



Build, Love, Grow Serve
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to look at to see how a word was used...they only had the Bible. Generally speaking that was enough....for the biblical Hebrew language (not modern Hebrew as used in Israel today) only has about 7,000 words (by contrast English has around 170,000). About 650 Hebrew words account for 80% of the words in the Old Testament...so those words are used many times. If someone ran across one of the commonly used words that was unfamiliar, to them, they could look at other places in the Bible where the word is used. But what happens if you run across a word that is only in the Bible rarely....or even worse what if it is used only one time (which is the meaning of the phrase *hapax legomenon*)? You can't go look at other literature to see how it was used, because we don't have any other literature in biblical Hebrew....except a very few, very short inscriptions (a farmer's calendar, an inscription found in Hezekiah's water tunnel in Jerusalem, maybe a name on a piece of pottery or a grave box (ossuary). Some of the Dead Sea Scrolls are in Hebrew, but they are centuries later....it would be like using a book by John Grisham to understand Shakespeare or Canterbury Tales. Very often, this is why a footnote may say, "Hebrew uncertain." The translators have to use their best guess....but most of the time, it is more than just a guess....but that is for next time....



DECEMBER 2024
Lead Pastor Richard Crooks | Music Director Sasha White | Fremont, NE



PASTOR'S NOTES



(This passage arises when the disciples ask Jesus why they couldn't cast out a demon.)

He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you." --Matthew 17:20

(This time the apostles are wrestling with being told how ready they are to be to forgive others.)

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. -Luke 17:5-6

As of the last Sunday of November, we are now at the end of our cycle of messages tied to the parables of Jesus, and the various Bible study groups will wrap up their review of them in the weeks to come. We began months ago with the parables of the soil and of the mustard seed, by which we were reminded that God can do the unimaginable through even the smallest act of faith. I hope you have enjoyed the studies as much as I have.

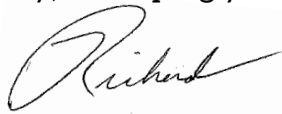
I want to wrap it all up by circling back to the mustard seed teaching, by coming back to the idea of a mustard seed in relation to our faith, using passages we did not discuss earlier. In the stories above, the disciples were keenly aware that they were somehow lacking. In his replies, Jesus seems to make explicit that is never about how much faith a person has...that tiny mustard seed is enough. It is always a matter of whether you apply that faith. Whether casting out a demon, or calming a sea, or feeding a couple of fish to thousands of people, or even marching toward a cross...faith is to be applied in any challenge, and God can use the smallest thing to accomplish the incredible.

At Christmas, more than any other time of year, we should be able to recognize that kingdom principle, because at Christmas we remember that a tiny, newborn babe of miraculous birth and spectacular angel announcement was going to save millions and millions of people from sin and Satan. As we approach Christmas, I want to encourage you to



hang the mustard seed ball we gave out last spring in a prominent place on your tree, or maybe even near your nativity. And let it remind you to ask yourself whether you are planting seeds of faith day by day, or keeping your faith all locked up.

It is ALWAYS planting season!



I recently read this devotional, that made me think of Perry Laten, and then made me think of some others who are facing some rough times....so I thought I'd share it with you. Copied from Daily Guideposts, November 21, 2007 by Fred Bauer (used with permission)

"MY BRETHREN, COUNT IT ALL JOY WHEN YOU FALL INTO VARIOUS TRIALS, KNOWING THAT THE TESTING OF YOUR FAITH PRODUCES PATIENCE." James 1:2-3 (NKJV)

"There is an eighty-year-old violin repairman in Paris named Etienne Vatelot. Yehudi Menuhin, Pablo Casals and Isaac Stern were just a few of his clients. Though Vatelot says that his hands are no longer steady enough to fine-tune instruments, his ear is still uncanny, able to diagnose problems—damaged wood, uneven fingerboards or the angle of a bridge, for example—for his trainees to fix.

