



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

January 25, 2006

## Pastors' Reflections

*by Paul Simpson Duke*

I had the privilege this past Sunday of baptizing Nathan Kirchner. At the time, he was 11; by the time you read this, he will be 12. He had decided that his baptism would take place as close to his birthday as possible. He had a sense, apparently, that baptisms and birthdays go nicely together. Both are about newness in life and about family and about growing up.

He and his parents – Matthew and Brandy – had asked if I would help prepare him for his baptism day. I was honored. He and I worked together for four months. I assigned passages of the Bible for him to read each day. We would talk about these when we met. He had questions for me, and I had questions for him. These were good conversations. He is an exemplary young man – inquisitive and open, with a quick smile and a solid sense of character. As he articulates his faith, both his mind and his heart are expressed.

He was already a believing Christian when he and I started. I asked him how long this had been so and he told me it was about as long as he could remember. Knowing his mom and dad, knowing their commitments and how they have raised him, I couldn't be surprised. Having heard him, on more than one occasion, pray in their home, I couldn't be surprised.

The church is part of it too. Matthew and Brandy have been attending here – and serving and leading here – since Nathan was four months old. Many here have known him, taught him, encouraged him, admired him, loved him. The Christian faith he has had for about as long as he can remember was, in good part, absorbed from the nurture he received from the ministries, programs, and people here.

Our attendance on Sunday was swelled by 18 visitors who came to witness Nathan's baptism. They were extended family members and friends, present for the purpose of celebrating him with us. Afterward, there was a lunch: Nathan, Brandy, and Matthew, plus those 18 guests, plus the four Dukes – 25 in all. It was quite a party, and fittingly, before it was done, "Happy Birthday" was sung and birthday cake appeared.

But I was more drawn to something else going on near the end of the occasion. My two little ones had finished their meal and grown restless. We released them from their highchairs so they could walk around the restaurant that was now mostly empty. But there was a continual return, by one or by both, to Nathan. They love him. They have long understood that he loves them. He has always given them extra special attention at church and wherever else he could, and when they're near him, it's like they are magnetized to his good nature and affection.

Do you see where I'm headed with this? The circle that nurtures faith and character continues. The church, along with family, nurtures Nathan. Nathan, so nurtured, nurtures Rob and Charlie. We hope that by grace they will stand in baptismal waters one day and profess as he did, "Jesus Christ is Lord." If so, countless people will have helped them toward that day. Among these will have been anyone in the church who loved them well, including the young Nathan Kirchner.

When someone is baptized here the pastor lays hands on him or her and says: "You are a child of God and a brother (or sister) in the family of Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Spirit fill you and use you as light for this world to the glory of God. Amen." I saw that word become flesh again on Sunday when a newly baptized young man opened his arms -- and his great nurturing smile -- to a little boy reaching up to him.

## ***CHILDREN & YOUTH CHRISTIAN EDUCATION***

Nursery	Room 307	9:30 - 12:30
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*All children are welcomed to worship with their families. After the "Time as Children" portion of the service, preschool – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are invited to Children's Worship.*

*Church School classes begin at 11:00 or when worship concludes.*

Preschool - 2nd grade	Room 202B	11:00 - 12:00
3rd - 6th grade	Room 304	11:00 - 11:50
Younger Youth (7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> )	Room 107	11:00 - 11:50

### ***Children's Music & Arts Ministry***

Jr. Handchimes	Sanctuary	9:15 - 9:45
Grace Notes (preschool - 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade)	Room 305	12:00 - 12:30
Jr. Choir (3 <sup>rd</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup> grades)	Room 102	11:50 - 12:30

## ***ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION***

### **The Birth of a New Religion: Christianity (Lounge) Ron Tipton**

This class will seek to answer this question: How did Christianity come into existence following the short ministry of Jesus? Jesus left his followers with no system of doctrine, no plans, no organization, and no new scriptures. Christianity as we know it was formed over a period of at least 300 years. We hope that our study of this formative period in Christianity will have three outcomes:

- 1) better understand our faith; 2) have greater insight into the New Testament; and
- 3) be better equipped to deal with current problems in Christianity.

