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A Sure Beacon-Light of Hope

By Rev. Dr. Kent Berghuis

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Annual Church Picnic	3
Summer Music Series 2026	4
Garden Report	5
Eastway Update	6
Vacation Bible School 2026	7
Youth Summer Camps	7
FBC Photo Album	10
July Birthdays	13
Financial Report (May)	13

This month our nation observes its 250th anniversary of Independence Day. Those colonists of long ago broke free from what they believed to be the tyranny of their own imperialistic lineage. Declaring that everyone was created equal and endowed with inalienable rights, they set out to continue the hopeful tradition of building a shining city set on a hill. They imagined we might evoke the New Jerusalem, a reflection of the alabaster city that gleams undimmed by human tears.

Many of us are old enough to remember the bicentennial. I was in grade school, and as I recall, it was a BIG DEAL. There were all kinds of celebrations that stretched out over the course of a couple of years. We visited the Freedom Train and collected commemorative quarters. I may not have understood national politics all that much at my relatively young age, but I recall a rather joyful and united time to be an American.

Today there may be less enthusiasm about celebrating our nation. Politics have become so divisive, and our leaders use opportunities for unity as further wedges to cast aspersions on their opponents. And maybe it's just harder to get enthusiastic about saying "semiquincentennial"!

One bright spot of late has been the narrative of internationals visiting America for the World Cup and posting their delight. From the Tartan Army of Scotland drinking Boston dry to Japanese fans extolling the virtues of Taco Bell and Waffle House, we are once again seeing ourselves a bit through others' eyes. Our greasy food, generally friendly hospitality and basic consumer culture still attracts.

The mythic promise of America has always been attractive to the world. When I was in school we sang the famous words of Emma Lazarus that are on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty. "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores, send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me; I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

It's ironic that these words were considered the paragon of patriotism in my youth in conservative rural America. This week we learned of the Supreme Court allowing the federal administration to revoke immigrants' Temporary Protected Status at will. This opens the door for the mass deportation of Haitians from Springfield and elsewhere as has been feared now for many months. Their futures will be in serious jeopardy, their families traumatized, and many may well face suffering we can barely imagine when returned to a nation from which they previously fled. This "wretched refuse" has been dehumanized by many who can't see them as people in need of the freedom and liberty that we could share.

My friend and fellow American Baptist pastor, Dennis Johnson, has edited volumes of the prayers of the Baptist theologian and pastor, Walter Rauschenbusch. He shared this prayer from 1910:

"O thou great Champion of the outcast and the weak, we remember before thee the people of other nations who are coming to our land seeking bread, a home, and a future. May we look with thy compassion upon those who have been drained by poverty and oppression; for we, too, are the children of immigrants, who came with anxious hearts and halting feet on the path of hope. We beseech thee that our republic may no longer fail their trust. Make thou our great commonwealth once more a sure beacon-light of hope."

The future will tell the story of whether we rise to the occasion of our better aspirations. The nation may or may not—but for the church to be the church, it must. Let's resolve to be a church that is a sure beacon-light of hope.

--Pastor Kent Berghuis



July Break

No Board Meetings

No Executive Council Meeting

Coffee & Cookie Social Time at One Lincoln Park

Monthly - 1st Wednesday from 2:00-3:30pm
590 Isaac Prugh Way, Kettering 45429



Next Social: July 1, 2026

Mary Herbert has planned a monthly coffee/cookie social time for our members who reside at One Lincoln Park. Currently we have 4 members residing there--Linda Ginter Brown, Gerald Busch, Bill Harrell, and Ken Taylor. You are invited and encouraged to drop in for these monthly socials! **Upcoming dates:** July 1, Aug 5, Sept 2, Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2. If you have any questions, please contact Mary at 937-380-8000.



FBC Church Picnic with Dorothy Lane Baptist Church



Sunday, July 26, 2026 ~ After church
Hills & Dales MetroPark ~ Paw Paw Pavillion
(Main entrance: 2655 S Patterson Blvd,
Kettering 45409)

Main dish and beverages provided.
Please bring a side dish or dessert to share!
Don't forget lawn chairs & lawn games.

Reservations needed by July 19!

