



200th Anniversary 1824-2024

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF DAYTON COURIER

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Truth and Love in an Age of Misinformation and Division

By Pastor Kent Berghuis

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“But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way in Christ.”—Ephesians 4:15

Our country’s election season has taken surprising turns this month. From our president stepping aside in the upcoming election to the narrow miss of an assassin’s bullet on our former and possibly future president, a tide of situational change seems to be upon us. Now, as much as ever, we need the wisdom of learning to speak truth in love.

We know we live in an age of misinformation. There have always been lies, conspiracy theories, and all kinds of wild rumors. The old authorities that used to sift through the data to forge our narratives are largely gone or disregarded. Research for the masses amounts to a Google search instead of a truly scientific method. Plenty of voices shout loudly to fill the void of understanding and wisdom. We need a deep commitment to truth, honesty, and the values of humility and learning in such an environment.

As we move inexorably toward a consequential election in November, we can expect the noise and rhetoric to increase. Perhaps the surprises we’ve seen are just the beginning of surprises yet to come. Our fear of seeing those who do not share our values being ushered into power may cause us to want to believe the worst. We may want to stoke divisions ourselves. We may realize there is hate in our own hearts, even as we sense the hatred of others.

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Jesus himself famously issued the hard command in the Sermon on the Mount to “Love your enemies” (Matthew 5:44). The root words of “enemy” and “hate” in the biblical languages are very similar. We have enemies because one or both sides are engaged in hatred and division. If we wonder what it means to love someone in such a context, Jesus makes it clear it isn’t just about having positive feelings for them. Instead, he says to pray for them and to do them good. Though he would one day be crucified by his enemies, he always sought their redemption.

In any situation we can choose kindness. We can always bring those with whom we disagree to the Lord in prayer. We meet them in fresh perspective in the presence of God. We serve a greater King than any earthly ruler or elected official. Let’s follow the wisdom of Scripture and learn to pray for everyone, including—and maybe especially—for those who may oppose what we believe or stand for. Just maybe then we will be growing into the maturity described in the texts cited here. Then we will be a little bit more like Christ. That could be a meaningful witness in the days we are called to live.

--Pastor Kent



Firepit Fellowship

Friday, August 16 @ 6pm



Dorothy Lane American Baptist Church (960 W Dorothy Ln) is inviting us to their "Firepit Fellowship" every 3rd Friday of each month throughout the summer beginning at 6:00pm. The next one will be on August 16th. Hotdogs, snacks, marshmallows and drinks are provided, but you can bring something to share if you wish.

Homecoming Sunday September 8, 2024

As the summer season starts to wind down, and students and teachers return to schools, we look forward to welcoming each other back from various travels and times away. And we mark the beginning of a new season of learning as we resume our full schedule of Sunday school offerings and other weekday opportunities. We also keep in mind that the idea of homecoming applies to all those who may yet join with us and find a spiritual home with First Baptist. So continue to keep an eye out for those who are new to our gathering, and help them to feel welcome!

Audit of Financial Records

A review of the church’s financial records was completed on June 29, 2024. A copy of the report was sent to the Executive Council. Thank you to those who helped in this—Melody Pugh, Clark Whittaker, David Coggins, and Carolyn Mowry.

June 2024 Financial Report

	Budget	Received	YTD Budget	YTD Received
Loose Offerings	1000.00	40.02	500.00	616.03
Pledges	207794.00	11781.00	103897.00	105058.50
Non-pledged Contributions	55000.00	3477.00	27500.00	29188.00

Garden Report

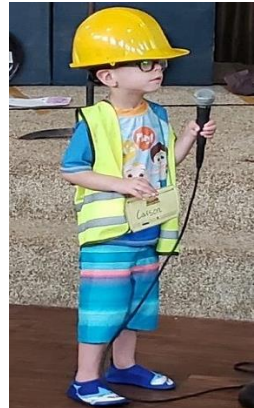
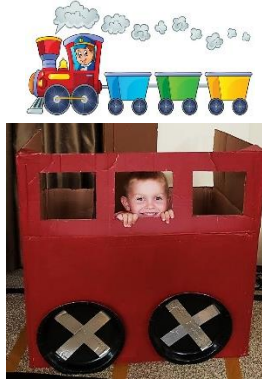
The much anticipated time arrived for the July harvest. Fortunately we were able to walk in a group of children from Vacation Bible School to help with the pulling up of onions and picking of green beans! Actually the garden walk was part of the demonstration of the today church continuing the practice of the early church to share what they have for the common table. This week we harvested a 5-gallon bucket full of onions (red, white and yellow), a half-bushel basket of green beans, and a wheelbarrow full of potatoes. Ben Ryan suggested we make some potato and onion soup. Whatever they make, I am sure the cooks at the House of Bread will make something delicious! I have been sharing garden notes with Nancy, the garden manager at Christ UMC church in Kettering. Last Sunday afternoon I visited their garden and saw some creative gardening techniques that we might be able to incorporate in the future of our garden. Another exercise in sharing for the common good. Thanks VBS, come back anytime!



