



The Barnesville Lantern

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Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105).

The Pastors' Spotlight

Your pastors cannot express too frequently to the members and friends of Barnesville Baptist Church how very grateful we are for the unity and like-mindedness you display as a congregation. The Apostle Paul urged the believers in the church at Ephesus toward unity, *"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all"* (Ephesians 4:3-6).

We thank God daily for each of you and pray for your needs and well being. Paul's prayer for the believers in Ephesus showed a pastor's heart and his yearning that each one should be blessed in a most exciting way. This will be our prayer of prayers for you:

"... I kneel before the Father, from whom His whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3:14-21).

God Bless,

Your Pastors

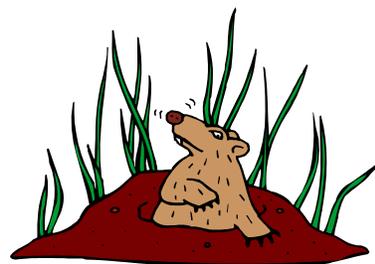


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Upcoming Events

- February 4** Business Meeting
- February 13** Lunch with Watkins Cabinet Friends
- February 14** Valentine's Day Dinner, 5:30 pm
- February 16** Presidents' Day
- February 20** Parents' Night Out



"...He has set a tabernacle for the sun...Its rising is from one end of heaven, and its circuit to the other end; and there is nothing hidden from its heat" (Psalm 19:4-6).

One of the benefits of teaching Sunday School is that you often learn as much as the students you are teaching. Several weeks ago, I was teaching out of *Matthew 18*. After explaining what a parable was, my class read about the disciples' question of who is the greatest in the Kingdom (vv. 1-5), and the story of the lost sheep (vv. 12-14). I usually teach parables by having the students identify all the characters in the story, and then explain the symbolism. In both of these stories, children and sheep are used to represent believers. I thought to myself, "Sheep and children? What's the connection between these two and believers?" There are more similarities than you might think.

Sheep are not numbered among the smartest animals in the world. They excel in getting lost, caught in brambles, and attacked by predators. Sheep depend on their shepherd to keep them together, lead them to safe pastures, and protect them from danger. Similarly, children are dependent on their parents for love, guidance, and protection. Young children are also innocent, trusting, and unconcerned with rank or position.

Taken together, a sheep and a child are good role models to imitate in our walk of faith. Just like a sheep depends on its shepherd and a child relies on its parents, we should put our complete, undoubting trust in our Shepherd and Father, "... [who] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

As we get older, these character traits of humbleness and dependency are often ignored. Like the disciples in the first parable, we worry about our position and rank, try to work our way into God's favor, and pursue our own goals. Jesus reminded His disciples that the Kingdom of Heaven is not about being number one, but rather that entrance is achieved by relying on God's mercy and kindness. We cannot earn our way into God's favor on our own efforts and strength, but we instead must depend on Christ's work on the cross to have fellowship with the Father.

Paul explained to the Christians in Corinth that he had to trust Christ's promise that, "...My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Corinthians 12:9). Paul, despite his "thorn in the flesh", overcame his difficulties and weakness by relying on God for protection and strength, just like the children and sheep in *Matthew 18*. Let us remember that a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly truth, and that taking the lessons from these two stories and applying them in our own lives will bear us much fruit.

Baptist Faith and Message, Part XVII

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

BFM Reflection: "Religious Liberty"

"Upon my arrival in the United States the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; and the longer I stayed there, the more I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this new state of things.

In France I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom marching in opposite directions. But in America I found they were intimately united and that they reigned in common over the same country.

Religion in America...must be regarded as the foremost of the political institutions of that country; for if it does not impart a taste for freedom, it facilitates the use of it. Indeed, it is in this same point of view that the inhabitants of the United States themselves look upon religious belief.

I do not know whether all Americans have a sincere faith in their religion -- for who can search the human heart? But I am certain that they hold it to be indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions. This opinion is not peculiar to a class of citizens or a party, but it belongs to the whole nation and to every rank of society".

--excerpted from Alexis de Tocqueville's observations on the relationship between religious liberty and democratic government in his book, *Democracy in America* (1813).

February Birthdays

- 3 Gary Cooley
Cynthia Westland
- 7 Maggie Cole
Michelle Vasko
- 8 Jeddie DeFries
- 9 Trudy Meissner
- 10 Carole Shreve
- 12 Luke Fedders
- 13 Bill Pleasants
- 20 Janet Magruder
- 21 David Gilliam
- 22 Joshua Holcomb
- 25 Paiten Cole
- 26 Joe Williams



Prayer Concerns

Charles & Dot Fowler
Ben & Laura Bennett
Pat Elam
Annie Cooley
Virginia Shreve, at the Sunrise Retirement Center
Kathleen Cole, Peter & Marva's niece, cancer
Mike Smith, brain tumor
Louis MacNaughton, Ann Carroll's father in Pensacola, Florida, congestive heart failure
Walt Rohwer, nerve disorder
Margie Stream, recuperating from hip surgery
Mike & Debbie Dennis, missionaries in Guatemala
Pastor Joe's eye surgery on 2-12-04
Todd Marsh, back surgery on 2-2-04
Marge Grant, breast cancer
Matt Cole, Lyme disease
Kaitlyn Cole, medical procedure on 2-4-04
Joe Williams, recuperating from wrist surgery
Dale Willis
Our Nation and its leaders
All of our military men and women

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).



