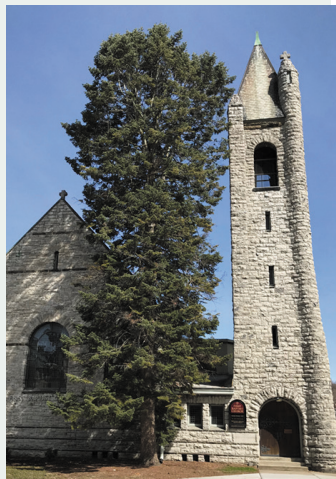


607-273-5800; www.firstbaptistithaca.org; email: fbithaca@gmail.com



Youth Enjoy Retreat

By Laura Ward

FBC Youth Group enjoyed an over-night at the Round Top Retreat in Richford, NY for an evening of fun and team building the 3rd weekend in September. Saturday's theme was Unity and we started the evening around the fire playing games to help us get to know each other better and to practice working as a team.

Our spiritual study included a closer look at what the Bible tells us about unity and a discussion about how to promote inclusion in our group.

Sunday's theme was reflection and how to answer spiritual questions we may have. The group spent alone time in nature reflecting on a chosen verse. In group, we discussed the importance of having questions and of seeking to understand for ourselves.

Our final challenge of the weekend was to work together in pairs to participate in an egg drop to illustrate that we are stronger when we put our ideas together. It was a great time of coming together to enjoy good food, great discussions and lots of laughs.



Round-Top Retreat: FBC Youth gathered for a rustic team-building retreat in Richford where they discovered the joys of not having Internet connection or running water.

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Upcoming Events

- See Listing on page 2.

Call for Items for Parable of Talent

Call for folks willing to donate time and talents for the Silent Auction. Suggestions: handmade items like knitting or pottery, offerings of meals or music lessons. Contact Marlene Sack



The Butler's 60th Wedding Anniversary: Jan and Frank Butler celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a reception in the Community Room at FBC on August 18th (see page 4).



World Communion Sunday: Rev. Tony Lister leads a chant during the service on World Communion Sunday, October 6th. The Communion Table in front of him is prepared with the elements of communion including a samples of breads from many nations. In front of the table is a world map. As they came forward to receive communion, congregants were asked to place little stones on sites they would like prayers for.





Japanese Anonies

Important Dates to Remember

- **Afternoon Meditation:** Thursdays at 5:30 pm
- **Choir:** Thursdays at 6 pm
- **Bible 101:** 1st and 3rd Tuesdays 6:30 pm, Pastor Debbie's office
- **Fall Cleanup:** Saturday, Oct, 12, 9 am - 12 noon
- **Grace Evans Memorial Service** Sunday, Oct. 13, 2 pm
- **Church Visioning meeting** October 19, 9 am - 2 pm
- **Parable of Talents:** BBQ & Silent Auction: Nov. 2: 5-9 pm
- **Wisdom School:** Nov. 9,, 9 am - 5 pm
- **Sanctuary Alliance Fundraiser Dinner/ Cabaret,** Saturday, Nov. 16
- **Tim Hembrooke Community Dinner:** Saturday, December. 14



Hydrangeas

From Your Pastor Debbie Bennett Reynolds

Dear Friends,

As a church, we began a Visioning Process last spring seeking clarity for this time in our life together. We are seeking to answer the questions – Who are we? And what are we being called to be and do? This is our Holy Vocation – the ways God's Spirit wants to use our gifts, our "deep gladness," to meet the "world's deep needs" in ways that are life-giving and transformative for all of us.

So far, we held two All-Church Events focused on Who We Are. We shared images and stories that capture the spirit of this church and named the values revealed in those stories. Summer significantly slowed our process, but we held 6 cottage meetings in August and early September. In these meetings we took the 100+ values we had named and put them in groups or clusters. These groups or clusters of values we titled. Then, the Visioning Team did a round of sorting and distilling the titles from the 6 small group meetings.

