose to a mission beyond ourselves, and projects us toward an outcome filled with expectation.

Titus 3:4-7 "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life."

Emily Dickinson wrote, "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all."

This past year has been filled with uncertainty and unrest. Yet, as children of God and follower of Jesus, we have reason to be full of hope and be confident in Spirit. Resurrection provides a second beginning after hope appeared lost. Easter, is therefore, as much a time of anticipation about our future as it is about God's work in the past. N.T. Wright wrote, "Easter was Hope in person surprising the whole world by coming forward from the future into the present." Pope John Paul II wrote, "Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song."

We might not be able to gather together in person this Easter due to COVID-19, but our song is no less strong and our message no less important. At the center of the Gospel lies a message of HOPE. We are not living out each day waiting to die; instead, our lives are full of the blessed HOPE looking ahead as Jesus said in John 10:10 "I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of." (The Message) Hallelujah. Our Hope is in Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life.

Love,

Pastor Kregg Burris
Senior Pastor

HERO HEADQUARTERS

Preschool & Elementary Children's March Schedule

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



Elementary

WEEKLY CUES

Theme

Bake Off: It's Worth the Wait

Patience is waiting until later for what you want now.



REMEMBER THIS

"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and don't lose hope. Wait for the LORD." Psalm 27:14, NirU

Week One

Luke 2:25-35
Simeon Waits for the Messiah
SAY THIS: When you have to wait, remember God is with you.

Week Two

Exodus 32:1-35
Golden Calf
SAY THIS: When you have to wait, remember what's true.

Week Three

Genesis 25:24-34
Esau's Impatience
SAY THIS: If you don't wait, it could cost you.

Week Four

Matthew 21:1-11
Palm Sunday
SAY THIS: You can celebrate even when you're waiting.



March Birthdays

1st Trinity Johnson	3rd Mike Skerritt	7th Diamond Miller	12th Elle Frey	20th Wilma Hall	28th Charie Babcock
3rd Alex Cardwell	4th Joyce Berry	9th Cynthia Burke	12th Cynthia Gill	23rd Jacquelyn Berry	
3rd David Parajon	7th Alwin Miller	11th Roby Gill	15th Mona Robinson	27th Faith Arnold	

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

abilities from God to grow the Church in Spirit and numbers

by Jennifer Whitley-Williams

God calls us as believers to discover and use our spiritual gifts in order to grow the Church in Spirit and in numbers. Class videos and materials are available online firstbaptistcleveland.org/spiritual-gifts-classes.



DAILY CUES



Morning Time

Remind your child that while they wait for something today, God is with them. Tell them to pay attention to all the times they wait during the day and encourage them to say a little prayer during that time. It could be a prayer for someone else or for themselves to have patience. Either way, it will be time well spent!



Drive Time

There can be a lot of waiting during drive time. Waiting in traffic, take out line, practices, and so much more! Why not celebrate while you wait by singing the song from this month. Head over to studio252.tv to listen.



Meal Time

Q & A FOR KIDS: Do you find it hardest to wait for your birthday, vacation, or Christmas? Why?

Q & A FOR PARENTS: What are your favorite patience hacks?



Bed Time

Waiting can be tough but trying to skip the wait can come at a big cost. Share something that you're having a hard time waiting for. Pray that when you're tempted to jump ahead this week, God will give you the patience to slow down and wait.

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!

A Conversation With Our New Moderator Dan Mizener by Mike Skerritt

Following a peaceful transfer of power Dan Mizener assumed the position of Moderator of the First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland at the FBC annual Meeting January 31, 2021. I interviewed Dan so that we could learn a bit more about him personally, and what his plans for the church are.



Mike: First, congratulations on being elected Moderator of First Baptist. Tell us what brought you and Julie to First Baptist in the first place.

Dan: Thanks Mike! Julie and I both went to John Carroll University and Anita Bartel used to pick up Julie and her friend for church on Sundays. We were on and off again attendees for a long time, but eventually joined and got plugged in through a small group.

