



doing life together
with Jesus

the SCROLL

the monthly newsletter of
First Baptist Church North Adams

DEEP THOUGHTS WITH PASTOR DAVE

FEBRUARY 2024



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As we move through the month of February the Lenten season will begin moving us toward the glories of resurrection Sunday. Every year we make this journey to the cross and Christ's victory over death and the grave. It is an amazing thing to know that we too are overcomers, death will have no sting over those who process Christ as Lord and Savior.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Many of us know these words frontwards and backwards but I pause this month to recognize that maybe just maybe we need to go a little deeper than God's love for us in all of this.

Yes, it is true that God's love is what brought Christ to earth. It is His great love for us that motivated Him to bring His Son into human for allowing the creator to become a part of creation. It is the Father's love that designed this plan to redeem and save His people. God so loved/loves you and I.... that is central to the entirety of Scripture.

As I look to Resurrection Sunday on the horizon in just a couple of months (Resurrection Sunday is on March 31st this year) I am looking deeply at the sweeping reality that it is far more than His love that saves me. What saved me, what redeemed me, what made all the difference for me and you is the horrific death of our Savior and Lord on the cross. It was on that cross, it was through Christ's broken Body on the cross that I was and am saved.

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

1 Corinthians 1:23 states that we preach "Christ crucified!" we talk a great deal about the great unconditional love God has for us and we should. One of my favorites words is "beloved." We are God's beloved, a truth I share every chance I can. We sing "Jesus Loves Me" which He does. The hymns are full of His love. The stories of Scripture scream out the fullness of His love for us, as we need to. His love is our story but....

continued →

DEEP THOUGHTS CONTINUED

His love for us motivated and ordained the cross and called it into being. His love for us made the cross essential. A Holy God would not ever have to settle for our sin and lower His standards.... He crushes our sin. When we say that "God so loved the world that he gave His Son, never forget that He handed His Son over to the religious leaders, the Roman soldiers and Pilate. He gave His Son and sent Him to be scourged, mocked, have a crown of thorns crushed down over His head and He would be forced to carry His own cross up Calvary. God so loves you that he allowed nails to be driven through His hands

and feet bringing death to His physical form. God so hates sin and so loves us He allowed His Son to carry the fullness and filth of our sin to the tomb, forever crushing and defeating the power of sin.

The Cross is God's saving power and the means by which Jesus has forgiven our sin and ultimately rescued us from the path of destruction. The cross IS the path which brings salvation to those who welcome and receive it.... All of that coming from the fullness of God's unconditional unending love for us. Thank you God for Jesus and the cross!

EMERGENCIES . . . KEEP US POSTED!

PLEASE contact us in the event of an emergency, trips to the ER, surgeries, hospitalizations, or other crises. We want to be available to our church family as

they need us. Pastor Dave, Terri, or a deacon will be available for prayer, assistance, and/or counseling.

PASTOR DAVE'S BOOK PICKS

On the Welcome Center are books to preview, prices, and ordering sheets. Book titles are:

- Who's in Charge of a World that Suffers? (Billy Graham)
- When You Don't Know What to Pray (Charles Stanley)
- God Never Gives Up On You (Max Lucado)
- Sunday Matters (Paul David Tripp)
- Bible Encouragement for Every Day: Daily Devotions for a Woman's Heart

Deadline for ordering will be February 25.



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

WEEKLY STATISTICS

BIRTHDAYS

2 Ashton Fierro
3 Jay McCausland
Jocelyn Spooner
4 Jasiah Brown
7 Carson Beagle
8 Sam Braman
10 Cindy Noel
11 Cole Benoit
Ella Borer
12 Gideon Bellows
13 Anna O'Hearn
15 Jess Critelli
Brenda Gabel
Elijah Miles
20 Megan Nehring
Sarah Czarnecki

22 Jerry Cole
Seth Tuper
Brian Czarnecki
25 Dot Spencer
Al Lorge
Wesley Childers
26 Linda Neal
Isabella Spooner
Elisha Clairmont
28 Terri Braman
Samuel Kennedy

ANNIVERSARIES

14 Ed & Karen Marino
17 Phil & Denise Krutiak

DATE	WORSHIP	OFFERINGS
Dec. 24	n/a	\$13,857.35
Dec. 31	n/a	\$1,573.05
Jan. 7	worship cancelled	
Jan. 14	173	\$6,741.60
Jan. 21	136	\$2,308.00
OFFERINGS NEEDED:		\$19,000.00
OFFERINGS RECEIVED:		\$24,480.10
		SURPLUS: \$5,480.10

DEACONS

Deacons are gearing up for a fresh new beginning in 2024.

