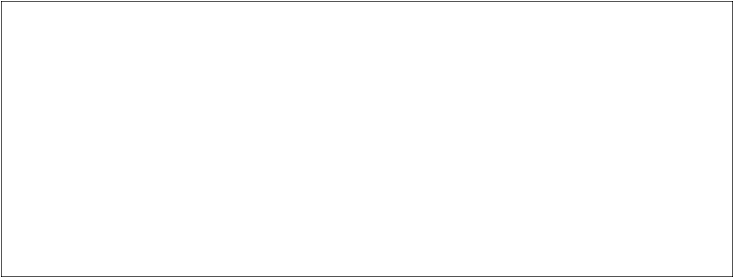


THE BRIDGE

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MISSIONS

Emma Quire Mission Center looked different for most of this year, but the work continues! Many of the groups who regularly visit for over-night projects have collected needed items to deliver to Owsley County. In the last month, EQMC has received deliveries from two churches in Kentucky and two from Georgia. Donations range from

household goods to food to clothing and are available for residents to pick-up at designated times, sometimes even rain or shine. A group recently sponsored a furniture giveaway and it unfortunately was raining on their planned date. But with deep connections built over years of service and our wonderful Interim Director Linda, having a location change to a county owned park with pavilions only took a phone call.



Keep an eye on our Facebook page and in worship services for information about all of our great partners and organizations that we support financially through our missions budget. Some of them are right here in Frankfort, but some serve around the world—occasionally in places where Christianity can create local security concerns. As the way we interact as a church grows virtually, and thus available for more people to access online, the specific way we talk about “missions” sometimes needs to change. So when you notice I’m saying “missions” and “ministry” less and things like “partnership” and “service” more, know that it doesn’t mean we’ve changed what we’re doing or what we’re about or who we support. We’re just making sure that no matter the cultural context, our words don’t harm our partners in ministry doing great work!

~Michelle Carroll

THE BRIDGE

First Baptist Church of Frankfort
November 2020 Newsletter

*All Saints Day
November 1*

*Mary Alvis
Powell*

*Glendolyn
Hughes*

*Rose
Smith*

*Jim
Morris*

*Noel
Biggs*

*Charlotte
Ivers*

Remembering the Saints of FBC

»FROM THE Senior Pastor«

Hebrews 10:23 – “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.”

The writer of Hebrews was basically imploring his audience to hang on to Jesus during rough times. Many in the early church experienced sporadic persecution and this word of exhortation was needed for perseverance and stamina. Sometimes I wonder what the church of our time and space would do in confronting this level of difficulty regarding our faith.

While we may not be facing persecution at this juncture, we are experiencing an unprecedented struggle with COVID. How unswervingly will we hold on to the hope we profess during this hardship? Pivotal moments or seasons such as this usually move us drastically in one direction or the other. We find out what our faith is really made of in times such as this. When the earth shakes beneath us, when the wind and waves go wild, our true selves are revealed.

I'm thankful today to look back at the last six and a half months and know my family of faith is holding unswervingly to the hope we profess. It is being revealed that we hold on with great resolve because we know He who promised IS faithful. God will carry us through to the other side of this pandemic. We will be stronger because of it. We will carry with us a greater appreciation for our in person gatherings. We will sing a little louder, we will pray somewhat more fervently, we will value those hugs and handshakes a little more, we will realize more how wonderful it is to serve alongside one another, we may even cherish meetings – business or otherwise!

We still have some road to travel. We are not finished with this virus disrupting our coming together. Let us hold fast with a firm grip to God and each other and see this trial as an opportunity to not just survive, but to demonstrate our authentic faith in the One who promised to see us through anything. Let us tell others that God abides and Jesus promised to be with us to the end. God never promised it would be easy, but God promised to be present and faithful to see us through the darkest valleys. So I encourage you to hold on and press on looking ever to Jesus who is Lord.

“Gracious and Loving God, we thank you for the opportunities we have to connect, grow and serve with You and one another. During these turbulent times, we praise You, we adore You, we love You and are grateful most of all for Jesus. May we seek to live for Him during this pandemic. May we consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds. We give thanks that our family of faith is holding fast and standing on the promises of who You are and that you will never leave nor forsake us. May we seek to engage even more in the life of FBC and invite others to do so as well. We pray for the eradication of this virus, but while it is with us, remind us that it is in these seasons that we can best demonstrate our authentic love for Christ and our neighbors. We long to be together, but we will hold unswervingly to the hope we profess until then. ‘Not to us, not to us, O Lord, but to your Name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.’ Amen.”

~Dr. Keith Felton



FBC staff wanted to find a safe way for members to participate in a Hanging of the Green time amidst the pandemic of 2020. We believe we've done it! From 1:00 - 7:00 pm on November 22, your family is invited to come to the sanctuary in 15 minute increments to hang a Chrismon on one of our two trees. It will be a chance for you to be in our beautifully adorned sanctuary and to take part in preparing for Advent.

To Participate:

- You must sign up for your 15 minute time slot at www.signupgenius.com/go/4090848A9AC29ABFD0-fbchanging
- Please arrive and depart on time!
- If you sign up for the “Piano Side” tree, please enter the building through the wood doors on St. Clair.
- If you sign up for the “Organ Side” tree, please enter the building through the glass doors on St. Clair.
- You must wear a mask at all times in the building. Hand sanitizer will be provided in the vestibule.
- You must practice social distancing from everyone not in your family unit.
- Chrismons will be on the front pews, and we ask that one Chrismon per person be placed on the tree.

We will also have items available for you to take home to help your family worship during the season of Advent.