We plant, God grows!
Farmer/Pastor Dave



Vacation Bible School Week (July 8-12, 2024)





El Salvador Mission Partnership Return Trip 2024-25



Since 2010 we have enjoyed a mission partnership with First Baptist Church and St. John Missionary Baptist Church in Springfield and Iglesia Bautista Dios Compasivo in Ahuachapan, El Salvador. And as part of maintaining that partnership we have periodically had a group travel to Ahuachapan and surrounding areas to nurture relationships and see firsthand the good work the folks there are doing. We had a trip planned for the Spring of 2020, but the pandemic forced us to cancel. We have continued to provide financial support for the work in Ahuachapan, but have yet to return in-person. However, we are now sensing the ability and opportunity to once again make group trips possible, beginning with a trip at the end of this year.

Some of the more experienced folks who have traveled in the past, including Diane Ashman, have met to discuss a trip that would take place just after Christmas, December 2024 and run through about January 5, 2025. This trip will in some ways feel like a restart, since we have not been there for several years now, and a good part of the work will involve getting reacquainted and discussing new ministry projects. **For now, we need to know who in our congregations would like to commit to going on this 2024-2025 trip. And we would like to know by September 1, 2024. If you are interested and would like to know more, please speak with me/Pastor Jason.**

An Adventure in Ethiopia

The following story was shared by Okway Omot on Facebook when his friend graduated with a university degree. He tells a fascinating story of a journey in Ethiopia with his friend from over 20 years ago that helped them become the people they are today. Here is Okway's adventure story, which I edited some for space in our newsletter.--Pastor Kent

In June 2003, Ojullu Diel and I went for a mission trip to Dimma Wareda (District), the richest gold area in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. We boarded a bus from Abobo town to Pinyudo and arrived there at about 10:00am. While in Pinyudo, we met Ojulu Jiili (Okwier) and told him about our plan. He decided to join us right away. For us this trip became self-defining.

At that time there was a vast number of government forces (soldiers) deployed in Gambella region and people lived in fear. Around 5:00 pm we bought two kilos of wheat from the local market and ground it in a miller machine for the planned trip. As we went through the process, my cousin Winykek Dichol was with us, but he was oblivious to our trip. He began suspecting something and asked, "where are you going?" We openly told him we were going to Damballa. "Hey guys stop that nonsense," said Dichol.

About 8:00 pm we left Pinyudo. Suddenly Ojulu Jiili stopped us and said, "wait for me here." He ran into a little bush near the road. Shortly, he came back with a root of tree. He cut it into three pieces and distributed it to us. "What is this?" Ojullu Diel asked. "This is magic, just put it in your pocket. From now on, nothing bad will happen to us on the road," the magic guy said. We were senselessly shocked. However, we avoided asking for further magical evidence. We put it in our pockets and continued walking.

When we arrived in Gog Ya Akaambo, we asked a woman to give us saucepan to cook our food. We cooked Ugali/Fufu and ate it. The journey we were about to take would take three to four days in the forest. Soon we learned that two ladies wanted to go to Dima, but unfortunately. their parents did not want. Therefore, they decided to join us to escape.

In Herbu, I sold my belt to get transportation on a truck whose driver had refused to help us unless we paid. Unluckily, the belt did not make enough money. I became beltless and tied my pants belt loops with a rope. The same driver came and offered us help. Eventually, he took us to Medan which was a few miles away from Dimma Town. When we reached Medan, Ojulu Jiili with the two ladies decided to stay there with their relatives. We hugged them and passed to Dimma. In Dimma, Ojullu Diel went to work at mining, and I went to work in road construction. We agreed to meet in Dimma after two months.

