

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA
 PO BOX 533
 OLYMPIA, WA 98507

Contact Information
 360-357-3881
 Fax: 360-357-8345
 Email: olyfbc@aol.com
 Web: fbcolympia.org

Church Staff
 Paul Aita, Interim Pastor
 Mark Rambo, Associate Pastor
 Caroline Lehman, Visitation Pastor
 Jordan Nylander, Organist
 Darrell Born, Choir Director
 Lela DePaolo, Secretary
 Gary Rogers, Caretaker

Non-Profit Organization
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Olympia, WA
 Permit No. 198

Return Service Requested

*Act Humbly
 Love Completely
 Live Differently*

DECEMBER 2018

December 2nd Pastor Paul Aita	Jeremiah 33:14-16 "After the Chaos"
December 9th Pastor Mark Rambo	Malachi 3:1- 4 Advent Messenger(s)"
December 16th Pastor Mark Rambo	Choir Program Zephaniah 3:14—20 "Last Minute Shopping"
December 23rd Pastor Paul Aita	Micah 5:2-5a "From a Little Town"
December 24th *Luke 2:1—14 (15-20); 2:(1—7), 8—10; John 1:1—14	7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
December 30th Pastor Paul Aita	Colossions 3:12-17 "What to Wear?"

Worship Schedule

DECEMBER



2018

Windows

PASTOR'S MOMENTS

Dear Friends,

Recently, Gail and I went to see the movie Green Book. When we got home, I continued reading Miss Burma, a novel a friend had given me. Later that evening, I read an article from a theological journal that had been suggested by another friend who is working on his Ph.D. at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. The three were very different from one another in some obvious ways. (The last one required me to use the dictionary quite a bit—even to understand the title!) However, when I thought about it this morning, I realized that they all had some very striking things in common.

Green Book, set in the 1960s, is based on the real-life experiences of an Italian-American nightclub employee who is hired as driver for an African American pianist on a concert tour from New York through the Deep South. Miss Burma, a work of historical fiction starting during World War II and continuing until after Burma's independence from Great Britain, is the story of a man of Indian heritage from Rangoon and his Karen wife. The journal article deals with a new approach to understanding Mark 5:1-20, the expulsion of a "legion" of demons from a man in a town across the Sea of Galilee from Jewish territory but still under Roman rule. All three call the viewer/reader to see the developing action of the plot through the eyes of participants who are different from their audience and/or from each other. I can't honestly say that I "enjoyed" any of the three—but I was captivated, instructed, and challenged by all of them. They made me question how much of my understanding of certain things is based on experiences that others may or may not share with me.

We are about to enter the season of Advent, which for many Christians simply means the time leading up to the celebration of Christmas (or a way to start celebrating Christmas early). It's a potentially helpful time to reflect on the state of the world before Christ—and the state of the current world without Christ. Pastor Mark and I plan to emphasize Old Testament scriptures in our sermons during Advent. There will be a temptation to "translate" these passages primarily from the perspective of how they were fulfilled by the coming of Christ into the world. In my preparation, I'm going to take a lesson from the three works I described above and try to look at them from the perspective of those to whom the prophecies were originally addressed, whose circumstances were definite different from my own.

December 30th will be my last Sunday with you. It has been a privilege for me to have served as your Interim Senior Pastor since May 1st. You have extended a very warm welcome to Gail and to me, and I believe you have been very responsive to my ministry among you. I know that you will be blessed by the ministry of Rev. David Roberts, who will begin as your Interim Senior Pastor starting on January 1st as the Search Committee continues its work in identifying an individual to present to the congregation as a candidate for the permanent position. May God bless you all during this meaningful time and always.

Sincerely, Pastor Paul Aita

In this issue:

Sarah Jean Nash Commission Service	2
Mark's Meanderings	3
Birthdays, Choir Program & Caroling	4
"An Unexpected Blessing" by Carolyn von Gohren	5
Women's Ministries & Moderator Article	6
December Calendar of Events	7

pages

**THE JANUARY
 "WINDOWS"
 DEADLINE IS
 DECEMBER
 16th**

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

As the result of our emphasis on membership during October, a number of individuals have expressed their desire to join the church. One of them, Henry Mackison, will join on the basis of baptism. We will have the privilege of witnessing Henry's baptism during morning worship on Sunday, December 9th, by his grandmother, Rev. Cathy Kernen. Several others will join on the basis of their Christian experience. All of the new members will be welcomed officially on Sunday, January 6th, and given the Right Hand of Christian Fellowship as we gather to observe the Lord's Supper that morning.