SUMMER MUSIC SERIES 2026

First Baptist Church of Dayton

202 Years of Musical Excellence

JUNE 14

*John Kurokawa
Clarinet*



JUNE 21

*Kirsten Nordland
Mezzo-Soprano*



JUNE 28

Noel Walton



JULY 5

*Cynthia Schindler
Soprano*



JULY 12

*Cyerra Pemberton
Soprano*



JULY 19

*Mr. Patrick Nugent
Pianist*



JULY 26

*Cynthia Schindler
Soprano*



AUGUST 2

*Maestro Charles Pagnard
Trumpet*



AUGUST 9

*Jason Holmes
Baritone*



AUGUST 16

Guy Chambers



AUGUST 23

*Dr. Melody Williams
Soprano*



AUGUST 30

*Dr. Lou Lillie
Tenor & Pianist*



SEPT. 6

Dr. William Henry Caldwell



(pictured with Renée Fleming)

Sunday Worship at 10:00 AM

111 W Monument Ave
Dayton 45402

937-222-4691

Email: fbc@fbcd Dayton.org

Website: www.fbcd Dayton.org

Garden Report



Onions Anyone?

The garden is starting to flourish with all of the recent rain we have been having. The harvest of the onions has begun with a first batch pulled, trimmed and delivered to the House of Bread. Thanks to the squirrels and the rabbits we had to do a second planting of some of the green beans and sunflowers. The green beans are starting to climb the fence and will produce fruit in a few weeks. Kale will need harvesting soon as well as more onions and potatoes. Nothing like fresh produce!!

Growing by the Grace of God,
Pastor / Farmer Dave





UPDATE

Our church supports Eastway Behavioral Healthcare by providing \$1500 per year to fund outings and special programming for the two child residential treatment programs in Dayton and Washington Courthouse. This money has been used to throw end-of-the-year picnics with bounce houses and cookouts and has also been utilized to help purchase Christmas presents for the children. In addition, the church has also supported Eastway's Food Pantry with a monetary donation as the pantry was getting up-and-running and by hosting a food drive last year. Please see below for an update about Eastway:

Eastway recently celebrated Mental Health Awareness Month in May and had a campaign via social media to provide education and resources. Specifically, 1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year. That stat is more than just numbers. It represents real people, including friends and family who need support. So, how can you get involved:

- Talk about mental health. Stigma grows in silence. Healing begins in community.
- Set an example: When we prioritize our mental wellbeing, we show others how to do the same.
- Learn more! Educate yourself!
- Show support: If someone you know is struggling, offer a listening ear or encourage them to seek help.

Together, we can continue to break stigma, build understanding, and remind our community that no one has to face their journey alone.





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2026

RIVERS' EDGE PEACE CAMP

July 13-17 @ 9:30am-Noon

Children grades **PreK-5th grade** are invited to a week of Vacation Bible School where we will explore ideas of peace & peacemaking from the Bible and songs of faith, particularly those that make a connection with river/water imagery. Join us for a fun week of music, story times, crafts, and games!

REGISTER TODAY!

Early registration is encouraged, and the form is online at www.fbcd Dayton.org (hard copies are available at the church office). For any other questions please contact Pastor Jason Alspaugh (jalspaugh@fbcd Dayton.org).

OVERVIEW

Date	Scripture	Title	Focus/Theme
July 13	Psalms 1	Like a Tree Planted by the Water	Grounded in God's Ways
July 14	Psalms 23	Beside Still Waters	Having Peace Within
July 15	Isaiah 2:1-5	Swords into Plowshares	Studying War No More
July 16	Mt. 3:1-3, 13-17	Baptized in the River	Following Jesus
July 17	Mt. 5:9	Blessed are the Peacemakers	Celebrating Peace

BAPTIST YOUTH FELLOWSHIP (BYF)

Thursday Evening BYF Gatherings
On Summer Break – June-August

YOUTH SUMMER CAMPS – SAVE THE DATES

BYC (Be Loved Youth Camp) in Laurel Springs, NC – June 28-July 3, 2026

Quest Camp in Green Lake, WI – July 19-24, 2026

Connect with Pastor Jason to RSVP your youth(s),
and/or if you have questions/need more info at this time.
Registration for BYC is closed, but there may still be time to join us for Quest.