This month I have preached sermons that speak to our Visioning, sermons around the nature and purpose of the church and the concept of vocation and calling. In adult education we have been discussing our Visioning Process and our worship life together. A strong theme that came out was our eagerness and even impatience to get into the next phase – to thinking about what we are being called to be and do. We had planned our next event for Friday evening, October 18, but in response to this urgency we consulted with Arlen Vernava. He urged us to find a way to get 4 hours of time together, instead of just 2 hours. Therefore, the Visioning Team has moved this event to Saturday.

So, on Saturday, October 19, we will have our next All-Church Visioning Event from 8:45 a.m. – 2 p.m. We'll gather at 8:45 and start by 9 a.m. Lunch will be included. Our task that day will begin with defining the Core Values of First Baptist that our titles reveal to us. Then, we will dig into the next phase. If this is who we are and these are our core values, what are the implications? For whom and with whom are we being called to live out these values? What needs of the world do our values lead us to address? What gifts do we have that our community needs?

In preparation for this work, Christian Concern has planned adult education sessions for October to inform us more deeply about some of the needs of our community. Joan Barber from the Kitchen Cupboard will speak October 6, Roy Murdough from the Friendship Center will be with us October 20, and Carol Hockton from Johnson Museum of Art on October 27 to talk about the current exhibit on migration. Also, our October 13 brunch will be a meal prepared only with foods that people get at the Kitchen Cupboard. Instead of a dish to pass, we will bring back grocery bags we have filled with donations for the Cupboard.

As you can see, there's a lot being planned for the next few weeks. There's a lot to engage our hearts and minds as we move forward together. Let's commit to be in prayer for God's will and to be open to what the Spirit of God wants to show us!

Blessings to all of you!

Your Pastor, Debbie Bennett Reynolds



Reverend Debbie Bennett Reynolds



Church-wide Visioning Meeting October 19th: During worship on September 29th, Pastor Debbie Reynolds enlisted the help of the children and youth in promoting the church-wide Visioning event to be held on Saturday October 19th from 9 am to 2 pm. All are urged to attend this important conversation about the future of FBC.

Photo by Mark Lawrence

The Butler's 60th Wedding Reception



Closing the Doors of Twinbrook Baptist Church, Rockville, MD, August 17-18, 2019

By Shella Chace



In the summer of 2018, the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (AWAB) received an invitation to apply for a Legacy Gift from Twinbrook Baptist Church in Rockville, MD and AWAB responded. AWAB was informed in the spring of this year that their proposal had been accepted with an amount to be announced at a later date. The plans were being finalized for the sale of their building. When the date of the official closing of the church was announced, I offered to drive down as the author of the document and as Board Secretary.

Anticipation

I had no idea what would await me there. I assumed there would be sadness among the congregation and joy among the recipients of their grace. But I had no idea how deeply I would feel both. The celebration of the gifts occurred on Saturday afternoon at the Rockville United Church (UCC/Presbyterian) followed by a reception. I missed most of that event due to accidents on the main route through Maryland. I was able to let Rev. Jill McCrory know what was happening, and I did get to observe the last few recipients of the awards. Many were local and beloved by the Twinbrooks congregation, and all of them were organizations that support people in need—mental health, medical health, housing, food, after school care, immigrant support, foster care—so many good people and good causes. My tardiness must have been announced because several people introduced themselves to me at the reception, and asked if I was all right after my very long drive. I met people who told me about the open doors at Twinbrook and how much it would be missed. Many people thanked me for being there to represent AWAB and receive the legacy gift of \$25,000.

Profoundly Moving

Sunday, oh my. I'm still not through feeling the depth of their grief and their joy. The service was beautiful, beginning with words that were said

by the first pastor of Twinbrook Baptist Church, Rev. John Laney. The church was opened in 1956 to fill as much of the void of social justice and human kindness as it could possibly do.

"The church, which is truly a church can be the redemptive force in society. The church, which will point out the way to a world perplexed by innumerable social and personal problems, must be basically what Elton Trueblood has called "the fellowship of the concerned." Rev. McCrory also played a recorded message from Rev. Laney for this occasion.