Anyone desiring to join the membership of the church at any time is invited to speak with one of the pastors about this. We are always delighted to welcome those who wish to serve God as part of our fellowship.

Thank you for praying for me as I step out in faith and follow God's call to be a missionary in Bolivia. It has been a beautiful journey these last 16 months of building my financial and prayer partnership network. This network is made up of individuals, Olympia First Baptist, and other American Baptist Churches across the U.S. Many of them will be attending my Commissioning Service on December 15 at 2:00 pm. I hope you will be able to attend this joyous celebration and worship service.

I wanted to share with you that I have not built my network alone. God has opened many doors through my Mission Partnership Team and my connections with the greater ABCUSA family. During my commissioning service Team Nash will also be commissioned because they are also saying yes to God's call in their lives to serve on my team. They serve as my key people who will help me Stateside while

I'm in Bolivia and each have an important role to help sustain my ministry.

The big WOO HOO moment that myself and Team Nash have been praying for is that God has provided my pledged recurring support to be at 90%! This is an incredible gift and am very thankful for your love, financial partnership, and your prayers. Thank you for being a part of the greater Team Nash!

Please pray that I will be 100% supported by the end of the year! Once I'm at 100% I can fly out to International Ministries for my last meeting before assignment and will be approved by the board to purchase my ticket to Bolivia! My Bolivian ministry partners and IM colleagues are hoping that I will be joining them in late January or early February. I ask that you really be praying for me as I wind down my life in the US and prepare to move to Bolivia. Thank you for being my family!

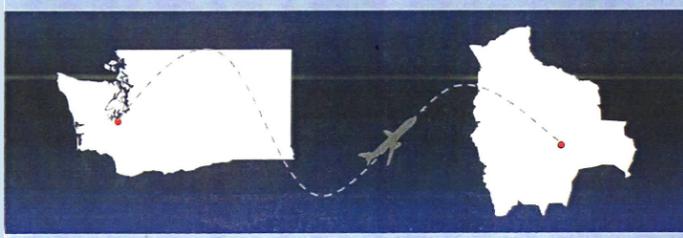
Much love and thankfulness,
Sarah Jean Nash



Commissioning Service

You're Invited

To attend the commissioning service for Sarah Nash
Saturday, December 15th, 2018 at 2 o'clock in the afternoon
First Baptist Church
904 Washington St, Olympia, Washington 98501
RSVP by December 1st to Emily Kok 360-584-0465 or emilykok@yahoo.com



DECEMBER 2018 SUNDAY SCHEDULE: 8:30 am Sunday School, 10 a.m. Worship, Child Care & Nursery, 4 p.m. Table Grace

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 8:30 a.m. Sunday School Communion Sunday	3 DECEMBER 15TH—2 PM SARA JEAN NASH'S COMMISSION SERVICE in the SANCTUARY	4 7:00 pm Choir	5 7:00 pm Choir	6 7:00 pm Choir	7 LADIES BRUNCH SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8TH IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL Doors open at 9:30 am Brunch Served at 10:30 am	8 10:00 a.m. Executive Council Room 102 6:00 pm Emmaus House 9:30 Doors Open 10:30 Brunch Served Ladies Brunch No Emmaus
9 8:30 a.m. Sunday School	10 8:30 a.m. Sunday School	11 6:30 p.m. Trustees Meeting Room 102	12 No ABW Meeting	13 7:00 pm Choir	14 8:00 am Men's Breakfast Fireside Rm 10:00 am God's Little Blessings Library 2:00 pm Sarah Nash's Commission Service No Emmaus	15 8:00 am Men's Breakfast Fireside Rm 10:00 am God's Little Blessings Library 2:00 pm Sarah Nash's Commission Service No Emmaus
16 8:30 a.m. Sunday School Choir Concert (during Worship service) ***NEWSLETTER Deadline	17 5:45 pm Christmas Caroling Meet at the Church inside entrance	18 6:30 p.m. Trustees Meeting Room 102	19 6:30 p.m. Trustees Meeting Room 102	20 7:00 pm Choir	21 JAIL MINISTRY DEADLINE COOKIE & SOCK DONATION	22 6:00 p.m. Emmaus
23 8:30 a.m. Sunday School	24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day!	26 Christmas Day!	27 7:00 pm Choir	28 7:00 pm Choir	29 6:00 p.m. Emmaus
30 8:30 a.m. Sunday School	31 New Years Eve					