We'd like to thank Pastor Bryan Lamber-ton and Kathy Bradbury for their time serv-ing God's kingdom as deacons. Their hard work, dedication, and servant hearts have been greatly appreciated and will be im-measurably missed. We wish them well on their new paths wherever God directs them.

In January, we welcomed Krista Tower, Larry Burdick, Tammy St. Pierre, Marcia Brown, and Shawn Field to the Deacon Team. We spent some time during our re-

treat getting to know one another and preparing our hearts to serve God, support Pastor Dave, and embrace the congrega-tion. The Team is excited and eager to be the hands and feet that the Lord has called us to be. Deacons will meet on the second WEDNESDAY of the month for busi-ness and on the fourth Sunday for a time of devotion, prayer, and time in the Word.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

PRAYER CHAIN REQUESTS

Let us be a resource for your prayers. We will lift our hearts and our voices in prayer with you whatever need arises, when it arises.

When you need your request added to the Prayer Chain, please call Brenda Burdick at 413/358-8748.

KIDS KORNER

Welcome to February! We are so glad you're here! Before long, you will be celebrating Valentine's Day.

So ask yourself, "What would Jesus do for Valentine's Day?" Do you think Jesus would send His mom a pretty card Maybe He would make her a card out of construction paper. Maybe He would get chocolates for all His disciples. Or maybe, just to show how much He cares about them, He would sit down and eat with them. Jesus would ask them how they were doing. He might tell them a funny story or pray for them as He listened to some of their problems.

Jesus was a master at seeing things most people couldn't see People who were hurting, lonely, and sad were the kinds of people Jesus loved to be around. He knew if He could show them kindness and compassion, He could show them God's love. The Bible says, "God's love drives away all fear." The love that comes from God isn't some kind of mushy romantic love. It's a love that gives you peace and puts a smile on your face.

There are kids in your school and in your neighborhood who don't have much to smile about. No one is asking them over to play. No one is hanging out with them at recess. No one is saying anything nice to them. They are lonely and in need of a friend.

What would Jesus do on Valentine's Day? Jesus would be a friend to the boy or girl who seems to have no friends. Je-

sus gave away love by doing something to put a smile on someone's face and making them feel special. There's no better role model than Jesus. Do what Jesus would do this Valentine's Day! Show His love to someone who really needs it.

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CHILDREN'S MESSAGES

February 4: Melanie Rowland

February 11: Terri Braman

February 18: Elysse Tuper

February 25: Pastor Bryan

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 4th: Communion Sunday No Nursery or Sunday School. No Youth Group.

February 11th: Sunday School and Nursery open. Youth Group 11:30-1:00

February 18th: Sunday School and Nursery open.

February 25th: Sunday and Nursery open. FLM Retreat 12:00-3:00

March 3rd: Cookie Walk

March 23rd: Pancake Breakfast with the Easter Bunny

March TBD: Kingdom Kids

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BABY DEDICATION

We would like to congratulate Destiny Crews & Lavante Wiggins Sr. on the dedication of their son, Lavante Lamar Wiggins Jr. Welcome to the First Baptist Church Family!

CALL OR TEXT?

With our new Robocall system, you now have the option of receiving voice calls, texts, or both! Contact Lora in the office with your option choice. And please be patient with us as we get everything up &

running. (Please note: some subgroups may only be offered as 1 or the other. Example: Prayer chain will only be a voice call.)

WOMEN OF THE WORD

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

February is often known as “The Love Month” and “the Hallmark Holiday”. But February isn’t just for sweethearts, it’s for everyone because of Jesus.

Can you guess the number of roses that are given out annually on Valentine’s Day? I’ll give you a hint - it’s in the millions. And did you know Valentines Day is one of the most popular days for marriage proposals, special dinners at fancy restaurants, and a host of other things which people translate to LOVE. While many people celebrate Valentine’s Day in all many of these different ways, it’s no longer an official Catholic holiday—and unfortunately for all the romantics out there, it’s not an official bank holiday or day off (though I guess you can always take the day off for a special day with your significant other!)

Let’s take the modernism and commercialism out of it and zero in on one of the

most powerful pieces of Scripture which is found in Matthew 22:36-40 when the Pharisees asked Jesus this profound question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him: “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments, hang all the Law and the Prophets.” And, of course, we have been given the greatest example of pure love because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for you and me.

So there you have it. Love God, love yourself and love others as God has loved us, and not just on Valentine’s Day, but every day throughout the year.

HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAY

FBC GEAR FOR A NEW YEAR

We will soon be offering a new line of FBCNA gear. It has been a while since we have done this, so no time better than the present, or a brand-new year.

We will be working with Beck’s Printing in offering some great selections for our church family to help display to the greater community who we are as a church.

There will be T-shirts (short- & long-sleeve), golf shirts, hoodies, vests, and jackets. There will also be a variety of colors to choose from and some styles for everyone.

Orders will placed every month for the first half of the year. Come by the Welcome Center in the chapel to place an order.



MISSIONS & OUTREACH

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP OUR WEEKLY FREE COMMUNITY LUNCH MISSION: Donate cases of water, flatware, paper hot cups and cold cups, paper plates, baggies, coffee, dishwashing liquid and similar donations are always appreciated. Please note, although we appreciate all donations, we cannot accept any Styrofoam products.

AL NELSON FRIENDSHIP CENTER: Please keep in mind that although we usually collect our food and supply donations the third Sunday of the month, our volunteers will be happy to accept donations from anyone who brings them any week of the month. Single use cleaning items, health care and pet food are some of our most needed items. The year-end results of your generous donations are as follows: 2319lbs of food and \$560. Thank you. The mission board hopes to be able to ramp up our giving in 2024, because of missed opportunities we fell short of 2022's total. In 2022 we collected 2782lbs of food and supplies.

AMERICA FOR CHRIST: Your gifts to the **America for Christ Offering** impact thousands – through ministries with marginalized children, mission trips that transform lives torn asunder by hurricanes, resources that cultivate Christian leaders, chaplains who bring comfort to hospitals and nursing homes, and much more. Two-thirds of received offerings are directed to the Ameri-

can Baptist Home Mission Societies and one-third are directed to the ABC regional office of the giving church. This offering is promoted in February and March. **Check the mission table for envelopes and info.**

I would like to share the prayer we always close our meetings with:

THE WORK GOES ON PRAYER

Dear God, we praise you that even though our meeting has come to an end, our work for you goes on. We thank you for making us wise, you bring joy to our hearts, and light to our eyes. We thank you for what we have learned in this time we have spent together. Thank you for teaching and leading us through this meeting and for the mutual encouragement we have received from each other. As we go from here, make us fruitful in the work you have given us to do. Amen.

SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS: Contact a board member:

Steve King (<i>chair</i>)	Dave Babcock
Michelle Filiault	Ruth Goyette
Rhonda Wood	Kurt Gabel
Phil Krutiak	Ron Shartrand
Terri Braman (<i>at large</i>)	

Thank you for your continued support and stay tuned for opportunities to join in our missions as we make exciting plans for 2024 that include you!

HARVEST FAIR

It's not too early to start thinking about the Harvest Fair in November!

We are looking for crafters to start making items! Please consider donating an item or two. Please see Gladys Williams.

The Fishbowl is making a come back. If you have any unused toys, coloring books, craft kits, etc., please see Krista Tower.

Want to be a part of the Harvest Fair planning? Watch for our upcoming meetings in March.

SAVE THE DATES



SALSA NIGHT

Saturday, February 10

We will once again be blessed with the music stylings of Alex Torres & his Latin Orchestra. Information on the time, venue, and tickets prices will shared as they become available.

LENTEN LUNCHES

Wednesdays—February 14, 21, & 28 and March 6, 13, 20 | 11 A.M.

Lunch will be served, followed by a video and discussion, during the Lenten Season. Soups, sandwiches, salads, and more will be the faire of the day.

Each week a program from the *Life Tree Café* will be shared—a video element followed by discussion.

- Who was Jesus Really?
- Can God Love a Mess Like Me?
- Where's the Justice?
- A Reason to Live
- Reboot Your Life
- How Does Prayer Work?

PRAYER RETREAT @ OCEANWOOD

Friday, February 16 – Monday, February 19 | \$200 per person

Quiet mornings, a casual brunch, morning devotions and Bible study times, an afternoon nap (for those desiring such) afternoon sessions, prayer partners, worship, sunrise on the beach, walks at the beach, dinner out Sunday night, board games, tremendous fellowship, great food... Talk with Pastor Dave, or sign up at the Welcome Center, if you would like to join us for a sabbath weekend.

A WEEKEND WITH CHOSEN PEOPLE MINISTRIES

Saturday, March 2 | 6 P.M.

Join is for worship and a authentic Passover meal with Dr. Richard Fishman. Spend an evening exploring the parallels between the Jewish Passover and life with Jesus.

Sunday, March 3 | 10 A.M.

