



## Cross & Spire

Newsletter of First Baptist Church

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*"Not a perfect church, not a perfect people, just a simple desire to follow Jesus."*

### Upcoming Events:

*Women 2 Women,  
Saturday, June 3 at  
2:00pm*

*Men's Breakfast,  
Saturday, June 10 at  
7:30am*

*Baby Bottles due  
Sunday, June 18*

*Prayer Meeting,  
Wednesday, June 21  
at 7:00pm*

*Community  
Appreciation BBQ &  
Worship Service,  
Sunday, June 25 at  
10:00am*



#### A Word from Pastor Rick

Jesus said some alarming things. For instance, he said, "Blessed are you whenever people hate you and exclude you and insult you and defame you for the sake of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy; for behold your reward in heaven is great. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets.....Woe to you when all people speak well of you because this is how they treated the false prophets."

I guess this has always been a hard saying, but it is particularly hard for Americans in the 21st century to accept. Besides the obvious difficulty handling the opposition of our peers we live in a world dominated by marketing. Please don't misunderstand me. There is a good a proper role for marketing in any business. People need to know what goods and services are available to them and be able to make a responsible choice about them.

However, the science of Marketing has some assumptions and methods that should never transfer to Church ministry. There is a principle in marketing: the customer is sovereign. What this means is that in business we must begin with the needs and tastes of our target audience and adapt our product and services and methods to them. In business this is self-evident and as long as it is honest, I can see nothing wrong with it.

But it is very different with our responsibility for making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20), or being witnesses to the world (Acts 1:8). Paul tells us that we should adapt to culture, ***within the limits of the stated will of God*** (1Corinthians 9:19-23). He calls this limit, "subject to the law of Christ."

We cannot adapt our message. We are given commands about our ministry that we dare not alter. There is increasing pressure within the church to adapt even in these areas because some Christians have this marketing mentality and think that in order to grow both the Church and its message needs to be popular with its audience. Anyone who says that has never carefully read the book of Acts. The message spread rapidly and with great power but the evangelists got run out of almost every town. In the first 300 years of the Church's existence the Gospel spread like a flame; but Christians were universally despised for their strict moral commitments, their exclusive claims for Christ and their uncompromising commitment to spreading their message.

Anyone who thinks this also has not been paying attention to God's work in the world. In 1948 missionaries were kicked out of China and persecution of Christians became official. Since then the church has been growing underground. Now the nation with the most Christians in it is China. The Church is growing rapidly in Africa and South America against opposition. In the USA there has been little that could be called opposition to our work here, but neither has there been growth in numbers or influence. We see increasing animosity in some circles and the reputation of Christians is not what it used to be in this country, but our brothers and sisters around the world are dying for their faith.

The relationship between opposition and growth is all very predictable. Just look at what Jesus tells us. We should rejoice at opposition because we will be rewarded very well; but also because that is how God's prophets, his true spokesmen, were treated. We can tell when we are on the right side when we experience opposition. Jesus says being popular is a sign that we are "false prophets." False prophets spoke in God's name, but their basic message was, "What you are doing and thinking is right and God will bless you for it." You can see why they were universally popular. But they incurred the active opposition of God and so disappeared from the scene. While the true prophets were persecuted, but their message and ministry was blessed by God so it survived and reached the world.

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We shouldn't walk around making trouble and stirring up opposition by being contrary and rude, but Jesus' words make two things clear: opposition to our message, lifestyle and ministry is a sign that we are God's representatives. Universal popularity is a sign of compromise.

#### **MEN'S BREAKFAST**

The next Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday, June 10 at 7:30am. We hope to see you there! Please see Jim Newcomb or Chris Scholtz for more details.

#### **WOMEN 2 WOMEN**

The next Women 2 Women will be held on Saturday, June 3 from 2-4pm. We hope to see you there! Please see Karen Scholtz for more details.

#### **PRAYER MEETING**

Please join us on Wednesday, June 21 at 7:00PM for a time of prayer. This is open to all in our congregation who wish to join us. This is a wonderful time of fellowship and prayer for our church family.

#### **BABY BOTTLE REMINDER**

Please return your baby bottles to FBC by Father's Day, June 18. These are to benefit the Pregnancy Center of the Upper Valley.

#### **CE BOARD UPDATE**

Please continue to pray for our Children's Ministry, our Youth Ministry, and our Adult Discipleship Committee.

##### Nursery Volunteers Needed

We are in need of volunteers for the Nursery, if you are interesting in helping serve in the nursery; please see Carol Rataj or Deb Girdwood.

##### Children's Church Volunteers Needed

We are in need of leaders or helpers for Children's Church. If you are interested in helping with this vital ministry in our church, please see Carol Rataj or Shelby Hawks.

#### **A NOTE OF THANKS**

*To My Dear Church Family,*

*You people made my 80<sup>th</sup> birthday incredible. I am truly blessed by so many fabulous people in my life. Hopefully someday I can repay you for your many kindnesses.*

*Much love,*

*Marilyn Garrow*

#### **HAITI & REGENESIS PROJECT UPDATE**

I will be returning to Haiti June 21st to June 28th to continue to work on projects for Regenesis Project. Regenesis Project is a 502(c)3 that does micro enterprise and financial education work in Sous Savanne, Haiti. This will be my 13th trip to

Haiti since 2011. During this trip, I hope to continue to work with the crafters involved in the project, finish setting up a laying chicken project, and continue to work on items needed for a financial education program in a local Christian school. It is so important to teach the children of Haiti the biblical principles of business and giving back. All of their lives they have seen so much corruption and unethical behavior, they need to see another way. I will also be investigating other small projects that Regenesis Project might be able to invest in or assist with. The idea is to let God lead us to what we should invest in. For example, last December I fully expected to go in one direction, but ended up paying school fees for children who had been displaced by Hurricane Matthew.

