

# The Messenger

A Monthly Newsletter of First Baptist Church of Rochester

July 2017  
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[www.fbcrochester.net](http://www.fbcrochester.net)

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## PASTOR'S COMMENTARY

We are learning that many people who consider themselves followers of Jesus and engage a Christian spirituality are beginning to ask the question, "Why do we need church?" They've grown weary of slow moving polity, they feel mired in rigid dogma, stuck in tradition for tradition's sake, and assaulted by controversy. There is no shortage of reasons to be frustrated with church. Even life-long, committed church people know that to be true. "What's the up side?" is the question posed now. If being a part of a congregation comes with so much struggle, what is there to make it worthwhile?

Protestants are at a particular disadvantage in answering that question. The church, in the view of most, does not impart grace; God alone does that. If God is as accessible in one's own living room, or in the mountains, or on the lake, or on a ball diamond as it is in a church building, why bother with an old and frustrating institution?

The Pastor of the First Congregational Church of Dubuque, Iowa, Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, answers that question in part by pointing out that church is where you can go and to be with people who may reflect God back to you but not in your own image. Church is where ideas are challenged, assumptions are put to the test, and our understanding of God is filtered through a web of diverse humanity. We could camp here and wax on about the importance of church for some time, but for the moment I'd like to suggest that many churches are asking a similar question to that being asked by the so-called, "spiritual but not religious."

Everything individuals have said of their frustration with church has also been said by congregations whose affiliation is with denominational structures. They're complicated, bureaucratic, slow moving, and have lots of rigid rules. Why on earth would a congregation choose to spend time, energy, and resources (all in short supply in today's climate) staying in relationship with a frustrating denominational body? Can't we just go it alone!?

These questions are magnified in the Baptist world wherein congregations are already autonomous and theoretically *could* go it alone with few consequences compared to our more hierarchical sibling traditions. Given that I am writing this a few hours before getting on a plane to Portland, Oregon and by the time you read this, I will be waist-deep in a brand-new-to-me denominational structure at the 2017 Biennial Mission Summit of the American Baptist Churches USA, I have found a few reasons to stick with denominational affiliation. Chief among my reasons is one given by Dr. Daniel and retrofitted for denominations and congregations where he shares that being in relationship with a denomination is the way for congregations to have God reflected back to them in an image other than their own.

ABC USA is one of the most diverse denominations on the planet, spanning spectrums of almost all imaginable demographic and theological categories. There is no better place for a Baptist congregation to experience God in many of God's varied expressions than to gather with others of ABC USA. We will encounter (or have encountered) those who have viewpoints we agree with which will embolden us in our witness and action. We will also certainly encounter those whose perspectives we disagree with. We will be challenged to reconsider and either strengthen or alter our belief. We will be stronger for the exchange. Some who have had experiences we could not even imagine will cross our paths and their stories will broaden our worldview. Some whom we've known for years, but haven't seen in a long time, will gladden our hearts with fondness. If we are committed to participation, our presence, too, will do the same for others. Aren't you glad we've all come to Portland!

OH.

You haven't.

Well, that's ok. You can follow along with us if you aren't already. Our dedicated FBCR delegates have agreed to help me keep you posted on the myriad experiences we will have via a live blog. Join us in Portland by reading along and commenting by following this link.

<http://www.irrevbrent.com/biennial>

(you can also link to the blog through the church website's home page at [www.fbcrochester.net](http://www.fbcrochester.net) and periodical email updates will also be sent to those on our email mailing list.)

I'll see you soon back in Rochester!

Our Delegates:

Rose Welch  
Ivan Marable  
Marcia McCarthy  
Lynn McClellan  
Tasha Wilson, member ABC Board of General Ministries  
Brent Bowden, Pastor FBCR

Also in attendance from FBCR: Alan Newton, RGR Region Executive Minister

*Pastor Brent*



## SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Friday Nights = 6 PM, Free and open to the public - Donations Accepted to benefit the Clover Center and various charities including: RAIHN, Cameron Community Ministries, Fairport Baptist Homes, Brighton Churches Coalition for Habitat for Humanity, and the Brighton Food Cupboard.

Brenda & Kevin Nitsch  
(Show Tunes), July 7

Main Street East Band  
(Classic Rock), July 14

Sam Nitsch (Indie-pop)  
July 21

Finely, Music on the Move  
(Dixieland), July 28

# OUR COMMUNITY

Reaching out to Others

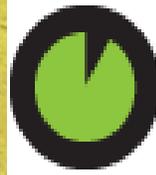


**Brighton Food Depot:**

July needs are:

## Peanut Butter and Spaghetti Sauce

The Brighton food depot is asking for peanut butter and pasta sauce again in July. We were shy of our goal of 100 in June. Thank you for your caring spirit and generosity for those in need.



# One Great Hour OF SHARING

Contributions give support in many forms both internationally and here at home.

### International Relief:

Flood  
Hurricane/Cyclone  
Tornado  
Earthquake  
Refugees  
Asylum Seekers  
Civil Conflict

### Aid to Baptists Churches in the USA

Iowa – Flood  
Indiana – Storms  
Kentucky – Tornado  
Michigan – Flint Water Crisis  
Nebraska – Arson  
New York – Plant shutdown  
Oklahoma – Flood and Tornado  
South Carolina – Hurricane Matthew  
Various – National Disaster Responses

If you have not yet contributed but wish to, please send your donation to the church office as soon as possible. Our collection to date is \$1,300 which is very generous but just short of our goal of \$1,500.

