

# FIRST BAPTIST NEWS

FEBRUARY 2020



First Baptist Church

## THE SNOW STORM BEFORE THE SEASON OF HOPE

I'm sitting at my living room window, watching the snow drift in from a storm. It wasn't near as much snow as was predicted, for which I am very thankful, but just enough to make the landscape picturesque. Normally, I don't care much for the later January or February snows. Christmas-time sure, but I'm typically over it by this point.

However, this year after the long-long year; I welcome the pure white snow. It reminds me of the purity of Christ, the mercy of God, and the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit. I find myself praying for the things that this Triune God inspires us all to seek after—humility, courage, a pure heart, and steadfast faith rooted in love. So pray for those things, both for myself and all of you as well.

I also pray for rest. I'm not sure why, but the snowy weather makes me want to rest; and, as I've mentioned, the long year brings on that same urge as well. The calling of a warm blanket and some hot cocoa. Just being warm and watching my kids play. Honestly, is there anything more magical? I wager not. So I'll be praying for rest too, again for you and me.

Jesus teaches us to avoid carrying our own burdens, but instead to put on his yoke.

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.  
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30*

My prayer is that we all put on the yoke of Christ. Let go of anything that does not fulfill that calling. Let go of any burden of hate, regret, or shame. Instead, take on that divine, mercy-filled yoke of Christ and let it guide you through this winter season of Epiphany as we walk together into Lent. The road to Easter is upon us, and I for one cannot wait to shout “Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, Christ is Alive.”

Until then, all the love and grace.

Serving Together,  
Dr. Rob Collins

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## FBC DEACON MINISTRY

The Diaconate of First Baptist Church continues to serve the congregation in 2021. Four new Deacons have joined the Diaconate. They are Nancy Phillips, Ron Jacobs, Gordon Brown, and Dick Gillaspie. The new Deacons have accepted assignments as they minister to the church. In addition, they also have accepted responsibilities in the Deacon Family Ministry Plan.

We would also like to thank the Deacons who have completed their service to the church. They are Doug Miller, Chair; Gay Barton, Arla Klimko, Jen Dusek, and Virginia Bott. Thank you to all who have served, and thank you to the Deacons currently serving.

Our goals as Deacons are to support the Pastor and the Church with worship planning, continue to minister to the congregation through our Deacon Family Ministry Plan, and provide assistance to members of the community through our "One In Need" program.

Paul Grove  
Chair

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## CONDOLENCES

We extend sympathy to:

The family and friends of FBC member Jim Ashton. Jim passed away on December 31, 2020. A private family service was held at the mortuary with Rev. Robert Collins officiating.

The family and friends of FBC member Betty Wenger. Betty passed away on January 3, 2021. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

The family and friends of FBC member Rosemary Walk. Rosemary passed away on January 18, 2021. A private family service was held in Peoria.

To family and friends of Lee Ora Haring. Lee passed away on December 21, 2020 in Black Mountain, NC. Lee Ora, wife of former FBC Assistant Pastor Ken Haring, and her family were an important part of FBC programs from 1971 to 1983. Memorials may be made to Doctors Without Borders.

## PRAYER CONCERNS

Tom Maulding      Char Austin      Sharon Polakow  
June Fredell      Joyce Clarke      Mark Stanard  
Sharon Stanard      Rosemary Walk      Mary Hinch  
Jerry Edwards      Alyssa Russell      Deb Houser  
Jacquelyn Kellogg      Leon Vickerman      Karen Vickerman  
Bob Braden (Sandy Johansen's brother-in-law)

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## ABW NUT SALE

Below are items still available from the ABW fundraiser. They are being offered at half-price, and can be ordered by contacting Carolyn Ihnken at 309-685-1388 or csimk@comcast.net.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Qty. Avail.</u>	<u>Price</u>
Chocolate Pecans	5 Bags	\$6/ea.
Pistachios	3 Bags	\$6/ea.
Mixed Chocolate Cranberries	9 Bags	\$4.50/ea.
Almond Cranberry Granola	3 Bags	\$4/ea.

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## FYI

**Contribution Envelopes:** If you would like some blue contribution envelopes for use in 2021, please call or e-mail the church office to let Sandy know how many envelopes you require. She will pull that quantity for you to pick up during office hours—Mon-Thurs., 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.—or if you are unable to pick them up, she will mail them to your home.

**2020 Contribution Statements:** Statements for January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 will be mailed out the first week in February.

**Don't Forget:** Please notify the church office when you plan to meet in the building. Please return any furniture or equipment to its proper place, wash and put away any dishes used, turn off lights and lock doors when you leave. Thank you for your help and consideration.



## First Baptist Church

Greetings, Friends of First Baptist,

I know many of you have been anxious for update on the status of our church reopening. While we listen to health experts on the guidelines for reopening, our Executive Board is dedicated to a safe reopening plan. We continue to monitor CDC, state and local guidelines very carefully and have been very conservative in our approach given the way the pandemic has shown spikes over the last few months. As we update our plans, it is important to note that our plans are simply guideposts and can be modified along the way as conditions continue to change. We have targeted March 7<sup>th</sup> as the first Sunday back with in-person services.

In addition to assessing the appropriate time to reopen the church, we are also evaluating when and how to conduct our annual business meeting and approve budgets for the 2021 calendar year. One option has been to conduct this meeting virtually for all to attend via a Zoom session. However, lack of internet connectivity, access and easy understanding of video meetings like Zoom for many of our members pose challenges. With that in mind, it is the preference of the Executive Committee to postpone the Annual Meeting until church has officially reopened for in-person worship on our targeted date of March 7<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be held in the Sanctuary immediately following worship service.

The church's Annual Report will be e-mailed to members. If you currently do not have an e-mail address on file with the church office or need to update your e-mail address, please call Sandy at (309) 682-5491. Additionally, the report will be posted online at our website—[fbcpeoria.org](http://fbcpeoria.org)—for a limited time only for download. If you would prefer to have a printed copy of the report, they will be available in the portico entryway, and members are welcome to stop by during weekday office hours—Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.—and pick one up. If you are unable to stop by the church and prefer to have a printed copy mailed to you, please contact Sandy at the church office, and she will make special accommodations for a report to be mailed to your home.

Friends, in the meantime, I sincerely ask that you keep the Executive Committee and Pastoral Staff in prayer. These decisions are not made easily and commonly with a heavy heart. We all long for the in-person ministry we have grown so accustomed to over our lifetimes. At the same time, however, it is our responsibility as leaders of this church to ensure a safe environment that minimizes health risks to our congregation and guests.

Sincerely,

Tim Austin  
Moderator



First Baptist Church

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THE MISSION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO MINISTER TO OUR CONGREGATION, THE COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD, SO THAT ALL MAY EXPERIENCE THE LOVE AND GRACE OF GOD.

# EPIPHANY

A Season for reflecting on the God seen in Scripture and Experienced in Our Lives

Water, Spirit, and  
Everything in Between

JANUARY 10

Listen Carefully

JANUARY 17

Change: The Flowing  
Love of God

JANUARY 24

What does this  
say about God?

What does this  
say about me  
and God?

The God of Prophets

JANUARY 31

God Loves you  
Thiiiiiiiiis Much

FEBRUARY 7

Flaming Chariots and  
Dazzling White Clothes

FEBRUARY 14