### **Becoming a Blessed Church (Library) Stacey Simpson Duke & Sue Ellen Glover**

A study based on the book *Becoming a Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence, and Power*. We will look at what it means to be a "blessed church" and what stands in the way of becoming such a church, especially for mainline congregations. We will discuss simple, basic acts of faith and trust as ways of becoming more grounded in God's purpose, alive to God's presence, and open to God's power.

### **Explorations in Christian Experience Sarah Heidt & Nathan Brown** (for older teens and college-age students)

This class will continue examining the popular arts and media from a Christian perspective. They are currently relating the contemporary film and musical culture to Christian doctrine and spirituality.

### ***Other Adult Learning Opportunities***

#### ***Wednesday Bible Study***

Pastor Stacey Simpson Duke is currently leading a study of Ecclesiastes. Please join us in the Memorial Lounge from 1:30-2:30 p.m. for fellowship, learning and great snacks!

#### ***Women's ChristCare Study Group***

This recently formed group meets Monday mornings from 10:00 - 11:30 in the Memorial Lounge. Please contact Brandy Kirchner (734-753-9880) or Sarah Heidt (734-424-2776) if you are interested, or would like more information. Childcare is provided.

***Small Groups (ChristCare):*** Centered on Bible Study, fellowship, mission, prayer and worship, there are currently six groups meeting once or twice a month. See Stacey, Paul or Sue Ellen for more information about joining a group.



## *FBC News & Happenings*



### **Annual Financial Meeting**

The church's annual financial meeting, at which the congregation receives and discusses reports of the financial affairs of the church and adopts the year's operating budget, will be held at 12:30 p.m. this Sunday, January 29 in the Fellowship Hall. It will begin with a potluck lunch and will be enlivened with singing -- yours! Please bring a dish to share: meat, vegetable, salad, or dessert. Eating utensils and beverages will be provided. Y'all come now!

### **Jesus' Parables**

Copies of *Jesus' Parables*, compiled by Mr. Scott and distributed last year to members of the Wednesday Bible Study Class, will be available to the congregation beginning on Sunday, January 29 at the Information Counter. One per family, please.

### **Volunteer Cooks: Campus Ministry**

If you would like to provide a much appreciated home-cooked meal for "The Gathering" this semester, please sign up at the Information Counter after Worship on Sunday. Instruction sheet provided. Thank you!

### **Vespers**

The next Vespers meal is Tuesday, February 7th. If you are interested in giving Devotionals anytime during 2006, please contact Sarah Heidt at 734-424-2776.

### **Engagement Announcement**

Congratulations to Amy Miloch (Sexton) who recently became engaged to Josh Moll, a chemical engineering student at U of M. They plan to marry in August of this year.

### **Greeters Needed**

We need friendly folks to welcome people to worship on Sunday mornings. This is one of the easiest - and most fun - ways to help out at FBC. Interested? Please sign up at the Information Counter.

