

First Baptist Church of Central Square

701 North Main Street, Central Square, NY 13076

www.fbc-cs.com T: 315-668-2138

Prayer Concerns: Nana, Smith Family, Maggie Heitmann, Morris Reels, Melody Clark, Cheyenne Hughes, Emmie Brooks, Rejina Moore, our nation, our military.

Birthdays:

Karl Backman 1	Emily Schaefer 6	Lynn Cuny 6
Pat Harrington 20	Mark Heitmann 22	Kay Springer 25

Anniversaries:

Maggie & Scott Heitmann 30

Mystery Member:

December's Mystery Member: Meg Biddle

January's Mystery Member hates touching ice cubes, is a member of the Central Square Fire Department, and spent many of his weekends this past summer in Watkins Glen. Can you guess who it is?

IMPORTANT

The church no longer has access to the "juno.com" church email. Please do not use it. Please email Reverend Meg Biddle at meg@fbc-cs.com with and questions or concerns.

Witness Articles

Please send anything you would like published to the email Kahminder@gmail.com by January 26th!

Annual Reports

Your annual reports are due! I need them no later than January 11th. Please e-mail me your report at mnbiddle@gmail.com. If you do not use e-mail, please slide them under my door or put them in my box. -Pastor Meg



Upcoming Events

January 5, 12, 19, & 26

Bible Study (6:30)

January 8

Trustee Meeting

January 10

Diaconate Meeting (6:30)

January 13

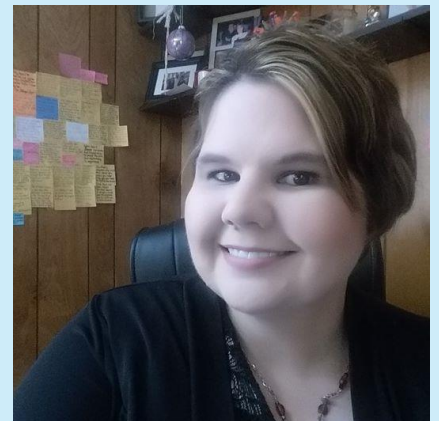
Young Life (6:30)

January 15

Annual Meeting (Carry In)

January 31

Free Lunch (11:30-1)



Free Lunch

This month's Free Lunch will take place on Tuesday January 31st, 11:30am - 1pm. The menu this month will be tomato soup, grilled cheese sandwiches, a homemade soup (to be decided on), chef salad, and blackberry crisp. See you there!

Thursday Bible Study

We will restart our Thursday evening study on January 5th at 6:30 pm. Our group has decided to study faith traditions different than our own. It is important that we make no assumptions, and instead, get answers. We plan to have guest speakers on Thursday evenings when available. We are going to start off with the study of how the Bible came to be, and move to the study of the Jewish faith. January 12th, Andrea Abbott from the First Universalist Church will be joining us to discuss the Universal/Unitarian tradition. All are welcome.

Board of Christian Education Update

The children's (and the adults leading them) hard work paid off with a joyous and enthusiastic Children's Christmas Play on December 11th. Their passionate singing and acting provided the congregation with their uplifting version of the Christmas Story. On December 18th following the annual Christmas Cantata we had a carry-in luncheon during which the Wise Men made their appearance and brought gifts to the children. Everyone appeared to have a very good time.

The annual Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering will be collected on four Sundays starting January 15th through February 5th. Our church's goal for this year will be \$417. Anyone who is not in the area and wishes to contribute to this offering may send their donation to the church. To insure that your contribution is designated to this offering please write "Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering" on the envelope.

Roxanne Spink, Board of Christian Ed Chairperson

Trustee Report

The exterior siding on the north wall of the church was completed in early December. And it looks good! Take a look if you haven't already done so. Insulation was also added. So the fellowship hall and bathrooms should feel a little warmer now. The total cost of the siding, insulation, and labor was \$3340.

We haven't forgotten that the fire and safety inspection needs to be completed. As discussed at the Executive Meeting (I was away on vacation), we will hold off for a time due to finances. We all know, however, that smoke detectors will need to be installed. It is important that we make and keep our church safe.

Things have slowed down significantly and I really do not have much to report for this month's Witness. The annual meeting is Sunday, January 15, 2017. At that time, we will also vote on the new Constitution. Happy 2017 to The First Baptist Church!

Randi Driesen, Trustee Chairperson

Church Officers

Reverend
Meg Biddle

Moderator
Lynn Bort

Church Clerk
Rebekah Springer

Treasurer
Elizabeth Rotundo

Financial Secretary
Grace Fuller

Sunday School Supt.
Misty DeFalco

**WHEN YOU CAN'T
FIND THE
SUNSHINE, BE THE
SUNSHINE.**

Why Christianity Is Like Soap

Someone once asked the legendary evangelist, Billy Graham "If Christianity is so real and valid, why is there so much evil in the world?" To this the famous preacher replied, "With so much soap, why are there so many dirty people in the world?"

Christianity, like soap, must be personally applied if it is going to make a difference in our lives."

Prayer Shawl Ministry

We will begin meeting again on Thursday January 5th from 1:30pm - 5pm or so. We usually meet at Penny Faulter's on Route 49. If there's any question regarding the meetings please feel free to contact Cheryl Backman at 668-2230.

