



Cross and Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church

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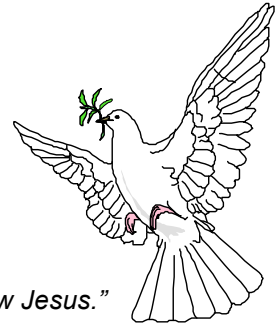
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"Not a perfect church, not a perfect people, just a simple desire to follow Jesus."



Faith: Fickle, Fragile or Ferris Wheel?

Laurie Edwards

Well, fair season is over. I can never get enough of fall fairs. I love fairs, though I have to admit my favorite fair attractions have changed quite a bit over the years. Whereas rides on the midway were the big attraction in my younger days, I now prefer the slower pace of the oxen pull and farm exhibits. I used to be pretty brave about a lot of rides that make me nervous even to watch nowadays. But I have to admit I never particularly cared for Ferris wheels. Going up and around wasn't the problem – it was the possibility of getting stuck dangling in mid-air several stories above the fairgrounds that gave me feelings of panic.

I recently read a novel whose story centered around events of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. The Fair was the site of the first Ferris Wheel. Now, I would have figured Ferris wheels started small and became larger and grander over the years – you know, gradually progressing up to the famous London Eye and Singapore Flyer of modern times. Boy, was I wrong. This guy named George Ferris submitted plans for and was commissioned to design a ride that would outclass the famous Eiffel Tower which debuted in the 1889 World's Fair in Paris. So it *had* to be big. The first Ferris Wheel stood 260 feet tall, had 2 steam engines, and instead of seats, had 36 cars which were designed to hold 60 people each for a total of 2,160 people per ride! This guy must have been a physics genius. And he must have had incredible faith in the laws of physics to design this monstrosity, not to mention faith in his own application of those laws and faith in the contractors he hired to construct it! Yeah, a test run today would have used crash dummies – his trial runs used real people!

Oh, to have that Ferris Wheel kind of Faith! I'm afraid my faith in God isn't always that strong. Instead my faith seems to waiver somewhere between fragile and fickle. Fragile faith is like a piece of fine China – beautiful to look at, but put it through the rigors of daily use and the bottom rack of the dishwasher, and it just doesn't hold up. It comes out cracked and chipped and missing a handle. Fragile faith doesn't hold up under pressure. When the sun is shining and all is well, the "I love Jesus" feeling is easy to come by. But when the pressures and storms of life come up, it collapses, falls apart, is easily crushed.

There's fragile faith, then there's fickle faith. Fickle faith means your mind is easily changed, doubts begin to crowd in. You know the Truth, you've embraced the Truth, but for some reason you're not firmly grounded in it. You're easily swayed by the arguments and beliefs of others. You can sit in church and Bible study and it all clicks and you know it's true, but come Monday morning around the water cooler someone challenges your faith and core beliefs, and suddenly you're not so sure anymore. Someone says "all roads lead to God" and you start to think that maybe that makes sense.

I don't want my faith to be fragile and easily crushed so that I'm easily thrown into despair at the struggles that come my way. Nor do I want my faith to be fickle, so that I'm constantly being thrown into doubt by "every wind of doctrine" – and face it, there's a lot of different breezes blowing around out there! I want to have Ferris wheel faith. Forget the crash dummies – I want to jump in with both feet and trust God and His Word. Jesus once said to a man who needed faith, "All things can be done for the one who believes." Together with that man I say, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:23-24).

CONCERT OF PRAYERS – NOVEMBER 19

Concert of Prayers – Thursday, Nov. 19 at 6:30 PM in the church sanctuary. Come pray with us, and join our efforts to ‘prepare the way for the Lord’ into our hearts, as we enter into the Advent and Christmas seasons. Let us give thanks to the Lord, and recall all the blessings He has bestowed on us this year, as individuals and as a church!

COME TO THE BAZAAR!!!

Our Holiday Bazaar is Saturday, November 7th. Proceeds from the Bazaar go to support our church Food Pantry, helping to buy groceries for the winter months. There’s still time to donate items to sell. We’re looking for donations of White Elephant (yard sale type) items, Jewelry and Craft items, Christmas Tree Ornaments, and Homemade Baked Goods. Deadline for White Elephant items is Thurs., Nov. 5. Other items may be brought in through Friday evening.

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON NOV. 15

Let us Break Bread and Give Thanks Together- November Church Fellowship Luncheon On Sunday November 15, 2009- immediately following church service. Enjoy a meal together of hot soup and homemade bread along with a variety of pies for dessert. Sign up sheet for bringing food items located on bulletin board at rear of church. Questions, contact Doree Clifford @ 603-448-4174.

NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to thank the congregation for all their prayers, cards, and phone calls, as our family grieved the loss of my sister. I truly felt lifted up by the church body. Thank you.

