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*First Baptist Church*  
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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
**FORT THOMAS**

*February 2021*

*The Vision  
Proclaiming the  
good news*



## Sunday Morning Worship Service

9 a.m. morning worship only. No Sunday school or nursery.

Online Worship Service via Facebook Live at 10:45 a.m.

Rev. Jeremy Shannon  
Pastor Cell phone: 859-536-2250  
jshannon@fbcftthomas.com

Miriam Fuller  
Worship Leader  
Home phone: 859-441-8220  
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mfuller@fbcftthomas.com

Kaitlyn Runion  
Children's Minister  
Cell phone: 859-279-8924

April Ayers (*Piano*)

Barb Musick (*Keyboard*)

Church Office Hours

Monday through Thursday  
9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Administrative Assistant  
Debbie Mershon  
office@fbcftthomas.com



**FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK...**

Greetings, church family!

During worship in the month of January we focused on a series called The Good In Winter. I hope that you were encouraged by the reminder that even in the hardest seasons of our lives, God is still at work. There is hope that winter will soon give way to spring.

While I firmly believe that spring will come, it does not lessen the fact that many of us are feeling frustrations of cabin fever brought on by all of the events of the last year or so. Our inability to gather in traditional ways has tested us in many ways. We ache for community and we ache for relationships. I am proud of our church family and how we have navigated this year, but still the challenges remain.

There are signs of light in front of us. I have been encouraged to hear how many of you have already had an opportunity to receive the first COVID vaccine. For the first time we are hearing some realistic timelines of when life might look more normal. Our prayers are being answered and for that I am grateful.

But, we still have a ways to go. The good thing about the ache for relationships that we feel is that they are a sign of God's design for our lives. We are made to be together and the past year has made that more evident than ever.

So, my challenge for the month of February is that we step up our game in our effort to stay in touch with each other. Who do you know that might benefit from a phone call or a card? What act of kindness can you show to someone to let them know that they are appreciated and remembered? How can you use this time to reach out to others for God's glory?

If we are willing, this period of waiting can be used to establish relational foundations that will help us build toward our future. Our church is not the only group of people that are seeking out community. Let's commit to praying that God will place people in our path that we can welcome into our fellowship and in doing so meet a need in both their life and ours.

I'd love to hear how you choose to live out this challenge. In this season of winter, let's commit to preparing for the rebirth in spring!

Shine on. Press on. Go on.

Pastor Jeremy

## From Our Children's Minister

Dear church,

Our children's ministry is in the middle of Flash Forward, a series all about finding hope in God. We've been learning to find hope in God's promises and to trust in him.

**FLASH**

Our family so appreciates your prayers last month while we were recovering from the coronavirus! Thank you for your support and encouragement. It has been wonderful to be back at church and I'm looking forward to lower cases, vaccinations, and being able to have more in-person, socially-distanced events with the kids again soon.

Blessings,

Kaitlyn

### ASH WEDNESDAY...February 17, 2021

In Western Christianity, Ash Wednesday marks the start of the season of Lent. Officially named "Day of Ashes,"

During Ash Wednesday mass or services, a minister distributes ashes by lightly rubbing the shape of a cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. The tradition of tracing a cross on the forehead is meant to identify the faithful with Jesus Christ.

Ashes are a symbol of death in the Bible. God formed humans out of dust:

Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person. (Genesis 2:7), Human beings return to dust and ashes when they die:

*"By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return." (Genesis 3:19, NLT)*

The Bible does not mention Ash Wednesday or the custom of Lent, however, the practice of repentance and mourning in ashes is found in Job 2:8; Daniel 9:3; and Matthew 11:21.

Historically, Baptist have not participated in Ash Wednesday services with fasting and mourning, however, it is becoming a trend for them to do so in the past few years. The denominations that used to be really strict about it have lightened their rules over the years. Many people give up something that they like for Lent. If you decide to join in and do that during the Lent season this year, give up something you really like. For me it would be no big deal to give up eating liver, but giving up pasta would be terribly hard for me. Maybe I will give up pasta or sugar this year and when I think of these foods I gave up, I will then stop and pray. I feel that would be an excellent thing for me to do. If you should decide to join me in this, remember it does not need to be food you give up, it can be something you do as well.