### **Newsletter Deadline Schedule (subject to change)**

February 12 \* March 5 & 19 \* April 2, 16 & 30 \* May 14 & 28

## Thelma Elizabeth Burke

Thelma Elizabeth Burke of Ann Arbor, MI, age 95, passed away peacefully on Thursday, January 12, 2006. She was born on December 25, 1910, in Bancroft, MI, the daughter of Blanche (Kittridge) and Delbert Hecox. She was a member of the First Baptist Church in Ann Arbor and the National Secretaries Association. She enjoyed bowling, bridge and knitting. Mrs. Burke worked during WWII as an Inspector at the Willow Run Bomber Plant. She was a secretary in the repair department of Argus Camera and also at U of M School of Nursing, retiring in 1977. She is survived by her loving family, daughter Marjorie Rosentreter of Ann Arbor; four grandchildren, Randy (Janet) Rosentreter of Chelsea, Cynthia Rosentreter of Ann Arbor, Shana Burke of Munith and Kelly (Chris) Rodriguez of Belleville. Also surviving are five great-grandchildren, Joel, Kevin and Timothy Rosentreter, Chauntay Hutting and Rion Rodriguez and sister-in-law Lois Hecox, as well as many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by son Gordon Burke and two sisters, Nellie Meyer, Jeradean Haller and brother Leroy Hecox. Funeral Services were held at the Muehlig funeral home on Monday, January 16. Burial followed at Sanford Cemetery in Cohoctah Township. Memorials may go to First Baptist Church or the American Cancer Society.



***MEDITATIVE KNITTING***  
***A Prayer of Heart and Hands***  
***Led by Stacey Simpson Duke***

Calling all Knitters! (and Crocheters!)

People who work with their hands often experience the calming, centering benefits of such repetitive, quiet work. Approached with an attitude of spiritual attentiveness, such work can become an avenue towards deep meditation and prayer. If you are interested in exploring the possibilities, join us on Saturday, February 18th, in the Memorial Lounge from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Though this is not an instructional class, knitters and crocheters of all levels of skill are welcome. Please bring your own needles and yarn. You may bring a simple project you are already working on; Stacey will also have free knitted dishcloth patterns available (the focus of this gathering is not the project but the process). Coffee, tea, baked goods and childcare will be provided. Please RSVP to [stacey@fbca2.org](mailto:stacey@fbca2.org) no later than Friday, February 17th.



*According to Webster, a "deluge is an irresistible rush of anything in overwhelming numbers, quantity, or volume," and that's exactly what happened when this old gal returned home after a hiatus of two months. There was a "deluge" of messages ~ sentimental, funny, and prayerful ~ from church members and friends. They helped me tremendously. Thank you, thank you one and all ~ big and small.*

*~ Zella Willis*

# NANDASMO CAMPAIGN

As a result of our recent trip to Nicaragua and conversations with the new farm manager, the Nandasmo Task Group is now confident that the vision of a self-sustaining farm project in Nandasmo is a real possibility. Over the past six months, a new egg production business has been developed and is now being implemented. We have already provided start-up funds, but to make this plan a reality we need to provide additional support between now and the end of February when full egg production will be reached. We believe that this will lead to profitability and the real possibility that the farm can begin to sustain the school.

We are asking the congregation to help support this exciting project, and to provide some interim funding to get the school through the first part of this year, by contributing \$8,000. While we will continue to support the church and school through Mission Action's annual gift and the various collections and small-scale fund-raisers we designate for Nandasmo, we expect this to be the last time we come to you for this level of support for the farm. Listed below are some of the items that are needed to meet the goal for both the farm and the school. Please indicate how you will help by using the form below (or you can pick up a copy at the information counter or church office).

To make a gift, designate where you'd like your donation to go below, write a check to "First Baptist Church," (designate to "Nandasmo") attach it to this form, and place it in the offering plate or send it to the office (Attn: Nandasmo Campaign). Thank you!

For the farm:

Chicks	\$5 (or 5 for \$20)	\$ _____
Feeders	\$35	\$ _____
Nesting boxes	\$15	\$ _____
Feed and Medication (100 chicks/week)	\$25	\$ _____

For the school:

Teacher salary/week	\$50	\$ _____
Tuition/books/uniform for one child/year	\$100	\$ _____

TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUTH VALENTINE SALE

It's time for the Youth Valentine Sale - a chance for you to show your love, friendship and appreciation to those in your church family. Now through February 5th, the Youth (and parents) will be selling the blank valentine cards (\$1 each) at tables near the Information Counter and the Fellowship Hall, before and after worship. After you fill out your cards, return them to the Youth, who will compile the cards and deliver each one to your chosen Valentines on February 12, along with a special treat. Remember - everyone will receive a treat from the Youth - what you are purchasing are the cards to express your sentiments, which will be joyfully delivered by the Youth. If you would like assistance in filling out your cards, the Youth will be glad to help. (All profits from this sale will be donated by the Youth to a charity.)