During the service and afterward at lunch, there were many tears and many hugs. But I don't think I could count the number of times people thanked me for representing AWAB in that space. It is clearly an anchor for many LGBTQIA folks! I heard several stories of people who had been rejected by church and family, only to find both of those at Twinbrook. They were making plans at my table to continue gathering for lunch, no matter what church home they found.

Several people approached me because of First Baptist Church in Ithaca's connection to Rev. John Laney. I met a lovely couple who have been there since the beginning, and clearly are celebrated by everyone there, John and Lois Harris. And I met George Laney, who insisted on a selfie for his dad and Joan Yarborough!

I chose the dandelion for this message, because that is how Twinbrook chose to represent their current situation. They hope to be seeds of hope and trust and true Christianity floating on the breeze and landing where they are needed.





Hydrangeas in the sanctuary are from a pg hydrangea tree planted by Tony Lister in his front yard. The vase was a wedding present to Susan Eymann's parents from a dear friend in 1941. The table runner is from Barb Fry.

Prayer Chain

A special part of each Sunday's worship at FBC is the sharing of our Joys and Concerns. Did you know that we also have a Prayer Chain to whom Sue Eymann now sends out an email each week with the Joys and Concerns shared during the worship service. If you are not already part of the Prayer Chain and would like to be, please contact Lil at liland_rich@htva.net and ask to be added to the chain.



Communion Table Flow bouquet, Aug. 18th

The Baptist Student Forum (1938 - 1942) by Naomi Hollister

Naomi Hollister, a resident of Longview, Ithaca, celebrated her 100th birthday on August 25th. In her honor we are reprinting an article she wrote for the Visitor in 2014 in which she recalled the Baptist Student Forum at FBC.

Forgettable? Never;
 Influential? Amazingly so;
 Helpful? Always;
 Fun? The Most.

This was the place to be Sunday night for the young people of Ithaca.

What? Worship, food and fellowship;
 Who? All young people;
 Where? In the basement of the First Baptist Church where the dining room and kitchen were located;
 When? Every Sunday evening from 6-9 pm when Cornell was in session;
 Why? To become acquainted and to worship together.

Our advisors were the Reverend Dr. John D.W. Fetter, the First Baptist student pastor and his wife, Mrs. Bess Fetter.

Volunteers Planned Food and Program

A group of six to nine volunteers each week prepared a simple meal and planned the program. We had devotions, shared discussions, and occasionally had a speaker. Working in the kitchen together was certainly a good way to become acquainted. I was only 17 years old when I moved to Ithaca and started attending First Baptist Church. I knew no one so was delighted to belong to this group. I met my husband there and I know of other couples who met there and were married — Myra Fincher' parents Myron and Evelyn, Rob and Barb Fellows, George and Vicky Manning, Bob and Winnie Fowler, and Ed and me.

When Cornell had a break, we would not have the usual Sunday night supper, but instead would meet at the Fetter's home. We would relax by the fireplace and have lively or stimulating conversations, play games in an adjoining room, or join the boisterous games at ping pong in the basement. Mrs. Fetter usually served popcorn, apples, and/or cake with a beverage.

Taughannock Picnics

Occasionally, in the fall or spring, we had a picnic at Taughannock State Park on a Saturday afternoon instead of our usual Sunday supper. Many times we had a rousing softball game, walked back in the gorge to see the Falls, or just enjoyed watching the boat traffic on Cayuga

Lake. The ballgame showed Rev. Fetter's love of sports and his amazing athletic ability which was often better than the youths'. Later we had our worship service on the lake shore.



Naomi Hollister

Rev. Fetter (or "Jack" as he was affectionately called) was the Student Pastor at our church. In addition to the students on the hill, he counseled the young people of Ithaca in our church downtown. He took a personal interest in everyone and made them feel welcome. The youth who had just graduated from high school might be adjusting to their first job or maybe trying to find work so he met them at church. He had an office on campus at Cornell so it was convenient. He helped the homesick freshmen who were overwhelmed by the enormous amount of homework, or the international students feeling lonely, trying to study in English and adjusting to a new life-style.