Thank you.

## MISSION MINUTE

Kim Mansfield

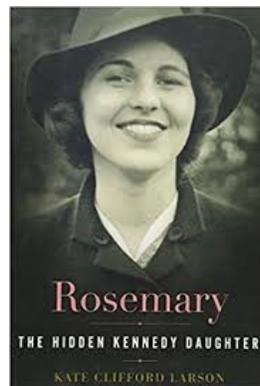


### ORPHANS IN HAITI HELPED

This spring, the First Baptist Church of Rochester Missions' Committee sent \$700 to the House of Bread Ministry in Les Cayes, Haiti. These funds will help orphans in Haiti. We received a thank you letter from local missionaries, Kim and Toby Mansfield, who spoke at Eldergarten in February, 2017. They said, "The people of Les Cayes, Haiti have received a record amount of rain and once again are flooded only six months after the devastating floods produced by Hurricane Matthew. These poor people are facing severe hunger in the months to come. Your financial support means so much to them. God has called us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and your church is a great example of this Christian love." Kim and Toby are affiliated with St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Wilson, NY.

To see some of these beautiful Haitian children:  
[http://www.stpaulslutheranwilsonny.com/St.Pauls\\_Church/OUR\\_HAITI\\_MINISTRY\\_26\\_Page\\_1.html](http://www.stpaulslutheranwilsonny.com/St.Pauls_Church/OUR_HAITI_MINISTRY_26_Page_1.html)

## JULY BOOK CLUB



The FBC Book Club will meet on the fourth Tuesday, July 25 at 11:30 AM in the church library. The book for discussion is *Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter* by Kate Clifford Larson. This book reveals medicine's lack of mental health expertise a half-century ago and one family's struggle to find a "cure." Everyone is welcome.

# GOINGS ON

## OCCURRENCES OF INTEREST

**Friday, June 30 - Sunday, July 2**

ABC USA Biennial - See Pastor's Commentary pg. 1

**Sunday, July 2, 2017**

Worship, 10:00 AM

Fellowship, 11:00 AM

**Tuesday, July 4, 2017**

Office Closed

**Wednesday, July 5, 2017**

Christian Education Meeting 1:30 PM

Adult Forum Meeting 2:30 PM

**Friday, July 7, 2017**

Brenda & Kevin Nitsch (Show Tunes) at The Clover Center for the Arts & Spirituality, 6:00 PM

**Sunday, July 9, 2017**

Worship, 10:00 AM

Fellowship, 11:00 AM

**Monday, July 10, 2017**

Welcome & Affirm Meeting, 7:00 PM

**Wednesday, July 12, 2017**

**CALENDAR MEETING & MEAL**

6:00 PM. Pulled Pork with salads and dessert. Sign up please. Everyone is welcome!



**Friday, July 14, 2017**

Main Street East Band (Classic Rock) at The Clover Center for the Arts & Spirituality, 6:00 PM

**Sunday, July 16, 2017**

Worship, 10:00 AM

Fellowship, 11:00 AM

**Monday, July 17, 2017**

Council Meeting, 6:00 PM

**Friday, July 21, 2017**

Sam Nitsch (Indie-pop) at The Clover Center for the Arts & Spirituality, 6:00 PM

**Sunday, July 23, 2017**

Worship, 10:00 AM

Fellowship, 11:00 AM

**Monday, July 24, 2017**

Jubilee Planning Team Mtg., 6:00 PM

**Tuesday, July 25, 2017**

FBC Book Club, 11:30 AM

**Friday, July 28, 2017**

Finely, Music on the Move (Dixieland) at The Clover Center for the Arts & Spirituality, 6:00 PM

**Sunday, July 30, 2017**

Outdoor Worship, 10:00 AM

Fellowship, 11:00 AM

# ROCHESTER GAY PRIDE PARADE

COME AND CELEBRATE GAY PRIDE

The Welcoming and Affirming Committee of First Baptist Church will be marching in the Rochester Gay Pride Parade on Saturday, July 15, 2017. We will be with other Welcoming and Affirming Churches in Rochester behind the banner announcing "American Baptists in the Rochester Genesee Region."

Come join the parade or be a spectator anywhere along the parade route: Park Avenue from Alexander Street to Culver Road. Then it is a short walk to the Pride Festival in Cobbs Hill Park. Line-up begins at 12:00 PM and step-off is 1:00 PM.

For more information: Marge Forth at mforth@rochester.rr.com.

## WESTERN NEW YORK PEACE MINI-CAMP

VULNERABILITY AND HOPE

Western New York  
**PEACE CAMP:**  
*vulnerability and hope*



**Friday and Saturday, September 8 & 9, 2017**

**Greece Baptist Church**

**1230 Long Pond Road, Rochester, NY**

### Speakers:

Dr. Marvin McMickle, President of Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School

LeDayne McLeese Polaski, Executive Director of Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America

### Program:

- Inspiring worship, speakers, and music
- Workshop dealing with vulnerability and hope in four different contexts: race, aging, special needs, and being peacemakers in a divisive political climate.
- Age-appropriate activities for children
- Time to relax and share

### Cost:

\$32 for adults, \$12 for children through high school. Cost covers registration, fees, Friday dinner, and Saturday lunch. Scholarships available. Deadline August 31, 2017.

### Contact:

Marilyn Thrall: MarilynTatGBC@gmail.com

Church Office: (585) 225-6160