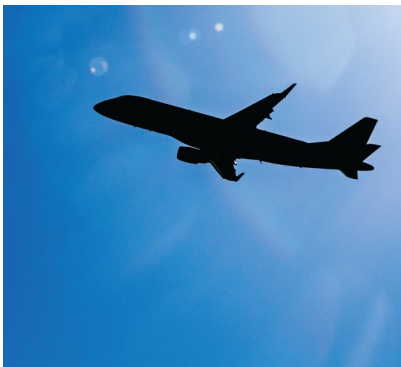


the LINK

First Baptist Church Newsletter



Sunny Side Up

Before the world recently came crashing down, Debbie and I had purchased airline tickets for Arizona. We were excited to see Keith and attend his fiancée's graduation. As you probably guessed, we did not drive to Fort Wayne on May 12 to catch our flight.

I'm not a huge fan of flying. Mainly because of all the before and after stuff involved. What a hassle! Once we're aloft I find most airplane flights fascinating. No matter how nice or how ugly the weather is on the ground, when the airplane gets to a high enough altitude, the sun is usually shining up there. I find that captivating. This unique upper vantage point causes me to think about how our lives tend to be.

Sometimes, our lives are going really well. Everything seems easy and "sunny". At other times things look pretty gloomy. At such times it feels like clouds and rain just persist for days on end. In dreary life circumstances, most of us have gotten caught up in the ugliness.

Our study on Ecclesiastes has demonstrated the importance of adopted God's upper or eternal vantage point. If we try to find meaning or purpose in life apart from the LORD, things eventually turn ugly and bleak. God helps us rise above circumstances. Yes, things might look twisted down here. But we can trust that our loving Creator has a beautiful plan. Keep Jesus in the center and enjoy your life as a tremendous gift.

Les



McFarren Scholarships
Please call or stop by the church office for an application. Details are in last week's Link.
Deadline is June 28.

We give a shout-out to the outstanding job the Christian Education Board has done to help the church in these unprecedented times. Here is a unique ministry for our children.

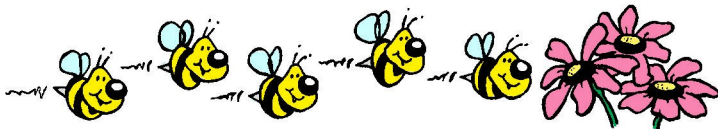
Worship Bags/Papers for Children

As our in-person church services reopen, there will be no Kids' Time nor LOL for now. Children will all be attending worship services with their families until further notice. To assist children with this new experience, the Board of Christian Education is planning to provide "worship bags" for children who normally attend Kids' Time and will provide papers with puzzles and other activities for LOL students. These will be in boxes in the Narthex each Sunday and will be clearly marked so parents know which activity is for which age student. To prevent unnecessary contact between students, the Board is asking parents to get these activities and to not send students to get their own bag or activity paper.

Kids' Time students should do the activities found in their bag and then take everything home with them when church is over. Do not leave anything behind. Everything in the worship bag is for children to keep. LOL students should also take their activity papers home with them after church.

Although there will be no nursery provided, at this time the Board is not planning to provide activities for nursery age children. Parents will need to bring things from home to occupy these children.

Currently, the Board is preparing the activities described above for Kids' Time and LOL students for four Sundays and will evaluate and decide about how to proceed at the end of that time. Parents may want to keep the items in the bags and bring them back to church at a later time when the Board may decide to discontinue making new bags. The Board hopes to have activities ready by May 31 if supplies arrive on time. If not, worship bags will be out as soon as supplies are delivered.



Dear Friends at First Baptist:
Thanks so much for taking the time to be a part of my birthday parade. I was stunned. It was great to see all of you.
May God Bless each of you.
Betty Bynum

Homebound Friends

Christian Care
Mildred Huss—Room 219B
Barb Smekens—Room 217B
Clyde Shady—Room 228B

River Terrace
Eulis West—Room 114
Doris Wolf—Room 102

Home
Ed Goetz
Rose McCormick

Markle Health and Rehabilitation
Larry Gilly—Room 210

Preparing to Worship at Building

The past few months have not been easy. As far as I know, each of you have responded in a balanced and mature manner. Thank you so much for your patience and grace. I'm proud of our deacons. These dedicated men and women have had long and honest conversations about how to navigate the FBC family through turbulent uncharted waters. They have done extremely well.

It is with brilliant hope that we look forward to our first in-person worship service at our building at 10:15 a.m. this Sunday, May 31. The following safety precautions are expressions of love for one another. It's not about us. We do these things to protect brothers, sisters, and guests that we dearly love.

To limit touching door handles, we plan to prop open the Johnson and Cherry Street exterior doors prior to and after our worship service. There will be two stations in the foyer with hand sanitizers, Kleenexes, and face masks. Another sanitizing station will be located in The Gathering Place near the elevator. Everyone is strongly encouraged to wear a face mask. Please wear yours from home if you have one. Wearing a face mask is not for your benefit, but to help others as an expression of love for Jesus.

Our coffee and cookie fellowship is paused temporarily. Round tables in The Gathering Place will be removed for now. The partition-dividers between The Gathering Place and sanctuary will be opened up. Chairs will be spaced out over on that south side for additional seating.

You may pick up a bulletin on the table in the foyer or on the table in The Gathering Place. Ushers will not pass out bulletins. In the foyer you will also find our offering plates. Please put your tithes and offerings in a plate before you find a seat. Or you may still mail your contributions to the church at the 202 W. Cherry Street.

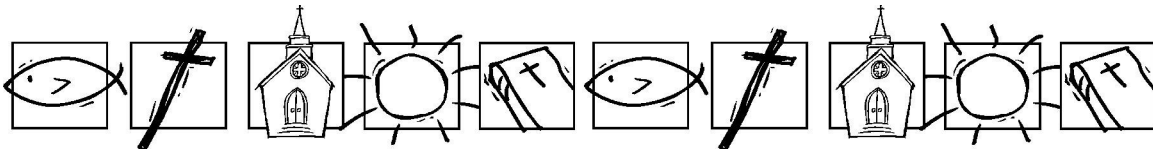
When you walk into the sanctuary or balcony you will notice that some pews are closed off with yellow tape. Please do not enter these pews to sit. These taped off pews help ensure that we keep a recommended distance between us. Fill out your Welcome Card and leave it near where you sit. Staff will pick up the Welcome Cards when our building is thoroughly cleaned and sanitized during the week. After a final prayer Les will dismiss sections of the church separately. This will help limit crowding in our foyer and exits as we depart. If you have to come back into the building after leaving, please use the Cherry Street door.

In regard to our online service, beginning May 31 we will just record and post the message. In a second and separate video we hope to pan the audience at our worship service and record the Scripture reading. We are not posting the entire service because we do not have the required hardware and software at church to record, edit, and post the whole service. We are consulting with Stylus about how much a video upgrade would cost.

That's about all for now. See you soon.

God will richly bless you!

Les





Sunday Worship at 10:15 a.m.

fbcbluffton.com

First Baptist Church

202 W. Cherry Street

260-824-1558



firstbaptist@adamswells.com



First Baptist Church-Bluffton Indiana

Pastor: Les Cantrell

Cell phone: 260-273-9073