Mike: Thanks to the pandemic and your delightful Stewardship moments on virtual Sundays we know a little bit about the Mizener family. But we are always interested in more information. How long have you and Julie been married and how did you meet? Does the future include additional Mizeners?

Dan: Haha, Julie and I will be married 10 years this August. We plan on celebrating by going to St Lucia next January for a week WITHOUT KIDS! We met through athletics at JCU. She played softball and I worked the games as a part of my part-time job in the Athletic Equipment Department. I slowly worked up the courage to ask for her AIM screen name so we could chat online before eventually hanging out in person. The rest is history. Hard pass on more kids haha...our two boys are perfect.

Mike: Most of us know you were a champion wrestler in college. Where did you go to school and what was your major?

Dan: As I said earlier, I went to John Carroll University. I wrestled for 4 years while earning a Bachelor's in Communications. After graduation I worked as the Graduate Assistant for the wrestling team and earned my Master's in Business Administration.

Mike: You have demonstrated a wide array of talent while at First Baptist. A member of the Praise Team and participation in Happy Ending Lyric Players productions as well as the Children's Christmas Pageants has shown us excellent singing and acting capabilities. What is your musical background (grade school, high school, college, other)? How important are the arts in your life?

Dan: I never knew I could sing. As a kid, my mom wondered if I was tone deaf haha. My freshmen year of college a friend heard me singing and pointed out that I was actually pretty good. I stepped out and sang at a couple of Open Mic Nights, then joined the Men's Acappella Group. As some point I auditioned for a play, but it wasn't

a musical and I didn't know how to act so I was cast as literally every male extra. I had 7 roles in a <10 person cast. While I believe in the essential role the arts play in our lives, it may be awhile before I audition for another play or musical. The role of Gaston was likely the peak of my theatrical career unless HELP does Aladdin someday and I can audition for the Genie ;)

Mike: When I first got to know you, you were in sales for an equipment rental company, but I think you split off from that company to start your own business. Tell us a little about it, and in hindsight, was that move a good decision?

Dan: I am still in the business of buying and selling heavy equipment. About 3.5 years ago I left my old company and helped kick off a new venture specializing more in heavy, intermodal equipment. I do a lot of the buying and most of the selling while also working with banks and leasing companies that need to remarket their off-lease equipment. It's a lot of fun and I'm pretty good at it. I also get to work from home and make mostly my own hours. 2020 was very tough on us, but 2021 is starting off to a giant start which is encouraging. Making the move 3.5 years ago was one of the best decisions of my life. I was very unhappy at my old company, but now I get to see my family so much more and most of the time, when it's nice outside, I can even work from the golf course!

Mike: Young families are the backbone of church growth. Unfortunately, many young folks today do not value a church connection. Why are you and Julie different?

Dan: Our faith has been integral to making us the people we are today. Without our faith and relationship with God, our marriage and lives as parents wouldn't be nearly as successful. I'll give a lot of credit to our parents for introducing us to Christ and making church/faith such a central part of our beings, but FBC has played a huge role as well. Our early involvement in the Covenant Groups, the couples group, and the Bible Studies have been so huge.

Mike: Did you have to foreswear your allegiance to the Cincinnati Bengals to be considered for the Moderator position?

Dan: Never. Although if any congregation member wants to join my Bengals fandom, I am always accepting applications and when the pandemic is over, I'll open my basement to them during games. I make a KILLER buffalo chicken dip.

Mike: With the pandemic still raging these are particularly difficult times for churches. How do you think you will be able to help navigate FBC through these difficult times?

Dan: Any good leader surrounds him or herself with strong and capable people. Luckily, that's what we have here. Our staff is dynamite and our council and lay leadership is literally brimming with fantastic, brilliant, and rock-solid leaders. I'm lucky. We're lucky.

That said, we just brought in more contributions and tithes than we have had in over 20 years! Our church has a fantastic group of congregants who believe in our missions and goals of being agents of Christ and agents of change in our community, local and abroad.