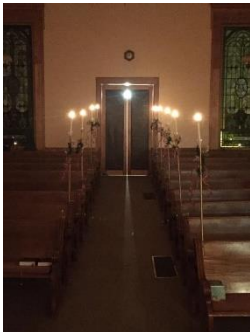
We have been meeting since February 2016 and have made a total of 66 shawls and have given away 56, including 11 lap robes that were sent to the children's hospital in Boston. We also have a request from Wounded Knee Indian Reservation in S. Dakota for needed baby blankets.

Since there is only 4 or 5 of us, we are in need of others willing to help out with this Ministry. Even if you can't meet with us and you can knit or crochet we would appreciate your help with this very blessed ministry. So if you or anyone you know can help us out contact Cheryl Backman. If you are in need of yarn we can help you out with that. Also with the baby blankets they can be sewed instead of knitted or crocheted, so I'm sending out a plea for all you ladies or gents who sew to think about helping with this Ministry. Thank you. God Bless.

Thank You

My family and I would like to thank you all for your Christmas gifts to us. It is very much appreciated, and a wonderful blessing.

-Pastor Meg



Christmas Eve at First Baptist
Photos taken by Rebekah Springer

Through the Eyes of Peter Woodin

By Delores Olin

A continuation...

The year 1987 was groundbreaking for the additions. In spite of many difficulties, the building proceeded. When Reverend Spencer arrived, it was dedicated in 1991.

The "Heart Song" concert drew community interest.

Ruth Spencer and Pat Harrington organized the AB Girls "Rosebuds" – and broad smiles for 150 year celebration!

Pastor Carlson organized the "Praise Band," a community outreach with coffee house. He earned his doctorate while here.



From the Reverend

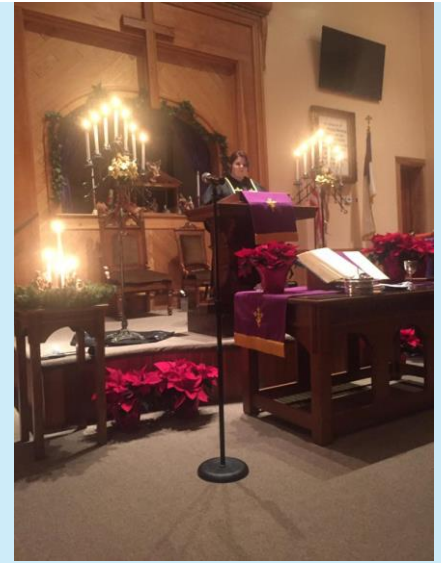
I was quite certain that 2016 was going to be a great year. Maybe for some of you, it was. I am not at all sad to see this year end. My year was less than the great year I had planned. It was not all bad. A new Bible Study was started and I had the honor of baptizing Dakota DeFalco. I was finally Ordained on July 17th, but my dad was unable to be with us due to the multiple surgeries he had on his foot, and the subsequent amputation of a portion of his foot. I am grateful that I had a wonderful support group who stood in his place, and to all who came to celebrate the day with me. I am grateful to those of you who gave money so that I could go back to Indiana and visit him. It was so helpful for me to go back and see that my dad was okay. I attended the funeral of one of my former best friend's mother while there. I never imagined that I would be back in Indiana less than three months later for the funeral of my step-grandfather, George.

When I visited Indiana in July, the kids and I stayed at my Nana and George's house so as not to be a burden on my parents. George loved the kids; he and Aubrey had a special bond. George had taught Aubrey the proper way to pick strawberries from the garden, songs like, "In the Pines, in the Pines, where the sun never shines," and they loved to sit on the back porch and swing together. George and Nana loved each other more than words can adequately describe. George did everything for Nana as her mind continued to slip further and further away. It all seemed rather cruel that they went to bed one night, and he did not wake up the next morning, although I am grateful he did not suffer. I am thankful for the 13 years of happiness they had together. I am forever grateful that on my way out the door in July, I said, "George, thank you for loving and taking such good care of my Nana." Some days Nana forgets that George died, and when she is reminded that he is with Jesus, her grief nearly crushes her. Dementia is a savage beast.

I often remind myself of Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Although, sometimes I find myself wondering just what God's grand plan is, and I know I must be patient. As we move into 2017, I believe God has some great things in store, and that while the year will be filled with highs and lows, it will be a good year. I will begin the three-year Nehemiah Leadership training in January. We will continue the Young Life youth group with other churches in the village, and in the schools, praying that God will give the youth a hunger to know the Lord and become connected with a church. In June, my home church from Indiana will be coming up for a visit, and bringing their fantastic hand bell choir to share with us. I am certain God has wonderful plans for us all, and we patiently continue forward trusting God to reveal those plans in HIS time.

I pray that you all have a Blessed New Year to come.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Meg



Tomorrow, is the
first blank
page of a 365
page book. Write
a good one.

- Brad Paisley

WHEN YOU CANNOT
SLEEP AT NIGHT,
HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT
MAYBE IT'S GOD SAYING
"WE NEED TO TALK AND
YOU NOW HAVE TIME."

EMPTY
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AND LET
GOD FILL
YOU.