

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA

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Gary Rogers, Caretaker

Non-Profit
Organization
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Olympia WA
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November 2018 Tentative Preaching Schedule First Baptist Church



November 4th

Rev. Paul Aita
Acts 15:1-5

November 11th

Rev. Paul Aita
Acts 16:1-10

November 18th

Rev. Mark Rambo

November 25th

Rev. Mark Rambo

First Baptist Church Olympia

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Pastor Paul's Ponderings

Dear Friends,

I'm writing this article exactly one week before Election Day, aware that I'm doing a lot of thinking and experiencing a great deal of emotion about political issues these days. Americans and Baptists (and those of us that are in both categories) have historically placed great emphasis on the doctrine of separation of church and state, but we have often misinterpreted it to mean a complete divorce between politics and religion. Church members are frequently heard to say that they don't want to hear politics from the pulpit, and I agree that sermons are not the setting to endorse specific candidates or promulgate the agenda of a particular political party. On the other hand, both politics and religion deal with values, so it is not possible to discuss one without ever dealing with matters relevant to the other.

Laughably, one of the ways that religion and politics are joined is in the maxim that both are to be avoided in polite conversation. There is no doubt that both can engender animated discussions that produce "more heat than light." But both are important to human society, and thoughtful, caring people need to learn how to communicate about both of them. It is certainly appropriate to share one's best understanding and honest convictions, but we should all try to do so respectfully, willing also to listen seriously to others who see things differently.

It's interesting to me that within the Christian community, there are definitely some who believe that to be a genuine believer, one must be a Republican, while others believe just as strongly that true followers of Jesus must be Democrats. (Maybe they don't say that in so many words, but they may at least be skeptical of the faith of someone of the opposite persuasion from their own.) To the extent that people think this way, I believe they are seriously mistaken. At their best, both parties espouse values worthy of affirmation, but neither can claim to embody the complete counsel of God with respect to human governance. Whether or not they are willing to admit it, I believe that there are things that each needs to learn from the other. And in any case, both should be working for the benefit of all, which means they need to find ways to work together to the fullest extent possible, exercising common principles of decency and refusing to tolerate bigotry and hatred.

I don't claim to have the answers about how to govern effectively, which is one of the reasons I haven't gone into politics. But I do believe we as a people need to learn to do much better in the way we govern ourselves and in what we expect of our leaders. Integrity, transparency, honesty, and creativity are needed from all in positions of leadership, whatever their political philosophy. Bullying, threatening, and vilifying others do not enhance the common good. Since negative behavior from one side is often reciprocated by negative behavior from the other, each group should monitor and control its own behavior rather than simply accusing the other of behaving inappropriately.

Pastor Paul cont. page 2...

I hope that all of you who are citizens will vote in the upcoming elections, having done your best to evaluate each of the candidates and each of the issues. I trust that the values that flow from your faith will help to guide you in these matters, which means you will intentionally mix your religion and your politics! Though this does not mean we will all vote the same way, I hope we can agree that if our best understanding of Christianity does not influence our political choices, we are withholding an important part of our lives from the service of God.

Yours sincerely,
Pastor Paul



*A Warm Welcome to our
New Choir Director -
Darrel Born & His Family!*

Darrell and Cindy (back),
Merribeth (left), Annalisa (right),
Loralynn (center)



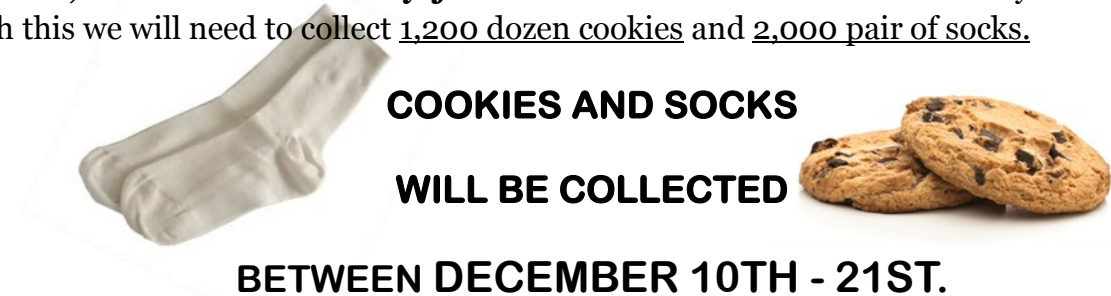
IMPORTANT Date !...
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
This is a Dessert Potluck
Bring your favorite dessert to share.
Wednesday, November 7th
In the Fellowship Hall at 6:30pm