Jim Newcomb

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is in desperate need for knitted or crocheted shawls. These beautiful shawls have been a great blessing to it's recipients. The ministry would like to expand to making lap quilts for men and baby quilts. If you are interested in making lap/baby quilts or need yarn or patterns for prayer shawls, please contact Jeanne Lang at 603-448-0277 or email ibtj2jl@myfairpoint.net. Thank you to all who have been part of this ministry. Thank you to those who are praying and thank you to those

who have made these lovely shawls. I wish you could see the joy on the recipients’ faces when they receive these gifts. Most will express the beauty and labor of love that go into making them. It makes them feel special to be prayed for and loved. *Jeanne Lang*

ISI WOMEN REPORT

12 ladies from our church attended the first New England “Iron Sharpens Iron” **Women’s** Conference on October 17th in Bloomfield, CT. What an awesome experience, to be among a crowd of 3,000 women, all worshipping and praising our Lord together! The keynote speakers were inspiring, and there was a good variety of workshops to attend (14 choices, covering a wide range of topics). It was a wonderful day of bonding with our sisters in Christ, and a great time of encouragement, growth, and blessing for all. Let’s go again next year...with even more women!!

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD COMING!

The Sunday School will be collecting items for Operation Christmas Child through Nov. 15. Small toys, gifts, etc. are needed to fill shoeboxes for children on the mission field. This is really a church-wide effort, and all donations of NEW items would be greatly appreciated. Here are some ideas: School supplies (pens, pencils, crayons, markers, pads, picture books, etc.). Toys (small cars, balls, dolls, stuffies, yo-yos, jump ropes, slinkys, etc.). Other (hard candy, lollipops, mints, gum, t-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, etc.). Thanks for your help!

WHITE CROSS COMING TO FBC

American Baptist’s White Cross is coming back to FBC. White Cross was formed by two American Baptist women in 1919 following the end of World War 11. It has helped thousands since then. We are doing a project for the Friendship House of Peoria; a small financial donation for Liberia; for those who like to sew or things like that, we need: baby gowns, baby blankets, surgical masks, surgical caps, bandages and so forth. We are looking into meeting at the church one Friday night a month to work on the projects. More information to follow in the bulletins, in the mean time if you have questions contact

Lorraine Bickford 632-5651 or email bickford48@gmail.com or see her at church.

FREE CLOTHING GIVEAWAY NOV. 20 & 21!

There will be a free Clothing Giveaway on Friday, Nov. 20 and Saturday, Nov. 21 (that's right – we're adding extra hours this year!). The Giveaway will run from 5:30-8:00 PM on Friday, and 8:30 AM – 12:00 noon on Saturday. **We are looking for donations of gently used seasonal clothing** (sorted by size/gender if possible). Donations may be brought to the church any time after Nov. 7. Anyone is welcome to help out with setup and the giveaway. Sorting will be Thursday, Nov. 19 at 3:30 PM. To volunteer or for questions, please contact Cheril Maynard, 603-632-5820.

GOT GRACE CONCERT @ CLAREMONT

Chad Perron and Calvary Road are two local Christian artists that are coming together at the Claremont Opera House on Saturday, Nov. 14 at 7:00 PM. Cost is \$5 for general admission. Bob Pierce of Light Radio will be emceeing the show. Tickets available at the door or in advance at Claremont Opera House (542-4433) or FBC of Claremont (542-2344).

ABC/VNH REGIONAL OFFERING IN NOV.

We will be accepting a special offering in support of the regional work of American Baptist Churches of VT & NH through the month of November. Special offering envelopes will be available in the church pews during this time. The theme of this year's offering is "If Not Now, When?" Ongoing ministries of our region include: Mission action events & mission fairs, pastoral placements, emergency relief for churches and pastors, Gove Hill Retreat, mediating & resolving church conflicts, and more. Please prayerfully consider supporting this offering.

MOMS IN TOUCH PRAYER EVENT

First Baptist Church of Meriden will be participating in Arise! Cry Out! – a women's worldwide prayer event for children in our communities and around the world hosted by Moms in Touch International – on Saturday, Nov. 14 from 9:00-1:00. The Meriden church is located at 2 Main St. in Meriden. Register online at www.momsintouch.org or contact Sue Jones (469-3376) for more info.

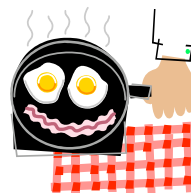
SCOUTING FOR FOOD NOVEMBER 14!

Boy Scouts will be holding their annual Scouting for Food Drive on Saturday, Nov. 14. Scouts will be leaving flyers on doors and then collecting food items on the 14th. First Baptist's food pantry receives a generous donation of food from this event – please generously support our scouts and our community through the drive!

ADVENT BEGINS NOVEMBER 29!

The season of Advent and preparing our hearts for Christmas begins on Sunday, Nov. 29. Special advent devotional materials for all ages will be available on tables near the church entryways as the season approaches.

Fellowship Luncheon
Sunday, Nov. 15
After Church!
Mark Your Calendar



**MEN'S
BREAKFAST**
Sat., Nov. 14
7:30 AM

ALL MEN WELCOME

*Women's Fellowship
Potluck Dinner &
Purpose-Driven Life
Study*
**Tuesday, Nov. 17 @ 6:00
PM**



Shop the
Holiday Bazaar!
Saturday,
Nov. 7
8:30-1:00
Luncheon,
Gifts, Goodies, White
Elephant,
Jewelry & More!