I remember once visiting the shop of an old violin maker in New York City. He told me that there were two elements that went into the making of a fine violin. The first was wood. Fine instruments are made of north-side-of-the-mountain trees, he explained. 'They have stood firm against winds and cold, and the bad weather has made them strong.'

'And the second?' I asked.

'The touch of the master's hand,' he answered with a smile.

People of faith, I've noticed, have often been seasoned by north-side-of-the-mountain trials and made stronger by their tests. And they, too, have been touched by the Master's hand.

Teach us Lord, not to ask for lighter loads, But greater faith for steep and rocky roads."

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord. -Luke 2:11



Nola and I want to express our appreciation for all the thoughtful gifts during Pastor Appreciation month this year. Many of the items have been used and enjoyed, some are in process, and some are yet ahead...but it was quite the mystery wondering what would come which day to spell out the message. Thanks for Mary Weldon, too, for all her work in coordinating the effort.



Have you ever wondered how people managed to write the first English dictionaries? Probably not...but I have a book that tells the story that I have been reading along in bit by bit. In 1775, Samuel Johnson published the first definitive English dictionary (with some help). If you read some of the writings of the Founding


Fathers (and others before them), you might be appalled to find that they did not know how to spell. But the reason they didn't, is because there was no standard spelling, nor was there even a set definition to various words and how they were used. That was the undertaking of the new dictionary, which was compiled by a process of looking at every written document they could find to see how a word was used and then writing the definition according to what was found there. Hence, we find that words have multiple definitions, because people had used them in a variety of ways, and those ways made it into the dictionary, which has been continually revised and updated ever since. As a result, whenever you or I run across a word we don't know, we can look in the dictionary to discover its meaning based on how it has been used over the years. What does this have to do with the Bible?



The new phrase for the month is "*hapax legomenon*," ever heard it? Hopefully every seminary student will have. I will define it for you, but first let me back into the topic. Have you ever been reading your Bible and happen to notice in the footnotes the phrase "meaning uncertain" or "Gk, Heb uncertain"? You will notice this in the Old Testament if you pay attention. (Look at Job 21:24 for an example) Why is that? What is it the translators are trying to tell you? They are trying to tell you that they do NOT have an adequate dictionary that clearly indicates the meaning of that word. (Fortunately, these references are in very minor usages, not the significant or theological words of the Bible.)

Why don't they?

It is helpful to understand that Hebrew was a living and spoken language up until probably about the time of the exile (586 B.C.), when Aramaic became more widely used, and then as the Greek language took root in later times, Hebrew usage began to decline, with the Dead Sea Scrolls being some of the last documents written in the language. Though the Bible books were still read in Hebrew in the synagogues and Hebrew scrolls were maintained, the language was not used much beyond that. As a result, sometimes there were Hebrew words that were no longer familiar. Think about when you had to read some of Shakespeare's plays, and were always having to look at the notes on the side because some of the words are words that haven't been used in English in centuries....the same kind of thing happened to Hebrew. But one other thing happened that did NOT happen in English, and that is that the only documents written in that Hebrew were the books of the Bible. Unlike the formation of our English dictionary, the early Bible translators had no other sources

Birthdays	PHONE	Date	Anniversary	phone
Kathy Mackey	402-727-4367	1		
Tom Peterson	402-719-5408	2		
Harlan Waugh	402-753-8046	3		
Larry Hill	402-727-5171	4		
David Lickteig		8		
Emily Schollmeyer	402-677-2933	9		
		10	Mike & Lynda Raasch	402-727-6854
Shirley Anger Mund	402-727-1937	12		
Nick Raasch		12		
Jerry Adams	402-720-4269	13		
		20	Bryan & Kelly Regier	308-458-7907
Vicki Anderson	402-727-0740	22		
Marcia Hill	402-727-5171	23		
Kelly Adams	402-720-4269	24		
Ethan Peterson		25		
		29	Don & Dorothy Charleston	402-657-0171

December Bible Puzzle


Who in the Bible was bald, and why do we know that?