**From Prison Ministries
CALLING ALL BAKERS AND SHOPPERS**



We are in the process of preparing for the Thurston County Jail's 2018 Christmas Program. As in past years, we are again appealing to the Thurston County Churches to contribute homemade cookies and new plain white socks.

Last year we ministered to almost **1,500 inmates** in **Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor, and Cowlitz county jails**. We would like to do the same this year. To accomplish this we will need to collect 1,200 dozen cookies and 2,000 pair of socks.



**COOKIES AND SOCKS
WILL BE COLLECTED**

BETWEEN DECEMBER 10TH - 21ST.

**PLEASE BRING YOUR COOKIES & SOCKS TO THE CHURCH
NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 21ST.**

Please have the cookies in non-returnable containers. They should be cookies, not brownies or bars. It is better if they aren't too sticky or crumbly (so they don't fall apart or stick to the other cookies when they are packaged). Please mark all containers of socks and cookies with "For Thurston County Jail Ministry". Former inmates will assemble the inmate gifts in plastic sandwich bags holding six cookies, a Christmas tract sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, a 2019 calendar card with a scripture on the front, and a little note saying, "**Cookies baked with love by Thurston County churches**", and on the back of the note is the verse John 3:16. The socks and Gideon pocket new testament will be distributed at the jails with the gift, by correctional officers. If you are unable to participate in the cookie and sock drive, please consider a donation to offset the costs of the Christmas gospel tracts, packaging supplies, and fuel. Please make checks payable to the Prisoner Outlook Development, PO Box 14213, Tumwater, WA, 98512. Thank you and bless you for sharing God's love with those who are otherwise unable to eat Christmas goodies, and receive gifts on our Savior's birthday.

Yours in Christ, Chaplain Art Brown—Thurston County Correction Facility

Mark's Meanderings

From the Moderator

Jean Heidal

All during the month of October there has been an emphasis on church membership. Pastor Mark shared his story recently and I wanted to share mine as well.

My mother, brother and I started attending First Baptist when I was 5. When I was 10, and in 4th grade, I went forward in church to declare that I had given my heart to Jesus and wanted to be baptized. I was a part of a large Sunday school class and a number of us went forward that year. We met with the pastor every Saturday morning for several weeks. The study book was called, "I Will Follow Jesus." At the end of our study, if we still wanted to be baptized, we could. There were 20 of us on that Palm Sunday morning – not just the 4th graders, but some older kids, teenagers and adults.

One of the things that I remember most was the pastor's emphasis on church membership and how, no matter our age we could be involved. I helped my mother when she took care of the children in the nursery during worship. She was the secretary of her Sunday school class and frequently called on the members who were absent on Sunday so I went with her. She worked with the older adult group to do dinners and I used to wash the dishes for 5 cents a place setting.

I also remember that we got giving envelopes. They were smaller than the adult envelopes and were sealed down the middle to create two pockets. One side said "My Church" and the other side said "For Missions." The pockets would only hold coins so as often as I could I would put money in the collection plate.

The "church membership is important" lessons I learned have carried me through my life. When my husband, Dale, was doing music ministry at a church I helped him in any way I could. I learned how to cook church dinners at Queen Anne Baptist in Seattle. I washed hand bell gloves and entertained choirs from the Presbyterian church in Kirkland and also the Methodist church in Bellevue. When Dale was the music director at this church we had choir progressive dinners – traveling from house to house in an evening eating a food course along the way. And then there are the wonderful friendships with other American Baptist Women from all over the Northwest. Life has been good and rich and meaningful because of a commitment to Christ and the church.

