

Published Monthly by:
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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
FORT THOMAS

January 2021

*The Vision
Proclaiming the
good news*



January

Behold, I make all things new...

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!

Last January, I remember a Sunday night small group gathering at the church with friends. We talked about the year ahead and I remember mentioning how much I was looking forward to what 2020 had in store. There were trips, conferences, and lots of memories to be made. It was going to be a good year.

As we all know, very few of the things that I expected to happen came true. As we gear up for 2021, I have spent time thinking about what the year will bring and here is what I believe more than anything else: We. Have. No. Idea.

There will be plenty of time down the road to look back on 2020. It was not all bad and we are thankful for God's provision in the midst of hard times. 2020 grew us. I'm not entirely sure how, but I believe that over time we will see how God used these moments to mold us into God's image.

While we are still in the middle of the covid-19 pandemic, I can't help but think about the hope found in the promise of a new year. I am not bold enough to put too many things on a calendar just yet, but here are things that I am encouraged we will see at some point in the year to come:

Loud, joyous congregational singing. The sound of children running and laughing through the church building. Having church visitors that in time become church members. Wonderful, delicious meals in the fellowship hall. Mission service projects. Community outreach. Hugs (well, you know I'm not a hugger...but many of you will resume them. Sunday school.

We will still have challenges, as will be the case until Christ returns. We will not ignore the grief around us and we will seek out the chance to be the hands and feet of Jesus everywhere we go. But, we will walk through it together and rejoice as things that we have missed come back to us at just the right time.

My family and I pray God's blessings upon you in the New Year. We love you and can't wait for a year of reconnecting with each other in ways that we have longed to do for so long.

Shine on. Press on. Go on.

Pastor Jeremy



From Our Worship Leader

Another year is dawning! Dear Father, let it be, in *working* or in *waiting*, another year *with thee*; another year of *leaning upon thy loving breast*, another year of *trusting, of quiet, happy rest*.

Another year
of *mercies*, of *faithfulness* and *grace*;
another year of *gladness* in the shining of thy face;
another year of *progress*, another year of *praise*,
another year of *proving thy presence all the days*.

Another year of *service*, of *witness for thy love*;
another year of *training for holier work above*.
Another year is dawning! Dear Father, let it be
on earth, or else in heaven, another year for thee.

Happy New Year, the beginning of 2021, a new start as it may seem. We've had a rough time in 2020 and may God remind us that His mercy and grace are new every day, let alone every year. The above hymn is one we sing every year but I wonder if we really listen to the words we are singing. I put some of the words in italics only because these are words we really need to look at to help us understand what the song is saying: mercy, grace, faithfulness, service, witness, rest, trust, proving God's presence... These are such good reminders to us. It reminds me of the scripture in Philippians 4, verse 8:

Finally, believers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable and worthy of respect, whatever is right and confirmed by God's word, whatever is pure and wholesome, whatever is lovely and brings peace, whatever is admirable and of good repute; if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think continually on these things [center your mind on them, and implant them in your heart]. (The Amplified Bible)

This hymn has many things to think about...

I miss each of you and really can't wait until we can be together in person for worship. I've been able to be at church each week because of our on-line services and our early in-person service but it's not the same and won't be until all of us can be together again in worship, in person.

Thank you for the privilege of being your worship leader and being able to continue that ministry through Covid-19. Thank you for your faithfulness to the church in general with your giving. I know each of us on staff are grateful that we can still minister in our areas during this very strange time.

Let me also say thank you for the wonderful Christmas gift. I appreciate your kindness so very much!

As we end each service...God be with you 'til we meet again!

Love you,

Mirm

From Our Children's Minister

Dear church,

Happy New Year! We're praying that it will bring new mercies and rest for our souls after a difficult 2020. Thank you to everyone who sent Christmas cheer last month to us and our kidmin families. We look forward to new things in our children's ministry in the new year.

Blessings,

Kaitlyn Runion

LEAVING BEHIND 2020

Just about anything that could happen, did – with much of it unpredictable. We've had the Coronavirus pandemic and a record year of hurricanes, with 12 named Atlantic storms that made landfall, resulting in \$65 billion in economic damage. We've had wildfires with many people losing their homes and insurance companies not insuring them, riots in 20 states, and cyber attacks that doubled in number going into the pandemic last spring. Some of these calamities will take a seasonal break, others will continue for now. Many of the insurance claims that were made are still unresolved today. This is making peoples lives very difficult. Many, if not most people, are wanting the year 2020 behind them.

2020 is a year that we'll surely remember for all of its many challenges, but also for the resulting opportunities to reflect on what truly matters. Things like God, family, faith, relationships, community and serving others. We miss being able to worship together, sing together, eat together and celebrate together. We miss not being with our loved ones in time of need and in times of joy. I can tell you right now, I am a hugger and I miss it terribly. I miss not getting to teach Sunday School with my kiddos and get their hugs every Sunday. We miss eating out and going to the movies and theater. Our kids miss going to school and their friends. We miss so many things that we have taken for granted in the past. It is hard and that is why it is important for us all to reach out to each other and I think we have done that well.

As you can see, there are many things we want to leave behind in 2020. However, it may take a bit longer. Let's continue to support each other and pray for each other as well. God will get us through this.

—Debbie Mershon

THE VACCINE IS HERE AND EVEN THOUGH IT MAY TAKE A WHILE TO GET US ALL VACINATED, THERE IS A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL!!!

Together in Solitude: The Challenge

If you're anxious that all have been asked
to stay home,
Take comfort in knowing you are not
alone.

Tonight at 8, wherever you are,
Gaze up at the sky and pick out a star.

A moment alone or with people you love,
We all share the beautiful sky high above.

Take 30 seconds, be still in your mind;
Reflect on a happy, most memorable time.