Two months later we met as planned. We bought stuff and prepared to return home. Around 7:00pm, we left for Akula which was about a six-hours journey. The sky was cloudless, the moon and stars were bright, and the weather was beautiful! It was an enjoyable journey! Three hours from where we left, we suddenly met an aggressive lion on the roadside. The lion sniffed us and yelled, and we staggered! Shortly, the lion roared, and the ground was silent with all its habitants and forest dwellers. My body trembled, and I suggested going back to where we came from, but Ojullu Diel recommended climbing a tree.

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While we were still trying to figure out what to do, the lion made a prolonged cry. Immediately we rushed to climb a tree. After spending two hours on top of the tree, the unclouded sky became clouded and the brightest moon and stars disappeared, instantly the rain started springing for the whole night. Simultaneously, the lion kept roaring especially when he sniffed us, and we stayed upright on the tree till morning. At midnight, the freezing weather whizzed, and our bodies shivered. I said from my heart, "where is the Ojullu Jiili's magic?" Unfortunately, Ojullu Jiili had remained in Dimma.

Early in the morning the lion was silent for almost forty minutes. Around 7:30 am we came down from the tree and resumed the journey. When we walked a little bit, we saw where the lion spent the night. We found that the lion was busy eating another animal and that was why he did not attack us. Three days later we arrived in Gog (Dipach) and slept there. In the morning, a friend escorted us to the road to Abobo (home!) and said, "Go, and when you reach a head there, there are two distinct separate ways: one on the right, and other on the left but both are going to the same place." When we found the two options, we chose the one on the right side and we went ahead. Within an hour, the lane looked ugly like an unused lane. I told Ojullu to return but he doubted it. We got lost in the bush for one day and half. At night we slept in the bush near a termite mound and an animal came and sniffed our air and ran. I did not sleep again.

In the morning, we resumed our journey. Around evening, we saw a narrow lane and we followed it. In less than an hour dogs barked at us and we knew we were near home. We arrived home in Debbi village, Abobo. Bawar went straight to bring us water without asking. We drank the water and finished it. He went for more water. The moment we finished drinking water, he brought us maize, and we ate and regained our energy. Immediately unusual sweat came out of our bodies, and we felt relieved from stress, anxiety, and of course the spirit of psychological death. Ojullu Diel and I started our normal conversation and laughed. We assessed ourselves to see if we were really us. An hour later, Othow Akway (Bawar), asked, "How many days did you get lost in the bush?" We told him it is one day and half. He was shocked but then happy because we made it.

I considered June 2003 as a condemnatory year but what I did not know was that God was clearing the way and preparing us. Six months later the government forces committed genocide. Ojulu Diel and I fled to Pochalla, South Sudan. From there he made his way to Kenya.

Thankfully, Ojullu Diel, a man who never gave up in front of Lion and in the bush got the opportunity to come to the United States in April 2016. The same month Ojullu went straight to ESL classes and continued up to October the same year. In 2017 he received his High School Equivalency Diploma (GED) and went straight to Forsyth Technical Community College. In 2021 he received his associate degree and transferred to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). This year he received his BA at this wonderful university. I am deeply proud of you Ojullu Diel. This achievement did not come overnight. It is a driving story that dates to early 2002- 2003.

Once again congratulations Ojullu Diel. You really inspire me!



Spotlight on Sue Wilson

FBC Member and Chair of the Deacon Board

(The following photo and article appeared in the DDN on July 5, 2024)

Centerville woman, 74, focuses on family, running



July 5, 2024 Dayton Daily News by Marie Kriedman – contributing writer

Susan Wilson has lived in Centerville for almost 44 years. In that time, she has likely run more than 44 times the distance of the city itself. Wilson, who started running circa 1980, has completed 10 marathons and more than 30 half marathons. She currently runs four to five miles twice a week, and eight miles once per week.

Before she took up running, Wilson said she played tennis, emphasizing that she and her husband played *a lot* of tennis.

The 74-year-old continues to challenge herself, and last summer joined MENSA after taking and passing their test. She also works full time, while singing with her church’s choir and serving on the deacon board.

Wilson and her husband, Bill, attend First Baptist Church of Dayton. The church recently celebrated its 200th anniversary and received a bronze Ohio historical marker.