Many times I hear people refer to the church as "a family" and that is true. In the past 3 months, since Dale passed away, I had told several people outside the church of the support I have received from family, friends and MY CHURCH FAMILY. One person said, "that makes all the difference." Church membership has made a difference in my life and I hope, if you are considering membership you will decide now is the time.

For those who know me, Newsletter articles are not my first love. Those pesky deadlines always seem to sneak up on me and then there is a mad dash to get something down on paper and into Lela/Glory/Jean's office so the Windows can get out in an orderly manner. So this month's Mark's Meanderings comes from sunny Arizona, where there are clear skies and 77 degrees.

First off, thanks for the wonderful birthday celebration on the 28th! Thanks to the Pastoral Relations committee for the wonderful reception complete with yummy birthday cake! Thank you for all the love, well-wishes and cards. Just another example of your gifts of hospitality and affirmation.

I also feel like I need to update you a bit on some of the things that have been going on in my life that affect our life together as pastor and faith community. I had my annual neurological physical in connection to my hydrocephalus. My MRI revealed a possible *Syrinx of the spinal cord*, which is a fluid-filled cavity/hole within the spinal cord. It has the potential to cause nerve damage and some other nuisances. I have 2 MRI's scheduled mid-November to confirm this diagnosis and/or to clarify exactly what this blip is. This is nothing close to life-threatening. I have full confidence with the neurology team I have through Swedish Hospital. Pastor Paul and the Executive Council have been advised of this new diagnosis and know all of us are on the same page. Prayers would be appreciated but know that our life together and the mission and ministry of the church goes forward.

The other bit of news is that I have completed my time with the Center for Career Development and Ministry out of Nassau, New Hampshire. This two-day assessment examined a wide-range of areas in my pastoral ministry, from personality assessments, to leadership style in conjunction with strengths and weaknesses, to the skills and gifts I may have. It was a very good experience. I felt my call and vocation was affirmed. I felt that their assessments of strengths and weaknesses was pretty well on point. The bottom line is that, whatever the future holds, whatever God has in store for Kathleen and me as we move forward, I have the ability, temperament and clarity to embrace and carry out whatever ministry opportunity God has in store for us.

Okay, enough of the personal stuff, let's get back to mission and ministry!

In November we will be wrapping up our sermon series on the book of Acts. I hope you have found this series to be thoughtful as well as challenging. Remember, we are not called to replicate and/or copy what the early church in Acts did, so much as learn from them, be challenged by them and to reflect and prayerfully consider how open we are to the same Spirit that guided them during uncertain times. One of my major takeaways has been the reminder that God is the chief actor/instigator/person-in-charge. God initiates everything. Every conversion, every door, every pathway, every opportunity, etc., is because of God. Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch. Peter and Cornelius. Saul/Paul on the road to Damascus. Lydia and Paul. Ministries in Jerusalem, Antioch, Philippi and across the Roman Empire. All because of the movement of God and God's Spirit. Where do you see the movement of God here at Olympia First Baptist? Where do you see the movement of God in your own life?

... Pastor Mark cont. page 4

Women's Ministries

Jean Heidal

Thank you! At the recent International Day Dennis Boone stopped by our table and watched as I rolled bandages on a little wooden bandage roller. Helen Pothier told him that we have rollers for 3 inch bandages, but none for 4 inch that are also needed. Dennis said, "Well, I can make you one." A couple weeks later Dennis came to church with 2 – 4 inch bandage rollers for us. Now, all we need are cotton sheets to rip and sew in 5 yard pieces and we will be "ready to roll!" Thank you to Dennis for the rollers! It will make our work so much easier. And... if you have colored or white cotton/cotton blend sheets we can use them for bandages. We cannot use flannel or other synthetic materials. Bring them to the church office marked "roller bandages" and we will be grateful for your donations.

