



2nd Quarter

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MISSIONS NEWSLETTER

June 2017

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For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree ripens its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away. Song of Solomon 2:11-13

WELCOME! Welcome to the second issue of the First Baptist Church Missions Newsletter. This letter provides church information from different mission ministries of First Baptist. It continues to recognize some of our local, national and international missions ministry, as well as shares information from First Baptist Church.

Forecasting the Seasons: It is the belief that the reason we have spring and summer is because the earth moves closer to the sun, and the reason we have autumn and winter is because the earth moves away from the sun. The earth spins at the same rate of speed, moves in the same direction, and travels the same path year around. During the year, the earth tilts from one direction to another. When it tilts some of us will experience a change in the seasons. And with each change of season, we plan what we are going to do.

When we look in the book of Genesis, we notice that the seasons have always changed. Genesis 8:22 says *“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”* The seasons have a significant purpose in God’s creation. We can take each season of the year and see how they relate to our spiritual lives:

During spring the plants grow, animals procreate, trees and flowers bud, and insects return to the warm air. In our very own lives, we may blossom, prosper, grow, feel anew, and even become excited by God’s blessings. In the book of Deuteronomy we learn what spring time can feel like in our lives. Deuteronomy 28:12 tells us *“The LORD will open to you his good treasury, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hands. And you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.”*

During the summer, heat, rain storms, tornados and hurricanes take center stage. Is there anyone who has not faced a storm in their lives? In the book of Psalms, we learn that God only has to speak the words and the storms in our lives will disappear, Psalm 107:29, *“He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.”*

Although many people like autumn, it does brings it’s own sense of sadness: flowers die, trees lose their leaves, animals and insects go into hibernation.

During this season of lost in our lives, God is very descriptive in the book of

Isaiah. He provides hope by letting us know *“the grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.”* Isaiah 40:8.

And there is winter. In some places, it is harsh, bitter, unwelcoming, and creates a scene of lifelessness for its inhabitants. Even when times like these enters in our life, God has a word that we can trust and stand by. Ephesians 4:31-32 says *“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

No matter what plans we make in our lives, the seasons are unpredictable. And regardless of what season we are in, we should never forget about God. From a season of prosperity to a season of disparity, He is and always will be our provider, comforter, and sustainer. The seasons will change many times during the course of our lives, but the Word of God never changes.

MISSION'S MESSAGES

Pam Harris (Ponemah)



1. What type of ministry does the Missionary focus on during the summer months in Ponemah?

Our missionary in Ponemah, Mrs. Barbie Maxwell, focuses on Vacation Bible School (VBS) or they call it “Kids’ Club” in Ponemah. Mrs. Carol Campbell started involving First Baptist Church in this ministry about fifteen years ago.

2. Give a description of the role that FBC has in that ministry?

In past years, our church actually led a week of VBS at Ponemah. Over time, our available and willing adult and youth staff dwindled and we were not physically able to carry out this project.

Also, churches from other areas have been committed to doing a week-long VBS and the summer stays pretty busy with events for the Ponemah Community! Currently, our role at First Baptist Church is to support churches from other areas who come to Ponemah for a week of “Kids Club”. Our church contacts the churches from other locations to see what their needs are and how we can help them. This ranges from asking our church members to donate food for daily snacks to prayer request for the groups when they are here from out of town. Kip and Becky Allen have offered to let the groups come to their lake home one of the nights they’re here for supper and a fun night at the lake. Members from our church help donate food for supper there. Brian Lietz, our youth pastor, usually ask our youth group to join and Darren Erickson, youth group helper, brings his boat and the groups mingle and have fun skiing and tubing!

3. What is the objective of FBC’s involvement?

The objective of FBC’s involvement is to provide help and assistance to the out of town groups who are here ministering to our neighbors in Ponemah. Our involvement is also to help make our congregation more aware of the need to share the love of Jesus Christ with our Native American neighbors!

4. Who is the sponsoring committee for this outreach? How does this ministry impact the church body?

The Christian Education Committee sponsors the outreach for the Ponemah outreach ministry. The Ponemah Ministry impacts our congregation by giving those who do not feel called to minister there personally an opportunity to give so others can go.

5. How many people are on your sub-committee?

Currently, our Ponemah Ministry Sub-Committee has 3 members. They are Mrs. Mary Thrash, Youth Pastor Brian Lietz, and Mrs. Pam Harris. We have asked others to join the sub-committee, but no one at the time was interested in making a commitment to serve. What is their role in the ministry? The Sub-Committee meets about 4 times a year mostly in the spring, summer and fall months to make final preparation for the groups coming to do ministry in Ponemah for the summer and to wrap up the summer plans. They are also responsible for helping provide food and set up for the Allen’s Fun Night at the Lake for the out of town groups. They also try to attend and bring food for the Thursday Family Picnic that is held for the attendees and their families during each week of VBS at Ponemah. This sub-committee has support from other areas in our church. Kip and Becky Allen offer to let us use their beautiful lake home for the Fun Night at the Lake for each group. Darren Erickson provides his boat and accessories for the Fun Night at the Lake. Barb Fisher helps with getting the list ready to ask church members to donate for each week’s VBS and sometimes offers to help with shopping for items that our church provides for the week.

6. Has this ministry had a positive impact on the parents and children in Ponemah? (in your opinion or based on your observations)

The positive impact on the parents and children in Ponemah is seeing them in Walmart or other places around town, and being greeted with a smile and a hug! It’s always good to see them and visit for a few minutes!

