

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
P.O. BOX 520
401 S. SECOND STREET
BANGS, TX 76823

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OFFICE ASSISTANT/WEB MASTER: Marsha Zabecki

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Words of Encouragement....

Psalm 115: 1 & 3 – *Not to us, Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory, because of Your mercy, because of Your truth... our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.* [NASB]

In my news article this issue, I am borrowing heavily from a short e-devotional written by Chuck Swindoll (*Insight for Today*, Dec. 10, 2020). It spoke to my heart because it seemed so timely and relevant. I trust it will encourage your heart as well.

I find God's incomprehensibility absolutely refreshing, especially in a day like ours where arrogant politicians prance like peacocks and media personalities crow like roosters. At a time when one-upmanship and human intimidation have become an art form, it is delightful to be reminded anew by the psalmist that "our God is in the heavens" and that "He does whatever He pleases." He doesn't ask permission. He doesn't bother to explain Himself. He doesn't feel the need to say, "May I?" or "Please." He just does as He wishes, thank you very much! After all, He is the Lord... the Maker of heaven and earth, the Alpha and the Omega, the sovereign God of all the universe. The heavens do indeed proclaim the glory of God. The skies do indeed display his craftsmanship (Ps 19:1).

We need that reminder – we who are tempted to think we're capable of calling the shots. We need to be brought down to size – we who feel we've got a corner on our own destiny. How many times does our incomprehensible God need to tell us "My ways are past finding out" (Isa 55:8-9) before we begin to believe it? How often must He prove to us that He is the Shepherd and we are the sheep before we bow and quietly whisper, "Have Thine own way, Lord"? The appropriate response on our behalf to all His power and goodness is: *surrender*.

We're told this in Lk 22:41-42 –

He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." [NLT]

What will it take to bring us to that point of surrender? It's time to stop resisting His plan. It's time for us to lean into Him. Surrender your will... and make *His will* yours. And, the peace will come... in time.

Blessings to you in your journey of surrender.

Bro. Pepper



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER! Any and all dates are subject to change.	
Jan. 1st: New Year's Day, Church Office Closed	March 8th-12th: Bangs ISD Spring Break
Jan. 3rd: No Children's Church	March 9th: Advanced Group Luncheon
Jan. 6th: Deacons' Meeting	March 10th: Quarterly Business Meeting, Building & Grounds Committee Meeting
Jan. 10th: Missions Committee Meeting, Children's Ministry Team Meeting	March 14th: Central Daylight Savings Time starts at 2 am.
Jan. 12th: Advanced Group Luncheon	March 21st: Annie Armstrong Offering
Jan. 13th: Building & Grounds Committee Meeting	March 28th: No Children's Church
Jan. 15th-17th: Youth/Winter Retreat at HOTBCC	April 2nd: Good Friday, Church Office Closed
Jan. 17th: Sanctity of Life Sunday	April 4th: Easter Sunday, The Lord's Supper, No Children's Church, No evening services
Jan. 31st: Teacher Ministry Appreciation Banquet, No Children's Church, Youth Camp Deposit due	April 7th: Deacons' Meeting
Feb. 3rd: Deacons' Meeting	April 11th: Missions Committee Meeting, Children's Ministry Team & Vacation Bible School Training Meeting
Feb. 7th: Children's Ministry Team Meeting	April 13th: Advanced Group Luncheon
Feb. 9th: Advanced Group Luncheon	April 14th: Building & Grounds Committee Meeting
Feb. 10th: Children-Valentines for Bangs Nursing Home, Building & Grounds Committee Meeting	April 25th: Kid's Spring Musical, No Children's Church
Feb. 13th: Valentine's Day Banquet	
Feb. 14th: Valentine's Day, The Lord's Supper	
Feb. 21st: Youth Ministry Team Meeting	
March 3rd: Deacons' Meeting	
March 7th-13th: Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering	
March 7th: No Children's Church	



Don't forget to "Spring Forward" one hour on Saturday night, March 13th before you go to bed! We change back to Central Daylight Savings Time on Sunday morning, March 14th at 2am. Don't be late for church!