She is also a big fan of Wright State basketball, Cincinnati Reds, Ohio State Buckeyes, and Cleveland Browns.

Wilson loves to travel, and previous trips included a four-week bus tour of the British Isles in 2014, and a Mediterranean cruise in 2018.

“Our favorite place is Traverse City, MI,” she said. “We have been going there every year since 2000. We also went camping there with the kids.”

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The next adventure for the Wilson family is a trip to Alaska, which will also include a cruise.

Wilson's advice for staying active is simple. "Just do it, she said. "The more you keep moving around, the more you are able to move around."

More about Wilson:

Tell us about your family: Married to William R. Wilson III (Bill) for married 52 years. The couple has two children and 8 grandchildren.

Favorite memory of your hometown: From childhood — All the neighborhood kids out playing (in the street!). Family vacations — NCR shut down the first two weeks in August, and we always went somewhere — Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, Washington D.C., Traverse City, MI. Also, when I was 11, my father bought a boat and joined the NCR Water Sports Club. We all learned to water-ski, and my brother and I were in some local water-ski shows.

How has aging affected your daily life: A lot more aches and pains, but I feel quite blessed that I'm basically in good health and can still get around fairly well.

What is your favorite activity: Spending time with family, puzzles, travel and running. I've completed 10 marathons, and am still running half-marathons.

How long do you plan to work or how long have you been retired? In 2014, I turned 65. A week later, I hit 40 years of civil service at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. Three days after that, I retired. A few months after that, I got a call asking if I would be interested in a part time job as a contractor at the base, and I took it. After three years, that job was eliminated, but before it ended, I was offered a full-time job, and took that. Still working.

How do you stay fulfilled in retirement: Since I'm still working, I do get a sense of accomplishment and feel that I contribute to the mission. I also am very active in my church — choir, deacon board. I'm most proud of my family — children and grandchildren, the people they have become, and follow their activities and accomplishments. My husband and I enjoy watching movies and TV series, going out to dinner, visiting the kids, and the occasional adult beverage establishment.

Biggest challenge of being a senior citizen: Probably health concerns — but again, I feel very fortunate to be in good health for my age.

Biggest reward of being a senior citizen: We feel very fortunate to be financially comfortable.

Most satisfying part about life today: Again, I'm very thankful that I'm healthy and can do most of the things I enjoy. I'm very thankful to have a wonderful husband (going on 53 years) — we support each other's interests. Also, we're very fortunate to have the means to help our children and grandchildren — vacations, college costs, etc.

What does the future hold for you: I hope to just keep on doing what I've been doing, and be there for my family.

Best advice for individuals 60 years and older: Enjoy every day, and don't sweat the small stuff.

Church Trivia...

WHO DESIGNED OUR CHURCH BUILDING?

I am sure the majority of us know nothing of the architects who designed our church building. At 110 years old, our building on Monument Ave has been the home to First Baptist Church for half of its existence. With all the attention our building has received over the last year I thought it would be interesting to find out who was behind the design our beautiful church home.

Harry I Schenck Sr. was born on November 13th, 1880 and was a lifelong Daytonian. Harry J Williams was born on November 4th, 1880 and was raised in Ithaca, NY. They met at Cornell University and both Harry's received a degree in Architectural Engineering in 1903. After graduating, Harry Schenck returned to Dayton and was followed by his classmate. In 1906 they formed the architectural firm Schenck and Williams and opened an office on the Ludlow St. side of the Arcade. An immediate success, the firm designed many notable Dayton area buildings. The list includes the YWCA and the YMCA (now the landing). The Rike-Kumler Dept. store, Liberty Tower, the Dayton Engineers Club, the Conservancy Building, Hawthorn Hill and Charles Kettering's Home. The Good Samaritan Hospital and Miami Valley Hospital. The Delco building at St Clair and the Frigidaire plants on First St. They designed the Third National Bank Building on Main St, Grace Methodist Church, Third St. Baptist Church, Dayton View Baptist Church and The First Baptist Church of Dayton as well as many other buildings around the State of Ohio. This is just a sample of an impressive body of work.

In 1946, Harry Williams moved to Palm Springs, CA to start a new venture, designing shopping centers until his death in 1957. Harry Schenck remained in Dayton and continued to operate the firm as Schenck, Brower and Associates until his death in 1956. He is buried with his family at Woodland Cemetery just around the bend from the grave of Col. Edward Deeds.