... HE BROUGHT THE PROMISE OF
UNCONDITIONAL LOVE,
UNENDING HOPE AND ETERNAL
LIFE TO EVERY PERSON WHO
BELIEVES IN HIM...

The Christmas Brunch is almost here! It will be a great event with good food, wonderful entertainment and a thoughtful time of devotion. So, don't forget, Saturday, December 8th, doors open at 9:30 am. Brunch is served at 10:30 am.

We are still hoping for more donations to the Treasure Room! They can be brought during the week, or on Sunday. Please let me know if you plan to bring things so they can be properly stored.

The Cookie Room will be open again this year. Bring your donations of Christmas cookies beginning Thursday, December 6th! You are also invited to come to the church kitchen that day and bake cookies!. We have done this in the past and it is great fun. Bring your pre-made cookie dough, or ingredients to make cookies and we will work together to get it done!

Kat Stoker is in charge of the Treasure Room this year and Dixie Mize is the Cookie Room leader.

Looking ahead Friday, January 25th, 6:00 pm will be "Ladies' Night Out" in the Fireside Room. All women of the church are invited. Women's Ministries provides the pizza and beverages - you are asked to bring a salad, dessert or appetizer to share. This year, the hula dancer and ukulele trio are coming back to entertain us. The "grass skirts" and "leis" will be available for those who want to participate in the hula lesson. This is a great evening to just be with your friends and have a good time. Be sure and bring card/board games as well! More information will be coming after January 1st.

This has been a particularly busy year for our women's group. I am grateful for those who have helped with programming and serving for so many events. Thank you. Let's look forward to 2019 with anticipation for what God may have in store for us.

From the Moderator

Jean Heidal

Thanksgiving is over and the Christmas season is fast approaching. I just want to say a big "thank you" to the Executive Council members for their hard work and support over the past year. In addition to leading their own board/committee they come monthly to Council meetings so that we can clarify plans taking place for the church body and deal with business/ministry issues. Almost every month this year we have had 100% attendance at each of the meetings. And, you may know that there have been several extra meetings regarding the transition. When you see Hans Stoker, Pastor Mark, Pastor Paul, Rex Comstock, Gary Baits, Carolyn Adams, Marlynne Fulton, Betty Utter, Sandy Grebbs, Dan Bezanson, or Wayne Hallmeyer give them a big "thank you" for all they have done this past year!

The other news I have to share is, as you probably know, Paul Aita is leaving at the end of the year. He committed to be with us for 6 months, but he liked us so much he stayed for 8 months. Now it is time for him to continue with his ministry to the Burmese congregations in the Kent/Renton area, work that he has continued while serving us. We have so appreciated his style of leadership, dealing with several personnel changes and all of the paper work that goes along with those changes. He has also been a strong voice in the Council, and with the Trustees and Deacons. I could not go without saying a big "thank you" to Gail as well. She came to First Baptist ready to be a part of our congregation and she has served alongside Pastor Paul all of these months! It has been a joy to have you with us, Gail!

Now it is time to move on with a new interim pastor until the new senior pastor is called. We, the Council, are pleased to announce the Rev. David Roberts will be joining us as of January 1, 2019. Pastor Dave is a retired American Baptist minister who has had three pastorates during his career, all in Washington. In addition, he has served two interim positions since his retirement. He and his wife, Merletta, live in Federal Way and Pastor Dave will be commuting to Olympia two days each week and on Sunday. He and Pastor Mark will share the preaching duties. It is an honor for us to have two such qualified persons to assist us with this transition period. Merletta is well known to our women as she serves as president of the region women's organization. I hope you will make sure to welcome Pastor Dave and Merletta when they arrive.

