

CONGREGATIONAL CHRONICLES



Declaring the Good News to all.



Notes from the Undershepherd's Heart

By Pastor Ben Spera

In the Sermon for our 140th anniversary, we looked at Christ's Building Project in Baxter, ultimately culminating in the Great Commission. At the end of the sermon, I tried to apply these principles by laying out three goals for our next 10 years of ministry at Baxter Congregational.

1. In the next 10 years, we want every person in Baxter to hear a gospel invitation from someone in our congregation. Jesus has given us the greatest news in the history of the world and commanded us to go and tell others. Over the next 10 years, we want every person in the greater Baxter community to hear the good news of Jesus, that Jesus died for their sin and rose from the grave bringing new life, and be invited to follow Him with all their life.
2. In the next 10 years, we want 10% of the people of Baxter to be actively involved in the life of our church. As we go and tell people about Jesus, hopefully, we will encourage people to want to follow Jesus with us. I'm not saying they will all be members in the next 10 years, but Lord willing, we will see 10% of Baxter worshipping with us on any given Sunday.
3. In the next 10 years, we want 100% of the members of our church to be actively growing their spiritual life through personal devotions, family worship, and serving in the church. Worshipping Jesus isn't just a Sunday morning thing; the church (and its pastors) are meant to equip you for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12), so we want our church to be a kind of training ground to help our members flourish in the faith we share in Jesus Christ.

I think these are achievable goals that come right out of the Great Commission and our Church Covenant. I encourage you to spend some time praying and working towards these things regularly. Hope this is helpful and encouraging as we seek to partner with Jesus as He builds His church right here in Baxter.

Sunday Service

Every Sunday
10:00-11:00 am

Ministries for Youth

Every Sunday during service,
from September - May.
For children PreK - 6th grade.

Women's Fellowship

A gathering of women to share
in service to God. Meetings are
held monthly on the third
Tuesday, at 10:15 am.

Upcoming Scripture Readings

- **November 2nd:**
 - 140th Special Readings
- **November 9th:**
 - Mark 16:1-8 - Isaiah 58:1-7
- **November 16th:**
 - Mark 1-16 - Isaiah 58:8-14
- **November 23rd:**
 - Mark 16:1-?? - Isaiah 59:1-13
- **November 30th:**
 - Philippians 2:1-2 - Isaiah 59:14-21

Prayer Emphasis

This month, let us join together in prayers of Thanksgiving. The Bible is full of prayers of thankfulness to G-d. Let me encourage you to find one thing you are thankful for each day and make it a point to thank G-d for it. You can keep a list and read it aloud as you pray and think about all the ways G-d has blessed you.

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child



It's shoebox time! Each year Baxter Congregational partners with Operation Christmas Child through Samaritan's Purse to deliver great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ to children in need around the world through gift-filled shoeboxes.

Each box packed full of quality toys, school supplies, and personal care items becomes a tangible expression of God's immense love for the child. For many, it is their first gift ever! The shoebox gifts provide an opportunity to present the Gospel to boys and girls in a clear, child-friendly way.

If you haven't already, you can pick up a box to fill in our church narthex. When packing the shoebox, it is important to make sure your gift is ...

FUN

Includes a "wow" item and other quality toys.

FULL

Packed to the brim with additional school supplies and personal care items.

PERSONALIZED

Prayed over and contains a note and photo, which are often the child's favorite items!

Here are some ideas on what to put inside:

TOYS

• Small ball • Building blocks or LEGO® sets • Slinky® or yo-yo • Toy cars • Plastic animals • Magnets • Interactive toys • Other small toys and figures

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

• Toothbrush • Washcloth • Comb and brush • Nail clipper and file • Water bottle • Flashlight

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

• Pencils, sharpener, and erasers • Pencil container • Pens • Crayons • Colored pencils • Markers • Notebooks • Index cards • Calculator • Scissors • Ruler • Glue stick • Small adhesive tape • Drawstring bag

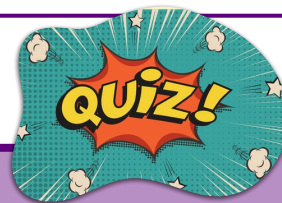
CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES

• Flip-flops or shoes • Sunglasses • Hat • Wristwatch • Costume jewelry • Hair accessories • Clothing and undergarments • Winter cap, scarf, and mittens

GAMES & ACTIVITIES

• Puzzles • Coloring books or pads • Dry watercolor set • Binoculars and compass • Musical instruments • Chalkboard and chalk • Jump rope • Stickers • Games

Shoeboxes are due back to the church by November 16th.



