



# Cross and Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church

P.O. Box 331, 13 School St., Lebanon, NH 03766

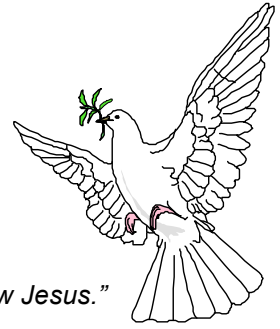
Pastor: Rev. Dale Edwards

Phone: 603-448-5618 Email: [soulman@lebfirstbaptist.com](mailto:soulman@lebfirstbaptist.com)

[www.lebfirstbaptist.com](http://www.lebfirstbaptist.com)

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*"Not a perfect church, not a perfect people, just a simple desire to follow Jesus."*



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## More Than Wishful Thinking

Laurie Edwards

I see dead people. Not really. But when people I love have died, I've found myself noticing people who look like them riding by in cars or walking down the street, and for a split second I've thought, "Wow, could that be so-and-so?" I've even on occasion had to make myself take a second look to make sure it was not them. "That person is dead," I have to remind myself, "of course I can't be seeing him here." I don't think I'm crazy (although I'm not putting that up for a vote): I think it's because deep inside I want to see that person again so badly, that if there's any slight resemblance or similar mannerisms that reminds me of my loved one, my brain cells call them to mind. It's just wishful thinking.

I've sometimes wondered why Mary Magdalene didn't recognize Jesus immediately when she bumped into him outside the empty tomb, and why the disciples on the road to Emmaus didn't recognize him until he broke bread with them at supper. There are several theories out there, one of the most common being that Jesus didn't look the same in his glorified body. I've got a different theory. I think Mary and those disciples wanted to see Jesus again so badly that they couldn't believe their own eyes. "Jesus is dead," they probably reminded themselves, "I can't really be seeing him here." "It must be just wishful thinking."

In the world as we know it, and as Mary and the disciples knew it, dead people do not come back to life. Yes, Jesus had resurrected Lazarus and a couple of others, but Jesus himself was now dead and not around to perform the necessary miracle. As far as they knew, their world had returned to what it had been before they'd met Jesus. Their main

concern now was how were they going to carry on their lives without him?

Because that's how you feel when someone you love dies. How am I going to go on living without them? How does life go back to normal, and just what is normal anyways? Sure, their hopes that Jesus was the Messiah had been dashed; but more than that, one of their closest companions, the person for whom they had left all behind in order to follow, as far as they knew, now lay dead in a stone-cold tomb. They were wandering around in a grief-induced fog. What comes next? What do we do now? Were we just deluded cult-followers? Does it all end here? How do we go back to normal, whatever normal was.

But then they encountered the risen Jesus, and suddenly it all made sense! This was really Jesus, he *was* alive! This wasn't just wishful thinking. Jesus was living and breathing, walking with them and talking to them. They could touch him, they could hear his voice, they could sit and share a meal with him. He could tell them, indeed, what was coming next, and what they should do now. What was "normal" was forever changed.

You see, that first group of Christians, the first followers of Jesus, went from no hope to ultimate hope. They went from unbearable grief to incredible joy. Jesus had risen from the dead! He had risen indeed! The fog had lifted, suddenly everything Jesus had ever taught them began to make sense.

You see, I don't really see dead people. I honestly know I don't. But someday I will. And the good news is they won't be dead anymore. Because of what Jesus did – because he died and rose from dead – I know I will see my loved ones once more.

## **NEW MEMBERS!**

The following were voted into membership on Sunday, March 22: Bridgette Barragan, Michael Barragan, and Allison Hiltunen via baptism; Janice Bowers, Gerald Berger, Terri Dudley, Marilyn Peterson, and Rohn Peterson via letter of transfer. Please be sure and extend them a warm welcome!

## **INTERESTED IN BAPTISM OR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP?**

Please speak with the pastor. A service of baptism is planned for Palm Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>!

## **FBC RETREAT – LISTENING TO GOD!!!**

Our annual retreat is set for May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> at Gove Hill Retreat & Conference Center in Thetford, VT. The theme for this year's retreat is "Listening to God". This is a 24-hour retreat and runs from 6:30 PM Friday to 6:30 PM Saturday. The retreat is open to adults and teens. Be on the lookout for more information and registration forms at the church in the coming weeks!

## **YOUTH GROUP NEWS**

Twelve young people and three leaders enjoyed a wonderful Deep Freeze retreat at Camp Berea from March 13-15. Paintball, tubing, carpetball, volleyball, pool, ping pong, bouncy-house boxing were all part of the fun! The featured speaker for the weekend was Travis Crimm of Dash Student Leadership in Los Angeles who spoke with humor and candor of how to maintain Momentum in the Christian life. We were also blessed with the music of Christian alternative rock band, Circleslide. Be on the lookout for future youth group events! Youth Group is open grades 6-12.

## **EASTER PLANTS/MEMORIALS**

If you would like to purchase an Easter lily or tulip to be placed on the altar in memory of a loved one on Easter Sunday (April 12), please see the green order form in your Sunday worship bulletin. Cost is \$6 per plant.

