



MIXON'S MUSINGS

Dear Friends,

These last couple of weeks have been quite busy for me as I attended the annual meeting of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in St. Louis and the biennial gathering of the American Baptist Churches-USA in Omaha. Both events were timely, informative, and moving at points. I heard some great preaching, attended some excellent workshops, ate too much rubber chicken, and touched base with many friends and colleagues. I also took the opportunity to talk to folk about First Baptist Ann Arbor – what a great church you are in a great university setting. I assured anyone who would listen that this would be a great place to pastor. I want you to know that there is interest among potentially outstanding candidates.

Part of next week I will make my way to Wayne State University for the annual meeting of the Hymn Society. I attended this gathering a number of years ago when it was held in Berkeley, CA, and I promised myself that someday I would go again. It was a wonderful time of singing, learning about hymns old and new and making music in general.

At the end of the month we will host my dear friend Brian Henderson, Executive Director of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists. Brian will preach and afterward lead a conversation on what it means to be an AWAB congregation. I know you will appreciate Brian's wisdom and grace. This Sunday, July 13, we will focus on Colossians 1:1-14 with a sermon titled "Worthy Living" and the 20th we will consider Hebrews 11:1-3, 39-12:2 with a sermon titled "We've Come this Far by Faith."

Worship in the Fellowship Hall has gone well overall. I am grateful to Kat, Xan, and Bob Kidd for working out the kinks. Thank you to all of you for your flexibility when the summer has been so hot. It's great to meet with you wherever we find ourselves!

Blessings on us all in this time of transition,

Pastor Rick



From the Interim Transition Team (ITT)

Dear FBC Family,

Two weeks ago, we shared our [Church Profile](#) for your review. Thank you to everyone who joined the Zoom call and contributed feedback for the final version. As a reminder, the profile reflects months of collaboration between the Interim Transition Team (ITT) and our congregation, offering pastoral candidates insight into our church's history, current state, and future aspirations. This document will guide potential leaders in discerning their call to serve us. We're now ready to pass it to the Pastoral Search Committee.

Your dedication has been invaluable, and as we reach this milestone, we look forward to the journey ahead together!

Yours in Christ,

Paula Burton, ITT Chair; Kat Becker, Bill Foster, Sue Ellen Glover, Rick Mixon, Robbie Stapleton, David Suell

[Check out the profile!](#)

From the Pastor Search Committee (PSC) The Pastor Search Committee

(PSC) met on Monday, July 7. We are nearing completion of compiling the needed documents to post the pastor position with American Baptist personnel services. We hope to send in the documents to our region rep by July 11. Once the position is posted with our denomination, we will decide on some additional places to post so we reach a wide range of clergy seeking a new place of ministry. The PSC is also working on some rubrics and a process for interviewing candidates. It's exciting to see the process unfold! Our group works very well together sharing a wide variety of perspectives and ideas, but able to reach solid consensus. Thank you for your prayers and your trust in us!

L.J. Brazier, Toni Burton, Bill Foster, DJ Reed, Gretchen Sanewsky, Julie Smith, David Suell



FBCA2 Teens are off to Camp Christian! We invite you to pray for Alice VanderVliet, Emmanuel Morgan (and his friend, Chase!), and Asher Morgan while they are at church camp this week. Please also pray for our middle schoolers who will be there next week - Ingrid VanderVliet and Piper Morgan. Interested in sending the middle schoolers a note while they are at camp? Here

is the address: 10335 Maple Dell Rd, Marysville, OH 43040.



Art Fairs Parking Lot

We have at least five artists who will rent spaces in our lot during the Art Fairs this year (July 17-19). The artists will arrive to set up their booths on Wednesday, 16th. On Thursday – Friday, when we have volunteers, we will rent out parking spaces to shoppers. Last year, with only four volunteers working from 8am – 3pm, we were able to raise \$2000 which subsidized expenses of the Hikone household supplies collection and the Daytime Warming Center (for winter clothing and health supplies).