November Bible Puzzles Answers

Psalms and Isaiah are the two Old Testament books most frequently quoted in the New Testament, used to prove Jesus was the Messiah fulfilling their prophecies. So familiar to the New Testament writers, how familiar are they to you? Could you prove Jesus is the Messiah by referencing those two books?

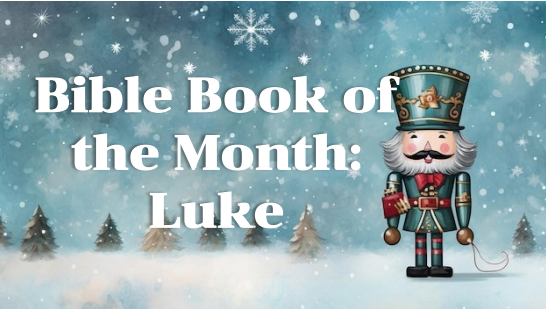
People Puzzle

If you would like to be our "People Puzzle Person" of the month, please let Pastor Richard or Amity in the office know.



Thank You!

Dear First Baptist Congregation,
 You all are AMAZING!! I can not thank you enough for all the amazing donations of items for our "Santa's Secret Shop" :) I will take pictures of the kids shopping and send them to you so you can see how much fun they have! We appreciate you all!! Sincerely, Julie Bechtel and Grant Staff!



Monthly Meetings

December 9 - Esther Circle - 11am

December 10 - Hannah Circle - 11:30am

December 26 - Naomi Circle - 12:30 pm

Get Involved



DECEMBER 5, 2024

ABWM @ 1:30

HOSTESS: ALL CIRCLES

As we approach the end of the year, it's time to submit your **Annual Report**. This report plays a crucial role in sharing the wonderful work we've done together, the progress of our ministries, and the ways we've impacted our community. Be sure to include information on your ministry's activities, achievements, and any prayer requests or goals for the upcoming year. Thank you for your dedication to our church's mission and for contributing to this important annual update. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. Thank you!!!! Amity

VISION TEAM MEETING: NOVEMBER 9, 2024

Attendance: Larry Hill, Betty Laughlin, Joel Foreman, Mary Weldon, Mike Raasch, Randy Cash, Mark and Vickie Anderson, Eileen Cash, Pastor Crooks.

Mike opened the meeting with devotion and prayer.

Budget committee: Joel proposed the projected number for the 2025 Annual budget be discussed as a committee. The projected amounts were listed except for the Children's ministry and Property team. The two committees will present their own proposal amounts.

Joel Foreman made motion "Whatever we do not collect for the current budgeted year towards the ABC Special offering, the church makes up the difference". Mary Weldon second - Approved.

Treasure Report: Randy reported the First State Bank account at \$17,300.62 at the end of October. Currently have \$13,000. The Building Account has \$11,071.42 while the FSB Memorial Funds is at \$38,879.18. It was reported that RVR is no longer wanting to do transfer funds slips. Is requesting we set something up online to move funds.

Personnel Team: No report

Property Team: Larry Hill reported calls are being made to fix the dishwasher. Moose Construction is working on the walls upstairs from water damage while the hail damage on the vans will not be done until next year. Property is looking into cleaning the carpets in the entry way and entry way of the business section in the family center.

Local Outreach: Mark & Vickie Anderson reported food continues to be collected which they would like to have before Christmas break. Grant School is hosting a Santa Work Shop and is asking for donations. Donations need to be received by November 25th, 2024.

ABW: No report

ABM: No report

Caring Ministry: No report

Events: No report

Children/Youth Ministries: No report

Worship: No report

Pastor Richard: Pastor Richard reported for the nominating committee they are looking into term limits. Paster Richard discussed with Deb Peterson on where the memorial funds received from Mary Ann should go.