Dr. Fishman will again join us for a morning of talking about the Christian Church in Israel. The message delivered in worship will continue after worship.

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOUSE OF PRAYER

Tuesdays | 6 P.M.

Our church needs prayer more than anything else. If we want to become more, we need to be seeking His will above our own. Please consider joining us.

BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesdays | 10 A.M.

Thursdays | 6:30 P.M.

We have developed an amazing sense of community as we ask questions, explore, and connect. There is no reason to feel intimidated; we have people with varying degrees of Biblical knowledge.

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Thursdays | 10 A.M.

The topics of conversation are wide and varied. Join us for this unique fellowship.

RECOVERY LIFE GROUP

1st & 3rd Sundays following worship

We start with lunch and continue with conversations, building relationships, and building a culture.

'WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY' LIFE GROUP

2nd & 4th Sundays at 6 P.M.

This is a mental health ministry to be used as a tool when dealing with mental health concerns. It is meant to show how God is with us always, even in our darkest times. Through scripture and fellowship, members will come to understand that they are not alone in the fight to deal with mental health concerns. We are now looking for NEW members to fill a 2nd group.

MEN'S LIFE GROUP

February 1 & 15 | 6:30 P.M.

Calling ALL men in the church...come gather and dive into The Word. We will begin meeting every other week.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Saturday, February 3 | 8 A.M.

Come and partake in culinary delights and great conversation.

WOMEN'S LIFE GROUP

February 6 & 20 | 6:30 P.M.

The women have begun to meet at the home of Terri Daugherty, and great fellowship is underway. There is room for more. Talk to Terri for more information.

ADULTS UNLIMITED

Friday, February 9 | 6 P.M.

No church business, just church fellowship! Each month is a new venue.

BREAKFAST WITH PASTOR DAVE

Thursday, February 15 | 9 A.M.

Come eat together, talk together, and share together. We always have room for more—more room to join us, more food to share, and more of ourselves to give.

FIGHTING WITH FAITH

Sunday, February 18 | 6 P.M.

For anyone touched by cancer, come be inspired through fellowship, scripture, prayer, and stories of hope & strength.

VICTORY GARDENERS

Monday, February 19 | 6 P.M.

We begin again on the 3rd Monday of each month at the home of the Andersons. Vibrant discussions will be had on garden planning, seed sharing, and supply ordering, with perhaps a field trip and a building project or two. Please bring an appetizer to share.

OUR LOVE TO GOD IS MEASURED BY OUR EVERYDAY

FELLOWSHIP

WITH OTHERS AND THE LOVE IT DISPLAYS.

10 SURE SIGNS YOU'RE IN A HEALTHY CHURCH BY MICHELLE LAZUREK

No church is perfect. It's full of imperfect people who come together for a common goal: to love Jesus and to tell about Him to those who don't know Him.

After Jesus ascended to heaven, the disciples formed a church, explained in the book of Acts. An account of this early church in Acts 2:42-47 is perhaps the best example of what of what a healthy church should look like.

So, what does this mean for the church today? Here are 10 characteristics of a healthy church:

1. A healthy church produces new leaders.

Jesus spent a lot of his time with the 12 disciples, and He spent extra time with three particular people—Peter, James, and John—whom He trained closely to carry on his legacy.

Churches that don't pour into others to make them leaders are missing the mark. Ministries soon become about the leader rather than fulfilling the purpose of why they exist. Good leaders identify and train others with potential to eventually take over the ministry.

Although not explicitly stated, I imagine the disciples took turns teaching and leading those in their fellowship. As the early church grew, the original leaders identified more leaders in the congregation to better serve the growing body (Acts 6:1-7). No one person assumed every responsibility. And because Jesus had worked with them often and closely, they all got a first-hand glimpse at what it meant to go out into the world, meeting the needs of those around them.

2. A healthy church helps members crave meat, not milk.

"But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh,

as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh." (1 Corinthians 3:1-3a)

"You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food." (Hebrews 5:12)

The responsibility to grow church members rests both in leadership and in the members themselves. So often, I come away from events and sermons that give no specific application to the audience, using cliché verses that are either taken out of context or don't reveal new truths to the more mature believer. Teaching is not the only way we grow—but it is a vital tool for regular attenders.

As for the members' responsibility to grow: when Paul mentions that the people of his church were still drinking spiritual milk, I don't doubt he urged his church to chew on what he was saying and apply it to their lives, rather than rely on him for a constant feeding. Church members are responsible for their own growth too. We must apply the word, not just hear it.