The littlest things can give hearts a lift;
If we pause, take a moment, and cherish
our gifts.

~Jennifer N Evensen

Holy Spirit Parish Pantry

In December, you donated 187
cans of chili & 11
miscellaneous items.

Way to go! You are such a
generous church.

In January, we are being asked to
make donations of Ramen Noodles.
Thank you for your continued
support of this outreach
ministry.

*For the poor will never cease to be
in the land; therefore I command
you, saying, 'You shall freely open
your hand to your brother, to your
needy and poor in your land.'
Deuteronomy 15:11*

Poinsettias in memory of...



George & Billye Tither, parents of...

Kathleen Webber

His Beloved Wife...

Bob Peelman

George Tither, friend and brother of...

Bob Peelman

Joe & Mitsuko (Mickey) Mershon, parents of ...

Walter Mershon

Florine Caulk, mother of...

Debbie Mershon

Kenneth Miller, father of...

Debbie Mershon

Oma Scott, wife of...

Jim Scott

Eugene & Barbara Scroggin, parents of...

Ann Sexton, Mary Scroggin-Harris & Virginia Scroggin

Larry Risch, husband and father of...

Pauline Risch and family

Poinsettias in Honor of...



Kathleen Webber, Dear Friend of...

Bob Peelman

Thank you...

I would like to take this time to say thank you to my church family for the generous gift given to me for Christmas. It was wonderful and I plan to do something very special with it.

Also, thank you for always being so kind to me in the office. I love my church family and I am very happy to be working for you.

I hope everyone has a better New Year!

In Christian love,

Debbie Mershon



DOES THE BIBLE SAY ANYTHING ABOUT MAKING NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

The Bible doesn't mention making resolutions at the beginning of a new year—but it does urge us to examine our lives regularly, and to seek God's help to become better persons every day. The Bible says, "Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord" (Lamentations 3:40).

Did you ever ask yourself why you found it so hard to keep the resolutions you make? One reason may be that they weren't realistic, or you had no clear plan for reaching them. Many New Year's resolutions, I'm afraid, are little more than a "wish list"—a series of things we'd like to change about our lives, but little more. They also may be very self-centered, with little thought about whether or not they are God's will.

Another reason, however, why we fail to keep our resolutions is because we seek to reach them in our own strength instead of with God's help. But we are spiritually and morally weak, and we will never be the people God wants us to be unless we turn to Him for the help we need. The psalmist wrote, "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:2).

As we begin this new year, pause right now and ask God to show you what He wants to do in your life during this coming year. Resolve to grow closer to Christ every day, and with the help of His Holy Spirit to "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love endurance and faithfulness. 1 Timothy 6:11

billygraham.org/answer/does-the-bible-say-anything-about-making-new-years-resolutions/

UNCHARTED WATERS *When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.*
(Isaiah 43:2)

The ball drops in New York's Times Square. The crowd counts down to Big Ben chiming. Sydney Harbor erupts in fireworks. However your city marks it, there's something exciting about welcoming in a new year and the fresh start it brings. On New Year's Day we push out into new waters. What friendships and opportunities might we find?

For all its excitement, though, a new year can be unsettling. None of us knows the future or what storms it may hold. May New Year's traditions reflect this: Fireworks were invented in China to supposedly ward off evil spirits and make a new season prosperous. And New Year's resolutions date back to the Babylonians who made vows to appease their gods. Such acts were an attempt to make an unknown future secure.

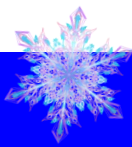
When they weren't making vows, the Babylonians were busy conquering people—including Israel. In time, God sent the enslaved Jews this message: "Do not fear....When you pass through the waters, I will be with you" (Isaiah 43:1-2). Later, Jesus said something similar when He and the disciples were caught sailing in a violent storm. "Why are you so afraid?" He told them before commanding the waters to be still (Matthew 8: 23-27).

Today we push out from the shore into new, uncharted waters. Whatever we face, He's with us—and He has power to calm the waves.

Taken from Our Daily Bread: 1/1/21

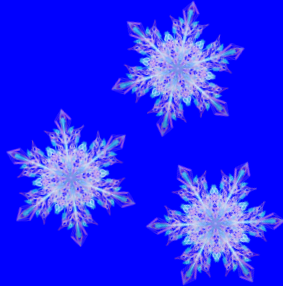
What worries can you place in God's hands?

God, thank You that whatever this new year brings, You will be with me in it.



*Happy
New Year!*

May this new year wish fill your heart with hopes of a brighter tomorrow unfold new dreams to realize God has a great faith in you!



THE BRIGHT SPOT

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us

Romans 8:18



DEACON MINISTRY

1/3

Harry Weitkamp

1/10

Walter Mershon

1/17

Bill Klopp

1/24

Lori Orne

1/31

Harry Weitkamp



1/7

Shirley Rosteck

1/18

Carol Hardin

1/20

Bill Klopp

1/22

David Adams

1/23

Ada Guilkey

&

Jeremy Runion

1/28

Carol Thompson

1/31

Susan Smith



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"I thought it was gonna be a New Year? This looks just like the OLD year."

JEFF AND THE KEANE

"A joyful heart is good medicine"



"You are holding all of your tension here in your neck. Just let it go. Nobody really cares how much wood you would chuck even if you would chuck wood..."



made with mematic

I pretended to be asleep and then I fell asleep. Now I'm going to pretend I'm skinny.



12-31-12

Maxine's Crabby Road

I'm celebrating New Year's Eve with a couple of noisemakers. Yeah, I still have company from Christmas.

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www.facebook.com/maxine maxine.com

WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU CROSS A SNOWMAN AND A VAMPIRE?



FROSTBITE

arsenic.deviantart.com | monstika.tumblr.com