We currently have four volunteers but would love to have more! Shifts are for two hours: 9:00 – 11:00 am, 11:00 – 1:00, 1:00 – 3:00). Volunteers will greet each car and explain the cost and take their money – or explain that the lot is full. Volunteers will also receive a free spot to park if they wish to shop before or after their shift.

Contact [Sue Ellen](#) if you have questions or would like to volunteer [734-646-2639].



Pizza in the Park! Join us Tuesday, July 22nd for a midsummer, intergenerational gathering of dinner and connection at County Farm Park from 5:30-7:30p. We'll have pizza, fruit, and drinks. Bring a lawn chair if you'd like! [Please take a moment to RSVP](#) so that we can prepare accordingly. Questions? Connect with [Xan Morgan](#) or a member of the Board of Christian Ed.

On Sunday, July 27, we will welcome the Rev. Dr. Brian Henderson to our pulpit. Brian is the Executive Director of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists. After worship we will have an opportunity to engage Brian in conversation about what it means to be an AWAB congregation. Everyone is encouraged to participate in this exploration.

Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists. The mission of the [Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists](#) is to create and support a community of churches, organizations and individuals committed to the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in the full life and mission of Baptist churches.



The Rev. Dr. Brian Henderson is an ordained American Baptist minister who has served three congregations over 25 years. Brian has worked with the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists' Board and Staff since 2019 before beginning as full-time Executive Director in 2024. Outside of his ministry responsibilities, Brian loves traveling and spending time with his three (nearly) young adult children.



Habitat for Humanity FBC Workday. The 2025 house is located at 1015 Gault Drive, Ypsilanti. Our Friday workday is August 1st. The FBC volunteers will work with another congregation to provide labor and perhaps lunch that day. If you have the time and wish to volunteer during the week go to the Good News house website: H4H.org/goodnewsgroup for home page and H4H.org/goodnewsvolunteer for signing waivers.

As in past years, our congregation has also committed financial support to the project. We are asking you to contribute as you have in the past to aid this effort to provide affordable housing in our community. We have committed to raising \$2500 in 2025. Checks can be written to FBC, with H4H in the memo line. Reach out to [Scott Diels](#) if you have any questions.



FBCA2 at Ann Arbor Pride! As a Welcoming and Affirming church, we have a commitment to offering a counter-witness to the messages of condemnation, exclusion, rejection, and even hatred the LGBTQ+ community has historically received from churches and from Christians. We'll be hosting a table at Ann Arbor Pride on Saturday, August 2 between 12:00p and 9:00p to help offer a public witness to love and welcome for all, especially for those who have not felt welcomed elsewhere. [Sign up here](#) to help host! All are invited to stop by our FBCA2 tent and spin the gift wheel!



American Baptist Home Mission Societies

American Baptist Home Mission Societies issued a pastoral response to federal deportations July 3, saying the denomination will not back down from ministry. "The Church as Refuge: A Pastoral Response to Mass Deportations"

is a brief letter to the congregations and people of the American Baptist Churches USA signed by Jamie Washam, president of the ABHMS board of directors, Trevor Hyde, vice president of the ABHMS board of directors, and Jeffrey Haggray, ABHMS executive director.

The letter states:

For generations, American Baptist Home Mission Societies has responded to Christ's call to welcome the stranger and walk with those on the margins. Our ancestors in faith sojourned vast distances, fleeing famine and war and seeking refuge in other lands. Scripture teaches us how to care for one another. "Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among you in your land. Treat them like the native-born among you and love them as you love yourself. Remember that you were once foreigners living in the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus 19:33-34)

Since 1948, our Refugee Resettlement ministry has helped more than 93,000 individuals find safety, hope and new life in the United States. We write to you now out of deep concern for the well-being of our immigrant neighbors and the sanctity of the local church.

"We write to you now out of deep concern for the well-being of our immigrant neighbors and the sanctity of the local church."

Recent actions by federal authorities have escalated mass deportation efforts, often through expedited removals that sidestep due process. These measures are sowing fear in communities across the country, placing families at risk and undermining the fundamental values of justice and compassion that we hold dear.