*Debbie Mershon*



Our church family extends our sympathy and love to Dale & April Ayers with the passing of Dale's stepfather Kenny Eads Senior "Hound Dog". Kenny was a Christian man and loved helping others. We know he will be missed by many. May God grant the peace that his family and friends will need during this time.

## SHROVE TUESDAY, FAT TUESDAY, and MARDI GRAS... are they the same?

Every year, Mardi Gras falls the day before Ash Wednesday. And this timing is no coincidence. Ash Wednesday marks official beginning of Lent, a period of prayer, fasting, and repentance that Catholics and some other Christians observe before Easter. While today, Catholics commonly don't eat meat on Fridays during Lent, in the past, Lenten fasting was far more strict. "Mardi Gras" is French for Fat Tuesday. The holiday is also known as Shrove Tuesday (from an Old English word meaning to confess) or Pancake Day. Historically, people would spend Fat Tuesday (and sometimes the weeks leading up to it) indulging in the foods (and behaviors) they would abstain from during Lent. Some would also use the day as an opportunity to confess their sins to a priest before the start of Lent. Beyond the fun of it, there was a practical reasoning behind Fat Tuesday feasts — meat and dairy products would go bad before Lent was over. The occasion became one big celebration, sometimes known as Carnival (a Latin word meaning "to remove meat").

*CNN Travel*



## GRENADA 24/7

Grenada is a small island country in the Caribbean Sea. It has beautiful landscapes and beaches. The people that live there are mostly very poor living in poverty. Many never finish school. They have something missing in their lives and Grenada 24/7 is a mission that was started in 2012 by Justin & Erica Zauflik. Children are helped along with their parents when possible. They are in need of so many things and they are searching for something to fill their lives. The mission teams are there to help with education, food and housing along with helping them find Jesus. This year our Christmas mission offering is going to them to continue their good work. We want to say thank you for your generosity giving to this mission. You gave **\$1,850.00**. Very well done First Baptist Church family! Thank You.

## Holy Spirit Parish Pantry

In January you donated 773 packages of Ramen Noodles.  
Way to go! You are such a generous church.

In February, we are being asked to make donations of pasta sauce  
in a can. Thank you for your continued support of  
this outreach ministry.



He who is generous will be blessed,  
For he gives some of his food to the poor. *Proverbs 22:9*

### LIVING IN A TIME OF NEVER QUITE SURE...

One of my favorite quotes is found in a book by James Gleick called: *Faster: The Acceleration Of Just About Everything*. He interviews the scientist in charge of the atomic clock that is responsible for keeping the precise time. In response to a question, the keeper of the clock replies, "A man with a clock always knows the time. A man with two clocks is never quite sure."

We live in the time of never quite sure. Sometimes this is good as learning the perspectives of those who are different from us can inform and enlarge our world. Not being overly proud and self-centered are surely Christian virtues.

But it seems more and more that we live in a bifurcated world where we have people who are sure, but who argue from different clocks. There is a certain arrogance entailed in this way of thinking that destroys the opportunity for community.

Even more insidious are those who in bad faith seek to argue that regardless of one clock being objectively right they argue for their own time. Arguing that the atomic clock's measurement is somehow inferior and flawed and that the experts are wrong and a \$10 wristwatch from the store has a better keeping of time.

In the time of never quite sure, we have arguments about obscure election laws, whether to take a vaccine, or the place of our country in the world. And the resulting conversations seem to happen as if the clocks clearly don't agree on the time.

It can be scary and disheartening in the land of not quite sure. That is why I am happy to have the certainty of my faith that reminds me that in the time of Caesar Augustus, God sent Jesus into the world as the one true clock measuring not the passing of time but grace and truth.

Our clock is the Holy Trinity and as long as our hearts are set to it, even in the time of never quite sure, we follow Christ together.