A WORD OF THANKS FROM BYF

Our BYF youth hosted Coffee Fellowship on June 7, and we just wanted to thank everyone who made donations to help offset the cost of summer camps. ☺

Blessings

Blessings to Camilla Albritton and the rest of the Quest Staff, as they begin training and preparation, getting ready for a summer of ministry to youth at Green Lake Conference Center. See you on Week 4!



Christian Education Notes

*11:30am Sunday School classes/activities
are on summer break until September.*

**Sunday School for Children (grades PreK-5) will continue through the summer.
There is a Volunteer Teacher sign-up sheet in the hallway down from the church office.**

BUILDING BRIDGES BIBLE STUDY

NOTE: This Thursday morning Bible study is on a summer break until mid-August.

El Salvador Mission Partnership – 2026-27 Trip Planning

Deadline to commit to the trip is July 31

Diane Ashman traveled to Ahuachapán, El Salvador and the surrounding area on March 1-7, 2026 to connect with our folks there, visit scholarship students, and observe the status of ongoing and new ministry projects. Below are some photos from her trip.

We are now planning another trip, hopefully a GROUP trip, that Diane will help lead later this year. The range of dates we are looking at are December 28-January 8. These dates are tentative, and may shift a little, if it results in better airfare rates. The cost per person is \$1,300-\$1600, which covers airfare, other transportation, food & lodging. The minimum age for participants is 16-years old, but minors must be accompanied by a legal guardian. We will try to do some fundraising, but generally expect to pay about half that amount out-of-pocket. If you are interested, have more questions, or are ready to commit, please connect with Pastor Jason (jalspaugh@fbcd Dayton.org) no later than July 31.



From the FBC Photo Album

Photos from Youth-Led Worship on Trinity Sunday, May 31, 2026





Debbie and The Three Pastors *from Pastor David*

When I visited Debbie Harshman at Siena Woods a few weeks ago, she asked for a picture of the three pastors to put on her wall beside her bed. She already has a few pictures of family and church friends that bring her joy. She loves First Baptist and extends an open invitation to any and all to stop in and see her. Debbie continues to rehab from a severe fall she had a few months ago and hopes to be walking again soon. You will find her in room 310 of building 6125 N Main St. She will be the one with a big smile on her face.



DAYTON PRIDE 2026

THE CENTER ♦ 50TH ANNIVERSARY

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED US WITH DAYTON PRIDE THIS YEAR!





- | | |
|----|---|
| 4 | Melissa Mikesell |
| 5 | Aidan Owens, Laura Rhodes |
| 6 | Ariella Broom, David Curry |
| 7 | Carolyn Mowry |
| 9 | Tim Holmen |
| 10 | Eli Powell |
| 12 | Marin See |
| 15 | Todd Petry |
| 18 | Nancy Kerr |
| 21 | Hannah Gockel |
| 23 | Tom Lasley |
| 25 | Anita Suro, Clark Whittaker, Kay Wingham,
Sharon Wingham |
| 27 | Marlene Hopper, Ray Landis, Theresa Taylor |
| 31 | Daryl Bogan, Martha Burtenshaw |

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



*For Our Cards
and Prayers*



Linda Ginter-Brown
Gerald Busch
Merriann Craig
Domesick Family
Neil Earnest
Lavanda Ferguson
Bill Harrell
Debbie Harshman
Gene Lee
Patty Loxley
Shirley Nash
Mary Ann Paloncy

Susan Parent
Petry Family
Judy Smith
Nancy Soloski
Joanne Stephens
Anne Veghte
Vice Family
Harold West
Sharon Wingham

Military Duty:

Sebastian Ewald, Sunny Ewald,
Brittany Kalbfleisch, Kyle Kline,
Will Badachi



MAY 2026 Financial Report

	Budget	Received	YTD Budget	YTD Received
Loose Offerings	108.33	106.00	541.67	496.00
Pledges	17667.67	16233.00	88338.34	105481.76
Non-pledged Contributions	5000.00	3175.00	25000.00	20579.00