A motion was made my Eileen Cash to have the church refund the money received from Mary Ann's memorial fund back to Deb Peterson to send to another ministry. The amount to be returned is to be determined. Mark Anderson second. - Approved

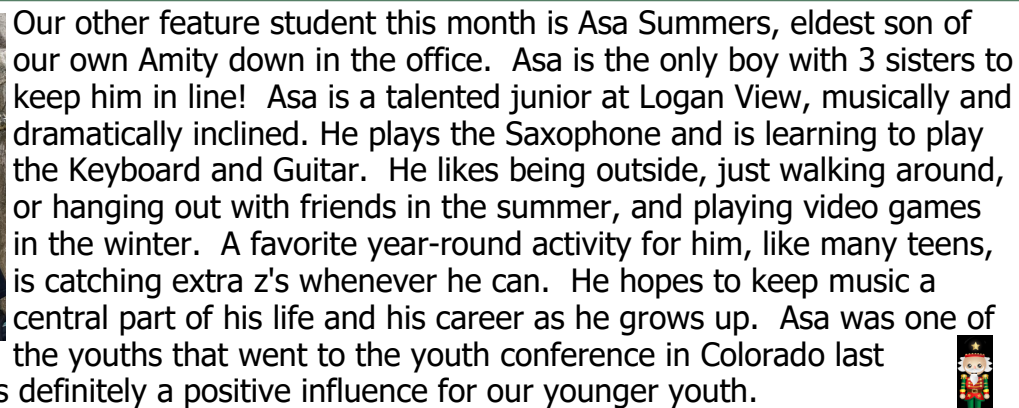
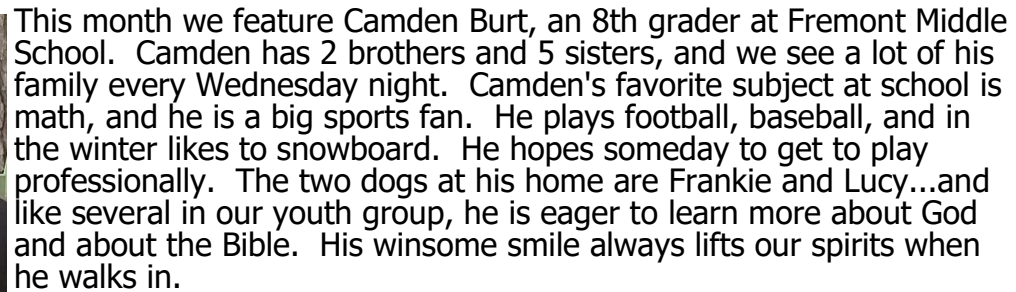
Mike Raasch continued by presenting the proposal of the guidelines for the First Baptist Endowment

Glory to God in the
Highest and on Earth
Peace Goodwill
Toward Men
- Luke 2:14



A Christmas Story December

- Day 1: Micah 5:2
- Day 2: Isaiah 7:14
- Day 3: Psalm 72:9-11
- Day 4: Jeremiah 31:15
- Day 5: Numbers 24:17
- Day 6: Isaiah 11:1-2
- Day 7: Luke 1:26-28
- Day 8: Luke 1:29-31
- Day 9: Luke 1:32-33
- Day 10: Luke 1:34-35
- Day 11: Luke 1:37-38
- Day 12: Luke 1:46-48
- Day 13: Luke 1:49-50
- Day 14: Luke 1:51-52
- Day 15: Luke 1:53-55
- Day 16: Luke 1:67-69
- Day 17: Luke 2:7
- Day 18: Luke 2:8-9
- Day 19: Luke 2:10-11
- Day 20: Luke 2:13-14
- Day 21: Luke 2:29-32
- Day 22: Luke 2:33-35
- Day 23: Matthew 2:1-2
- Day 24: Matthew 2:10-11
- Day 25: Matthew 2:16-18
- Day 26: John 1:1
- Day 27: John 1:4-5
- Day 28: John 1:14
- Day 29: John 1:15-16
- Day 30: 1 John 5:1
- Day 31: Romans 8:2-3