Peace,

Bob Fox

*CBF Kentucky Coordinator*



# THE GREATEST LOVE



Everyone loves love. We all need it. We all crave it. But what is this thing called love?

There are many different kinds of love: love of a friend, parental love, puppy love, romantic love. And love comes in different strengths. There's undying, conditional, sacrificial, and fleeting love. We've all experienced love in a variety of ways, and we know that when it's good, it's very good. But we also know that sometimes it can hurt. Love can let us down.

What we need is love that will last, love that goes deep, love that's expressed by action. What we really need is God's unconditional love. As the apostle John said, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

Just think—though we didn't love God, He loved us and acted on that love. He sent His Son Jesus into the world, who died a sacrificial death on our behalf, Jesus was "an atoning sacrifice for our sins," so that all our failures, mistakes, acts of rebellion, and weak expressions of love would be done away with. His death for us is "atoning" because it brings two parties back together —namely us and God (see Genesis 3:1-19).

God's love is amazing because it's proactive. It's expressed by action. It cost Him a lot, and it's the love we need. Other forms of love have their place, but nothing less can take the place of His love. We need the real thing.

Do you know that God loves you? Or do you find that hard to believe? Well, it's the truth; and it's been demonstrated powerfully by Jesus. The thing is, love is better when it's not done at a distance. So, will you come near to God and receive His amazing love by repenting of your sins and believing in Jesus?

—CON CAMPBELL, *Our Daily Bread* writer



**GROUNDHOG  
DAY**

*February 2nd*

Will the groundhog see his shadow?  
If he does, 6 more weeks of winter  
weather!

**ASH  
WEDNESDAY**



February 17

Each year,  
Ash  
Wednesday  
marks the  
beginning of  
Lent and is  
always 46  
days before  
Easter  
Sunday

**President's Day, Feb. 15 :** Do you remember when both Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays were celebrated on the 12th and 22nd respectively? I loved it because we got two days off from school in February! In 1968 the government decided to change it to celebrate them both on one day that would fall on Monday so that we would have a long weekend. I can tell you the kids in school did not like that. We wanted our 2 days back!





**THE BRIGHT SPOT**

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:13



***Isaiah 41:10***

So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

*If you are starting to feel that the pandemic will never end, remember that God is in control. He will take care of us. He is always right by our side.*



**DEACON  
MINISTRY**

2/7  
Walter Mershon

2/14  
Bill Klopp

2/21  
Lori Orne

2/28  
Harry Weitkamp



- 2/4  
Ron Daniels
- 2/7  
Robert Rose
- 2/11  
Barb Scott
- 2/13  
Dakota Guilkey  
&  
David Weitkamp
- 2/14  
Ellen Coghill
- 2/17  
Rebecca Adams
- 2/19  
Crosley Shannon





"A joyful heart is good medicine"



Crabby Road

2-13-12



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### Valentine's Day 2021!

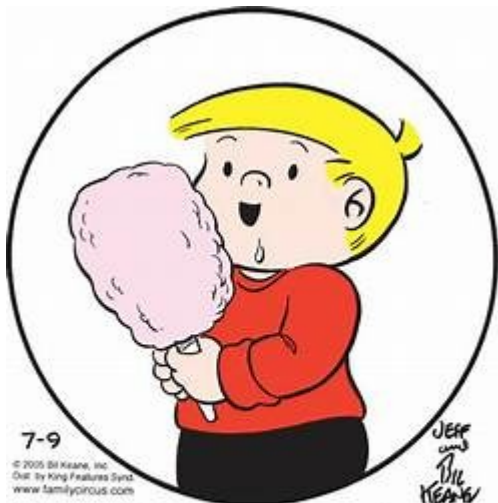


2-21

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Bill Keane

"When I get to heaven, do I get to hug God or just shake His hand?"



7-9

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Jeff Keane

"They might be made from the same thing, but cotton candy tastes better than my shirt."

As we are in another lockdown, why don't they train all the Amazon delivery people to give the vaccine. The entire population would then be immunized by Saturday. Wednesday if you've got Prime.