Endearing Qualities of Advisor

Jack had two endearing qualities that attracted the youth. He had a marvelous sense of humor. Also, he was vigorous and athletic so was a challenge in games of softball and ping pong. He and Bess had children of their own so they could easily relate to this age group.

Mrs. Fetter (known as Bess) was a great help to her husband. Being caring and understanding, she made the youth feel welcome and, frequently, she and Jack would have them for lunch or dinner.

Cake Disaster

One Saturday morning disaster struck! Bess had just finished frosting four large two-layer cakes for the Sunday night get-together in their home. She then noticed a glass with a chip of glass missing on the kitchen counter. She couldn't take the chance of anyone being cut, so, regretfully, she had to throw the cakes away.

Jack and Bess were excellent role models, an inspiration to all and had much influence in our lives. We would always remember the Sunday night supper with them. We had meaningful worship, made lasting friendships, embraced new and different ideas and thought, and have happy memories of the good times and the Christian Fellowship. I am now 94 years old, but I can truly say I've never been part of such a caring, fun-loving, and friendly group.

Flowers' Glory



Wisdom School

~ A One-day Experience ~

Saturday, November 9th; 9 am - 5 pm

First Baptist Church

Sponsored by the Worship Team



Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault

"Wisdom is not knowing more, but knowing with more of you, knowing deeper, carrying and digging your being deeper and deeper so that it can receive more knowing."

Cynthia Bourgeault

Wisdom School ~ A One Day Experience ~ As a followup to the Wisdom School: The Divine Exchange attended by Rev. Debbeie Bennett Reynolds, Bill Abeles, Barb Fry, Tony Lister and Tina Hilsdorf at the end of July at Moravian College and Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, PA, the Worship Team is sponsoring a one day retreat November 9th at FBC so that interested persons can experience some of what they experienced during that meaningful week-long retreat. For more information, contact Tony Lister or Barb Fry.



Lil Barron having fun with the children during Sunday School.



Bill Fry arriving at Stewart Park at the completion of his 103 mile AIDS for Life ride.

Photo by Barb Fry

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) *By Laura Ward*

On Sunday, September 29th the Youth Group along with some friends and members of the congregation volunteered to pack food at St. Catherine of Sienna church in Ithaca for FMSC. In 2017, FMSC's 1.2 million volunteers packed more than 333 million meals for children. On Sunday, in just an hour and a half, our group, in addition to other volunteers, packed enough food to feed 63 children for an entire year. Our group worked well together as a packing team and had a lot of fun singing and dancing while they were busy packing.



Feed My Starving Children: A FBC group including Linda Caughey, Steve Hilsdorf, James Schultz, Ethan (James's friend), Kalina Korinek, Laura Ward, Adelyn Aittama, Kai Aittama, Marlene Sack Janet and Greta Cottraccia joined in the community-wide Feed My Starving Children food packing event Sept. 29th.



Please keep in your prayers:

- Nancy Sokol
- John Gross
- Suzanne Kilgore
- Naomi Hollister
- Laurel Lawshae
- Joan Yarborough/John Laney
- Betty Brown
- The Evans family
- Pastor André Thera
- Marge Hansel
- Ron Drummond
- Barbie Lister

A Memorial Service for Grace Evans will be held on Sunday, Oct. 13 at 2 pm at First Baptist. All who knew and cherished Grace are invited to attend. Pastor David Evans, Grace's beloved husband, is expected to be in attendance.



A Japanese anemone from the garden of Barbara Fry.