Test Your Knowledge! Fruit of the Spirit

1. What is the role of the Holy Spirit? (John 16:8)
2. Love is _____, love is kind (1 Cor 13:4)
3. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, and _____. (1 Timothy 6:11)
4. Great is your _____. (Lamentations 3:23)
5. Do the best you can to live in _____ with everyone. (Romans 12:18)
6. God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and of great loving _____. (Psalm 145:8)
7. Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the _____ of my heart. (Psalm 119:111)
8. God is _____, a stronghold in the day of trouble. (Nahum 1:7)
9. _____ your neighbor as yourself. (Mark 12:31)
10. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and _____. (Galatians 5:22)

Psst! You can find answers at the bottom of the last page, or your Bible!

A Word From Women's Fellowship

By Marlys Colyn

The Women's Fellowship met on October 21st. Devotions by Marlys were about letting your leaves fall. Just as the trees don't stubbornly hold on to their dead leaves in the fall, we shouldn't hold on to any unnecessary weight in our lives. Ephesians 4:31-32 says, "Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you."

It was decided to prepare a snack mix at the November meeting. Individual bags will be filled with a Thanksgiving message attached and gifted to folks at Discover Hope and homebound Baxter friends. Each of us will contribute an ingredient.

Thank you notes were read from Samaritan's Purse for the contribution to the Texas Flood Relief fund and from Pastor Ben & Julia for the recent carpet cleaning in the parsonage.

The next meeting will be held on November 18th and Diane will give devotions.



Thanksgiving Worship Service November 26th at 6pm

Join us Wednesday, November 26th at 6pm for our Thanksgiving Service. Did you know that Thanksgiving is uniquely a Congregationalist holiday? The pilgrims were Congregational Christians seeking freedom to worship according to the rule of the Bible rather than the king of England. When they finally settled in the New World and had their first semi-successful harvest, they wanted to Thank God for all He had done for them, so they set-apart a day of Thanksgiving.

As we come together to set-apart a day of Thanksgiving, let us thank God for all the amazing things He has done for us. In all circumstances, it is good to give thanks for what we have been given when we remember to thank the One who has offered every good gift, including the greatest gift of His presence in our lives. No matter what has happened in our lives this year, all believers have the presence of God with them forever. And that gift is greater than any other and worthy of our praise. May we all follow Paul's exhortation to "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in everything" each and every day (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Thanksgiving Food Drive

The tanginess of cranberry sauce. The sweet gooey goodness of pecan pie. The salty richness of gravy on fresh mashed potatoes. There's not much that can match a Thanksgiving spread. Yet the warmth of Thanksgiving is far more than turkey and stuffing. We give thanks not only for our food, but for our families, our health, our homes, and our jobs. Thanksgiving invites us to slow down and savor not just our foods, but the blessings God has so graciously given us. Thanksgiving invites us to taste and see that the Lord is good.

With all the excitement of the holiday season, it's easy to take what we have for granted. While we're enjoying our Thanksgiving meal, there are many who are having a much humbler celebration out of necessity. One of our church's Thanksgiving traditions is to help others in need through a food drive. If you are able, please consider donating some shelf-stable food items to help us give to those in need this Thanksgiving. Below is a list of some food items to consider.

All food donations are due back to the church by November 16th.