- The new Sanctuary Choir Christmas CD, “The Work of Christmas,” was recorded this past January. We are very excited to finally be able to share this with you. The CDs are free, but please only take as many as you will use or give away so that we can share with as many as possible.
- A copy of our Advent Devotional
- A children's “Choose Your Own ADVENTure” bag

While we wish we could gather as we usually do, we hope you will take this opportunity to come to the sanctuary and spend a few minutes decorating the Chrismon tree, listening to the choir's new CD, and preparing your heart and mind for the season of anticipation.

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You will be enriched
in every way to be
generous in every way,
which through us will
produce thanksgiving
to God.

2 Corinthians 9:11



In this season of Thanksgiving a hymn text comes to mind. I hope you will take a few moments to just read it through a few times. We often don't give the text enough time to sink in while singing. This text is so rich that it deserves a slower read:

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

For the Fruit of all creation, thanks be to God. For His gifts to every nation, thanks be to God. For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping, future needs in earth's safe keeping, thanks be to God.

In the just reward of labor, God's will is done. In the help we give our neighbor, God's will is done. In our world-wide task of caring for the hungry and despairing, in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.

For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God. For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God. For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us, most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green CCLI#403620

What phrase speaks to you most in this hymn as you read it today? For me, at least today, the phrase "silent growth while we are sleeping" stands out. In this most unusual year of Covid-19, I am trusting in that silent growth, a promise of future needs being met by our generous and faithful God. We have so much to be thankful for, and I am certainly thankful for the joy and privilege of being on this journey with you! Have a grateful Thanksgiving!

~Rev. Richard Summers



Hi friends!

I hope you and yours have been doing well!

Continuing with my focus upon connection, what could be a more appropriate means of connecting with God, each other, and ourselves than by way of thankfulness and gratitude? Things might look different for each of us heading into the holiday season, but the one thing that can remain a constant is how we give thanks for the ones with whom we're connected. Personally speaking, if there is any one thing that the events of this year have brought out of me, it's the importance of both being thankful and giving thanks. What's more, in our current times, I believe it's even more imperative that we pay attention to the opportunities God gives us to express thankfulness. Even just the smallest nuances that often times get overlooked merit thankfulness. So, my question is, not just for our students and families but for each of us, what will our expressions of thankfulness and gratitude resemble during this time of year?

Please know that I miss seeing all of you dearly. I love each of you and pray the Lord continue to bless and keep you.

Peace be with you!

~Rev. Marcus Pernel (aka Maurice Ross)

RAINBOWS BESIDE THE RED SEA: LEARNING FROM OUR CHILDREN TO LOOK FOR GOD

By Rev. Amanda Standiford, Associate Pastor of Children and Spiritual Formation

One of my favorite parts of every week is a Sunday evening Zoom gathering with preschoolers, kindergarteners, and first graders for Godly Play. Some of the kids in our group are FBC members, while others are friends and family who are taking advantage of our current digital setup to join with our circle from afar. As a result, almost all of the children are experiencing these Godly Play stories for the very first time, and witnessing both their awe and their wondering is a joy. We've been working our way through the Old Testament: Creation, The Great Flood, The Great Family (Abraham and Sarah), and, most recently, The Exodus.

The Exodus story takes place in the desert box. It's told dramatically, beginning with the people of God getting trapped in Egypt and becoming slaves to the Pharaoh. Over and over, Moses asks the Pharaoh to free his people, but the Pharaoh always says, "No." Finally, after the horror of the plagues, Moses goes to the Pharaoh once more and says, "Let my people go!" This time, the Pharaoh says, "Yes."

The people of God hurry to get ready to leave. They pack quickly and bake flat bread because there's no time to wait for it to rise. Even so, by the time they reach the Red Sea, they're trapped. Pharaoh's army is behind them and there's nowhere to go but the water. God comes close to Moses and Moses comes close to God, and then Moses knows what to do. The water parts and the people pass through. As the little wooden people cross through the sandy place between the felt strips of water, they're each given an emotion: "This one is afraid," "This one is confused," "This one is sad," "This one is glad," and so forth. Then, when they're safely on the other side, the sea closes behind them, and they are free. The last line in the story is a particular favorite of mine: "Miriam, the sister of Moses, led the dancing!"



Since we're on Zoom, we've been using dry erase boards and Play Doh to help with our wondering time at the end of the stories. I ask a question, then give the children several minutes to draw or sculpt their answers before inviting them to share with the group. They may be able to see what their siblings are working on, but they usually can't see anyone else's work until we begin sharing.

So I was more than a little surprised when, as we began to share our responses to "I wonder what part of this story you liked the best?" and then "I wonder what part of this story is most important?" more than a few of the kids shared drawings or sculptures of rainbows. I went along with it for a few minutes – I always try to trust that the children's responses make sense to them, even if they're not quite able to verbalize the connection they're making. Finally, though, I had to wonder if the kids were just making rainbows because rainbows are fun to draw and sculpt. So I said aloud, "So many of you have made rainbows! But there wasn't a rainbow in this story. Can you help me understand?"

As I listened, I learned that the children knew perfectly well there was no rainbow in the story they'd just heard. The rainbow belonged with Noah and the flood. They knew that. "But it's the same," they told me. "The bad part is over and God stayed with them," said one. "They probably saw a rainbow," suggested another. "Rainbows tell us that God is there," added still another.

It's not so hard to put ourselves in the shoes of the people of God in this Exodus story, crossing through the water and wondering what will come next. I imagine that the thundering roar of the pandemic, of this election season, and of our own and others' unrest over the injustices in our world reverberate at a similar volume to the thundering roar of the Red Sea on one's right and left. And we, like the people of God, have likely experienced a range of difficult emotions – sadness, anxiety, fear, and exhaustion. So in the midst of this season that has brought us both "bad parts" and just plain hard parts, I suspect these words about rainbows from our children might speak powerfully to all of us.