If you are unable to be in church the next few weeks, please call or email Sue Ellen at (663-9376; [sueellen@fbca2.org](mailto:sueellen@fbca2.org))

### *Daily Devotions* by Sue Ellen Glover

I hope that one of your New Year's resolutions was to spend a quiet time each day with prayer and scripture. I'd like to recommend some resources:

Currently we have the *Secret Place* available at the Information Counter. This is published quarterly and is offered in regular and large print editions. (It is also free as a gift from one of our members.)

The Upper Room publishes a book of one-page daily devotions, *Disciplines*, which follow the lectionary so that each week you can read and ponder the scriptures that will be included in the upcoming Sunday's worship service. Each week has a different ecumenical author who are drawn from ministries throughout the world. The books are currently priced at \$8.80 and I would be glad to order one for you. Please let me know.


I have also found two online devotional websites that I would like to recommend. The website of the American Baptist Churches, USA, ([www.abc-usa.org](http://www.abc-usa.org)), is offering daily/weekly devotionals focusing on discipleship. Staff from American Baptist regions, national boards, agencies, and institutions have agreed to develop the weekly themes by writing daily devotionals to coincide with the weekly themes. Thus, this is a project written by American Baptists for American Baptists focusing on themes deemed to be important to American Baptists. <http://www.abc-usa.org/devotional.htm>

Another website is my favorite, even though it is written for teens and young adults. "d365" devotional series (<http://www.d365.org/>) seeks to provide reflections on themes that impact our faith journey by creating a quiet space for contemplation and prayer. The site is interactive and I highly recommend it to middle school, high school and college students (as well as adults).



# February 2006



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering	2 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	3	4
5 Communion 12:30 Recruitment Committee	6 10:30 Women's CC	7 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Bd. of Evangelism	8 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Davis/Diels	9 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	10	11
12 Newsletter Deadline	13 10:30 Women's CC 7:00 Bd. of Worship 8:00 Bd. of Mission Action	14 	15 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering	16 11:45 MacGregor-Stitt (lunch @ Sheraton) 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	17	18 10:00 Meditative Knitting
19	20 10:30 Women's CC	21 1:00 Waterman-Chapman 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Bd. of Trustees	22 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Davis/Diels	23 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	24	25
26	27 10:30 Women's CC	28 9:30 Bd. of ABWM				

## February Birthdays

Vicky Rushton	2	Conrad Juchartz	7	Ed Voss	22
Mary Lou Hallock	4	Grace Aaron	10	Beth Foster	22
Doris Fraker	4	David Moehring	13	Linda Halsey-Ames	24
Lauren Bowen	5	Henry Griffin	14	Ginny McKeachie	27
Renee Alton	5	Laura Barbour	16	Katharine Drake	27
Carolyn Blue	6	Ahnon Kerschbaum	19	Ron Rinker	27
		Emily Kiver	20		

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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors

Dated material:

Wednesday, January 25, 2006

Next Deadline:

Sunday, February 12, 2006

## ***Green Lake Information Available***

Green Lake Conference Center (American Baptist Assembly) is a beautiful year-round Christian conference center set on the deepest lake in Wisconsin. The Mission Statement reads: *"We welcome all to a Christian environment of natural beauty, hospitality and acceptance. Through experiences of training, worship, fellowship and recreation, people are refreshed, renewed and transformed for their journey of life and service."*

Conferences offered this summer include: The Family Life Celebration Week, Holy Spirit Renewal Conference, the Conference for Church Musicians, The National Women's Conference and the World Mission Conference – all in JULY! August includes the Green Lake Spiritual Growth Conference and the writer's conference.

Scholarships are available and booklets are available at the Information Counter.