Pastor Richard mentioned Kelly Foreman from Kodiak will set up a slide show. The theme for Advent this year is HOPE. The hygiene bags made to go to Florida for the hurricane victims, it was later discovered the Region wanted to keep some of them here. Paster Richard expressed his concerns and supported the act they should all go. The Region was advised that if they would like some here, we can make more. No response has been received at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Four nutcracker figures standing side-by-side. From left to right: 1. A king wearing a gold crown and a pink and white uniform. 2. A soldier wearing a black hat with a gold emblem and a pink and white uniform. 3. A wizard wearing a black hat with a gold triangle and a pink and white uniform. 4. A general wearing a black hat with a gold emblem and a pink and white uniform.

WHAT IS YOUR
FAVORITE CHRISTMAS
MEMORY? WHY?

[illegible]

Christmas Party

DECEMBER 11TH | 6-8PM

Join us for a *joyful celebration* as we come together
to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ!

FESTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- * CHRISTMAS DINNER - CHILI AND CINNAMON ROLLS
- * CRAFTS, GAMES, AND MAKING TRAIL MIX
- * PHOTOS
- * SINGING CHRISTMAS CAROLS

WHAT TO BRING:

- * A FRIEND, FAMILY OR SOMEONE YOU JUST MET
* 2 DOZEN COOKIES TO SHARE

DRESS CODE:

- * CASUAL OR FESTIVE - UGLY SWEATERS ARE ENCOURAGED

CHRISTMAS EVE
Candlelight Service

S E R V I C E
S T A R T S
@ 6 P M

December 2024

It's always a good idea to verify times and places, Thanks!

Cookies & Coffee

2 - ABM
8 - Hannah
15 - Esther
22 - Naomi
23 - ABM

ATTENTION!!!
Business meeting to adopt new budget and to vote on officials will be Sunday December 15th between worship services.



Food Drive

We are excited to announce our Food Drive for Schools & we need your help to make it a success! Our goal is to collect non-perishable food items to support local schools and families in need. Every donation, big or small, will make a real difference in the lives of those facing hunger in our community. Every can counts! Thank you for your generosity!

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Communion 1st Sunday of Advent 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service	2 9a - Men's Coffee 7p - Woodcarvers	3 7p - AA Meeting	4 9:30a - Women's Coffee 6:15p - Meal 6:45p - FBKids FBYouth 7p - Bible Study	5 1:30p - ABWM 5:30p - Kay Circle Mat Weaving	6 9a - Men's Coffee 12p - Bible Study in Parlor	7 7a - ABM Bible Study 8a - ABM Breakfast 9a - Property Team 6p - Fun and Fellowship head to Omaha
8 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study 6p - Brown Bag 6:30p - Movie Starts	9 9a - Men's Coffee 11a - Esther Circle	10 11:30a - Hannah Circle @ the Office in Hooper 7p - AA Meeting	11 9:30a - Women's Coffee 6p - FBKids FBYouth Christmas Party 7p - Bible Study	12	13 9a - Men's Coffee 12p - Bible Study in Parlor	14 8:50a - Personnel Team 9:30a - Vision Team
15 9:30a - Traditional Service Business Meeting Between Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study in Parlor	16 9a - Men's Coffee 7p - Woodcarvers	17 7p - AA Meeting	18 9:30a - Women's Coffee 7p - Bible Study	19 5:30p - Kay Circle Mat Weaving	20 9a - Men's Coffee 12p - Bible Study in Parlor	21 
22 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study in Parlor	23 9a - Men's Coffee	24 Christmas Eve 6p - Worship Service 7p - AA Meeting	25 Christmas Office Closed 	26 12:30p - Naomi Circle	27 9a - Men's Coffee 12p - Bible Study in Parlor	28
29 9:30a - Traditional Service 11a - Casual Service 11a - Bible Study in Parlor	30 9a - Men's Coffee 7p - Woodcarvers	31 7p - AA Meeting	<div>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" – Luke 2:13-14</div>			