November Meeting Mylinda Baits, our globetrotting missionary, will be with us at our November 14th meeting in the Fireside Room at 12 noon. Mylinda has been all over the globe in recent months so we can look forward to a glimpse of her travels and ministry. Bring a sack lunch, beverages and dessert provided. All women of the church are invited.

Christmas Is Coming! Tickets for the Christmas Brunch will go on sale beginning Sunday, November 4th, before and after church in the church library. Cost is \$12.00. The Brunch is Saturday, December 8th, 10:30 am. The doors open at 9:30 for shoppers in the Christmas Treasure Room and the Cookie Room. And... if you have donations for the Treasure Room, please let me know as we can store them for you at the church. The program this year is presented by the women's group Karen Wilson sings in. Gail Aita is bringing the devotional and the program/devotional will center around the song, "Mary, Did You Know?" We will also be looking for cookie bakers who can contribute to our "Cookie Room" sales!

Thank you again! To the women who helped with the recent FarWest Area Rally at the church. It was a great day and the women who came were so appreciative of our hospitality. I have received notes and emails from several who attended thanks us for such a great day! In my Annual Report I mentioned that our women's group has given over \$4600 this year to various missions and ministries. Before the end of the year that number will be well over \$5000. I am so grateful for the work our women do to help those in our local church and community in times of need and in reaching out to our missionaries wherever they may be serving. Thank you!

Pastor Mark Continued...

Finally, November is a time of thanksgiving and preparation. A time to give God thanks for the many ways we have been blessed as individuals, as a church community and as a nation. A time of family and community. A time to celebrate the goodness of life as well as the goodness of God. May you make time to share your own sense of thankfulness, with God and with others, this season.

November is also a time of preparation because it signals that the season of Advent is just around the corner. Advent, too, is about preparation as well as anticipation. With Advent, we prepare ourselves to receive the gift of the Christ-Child. We do that in worship; we do that through prayer; we do that through family traditions; we do that in a variety of personal and corporate ways. Mostly, I think, we get ready by making room in our heart for something that words cannot describe adequately. Somehow we try to temper the busyness of the season, with all the family obligations, parties, the hustle and bustle of buying and wrapping and baking and giving that comes with this time of year. Maybe that should be our prayer, as a community of faith this Advent season. Let's find ways to make room, create a nursery space if you will, for the coming Christ-Child, to settle into and be loved.

With Joy and Anticipation!

Mark

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Discipleship is an ongoing part of an individual's faith journey. Prayer, study, worship and other spiritual disciplines are important for our faith health. Like exercise is good for your body, discipleship engagement is good for your soul and self-care. One of the options that is provided for you at Olympia First Baptist is the Thursday Morning Bible Study. This study has a long history of excellence from Ruby Nickerson leading a Women's study to Roy Schmidt bringing his knowledge and technology to the masses, and most recently, Pastor Bob providing insight and his downhome wisdom to the scriptures. This year Pastor Mark is giving leadership but promises that there will be guest appearances by other really, really smart and creative people. Here's what you need to know:

When: Thursday Mornings at 9:00 a.m.
Where: The Fireside Room, downstairs, @ First Baptist Church of Olympia
What: Bible Study around the Lectionary Psalm & the Gospel of Mark
Treats: Always! Class participants signup to provide something to fill your stomachs while the Bible fills your soul
Coffee: A must!
Music: Possibly? Still in negotiations...
Fellowship: Fun, relaxed, insightful and supportive!



2018—2019 Thursday Morning Bible Study Schedule

Look for more dates in the December 2018 Newsletter

Nov. 1 st	Psalm 146/Mark 12:28—34
Nov. 8 th	Psalm 127/Mark 12:38—44
Nov. 15 th	Psalm 16/Mark 13:1—8
	[Winter Break]
Jan. 10 th	Psalm 29/Luke 3:15—17, 21—22
Jan. 17 th	Psalm 36:5—10/John 2:1—11
Jan. 24 th	Psalm 19/Luke 4:14—21
Jan. 31 st	Psalm 71:1—6/Luke 4:21—30