



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Nickelsville

11606 Nickelsville Highway, Nickelsville VA 24271

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Let Me Show You Some Family Portraits 1 Jn. 3:4-18

Through the years I've said it time and time again - since the beginning of all things God has been gathering and preparing for himself a family with whom he intends to spend eternity. And might I add, his family is unlike anything the world can possibly imagine. Yes, each of us as God's children are quite unique and nowhere are we better reminded of this than in the writings of the Apostle John where he referred to those in the Johannine community as "little children."

I think it is quite accurate for us to say that John took great delight in the family of God, as any pastor should. After all, he had been with them when they were born into the Kingdom of God. He had nurtured them throughout their developmental years and closely documented their spiritual growth. He had been with them when they celebrated their accomplishments in serving the Lord and others. He had gently lifted them to their feet and prayed with them when they stumbled and fell. And he had witnessed firsthand the grace and power of God as He enabled them to mature and reproduce. Is it any wonder that he called them "little children"?

John also went to great lengths to show us exactly what God's children should look and act like. *First*, he showcased the great standard the Father had set for them in the third chapter of 1st John (see vv. 4-6) and encouraged them to live up to his expectations. *Second*, he challenged them to exhibit the kind of behavior that pleases their Father on a daily basis (see vv. 7-10). *And last*, he highlighted a highly visible birthmark that is noticeable to everyone, including those who aren't a part of the family of God (see vv. 11-18).

In his writings focusing on systematic theology Wayne Grudem declared this family (or the church) to be "... invisible yet visible..." How can that be explained? Well, everything depends on one's perspective. From God's perspective she is invisible because he sees her from a different perspective than anyone else - she is the glorious bride of his son who is beyond comparison. On the other hand there is the visible aspect of God's family (or church) on earth as Christians see her. Perhaps Stanley Grenz best described this aspect when he stated, "She is a dynamic reality consisting of people in covenant who pioneer in the present principles that characterize the future kingdom of God, thereby constituting a sign of divine reign" *in their daily lives (italics mine)*. As such, Grenz went on to say, "... the church in all of its expressions exists ultimately for the sake

Please see "Our Family Portraits" on Pg. 2

A "BIG HELLO" To To all Our Church Family

From First Baptist Church

UPCOMING ITEMS OF INTEREST AND OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Deacons Meet- 1st Tuesday every other month unless otherwise noted
- ◆ Baptist Women Meet- 1st Tuesday of each month 6:30 PM
- ◆ GA'S meet- 1st. & 3rd. Tuesday of the month. FLC 3:30-5:00 PM during school months.
- ◆ New Web Page - We have been hard at work developing a new web page for our church that is much more user friendly and interactive than our older one. It is now finished and has been published. Check it out at: fbcnick.org
- ◆ Another thing we've discovered in working on our web page and additional methods of outreach is the need for several new Life Groups to engage in bible study. If you're interested in leading a group, let's connect.

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Church: 276-479-5222

Web Page: fbcnick.org

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“Our Family Portraits”

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of the glory of the triune God.” Now I know that’s a lot for us to swallow in one bite but this is certainly what the word of God declares. But within the family of God there is another aspect that we often overlook and this is the world’s view of the church which we must remember is heavily marred by sin and separation.

With these thoughts in mind we must ask ourselves - who or whom are we trying to please? Our Father or the world? Where are we focusing? On the invisible aspect, as God sees us? Or, on the visible aspect, as the world sees us? I believe the best approach we can embrace is somewhat of a hybrid approach. As such, might I add, the beauty and ministry of the church lies within the context of our invisible existence as the visible community of God, united together by the Father through the Son to exemplify the ideal community of love in the midst of a broken world. As such we have 3 Greek words that should characterize the life and ministry of any local body of believers: *kerygma* (witness); *koinonia* (fellowship) and *diakonia* (service). These are the ways that God is glorified in our lives, our midst, and our outward expressions.

With these thoughts in mind I want to take a few moments and share a family portrait with you. Let me introduce one young family who was with us for several years and has now moved to Arkansas where they continue to glorify God in their service to him and others. Meet Logan and Ashley Counts and read with great care the article I asked her to write.