Harry Irvin Schenck
1880 – 1956

Harry Schenck was a president of the Dayton Engineers Club and president of the Dayton Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He was a Director of the Dayton Art Institute and was a Trustee of the Dayton Community Chest. He was a Rotary club Member, a Mason and member of the Central Reformed Church.

Jonathon Wolfe

Chair, Board of Trustees, FBC

Dedication of the Janet Lasley Legacy Garden at Caesar Creek Nature Center

The dedication of the garden included a program with many speakers who talked about not just Janet, but the volunteers who worked on creating this garden. Tom Lasley also shared a few words. First Baptist was well presented with quite a few members in attendance.



FRIDAY
JUNE
28TH
2024

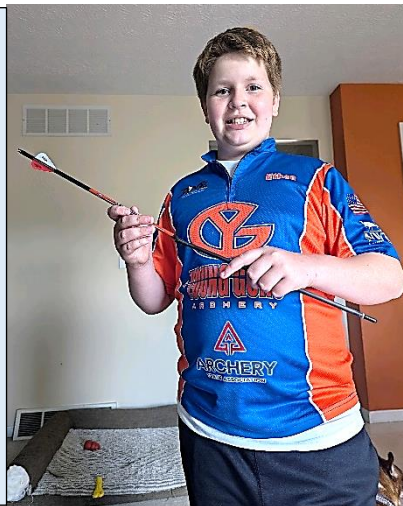


Congratulations Ethan!

Ethan Charron shot a "robinhood" at his last archery shoot of the summer.

A robinhood is when you shoot an arrow into the back of an arrow you previously shot.

Two bullseyes!!



Summer Fun Photos

Jerome Stueart and Joey on their recent summer adventure: The kayaking pics are from a trip to Clifty Creek in central Kentucky. The other one was taken from their climb to the first bald of Roan Mountain, overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains, just on the border of Tennessee and North Carolina.



Steeple Work Continues... prepping for the scaffolding





Fishing Ohio Farmland

By Pastor David Coggins

Dayton is located where it is because it sits at the confluence of five rivers: Great Miami, Stillwater, Mad, Wolf Creek and Twin Creek. The Mad River is the only river in Ohio where you can fish for trout year round: mostly brown trout with a few rainbows and brookies. A brief 40-minute drive from my house will put me on the upper section of the river which maintains perfect conditions for trout because it is fed by cold water springs. A few weeks ago I went out when it was 93 degrees. The water temperature was 63 degrees. Between the tree canopy and cool water it is almost like fishing in outdoor air conditioning.

Besides the adrenalin rush of having a fish on the line the river draws me to it. As all fishermen and fisherwomen know, there is something that grounds us when we immerse ourselves in nature and let it transport us to another place outside of ourselves for a short while.

Thanks to the generosity of local farmers we can access the river across their fields of soybeans and corn. Walking through the corn is reminiscent of the *Field of Dreams*. If you don't know how to get to the river just follow the deer and raccoon tracks. Expecting to come out the other side into heaven, you do!

Songbirds are generous with their morning Alleluias. An eagle perches on a tree fifty yards downstream to see if I am going to cast into his breakfast pool. The Great Blue Heron is just irritated that I am there and flies off to another section of the river.

Working my way downstream there are signs of life everywhere. Deer enter the river to take a sip of the cooling waters. Bucks cross the river toward the cornfield for a morning brunch. Fish rise to engulf the bugs emerging from river bottom. Some leap out of the water to snare ants off of an overhanging limb.