## **MAUNDY THURSDAY DINNER**

Our Maundy Thursday dinner is a facsimile Passover meal eaten in quietness with readings commemorating the Last Supper. Please be sure to fill out the lavender sign-up slip in the Sunday bulletin or sign-up on the

sanctuary bulletin board if you plan to attend, so we know how many to plan for. Thanks!

## **90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR CARMEN!**

The church family is invited to a 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party for Carmen Walton. The party will be held Saturday, April 4 from 2:00-4:00 PM at First Baptist Church. In lieu of gifts, please bring your favorite memory of Carmen on a 3"x5" index card or piece of paper with your name on it. We'd also like to "shower" Carmen with cards, so please send birthday greetings to: Carmen Walton, #103 Lebanon Towers, 97 Hanover St., Lebanon, NH 03766.

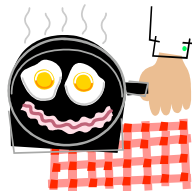
## **EASTER OFFERING ENVELOPE**

If you would like to make a special Easter donation towards the ministry of First Baptist Church, an Easter offering envelope is included for your convenience.

## **PALM SUNDAY FOOTWASHING SERVICE**

*"Then (Jesus) poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet . . . he said to them . . . 'So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.'"*

Plan on joining us for this very moving service on Palm Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM as we wash one another's feet. Please come prepared to participate in having your feet washed as well as in washing the feet of others. Note to Ladies: no panty hose please.



Men's Breakfast  
Saturday, April 11  
7:30 AM  
All Men Welcome!

## **GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE@FIRST BAPTIST**

First Baptist will be having a Good Friday service at 6:30 PM on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. This will be a time of music and meditation on Christ's sacrifice for us. Join us!

## **ECUMENICAL GOOD FRIDAY WALK**

The ecumenical Good Friday Walk will begin at 3:00 at Sacred Heart Church on Good Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. The walk will proceed around the downtown area with readings corresponding to Jesus' journey to the cross. If you are willing to volunteer for readings during the Walk, please see the pastor.

### **NEW ORLEANS MISSION TRIP!**

Plans are underway for a team of young adults from First Baptist to go on a mission trip to New Orleans this summer to do housing work with the Operation NOAH Rebuild project in continuing efforts to repair/rebuild housing in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The dates of the trip are June 13-21. Participants must be 18 or older. If you are interested, please contact Beth Edwards, Derek Dubuque, or Karisa Maynard.

### **RETURN OF THURSDAY MORNING PRAYER**

Why not stop by the church for Thursday Morning Prayer & Bible Study before heading off to work?! The meeting time is 6:30-7:30 AM, the place is the Pellerin Room/church office. Start your day right – join us!

### **EASTER WORSHIP & BREAKFAST**

First Baptist will be holding two worship services on Easter Sunday, with a free Easter brunch in between. We will be having an 8:00 service and a 10:00 service. The free Easter brunch will be held at 9:00. Come to the early service and stay for brunch, or arrive for brunch and stay for the second service! Or join us for all three! Be sure to invite friends & family!

### **EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE**

*“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb.” John 20:1.*

Don't miss the traditional ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service at 6:00 AM in Colburn Park in downtown Lebanon. Start your Easter Sunday the way the first disciples did!

### **LOOKING AHEAD:**

#### **Baby Bottle Benefit Coming**

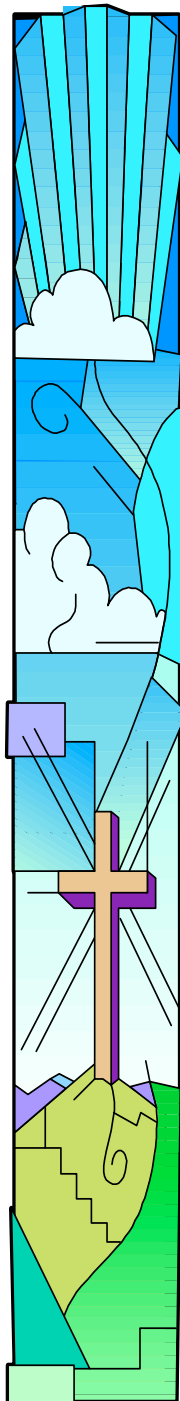
CareNet's Annual Baby Bottle Benefit fundraiser will be held from Mother's Day (May 10) to Father's Day (June 21). Save your loose change – save lives!

**Letter Carriers Food Drive:** The National Association of Letter Carriers

will hold their annual Food Drive on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to leave your donations of non-perishable food items by your mailbox. Donations directly benefit our own Raven Box Food Pantry!



*Women's Fellowship  
Potluck Dinner &  
Purpose-Driven Life  
Study  
Tuesday, April 21 @ 6:00  
PM*



## **Easter Calendar**

### PALM SUNDAY

April 5

10:00 AM Worship & Baptism

6:30 PM Footwashing Service

Please come prepared to participate

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

April 9

6:30 PM Supper Service

Facsimile Passover Meal

Sign Up TODAY!

### GOOD FRIDAY

April 10

3:00 Good Friday Walk-Sacred Heart

6:30 PM Good Friday Service

Music & Meditation on

Christ's Sacrifice for Us

### EASTER SUNDAY

April 12

6:00 AM Ecumenical Sunrise

Service @ Colburn Park

8:00 AM Early Worship Service

9:00 AM Free Easter Brunch

10:00 AM Easter Worship