Logan and Ashley’s Faith Journey

Myself and my husband, Logan moved to Nickelsville almost 3 years ago, and that has been one of our greatest blessings thus far. I have met some of the most amazing people who I consider family and will treasure for the rest of my life. I have been a student throughout my time in Nickelsville. I worked two jobs as well as attending a full-time Masters program for Occupational Therapy while my husband worked a full-time job and finished out his 6.5 year contract with the Army. None of that would be possible

without the blessings of God and the prayers of the people around my little family and the supportive people in our lives from Nickelsville.

When I started attending Nickelsville First Baptist Church almost three years ago, I knew that I had finally found my place in God’s kingdom. I was in a very dark place at the time; I was battling depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideations among other things. I can remember many sermons sitting in the pews crying because for the first time in all my years of being in and out of church I felt two things. *First*, I felt like I belonged; every single person in that church made sure to include my husband and I as if they had known us our entire life. *And second*, for the first time in my life, I really understood the messages that were being taught. My time that my husband and I have been a part of this church has been nothing less than filled with grace, love, compassion, and servant leadership.

I have had many people in the church push me, but I have so Please see **“Our Family Portraits”** on Pg. 3

UPCOMING ITEMS OF INTEREST



Baccalaureate

On Sunday, May 23rd @ 2:00 PM we will host a Baccalaureate Service for the graduating classes of our area. This includes both high school and college graduates. We will also recognize our graduates during our morning worship services. Please let us know that names of those who are graduating in your family and the school, college, or university from which they are graduating. Thanks so much.



We are happy to announce that we have been able to set a date for our Annual Youth & Adult Outreach Week. That week will be June 7th—11th. And

we will focus on mission projects throughout our region and probably be working alongside the efforts of our Southwest Virginia Partnership.

**Make Plans to Celebrate
Vacation Bible School
with us in 2021
At First Baptist Church**



**Yes! You heard correctly!
We are planning to kick-off our
2021 VBS at our church campus
beginning Sunday, June 20th
and continuing through
Friday, June 25th.**

**So mark your calendars and set time aside
for this awesome annual event.**

**For more information
Contact our VBS Director
Karianne Counts**

“Our Family Portraits”

Cont. from Pg. 2

much respect and gratitude for Pastor Steve and his wife Sandy as they have pushed our family to fulfil our potential as servant leaders. They have led by example throughout the duration of our time in Nickelsville. My little family and I are so beyond blessed, and I am absolutely amazed at the way God utilizes all of us for his glory when we allow him to.

When I was first approached about the idea of leading a bible study group for my age group, my first instinct was to run, but I did what I always do in situations I am unsure of, I prayed, then I tried to run, haha. I had been asking God for months to lead me where he wanted me, yet here I was running from what he wanted me to do.

This being said, I teach a bible study class via Zoom on Sunday mornings for people that are college aged/young adults. One of my key purposes for this class is for people to have a safe place for all levels of learning including new Christians, or someone who has studied the word their whole life. I am still learning myself, and I want everyone to feel welcome and comfortable sharing their discomforts, misunderstandings, hardships, etc.

I always tell people “come as you are”, and I truly, truly mean that. I want the light of Jesus to shine through me so that I can put self aside and continue to disciple to those around me. So, come as you are and join us on Sunday mornings for a time filled with love, Jesus, and learning.

Ashley Counts

Truly we were blessed to have the Counts family with us since they married and moved back to our area. Ashley has since finished her course of studies as an occupational therapist at Milligan University.

While they were with us Ashley was engaged in and led some of our weekly bible studies where she did a great job. And while she was enrolled as a full-time graduate student at Milligan University she was also enrolled as a student in our Appalachian School of Theology where she excelled greatly and maintained a 4.0 average.

Since her graduation Logan, Ashley and Bear (their dog) have moved to Conway, Arkansas where she is now serving as an occupational therapist at Pediatrics Plus in Conway, Arkansas. Logan will continue his studies in August at Pulaski Tech in Little Rock where he plans to major as a radiology technician. As you might guess, we miss them dearly but wish them the very best and want them to know they are continually in our thoughts and prayers.

Ashley continues to lead bible studies utilizing Zoom technology and her class continues to grow in number. If you would like to connect and join her in their time of study send her an email at amcounts@mymilligan.edu or if you would like to connect with them by mail their address is: Logan and Ashley Counts, 511 First Street, Conway, AR 72032. You can also connect with them on Facebook by sending them a friend request.