STUDENT & EDUCATION MINISTRY NEWS

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!"

(2 Corinthians 5:17, CSB)

These words have a huge impact on 2021! It has been a long time since the people in our nation and churches longed for a new year...a chance to start over...a re-do! Twenty-twenty, in most minds, needs to be wiped from the books.

The reality is though that 2020 will not be wiped from the history books. History is meant to be studied, learned from, and effect change. We have seen the dangers in our own nation of trying to erase the history that we are ashamed of or no longer agree with. If we are not careful, we will be destined to repeat it.

However, the good news is this; that if we are Christ-followers, our history is wiped clean. Paul tells the Corinthian church that if we are in Christ, we are a new creation. Zero-in on that word "new." The dictionary defines "new" as, "not existing before." If we are in Christ, the person we become has been reconciled and resurrected into a new (never before seen) creation! How awesome is that! This should bring great joy to us, because we know how we were prior to our spiritual reconciliation. Our past has been wiped clean. In the video game world when you die, one "respawns" back into the game at a previous save point. My friends, when we come to know Christ we have respawned back into the game; the spiritual battle between good and evil or light and darkness.

While our history can never be truly erased, so too is our past. Yes, we are a new creation, but the Lord allows us to remember the way we were to study, learn from, and effect change in our future. Most often, we call this our testimony—our story. We are left with the memories of a pre-reconciled life to be able to speak Truth to those who see this change in us. Who will you tell your story to this year?

No one can tell us what 2021 will bring. However, if 2020 is any indicator of lessons to learn, don't be surprised by what comes next. Have full assurance in the understanding that if you are a child of God, you are grafted into the Family of God through the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord! And, that folks, is the greatest news for the New Year! Happy New Year everyone!

Seth

Up Coming Events/Dates

Jan. 31 st	Deadline for camp signup and deposits due
Jan. 31 st	Teacher Appreciation Banquet
Mar. 8 th -12 th	Bangs ISD Spring Break



Ladies' Fitness Classes will start up for 2021 on Monday, Jan. 4th at 8 am in the Gym. Ladies of all ages are welcome!

Mondays and Thursdays are Step Classes.
Tuesdays are Yoga Classes.

If you're looking to shape up and have some fun along the way, this just might be for you!
Contact Cindy Boyle at 325-642-5908 for more information.



CHILDREN'S NEWS



FBC LOVES!!!

FBC **L**oves GOD & Loves People! Mark 12:30-31

Obey His Word. John 14:15

Ser **V**es one another in Love. Galatians 5:13

Encourages one another. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Goes & makes Disciple **S**! Matthew 28: 19-20

After teaching on spiritual gifts and the parts of the body of Christ,

Paul teaches on Love. Read this chapter as if you are reading it the first time.

1 Corinthians 13

And yet I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. 12 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. **But the greatest of these is love.**

I pray in 2021, our hearts will be filled with God's LOVE and perfect Peace! "Don't look back, we're not going that way", but look forward and keep your eyes on Jesus! Ask God, "What are you teaching me in this situation and how do you want to use me?" Take every blessing and lesson learned with you into this next year as you remember that:

We can always be still and know that He is God in any circumstance.

The joy of the Lord will always be our strength.

He is with us ALWAYS!

Love is a fruit of the Spirit and is the GREATEST of all!

I love you dearly FBC Family and I look forward to God's plans for us this next year! It is a joy to serve the Lord with you!

May this be our prayer and greatest desire for us individually, as a family and as a church in 2021 - FBC LOVES!!!

Joy

Kid's Choir resumes on January 10th!

Join us for Kid's Choir on Sunday evenings at 6 pm as we prepare for our Spring Musical "I Can Only Imagine".



SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS!! June 27-30 Registration will open soon on the Church website or Facebook page.