3. A healthy church devotes itself to prayer.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." (Acts 2:42)

"So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." (Acts 12:5)

If the saying, "the family that prays together, stays together," is true, the same goes

continued →

for a congregation. Not every church has a regular prayer meeting to pray together. But God knows those that go into their prayer closets to pray. Those that beseech the Lord for His will instead of their own create a recipe for a healthy congregation.

4. A healthy church has members who serve with joy.

"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love." (Galatians 5:13)

"But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code." (Romans 7:6)

Ministries take work. In some cases, a ministry may make take hours of volunteer time. Yet healthy church members serve with joy, knowing they are investing in the Gospel being preached to all who benefit from that ministry.

- Helpers in children's church can take solace that the Word is being planted in those young minds and hearts.
- Those that give their lives to missions can know God will not allow that work to return void.

Service is not a chore, but a privilege. Healthy people know that and embrace that reality.

5. A healthy church has members who resolve interpersonal conflict in a healthy way.

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take

one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector." (Matthew 18:15-17)

If a church member is mad at someone else in the congregation, they should go to the person directly about the matter, not spread gossip to everyone else. Here's how Scripture teaches us to resolve interpersonal conflict:

1. Healthy members go to the offender first to show care and consideration for the other.
2. If the two cannot reconcile, enlist the help of someone you know to go with you to confront the person.
3. If that still doesn't work, then go to your pastor or another leader in the church. (This is not the first step.)

Do your best to resolve it, but if you can't, leave vengeance in God's hands, not yours.

6. A healthy church is made up of people who appreciate the past but look forward to the future.

The world is a tumultuous place. With so much sin and uncertainty, it can feel overwhelming at times. It is tempting to imagine a simpler time in the past—a time when a ministry worked better and the world in general seemed like an easier place to live. But healthy churches don't relish the past. Rather, they move forward with confidence that God is in control of the world. They do whatever they can to advance the Gospel instead of allowing the enemy to trick them into staying stuck in the past.

7. A healthy church is an accountable church.

"Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16)

"Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy." (Proverbs 28:13)

Even when a church appears healthy, the enemy still seeks to kill and destroy anything that gives God glory, rather than Him (John 10:10). Members know that if they are falling into sin, they must confess that to someone. Healthy churches confess their sins not only to God, but to each other. This also includes pastors. Pastors need to find wise counsel outside of their congregation to make sure they are not falling into sin too.

8. A healthy church gives cheerfully.

The Acts church was so devoted to each other, they sold everything they had to give to those within their fellowship that had need.

"All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need." (Acts 2:44-45)

If churches gave this way today, everyone's needs would be met enough to where they could then pay it forward to others in the world with a need.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

God loves a cheerful giver, and the Acts church was a great example of that.

9. A healthy church bears one another's burdens.

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2)

One of the best characteristics of a healthy church is one that genuinely cares and connects with its members. They don't view each other as burdens, but rather go out of their way to bear one another's burdens. When people feel like others genuinely care about them, they are a part of a healthy congregation.

In a previous article, I wrote about depression and the church. Many readers responded that their number one concern with the church is that they were dismissive when it came to expressing themselves honestly about their mental illness and that most other church members didn't care. They said people offered platitudes such as, "just trust the Lord and your depression will go away."

10. A healthy church welcomes strangers.

According to Acts 2:42-47, as the church met the needs of those around them, *"the Lord added to their number daily."*

Jesus tells his disciples in Matthew 25:35: *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."*

When we welcome in the hurt, the down-trodden, and the poor without expecting anything in return, it is like we are doing it for the Lord. And any church that welcomes Jesus is a healthy one.

Church can get messy. However, for churches that are willing to lay aside their own agendas and emulate the Acts Church example, the Lord will add to their number, making being a part of church truly a joy.

PRAYER REQUESTS

WILLIAMSTOWN COMMONS

Lyle Blanchard

HEALTH ISSUES

Sue Bean

Craig Benedetti

Heidi Braman

Sarah Czarnecki

Elmer Douglas

Ed Either

Frank Goodermote

HEALTH ISSUES CONTINUED

Denise Krutiak

Al Lorge

Charlie Marshall

Missy McLain

Anne Nelson

Suzette Pierce

Linda Quimby

Cal & Mary Rowland

Emory & Janet Scholl

HEALTH ISSUES CONTINUED

Cindy Smith

Brandy Whipple

IN THE MILITARY

Nick Belanger

Jon Cantoni

Cecelia Lawson

*When you can't put your prayer into words,
God hears your heart.*

the **SCROLL**
your home-church newsletter



FIRST
BAPTIST
CHURCH
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