MISSION'S MESSAGES

7. Describe some of the spiritual blessings you have seen in Ponemah over the years of FBC's involvement.

Our involvement in Ponemah has been a spiritual blessing to many people - young and old. One of the young ladies who has attended Kids Club for as long as I can remember is now grown. She still comes to Sunday School and VBS when she isn't working or in Bemidji at church. She and her mother drive down to Bemidji almost every Wednesday and Sunday to attend church at the Calvary Chapel. Another young lady who attended VBS last summer in Ponemah started attending Bemidji High School and several of our youth group remembered her and tried to befriend her.

8. Are there any observations that you would like to include in this information?

Spending a little time sharing and showing the love of Jesus to our neighbors to the north has been a very rewarding experience.

9. Please identify some of the visiting churches that have participated in this mission outreach.

The Lombard Gospel Chapel from Lombard, IL has been coming to Ponemah to do a week of VBS for about 10 years. The Cornerstone Fellowship Church from Shenandoah, IA, has been about two times. The IA group of believers joined with friends from Bellevue, NE, and they worked together. The Nebraska group has been coming to Ponemah for about 10 years also. Cottonwood Community Church in Grand Forks, ND, has been about 5 years. The Covenant Fellowship Church from West Orange, NJ, has been to Ponemah about 3 years.

10. How is the ministry financially supported?

The Ponemah Ministry is supported financially by several different resources. Mrs. Barbie Maxwell, widow to Pastor Bim Maxwell, is still supported by Continental Missions. Our church also sends her a small portion of money each month to help with her expenses. First Baptist Church has Ponemah Ministries listed on its Financial Report under CE Committee.

Thank you Pam for responding to the interview questions concerning Summer Ministry in Ponemah. We thank you and the committee for your faithfulness. - The Mission Committee



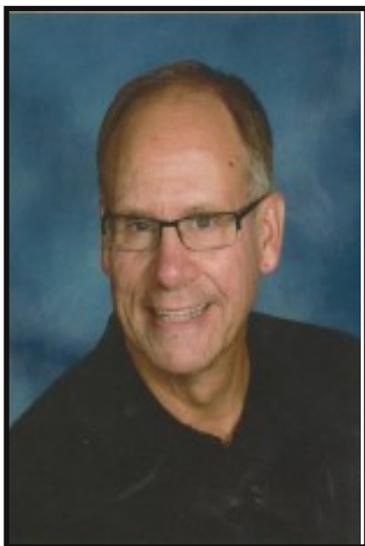
Pastor Brian Lietz—Youth Ministry Outreach (Ponemah)

The First Baptist Church youth group has been involved in the Ponemah ministry on a regular basis since the summer of 2015. The youth group spends the second Sunday of every month teaching Sunday school and building relationships with about 12 to 15 children ranging in age from 3 to 17. Our focus through this ministry is to build lasting relationships and share the love of Jesus Christ. We teach a Bible lesson, sing songs, and then spend the remainder of our time sharing in their lives. There have been relationships formed over the past two years which has opened the door to discussions about the love of Jesus Christ. There have been difficulties at times as some of the children resist our lessons, but God is good and we trust that he has a plan for those moments as well. The one regret is that we don't get to spend more time in Ponemah. We live far enough away that weekly visits are not an option throughout the school year, but summer offer more opportunity.

Throughout the summer the chapel in Ponemah hosts churches from around the country to join in the ministry by doing a Vacation Bible School for the children in the area. The First Baptist youth group participates in the activities by welcoming the churches in and encouraging the youth and staff in their ministry opportunities. We participate in a couple of the day's activities to further build relationships and we assist in an end of the week picnic where the children and their families are welcome to attend. This has been a wonderful opportunity to get to know the elders in the community and share the love of Christ.

Recently the youth group praise and worship team lead music during the Sunday service in Ponemah which was an amazing opportunity and blessing for our young people. The youth group is hopeful that they will be able to lead an entire service at some point this summer which would include music, sermon, and children's ministry. We are excited to be a part of this ministry in Ponemah and are looking forward to many more opportunities to share the love of Christ up there with our beautiful neighbors to the north.

Word from our Pastor



Oh how we all look forward to Spring and Summer in the North Country. Besides warming up we jump into many more outdoor activities. One of the activities that this area is well known for is fishing. With all the lakes around us fishermen come from many miles to catch their limit of Northern Pike, Crappie, Walleye, and Sunfish. There's nothing more enjoyable than eating fresh deep fried fish, especially Walleye. I'm not much of a fisherman. I can easily get bored if they're not biting but on the other hand if they are biting I can enjoy it. As you well know much of Jesus' life on this earth was around the Sea of Galilee. The first four disciples that Jesus called were commercial fisherman. There were two sets of brothers, Peter and Andrew and John and James. The famous quote that we are all familiar with is from *Matt. 4:19 and Mark 1:17*, "*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.*" The idea behind fishing is to know the fish you are looking for and attract them so you can make the catch. To catch a fish we must know what equipment to use, the habitat and depth of the water we are fishing in, as well as the kind of bait the fish will go after. After we understand everything we need for real fishing, then how do we relate that to being fishers of men? Well it's really not that much different than catching fish. First of all, we need to go where the people are. Secondly, we need to know something about them. Thirdly, we need to share the gospel with them, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation, for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek*" (*Romans 1:16*). After doing all of that if they respond to the Gospel we need to realize the Lord is the one who catches them and cleans them. What a great opportunity Jesus gives us in fishing for men, women, and children.

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