Logan & Ashley Counts & “Bear”



GREAT OFFERING EMPHASIS

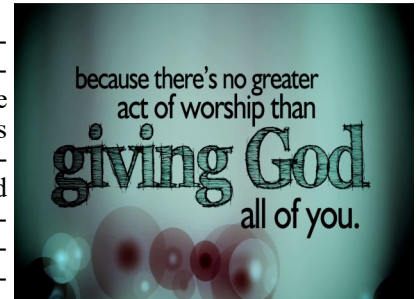
In 1999 we launched what we called a “Great Offering” emphasis on Easter Sunday. We did this with the intention of using whatever funding we received on that particular Sunday as a down payment to purchase the building and property across the street from our main church facility from Den-nie Dishner, who owned and operated a community pharmacy there. Looking backward I well remember how shocked I was as you pastor when the receipts from that offering were finalized. If you remember, our offering on that one day was more than \$30,000. Needless to say that may have shaved a few years off my expected lifespan.

Because of the tremendous initial response we decided to do the same for the next couple of years and this enabled us to pay off the outstanding balance on that property in 3 years or less.

Since then we have continued to receive an annual “Great Offering” on Easter Sunday with all of the gifts going to the purchase of additional properties and other special projects that we’ve been engaged in and blessed by.

About ten years ago someone came up with the great idea to utilize our “Great Offering” for mission projects such as our Annual Youth / Adult Mission Project and other types of missions engagement beyond what is reflected in our church budget.

With the pandemic that continues to rage many churches across our nation have closed their doors permanently. Others are experiencing severe financial hardship due to lack of support. Thankfully ours hasn’t been one of them. For this we are extremely grateful. And we want to thank each of you for your continued support.



Because of the nationwide lockdown and social distancing procedures we’ve experienced we have decided to extend the time of our Great Offering throughout the month of April.

The pandemic has not altered our mission engagement in any way. As such, your support of missions is greatly needed and appreciated. And supporting your church as she engages in God’s work though her mission endeavors is fast and easy for each of us. One of the ways we can do this is through our electronic giving portal as seen below. Thanks so much for your generosity in advancing the Kingdom in whatever way you choose to give.



Online Giving Portal.htm

Worship Opportunities

SUNDAY MORNING

8:45 AM - Early Worship

10:00 AM - Life Groups (all ages)

11:00 AM Morning Worship (Streamed Live)

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WEDNESDAY EVENING

Worship @ 7:00 PM (Streamed Live)

Church Choir

We want to take this opportunity to thank our choir members who practiced and blessed the hearts of our people on Easter Sunday. We would also like to thank Minnie Lynn Bates for the songs she shared with us on Easter.

In addition our times of worship during Passion Week as we celebrated the "Eight Days that Changed the World" were extremely moving for everyone involved. Our singers included Minnie Lynn Bates, Sandy Brown, Bobby Hillman, Bob and Sandy Ramey, Karen and Morgan Culbertson, and Sabie Collins. All did a spectacular job throughout the week.

Baptist Women

We gave Easter Baskets to all our kids at church on Easter Sunday. They his eggs during Children's church.

We are collecting toys for our Christmas store. Please try to buy one or two each month. We appreciate your support.

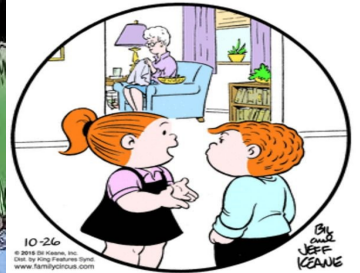
Praying that 2021 will be a better year and hoping to start GA'S back at the beginning of a new school year. We sure do miss all the girls.

We are still doing snacks for Welmont Hospital each month. We need Debbie cakes and peanut butter crackers.

Baptist Women meet the first Tuesday of each month. All ladies come and join us. Linda Hillman is our leader.



"Holy Humor"



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"The two places we know we're always welcome are church and Grandma's house."



© Joban Nilsson
"If I send my prayer as a text message, will I get a faster reply?"
I KNOW MY BODY IS A TEMPLE ... I'M A MEGA-CHURCH



"I LOVE THIS CHURCH. I'D DO PRACTICALLY ANYTHING FOR IT— I MEAN, ANYTHING OTHER THAN ACTUALLY JOIN IT AND TITHE AND WORK AND SUCH."



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"Hear that? People in heaven have ever-laughing life."
"If you're ever headed the wrong way in life, remember the road to Heaven allows U-turns."