Have a blessed Christmas!

MARK'S MEANDERINGS

The Christian year begins with Advent. The season of Advent, from a Latin root meaning, "coming," or "arrival," runs through the four Sundays before Christmas. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of Christ into the world. Traditionally, this is done by both looking back to the first coming of Christ and also by looking forward to the second coming or return of Christ. Like the season of Lent, Advent is associated with spiritual disciplines of repentance, fasting, and waiting and are characterized by attitudes of longing and hope.

Advent also takes us on a journey through the Bible. Each week the Lectionary readings trace the promise of the Messiah through the Hebrew scriptures and introduce us to significant characters in the unfolding drama of the Christmas story. During Advent we wait with and through these New Testament biblical characters as we are exposed to their stories as witnesses: Elizabeth & Zechariah, John the Baptist, Mary & Joseph.

I really like this definition and/or challenge of Advent that comes from The Taizé' book of common prayer:

"Advent is a time of waiting in contemplation for the presence of Christ within us; we are called to bear Christ, to live Christ for others. We along with the witnesses are invited to live that same spirit of poverty, of humility and joy."

Advent then, is not about the frenzied activity of getting ready for Christmas morning that we've turned it into, but finding and making time to make space in our hearts and minds for contemplation and action, daily action of being Christ-like for others. Here is a practical suggestion for you to try on as a way of incorporating this notion of contemplation and action into this Advent season. Spend some time reading and praying over Luke 1:46—55, Mary's Magnificat, or Mary's Song of Praise. Contemplate the implications of this passage. What action does it call you to? How did these words prepare Mary for the child she carries inside of her? How does it prepare you for the coming of the Christ child? Pastor Paul and I look forward to you joining us for worship throughout this season of Advent!

Hope, Peace, Love and Joy!

Pastor Mark Rambo

OFBC Happenings - December Birthdays!



Angel Swilley	1	Joanna Miller	12
Tom Hibben	2	Carolyn Adams	13
Barbara Martin	5	Seana Holcomb Ditterline	13
Carol LaMoine	8	Linda Graves	20
Lura Belle Anderson	8	Jan McCormick	21
Carolene Jones	9	Esther Alexanian	27
Ben Raleigh	9	Dennis Baker	28
Pastor Sam Hochstatter	10	Tom Bernius	29
Tia Pennell	11		



If you haven't seen your name on the Birthday list this year - please contact the church office at 360-357-3881 to include your name and birthday date for us to post in the newsletter - we'd love to share it here!

TO ALL JAIL MINISTRY CHEERFUL GIVERS

- THE INMATES NEED:**
- 1. COOKIES: HOMEMADE COOKIES/ OR COSCO SELLS COOKIES IN BOXES**
 - 2. WHITE CREW SOCKS**

The Jail Ministry will reach 1,500 inmates this year with your help! Items will be collected at OFBC between **December 10th - 21st**. Cookies (not brownies or bars) must be in non-returnable containers. Socks and cookies should be marked "For Thurston County Jail Ministry". Please call the church (360-357-3881) with any questions. If you are not able to bring cookies or socks, please feel free to help offset the cost of Gospel tracts, packaging supplies and fuel. Checks can be made to the Prisoner Outlook Development, P.O. Box 14213, Tumwater, Wa 98512.

The Choir Christmas Concert

"The Promise is Near"

will be on **Sunday, December 16th**

during the worship service.



Christmas Caroling - It's time to Make a Joyful Noise!!

Everyone is invited to meet at the church - 5:30 pm on Monday night, **December 17th**. We'll go out and bring joy to many church members and friends - singing the traditional Christmas songs. Upon return to the church, Freda and her crew will serve hot cocoa, and if you would like - bring a dish of goodies to share!