Why go 2 times a year?? First and foremost, to build relationships, and then to invest in people. I believe that it is important for the Haitian people to see you continuing to come back, that you are serious about what you say and do and not just a lot of talk.

Regenesis Project gets its funding from selling some of the crafts from Haiti at craft events and music festivals. Currently we have the blessing of a matching donation. A donor has agreed to make a matching donation up to \$3500.00 for donations made by June 15th. So, \$5.00 becomes \$10.00, \$10.00 becomes \$20.00, etc up to \$3500.00. That \$3500.00 will become \$7000.00. We have already reached more than 1/2 of that \$3500.00 goal. If you feel moved to donate to the work of Regenesis Project, a tax deductible donation can be sent to Regenesis Project, P.O. Box 34 Plainfield, NH or you can go online at [www.regenesishproject.org](http://www.regenesishproject.org). Any donation, no matter what the size will be greatly appreciated. All funds raised for Regenesis Project, go directly back into the work. All travel expenses for those traveling for Regenesis Project are covered by the traveler.

June 23rd and 24th, Regenesis Project will have a booth at Worship in the Adirondacks at Word of Life Ranch, Pottersville, NY. If you would like to help out at this event (check it out online) and help man the booth, let me know. Steve Girdwood and Gail McCoy will be working this event as I will be in Haiti at the time. We will also have a booth at Soulfest in Gilford, NH, August 3rd, 4th, and 5th. I will be preparing the food for the volunteers for their midday meal, so coverage is needed from 9am until 1 or 2 in the afternoon. If you would like to participate, let me know.

Regenesis Project is also looking for a small bus or box truck to convert into a "mobile store". We would like to paint the outside of the vehicle in the same manner in which "tap taps" are painted in Haiti. (the most visible form of transport in Haiti) By having a mobile store, it will cut down on the heavy lifting involved in setting up and tearing

down at an event. It will also be an asset in case of inclement weather. If anyone knows of this type of vehicle that someone might be willing to donate for a tax deduction, or sell at a low cost, please let me know.

Last and not least, please keep Regenesis Project in your prayers that the work may continue. Thank you. Janet

contact@regenesisproject.org  
603-252-1785

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### **DEACONS UPDATE MAY 2017**

Greetings Fellow Congregants,

I pray you all enjoyed the blessings of a beautiful Memorial Day weekend where we honored those who have fought for our country and for our freedoms. We are forever indebted to those who have paid the ultimate price and to those who continue to serve.

The deacons met twice in the month of May. Our first meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup> was to work through our regularly scheduled business. Upon completion of our regular duties, Pastor Rick led us through some scriptures dealing with gossip. We then met on May 23<sup>rd</sup> to explore these scriptures in more depth. The first scripture we studied with the Pastor was Proverbs 16:28 where gossip is described as breaking up relationships. The next scripture was Proverbs 18:8 which describes gossip as choice morsels; they go down to the inmost part. Next was Proverbs 26:20 which states without gossip, a quarrel dies down. We then looked at Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:19 where the Bible instructs us how we are to deal with sin amongst ourselves as believers. Pastor Rick also gave us three questions to contemplate as we studied the above scriptures. The questions are as follows:

1. How do we help the congregation embrace this teaching?
2. How do we respond to those who begin passing on gossip to us?
3. How do we keep from participating ourselves?

While considering the above questions, Pastor Rick asked us to think about Paul's solemn word to the Ephesians in Acts 20:32 "And I now entrust you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

Please continue to keep all leadership in prayer as we contemplate such challenging topics as gossip. Please pray that we as a board and as a congregation are able to follow the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and that we are able to do so only in love.

Respectfully and prayerfully submitted by  
Marjorie Olson

### **CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION**

Just a little reminder that we do still have our P. O. Box as our main mailing address for the church. That address is: P. O. Box 331, Lebanon, NH 03766. Please continue to send mail to that address.

### **ONLINE GIVING AVAILABLE**

We have online giving available. You can go to: [www.lebfirstbaptist.com/giving](http://www.lebfirstbaptist.com/giving) to sign up for this.

### **COMMUNITY APPRECIATION BBQ & WORSHIP**

Sunday, June 25 is a day of celebration of thankfulness for our entire Church Family. Pastor Rick, our boards, and music committee are preparing to bring the worship service to the CCBA pavilion in gratefulness to you, our brothers and sisters in Christ, as we have gone through the difficulty of losing our church building, in such a dramatic manner, with faith in the Lord's leading.

We continue to work together as many pitch in on Sunday mornings to prepare the middle school for worship, this is not an easy task. "Whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians 3:17.

This is also the opportunity to thank the first responders and our wonderful community for the outpouring of help and financial support after the fire. Your encouragement and gifts were a true blessing to our church family.

Please join us at 10:00 a.m. as we gather together to Thank God for his sovereign care over His people, and to thank all who helped us and continue to help us rebuild.

At 12:00 we will have a free BBQ lunch - everyone is invited.

There is a signup sheet for salads and cookies on the back table on Sunday mornings. We are also in need of a few grills along with helping hands to set up, serve, and clean up.

There will not be a service at the Lebanon Middle school June 25, but we would love to have you at the CCBA (located behind the Senior Center). Please come and join us for this celebration!

Questions or comments email Chris Clark or Carol Rataj.

Grace and Blessings to you today.

In Jesus Name,  
Carol