"A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing."



Business Meeting Briefs

Report from the Monthly Business Meeting in January:

- The Treasurer submitted his Annual Report on the 2003 fiscal year, and it was approved. The Church had a budget surplus of \$10,495.44 for the year.
- The Pastor appointed the Deacon Body to serve as a Select Committee on Auditing to review the 2003 finances, which will report at the March Business Meeting.
- A motion to consider the installation of a bathroom in the basement was referred to the Internal Administration Committee.
- A motion to consider the steps necessary to install a stair glide lift into the Fellowship Hall was referred to the Internal Administration Committee.
- A motion to consider permanently illuminating the church building at night was referred to the Internal Administration Committee.

Expected at the February Business Meeting:

- The Outreach Committee will report on a motion to consider supporting various ministries and missionaries through the Church budget.
- The Internal Administration Committee will report on the three motions assigned to it at the January Business Meeting.

Baptist Press Cartoon

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



When Pastors Dream

Copied by permission of Baptist Press

News You Can Use

Randy Gilliam

Snow postpones Men's Breakfast. A frigid Alberta clipper blew through Barnesville on January 17 and 18, bringing enough snow and ice to delay Baptist Men's Day and cancel services on the 18th. The breakfast and Men's Day service are rescheduled for February 1.

New prayer kneelers donated. Our good friends at Watkins Cabinet crafted four prayer kneelers that were installed on Jan. 23 and dedicated on Jan. 25. They are positioned in front of the altar rails for use during the morning worship and any other time someone wants to pray. Barnesville extends a big thank you to the men at Watkins Cabinet for this generous gift and hand crafted blessing. Also, thanks to Mary Hurley and Sandy Gilliam for upholstering the kneelers.

Volunteers needed for monthly cleaning. If you have not done so already, please consider volunteering to serve in this ministry opportunity. We rely on our members to help keep the church clean. The signup calendar is located in the foyer.

Lottie Moon offering goal exceeded. Our goal for the Lottie Moon offering this year was \$1100. The final total was \$1482. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this offering for International Missions and helping BBC exceed the goal again this year.

Valentine's Day Dinner. Our church family will celebrate Valentine's Day with a dinner on February 14 at 5:30 pm. The church will provide meat and drinks. Mary Yates will contact members about bringing a dish to share.

New Members Class. Pastor Joe will begin teaching a New Members Class on February 8, 2004. The class will meet during the Sunday School hour and run for 4 weeks. Anyone who is interested in learning more about the Bible and Southern Baptist doctrine is invited to attend.

Up Close and Personal with Lois Carroll

The *Barnesville Lantern* staff recently interviewed Lois Carroll, who is a member of Barnesville Baptist Church and the daughter of Ann Carroll. She is currently a sophomore at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) majoring in elementary education. Lois graduated as valedictorian of Brunswick High School in 2002.

BL: What have you enjoyed most about college?

LC: I think the opportunity to set my own goals and personal demands. There is a lot of "self-learning", especially in being a roommate. I have learned a lot about myself.

BL: What is one important activity you have participated in?

LC: A very important contact for me was with Christian friends and a local church. I have experienced a different kind of worship, i.e. very exciting and a new freedom in worship. This has been a new experience and new music in worship but it has been very comfortable and good.

(continued on next column)

Up Close and Personal with Lois Carroll

(continued from previous column)

BL: You have recently returned from a semester in Europe. When did you decide to go overseas?

LC: I was taking a class on options for the school of education. A new option was a class in children's literature offered in two countries. I was anxious about going abroad at first but when I began to relax, doors started to open and a trip to Denmark and Norway became a reality.

BL: Tell us something about the students you met there and about the class.

LC: This was truly an international class. There were students from 11 different countries and we all got along very well. People were very friendly toward me as an American. But they were against the Iraq war. Communication was sometimes a minor problem, but we managed. Part of the class requirements was to produce a puppet presentation. That was a challenge and it was fun. I learned a lot about story-telling in working with young children.

BL: Did you get homesick?

LC: I stayed too busy to get homesick! Actually I helped others who were very homesick.

BL: What lesson did you learn about yourself when you traveled in Europe?

LC: I learned I can be more flexible and less structured. I have learned "planned spontaneity". Not everyone is as structured as I.

BL: Would you recommend a similar experience to others in college?

LC: Definitely! Just go for the right reasons and be a good ambassador for the U.S.

BL: You got to know people at a church in Oslo, didn't you?

LC: Yes. There was group of young people called the "Jesus Revolution Army". It was started by a pastor in Oslo with a passion for the Great Commission (*Matthew 28:19-20*). The organization does church planting and is now in many cities, truly international. I was challenged by their passion for the Great Commission.

BL: What is in the future for you?

LC: I really want to pray about God's direction and be open to possible opportunities for mission work. My long range goals would be: complete my education, be in the center of God's will for my life, and someday have a family.

BL: Is there anything you would change about your education or background?

LC: I wish I would have been more involved in service activities, especially outreach ministries. I think I would have taken more risks in ministry.

BL: Is there a Scripture verse or quotation that you really like?

LC: Yes. Part of *Philippians 3:8*, "I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord". Also, a quote by John Piper, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him".

BL: Thank you, Lois. God bless you as you return to IUP for the spring semester. We miss you in Barnesville!