As American Baptists, we affirm the sacred nature of our houses of worship. Churches are places of prayer; our sanctuaries are also places of refuge, mission and ministry. The presence of immigration enforcement officers in or near these spaces, without consent or proper legal oversight, threatens both the spiritual safety of those who gather and the religious liberty that our nation guarantees to all.

We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to our immigrant siblings:

- *We will continue to offer pastoral care, accompaniment and advocacy for immigrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and those facing deportation.*
- *We believe churches and other sacred spaces must be protected from enforcement actions unless due process is followed and the community consents.*
- *We urge the federal authorities to honor and expand the sensitive locations policy, which protects houses of worship.*
- *We support legal advocacy groups working to uphold the rights of immigrant and refugee individuals and congregations.*
- *We call on American Baptists to speak with their elected officials and advocate for policies safeguarding families and preserving religious*

freedom.

We also encourage pastors and church leaders to educate their congregations and to prepare for encounters with immigration enforcement in ways that reflect the gospel's call to hospitality and courage.

ABHMS will continue to monitor federal policy and enforcement developments, provide resources and guidance, and elevate these concerns through our Justice Dialogues and public witness. We are committed to ensuring that no person of faith must choose between their safety and their sanctuary.

We ask for your prayers, prophetic voice and faithful presence. We encourage our fellow American Baptist individuals and congregations to discern their particular role as a sanctuary, ally, advocate or pastoral presence in the broader movement for immigration justice.

May we live out our calling to be people of welcome, justice and fearless love.

CONGREGATIONAL NOTES

CHURCH BOARDS AT WORK

**Look here for how our boards are leading us
in being the church together.**

Board of Outreach Updates

Greetings from the Board of Outreach! We have been working towards improving our welcoming and accessibility, which includes the following:

- Adding railings to the chancel to make it more accessible
- Placing signage outside of Huron St. entrance to indicate an accessible entrance on Washington St.
- Adding wayfinding signage near and within the elevator

We are also addressing the church's visibility and safety with the following:

- Large signs on both sides of the church

- Prominent entrance and exit signs for the parking lot

We would like to acknowledge the expert assistance of Scott Diels and Lee Foley regarding the chancel railings and also thank Frank Yan for his valuable help with the signs. Our church is blessed with talented and committed individuals!

Lastly, our board is open to any suggestions from our fellow congregants for ways to expand and optimize our outreach. Feel free to speak to any of our board members.

Cesar Alaniz, for the Board of Outreach

Members: Larry Bates, Cat DaSilva, Lex DaSilva, Sam Laidlaw, Xan Morgan, Gretchen Sanewsky



support those affected by the floods



In response to the disaster in the Texas Hill Country, the Mission Action Board is calling the congregation to support two efforts taking place to help those affected by the floods. The first is the Kerr County Flood Relief Fund and the other is the ABCUSA One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. Donations can be given to the church with the note: "Texas Flood Relief." Donations will be matched by the Mission Action Board up to \$1,000.

For more information about the Kerr County Flood Relief Fund go to: https://cftexashillcountry.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/create/fund?funit_id=4201.

And for One Great Hour of Sharing, go to: <http://abc-oghs.org/>.

Thank you for the prayers! Julie Smith's aunt & uncle were forced to evacuate their home due to the wildfires in Manitoba, and we added Peg & Joe Bradford to the prayer list. They sent a message to thank everyone for the prayers and to let folks know they were home safely.

"Great drive. We can never thank those who protected our town enough. No homes or businesses were damaged by the fire. Thanks for your prayers because they were answered. Let your church family know how much we appreciated their prayers. THANKS 🙏"

Look at all the fun the Elementary kids and our teen counselors had at Church Camp last week!





PRAYER REQUESTS. Praying together is a core element of our life together. Each Sunday during worship (10:00a on our [Facebook page](#), [YouTube channel](#), and in person), we pray for those we know to pray for by name during the Prayers of the People. You are invited to share prayer requests/praises using [this form](#).

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE AND DEADLINE. The next newsletter will be Thursday, July 24. Deadline for submissions is Tuesday, July 22.



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