Mike: Do you have specific short term and/or long-term goals you would like to achieve in your first year as Moderator?

Dan: Kim Kidd-Collins did such an amazing job the last 3 years as Moderator, which is one of the reasons (among many) that I insisted she be Vice Moderator. My goals are to build on what she and our council/staff have been doing. We need to grow our Social Justice Initiative with more members and scope of influence. We need to continue to update, fix, and improve our building. We need to grow our church members and to do that all of that, we'll need everyone to buy in and take up the mantle.

Our online services are not going away even when the pandemic is over. We will continue to stream our services so we can reach those at home and outside of Cleveland. Figuring out how to open safely is essential, but we'll need to do it safely and under the guidelines the state and medical professionals set forth. I, for one, can't wait.

Mike: You have served on Council for some time, under at least a couple of Moderators. How will your tenure be different or unique?

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

Explore and discuss the book of Romans. In his description of the book, Dr. Keller stated, "The book of Romans is one that changes the world by changing the people."

The Screwtape Letters – Group for Everyone

by Clive Staples Lewis

Led by Pastor Jeff and Tammy Gordon

Starting at 7:00 PM via Zoom conferencing #867 3860 6720

This is an 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. This novel serves as a platform for a thought-provoking discussion.

Into the Word – Women's Group

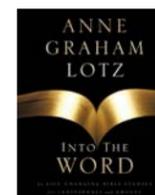
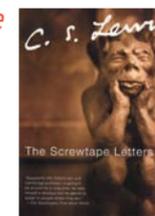
by Anne Graham Lotz

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.



Dan: I've actually only served under Kim. I came on as Stewardship chair the same time Kim took over as moderator.

Mike: As Stewardship Chair these past few years you have had the advantage of help from an Assistant to the Stewardship Chair and an Assistant to the Assistant to the Stewardship Chair. As Moderator will you have similar support going forward?

Dan: Haha, the assistants have undergone rigorous training to make the crossover to a more prominent role. I'm confident in their ability to continue the work we started as Stewardship Staff.

Mike: In closing, what is your message to the members and friends of First Baptist?

Dan: Friends – I'm so honored to be elected Moderator. I promise to serve you and serve the community of FBC prayerfully and in a way that I believe honors you and our Father. I covet your prayers, your advice, and your feedback on how I can do a better job as Moderator so that we can continue to do His work together. Peace.



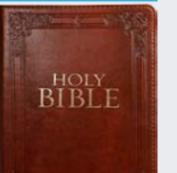
Thursday Mornings

Women's Bible Study Class

Led by Sandra Alexander Haynes

Starting at 10:00 AM & 10:30 AM

via phone conferencing



Thursday Evening Bible Study

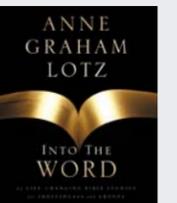
Into the Word – Women's Group

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."



Sunday Discipleship Hour

Lessons from Esther-From Providence to Purpose Group for Everyone

Led by Dr. Tony Evans

Led by Marty Capers

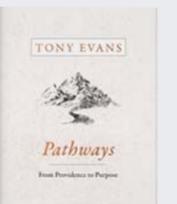
Starting at 12:00 PM via Zoom conferencing

Take an in-depth look at the Book of Esther, it 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





Tower Tidings

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Shaker Heights, OH 44118

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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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: Dan Mizener
Vice Moderator: Kim Kidd-Collins
Treasurer: Ralph Hise
Clerk: Melinda Burns
Personnel: Traci Hixon

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 & Nurture: Kristin Roberts
*Stephen Ministry, Deacons,
& New Member Orientation*

Stewardship: Lynne Liu

Finance & Property: Jennifer Whatley-Williams

Missions & Social Concerns: Carolyn Neal

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 **Mar. 15th** to Greg
gbeckner@firstbaptistcleveland.org Issue mailed Apr. 1