The Visitor — October 2019

Editor, publisher: Susan Eymann

Proofers: Judy Kennison Tony Lister

Contributors: Debbie Bennett Reynolds, Laura Ward, Shella Chace

Photos: Judy Kennison, Barb Fry, Mark Lawrence, Laura Ward

Visitor — October 2019 Issue

In the Baptist tradition each of us are called to be ministers. Therefore, each of you is invited and urged to contribute to our *Visitor*. Please send announcements, articles, features, pictures to: susan.eymann@transonic.com



2019 AIDS Ride for Life. FBC was well represented at the 2019 AIDS Ride for Life with the following participants, from left to right: Mark Lawrence, Marlene sack, Craig Riecke, Barb Fry, Bill Fry, Tina Hilsdorf, Amy Chaffee, Rich Barron, James Schultz, Steve Hilsdorf, Charlie Gerber and Caroline Young. Over \$5,000 was raised from the FBC groups sponsors.
Photo by Judy Kennison

Time and Talent Ministries

First Baptist Staff

Pastor: Rev. Debbie Bennett-Reynolds
 Secretary: Shella Chace
 Organist: Christopher Morgan Loy
 Choir Director: Belinda Adams
 Youth and Children's Ministries
 Coordinator: Laura Ward
 Nursery Caregiver: Carol Fleming
 Sunday School Aide: Sarah Zipfel
 Custodian: David Hopkins

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Moderator: Judy Kennison
 Vice Moderator: Mark Lawrence
 Membership Clerk: Tina Hilsdorf
 Recording Clerks: Rich Barron/Susan Eymann
 Treasurer: David Caughey
 Assistant Treasurer: Andrea Mooney
 Financial Secretary: Marlene Sack

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 Amy Chaffee, Steve Farrell, Janet Cotraccia, Bill Fry, Susan Eymann

Interior Decoration: Barbara Fry, Julie Dean, Tina Hilsdorf, Bill Abeles, Anne Farrell, Andrea Staffeld, Susan Eymann

Church Archivist: Linda Caughey

Lay Delegates:

Affiliate Organizations

Rochester Genesee Region (2 delegates), ABC-USA (2 delegates): Rich and Lil Barron, Co-chairs Ossia Heath-Crump, Anne Farrell, Bill Reynolds
 AWAB: Shella Chace, Josie Zanfordino,
 Baptist Peace Fellowship: Meg Gillard,
 Cornell Protestant Cooperative Ministry:
 Julia Dean, Linda Nicholson,
 Anne Farrell

Kitchen Cupboard: Amanda Ufford, Sue Hemsath
 Tompkins County Workers Center:
 Bill Abeles

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Barbara Fry (2022), Bronwyn Evans (2022), Bill Abeles (2021), Lou Carlucci (2021), Tim Dean (2020), Steve Farrell (2020)

Nominating Committee

Josie Zanfordino, Adrienne McNair, Linda Caughey, Louise Mudrak, Marge Hansel

Personnel Committee

Tony Lister, Julia Dean, Beth Wolfer

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Worship/Spiritual Life Subgroups

Flower Committee: Barbara Fry, Mariana Morse, Tina Hilsdorf, Andrea Staffeld

Myra's Ministry: Tina Hilsdorf, Lou Carlucci, Bill Reynolds

Labyrinth Ministry: Kris Scott, Liz Wilkinson

Sound & Audio Ministry: David Caughey, Curt Ufford

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Children's and Youth:

Carol Fleming, Tim Dean, Leslie Schultz

Christian Ed Teachers: Baruch Whitehead, Lou Carlucci, Sarah Zipfel

Adult: Bill Fry, Tony Lister

Christian Concern

Steve Farrell, Bill Phelan, Co-chairs;

Christian Concern Subgroups

Circle of Care: Coordinators: Amanda Ufford, Sue Hemsath, Linda Caughey

Hospitality Ministry:

Anne Farrell: chair; Shella Chace, Meg Gillard, Tina Hilsdorf, Adrienne McNair, Andrea Staffeld, Ella Dean, Greta Cotraccia, Bay Ward/Aittama

Communications Ministry

Shella Chace (convener), David Caughey, Mark Lawrence, Craig Riecke, Susan Eymann, Amy Bean, Lisa Kilgore

Green Team

Louise Mudrak, Lisa Kilgore (Co-conveners), Lynn Glase, Tony Lister and many others

Ad Hoc Visioning Team

Bill Abeles, Julie Dean, Bronwyn Evans, Anne Farrell, Bill Fry, Judy Kennison, Mark Lawrence, Barb Fry, Debbie Bennett Reynolds