Shelf-Stable Foods

- Canned Ham
- Boxes of Stuffing Mix
- Boxes of Instant Potatoes
- Boxes of Macaroni and Cheese
- Canned Yams
- Brown Sugar
- Bag of Marshmallows
- Canned Green Beans
- Can of Cream of Mushroom Soup
- French Fried Onions
- Canned Corn
- Canned Cranberry Sauce
- Jars of Gravy (Or packets)
- Cornbread Mix
- Dessert Mix (Pumpkin Pie Mix, Brownie Mix, Cake Mix, etc.)
- Jello Mix



Hymn of the Month #31 My Jesus I Love Thee

This hymn is attributed to William R. Featherstone, a young Canadian who likely wrote this as a poem upon his conversion. Featherstone passed away at 27 years old. Legend tells us that his parents found it in the young man's Bible and decided it should be read at the funeral. After the funeral, the poem spread across Canada and the US until one day an American Composer, Adoniram Gordan (co-founder of Gordon-Conwell College and Seminary) put together the music to this beloved hymn. The lyrics invoke the great love for Jesus that many of us felt when we first came to faith. And the story around the hymn is a solemn reminder that loving Jesus makes life (even a short life like William Featherstone's) meaningful, powerful, and eternally significant.

*1 My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine;
for thee all the follies of sin I resign;
my gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou;
if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

*2 I love thee because thou hast first loved me
and purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree;
I love thee for wearing the thorns on thy brow;
if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

*3 I'll love thee in life, I will love thee in death,
and praise thee as long as thou lendest me breath,
and say when the deathdew lies cold on my brow:
if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

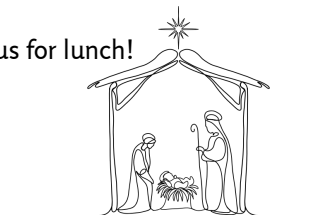
*4 In mansions of glory and endless delight,
I'll ever adore thee in heaven so bright;
I'll sing with the glittering crown on my brow:
if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.*

Let's Decorate!



Come over to the church on Saturday November 29th at 10am. We will be decorating our church for Christmas, and all help is greatly appreciated. Decorating the church for Christmas goes beyond simply placing ornaments and garlands. It is a part of the preparation time for celebrating Christ's birth. The atmosphere helps us to reflect on the joy and hope of the Christmas season, as well as open hearts to the message of the Gospel.

After we are finished, feel free to join us for lunch!
We will meet at That Juan Taco Place.



Sunday School Sessions

Monthly Memory Verse:
"The Son of Man must be killed and after three days rise again."
Mark 8:31

• **November 2nd :**

- No Sunday School
 - 140th Anniversary Celebration



• **November 9th :**

- Washed With Tears
 - A sinful woman anoints Jesus, from Mark 14; Luke 7; and John 12

• **November 16th :**

- The Servant King
 - The Last Supper, from Mark 14 and John 13-14



• **November 23rd :**

- The Sun Stops Shining
 - The Crucifixion, from Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23; John 19

• **November 30th :**

- God's Wonderful Surprise
 - The Resurrection, from Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20



Upcoming Meetings

- **Community Coffee:**
Every Tuesday 9-10 am
- **Diaconate:**
11/03/25 at 4 pm
- **Diaconate:**
11/10/25 at 2 pm
- **Women's Group:**
11/18/25 at 10:15 am

Talk To Us

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Upcoming Events

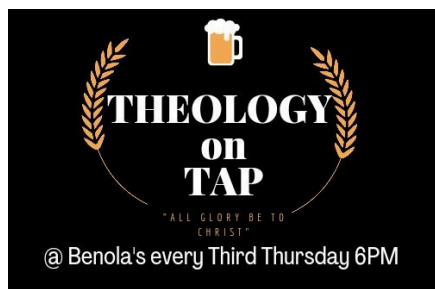


Midweek Bible Study

With Pastor Ben

Every Wednesday at the Church

6:00 - 7:00 pm



Theology on Tap

With Pastor Ben

Every Third Thursday at Benola's

6:00 - 7:00 pm



Prayer Meeting

FRIDAYS 10:30AM

BAXTER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Friday Prayer Meetings

With Pastor Ben

Every Friday at the Church

10:30 - 11:30 am

Quiz Answers:

1. Conviction of sin, instruction in righteousness, & sound judgement, 2. Patient, 3. Gentleness, 4. Faithfulness, 5. Peace, 6. Kindness, 7. Joy, 8. Good, 9. Love, 10. Self-Control