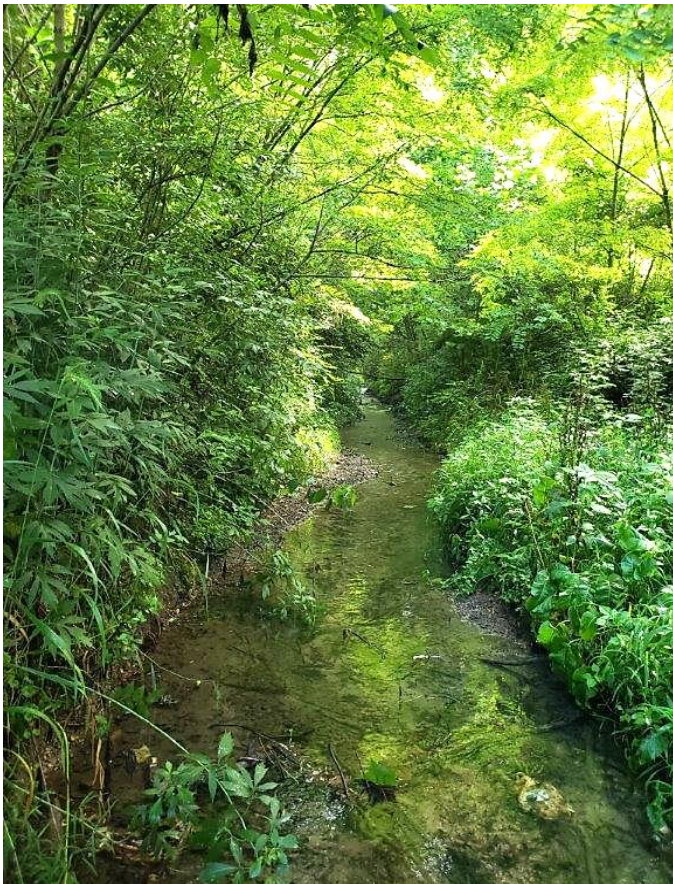
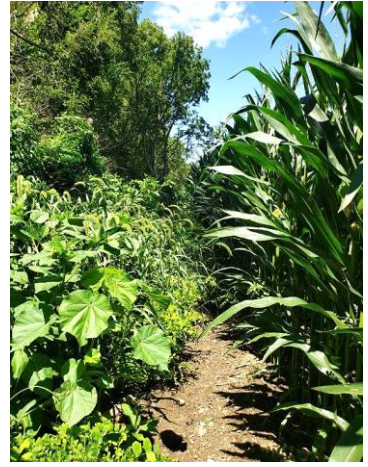
Sometimes I pick up fossils or interesting rocks left behind by the glaciers retreating to the Great Lakes. It fascinates me that I can find a pink/black granite rock in the middle of farmland. Some rocks are sculpted for painting. The Shawnee tribe had a camp along the river but I have not been fortunate enough yet to find any Indian artifacts.

A river mink scurries down the bank and dives into the pool where I am casting. Later I see him downstream as if he was following me, as if I knew where the fish were more than him. Not today. No fish. Not even a hit on the line.

But the fish are there. Waiting. Waiting for a better fly selection or a better presentation.

As I make the walk back to my car I think what a good day it was. The peace and harmony of it all made the drive worthwhile.

(See photos on next page)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

August Celebrants

- 7 Greg Merkle
- 11 Jack Radachi, Jamie See
- 13 Corine McMaster
- 14 Randy Compton, Anna Wildermuth
- 17 Michael Curry, Evander Pugh
- 18 Patricia Taylor
- 22 Griffin Leach
- 23 Shirley Williams
- 28 Allyson Black
- 30 Ashley McWain
- 31 Jason Alspaugh, Dawn Kalbfleisch



(Is your birthday not listed? Please contact the church office and update our records.)

For Our Cards & Prayers



- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Tathiane Ayers | Merkle Family |
| Babb Family | Shirley Nash |
| Clara Black | Mary Ann Paloncy |
| Don Brown | Susan Parent |
| Linda Ginter Brown | Jamie See |
| Gerald Busch | Judy Smith |
| June Collier | Roger Stephens |
| Lavanda Ferguson | Anita Suro |
| Bill Harrell | Thomson Family |
| Karen Johnson | Lee Tyson |
| Kalbfleisch Family | Anne Veghte |
| Doris Landis | Harold West |
| Ray Landis | Dorothy Williams |
| Gene Lee | Sharon Wingham |

Military Duty:

Sebastian Ewald, Sunny Ewald, Brittany Kalbfleisch, Will Radachi, Andy Wilson



Our Condolences

We extend our condolences and prayers to the Babb Family on the passing of Glen Babb on July 30, 2024.

Service details follow:

Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024
 Morton & Whetstone Funeral Home
 (139 S. Dixie Dr, Vandalia 45377)
 Visitation from 11am-1pm
 Memorial Service at 1:00pm
 Burial to follow at Dayton Memorial Park



Mark & Merrienne Craig off to the Celtic Festival after church.