AN UNEXPECTED BLESSING by Carolyn von Gohren

While attending a memorial service luncheon for our friend Bob in 2001, Roger and I met Barbara Meyer, an interesting and charming older lady who lived on the same street as Bob's widow Barbara. Later, Barbara said that she had hoped that we'd become acquainted with Mrs. Meyer at the event. Over the ensuing years, we remembered Mrs. Meyer with flowers when we were taking bouquets to Barbara. There were May Day flowers; and at least once, we gave Mrs. Meyer a pot of our home-grown, forced hyacinths. Mrs. Meyer had had a noteworthy life. She was an organist at various Catholic churches, including St. Michael, and her deceased husband Ernest had been an attorney. They had nine children—all boys! The youngsters were raised in a four-bedroom house, and the residence had just one bathroom! However, one of the sons told me that this was less of a problem than if there had been girls in the family. "No girls allowed!", he exclaimed.

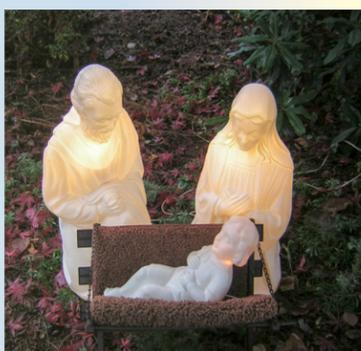
There's an interesting side story about Martin Meyer, one of the sons. When he was a child, he was very helpful with yard work for an older couple who lived at the corner of 17th Avenue and Water Street in Olympia, just a block away from the Meyer residence. Several years later, when the couple passed away without heirs, they willed their large, historic home to Martin, who was then in his thirties. He was completely surprised and lived in the lovely old house for many years.

Somehow, Roger and I became aware of an illuminated Nativity scene that Mrs. Meyer displayed in her front yard every December. We made a point of driving by her house on 18th Avenue annually, after attending the Christmas Eve service at church. It's our custom to take longer "lights drives" in Olympia every December; however, the Meyer's display was by far the most beautiful and meaningful in its "simplicity", with Mary and Joseph and the Baby Jesus in a manger. Indeed, it was our favorite outdoor Christmas display in town.

Around Year 2010, we were saddened and disappointed that the Meyer's Nativity scene was no longer displayed at Christmas time. After a few such "missing" years, I wrote Mrs. Meyer a note, telling her how much we had admired her December display and saying that we'd so appreciate buying it if she was receptive. However, there was no reply to my correspondence. Then in January of 2014, I read an obituary for Mrs. Meyer in THE OLYMPIAN. She had passed away on the second of the month, at age ninety-five.

On November 10 of last year, Roger saw a notice in THE OLYMPIAN for an estate sale at 208 18th Avenue S. W. Although we didn't know which house that was, I commented to him that the address was on the section of 18th where Barbara lived. So that afternoon, he rode his bicycle over to the estate sale site. Then shortly later, Roger called me, saying that he was at the Meyer house, and that he'd "found" the Nativity figures in an upstairs bedroom! He wanted to know if he should buy the set, and I enthusiastically said, "Yes!". So he paid the asking price of \$25.00 and told the family that he'd return with our car to transport it to our home. He did so right away, as we didn't want the Nativity scene to be accidentally sold to someone else!

How absolutely incredulous and thrilled we were to receive this totally unexpected blessing. That weekend, I went to the Meyer estate sale and learned as much as I could about the Nativity scene. Five of the Meyer sons were there and told me that their parents had acquired the decoration in the 1960's, ordering it from a Montgomery Ward catalog. Some of the "boys" had hauled the figures out onto the family's front lawn annually, until a few years before their mother had passed away. By then, she'd developed dementia and didn't want the display put in place. (Her sons also told me that their mother's dementia would have accounted for her not answering my earlier note.) The sons that I met, including Martin, were all very personable and tall. After hearing my story, they seemed delighted to know that the Nativity scene would have such a loving new home and said that they'd drive by to see it in December!



P. S. This good fortune was definitely meant to be. Earlier, we'd canceled a long-planned, November trip to Chicago. Had we taken the vacation, we would have been away on the day that Roger "found" our treasure! We are all wise to remember that great blessings can sometimes arise from our disappointments!