



doing life together
with Jesus

the SCROLL

the monthly newsletter of
First Baptist Church North Adams

DECEMBER 2025

PASTOR

Rev. David Anderson

FAMILY LIFE MINISTER

Terri Braman

MUSIC MINISTER

Abe Sanchez

OFFICE MANAGER

Lora Peck

CUSTODIAN

Jeff Burdick

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday–Friday,
8 A.M.–1 P.M.

PHONE:

413/663-3780

EMAIL:

office@fbcna.net

WEBSITE:

firstbaptistnorthadams.org

FACEBOOK:

facebook.com/
firstbaptistnorthadams

DEEP THOUGHTS WITH PASTOR DAVE

Abide with me,
fast falls the eventide
The darkness deepens,
Lord with me abide
When other helpers fall
and comfort flee
Help of the helpless
oh abide with me.
Swift to its close
ebbs out life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim,
its glories pass away
Change and decay
in all around I see
O Thou who changest not,
abide with me.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved

you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (John 15:4-11)

This Christmas season I find myself focusing on the word abide. Abide is defined as accepts or act in accordance with a rule a decision or recommendation. Biblically to abide is to live in close, continuous union with Jesus through faith trust and obedience. Abiding is to allow Christ to be the source and center of your life – a branch drawing life from a vine. This union brings new life, helps one find their purpose, bringing significance and meaning to life. The abiding relationship is where believers find true hope, and joy and peace and love – the gifts of the Messiah talked about in the Advent/Christmas season.

This union or alignment with Christ finds us relying on Christ daily, living by His Word daily, seeking Him in prayer daily and living in love as He commands, daily.

As Christmas approaches and we contemplate abiding I ask the question, "Is the Christmas Season

continued →

DEEP THOUGHTS CONTINUED

religion and relationship? Is the arrival of the Christ Child tradition or transformative?" Do you allow the person of Jesus Christ continue to shape and sanctify you? As Jesus talks about He being the vine and we being the branches connected to the vine, or not, we find Him sharing with us the reality that there is something we can receive from He the Vine.

Jesus, Emmanuel, God with Us, brings new life. When a person is saved he or she is described as being "in Christ." Romans 8:1. We are held secure in a personal, permanent and intimate relationship with Christ Himself. This is a position for all believers. The difference between abiding in Christ and not abiding in Christ is being saved and unsaved or walking far from the Lord, hearts being far from Him.

Abiding is not a superficial relationship or acquaintance with Jesus. Disciples, drawing life from Jesus is essential. Far too many believers are stuck, stagnant and not growing. Far too many find them-

selves living Sunday to Sunday with little recognition of Jesus during the week. Far too many are nailed to the church but have not surrendered to the cross of Christ. The life altering submission that followers choose.

This Christmas Season as the decorations come out, as the tree goes up, as the cards are sent, as the gifts are purchased, I encourage you view Jesus anew. Read the Gospels. Pray. Worship. In what has become the busiest time of the year, take time to slow down, this is how we begin to abide. It is the difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus personally. We miss the joy of Christmas because we do not take time to simply "abide in Christ."

Please, this Christmas Season take the long quiet journey to the manger and be caught up in the reality that this birth is for you, personally. This month...ABIDE IN ME AND I WILL ABIDE IN YOU.

Merry Christmas my friends and brothers and sisters in Christ.

HOLIDAY HOURS

Please note that office hours will be sporadic from December 22 through January 2, in observance of the Christmas

and New Year's holidays. We will resume our normal schedule on Monday, January 5.

TAX INFORMATION

In order for your annual offering statement to reflect monies donated to the church in 2025, all money *MUST* be received by the church office *no later than* **Tuesday, December 30**. Money received after that

date will be on the 2026 statement. Federal regulations state that to be included, money must be deposited prior to the last day of the year. Thank you for your support during this year.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

WEEKLY STATISTICS

BIRTHDAYS

2	Ed Ethier	22	Jen Benoit
4	Melissa Borer	23	Charlotte Tuper
	Sam Bellows	24	Joan Sadlow
	Wyatt Bellows	25	Ann Perry
5	Steve Brown	26	Brian Brazeau
7	Kurt Gabel	31	Jerilyn Perry
	Lisa Pisano		Rhonda Wood
9	Fran Czarnecki	ANNIVERSARY	
13	Bruce Pierce	2	Steve & Tammy Meranti
	Nancy Kennedy		
14	Kathy Bradbury		

DATE	WORSHIP	OFFERINGS
Oct. 26	145	\$2,114.54
Nov. 2	191	\$6,245.54
Nov. 9	128	\$4,944.90
Nov. 16	139	n/a

OFFERINGS NEEDED: \$15,200.00
OFFERINGS RECEIVED: \$13,304.98
SHORTFALL: \$1,895.02

PRAYER REQUESTS

HEALTH ISSUES

Sue Bean
 Craig Benedetti
 Ed Either
 Frank Goodermote
 Denise Krutiak
 Al Lorge

HEALTH ISSUES CONTINUED

Charlie Marshall
 Anne Nelson
 Ann Perry
 Suzette Pierce
 Linda Quimby
 Cal & Mary Rowland

HEALTH ISSUES CONTINUED

Emory & Janet Scholl
 Cindy Smith
 Tammy & Bill St. Pierre
 Brandy Whipple
 Missy Wood

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

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO PLEDGE!

To continue to make ministry happen in 2026, the church needs to bring in at least \$3,800 weekly. For some people, trusting God with their money comes naturally. But for too many others, they are still fighting that uphill battle.

One of the biggest challenges is the mindset that our discipleship and our generosity are two separate entities. They are not!

Do you trust in God to provide for us as a church family? Do you trust that He will oversee your resources if you give money to the Kingdom? Take time to prayerfully consider what you can do.

If you have misplaced your pledge card, or need another, please contact the church office.

DEACONS

'Deacon' comes from the Greek word "diakoneo", which is translated "to serve". With the restructuring of teams in full gear, the Deacon members are ready to serve you, our congregation.

Contact a deacon:

- If you need prayer or just need to talk
- If you want to be put on the prayer chain and/or on the prayer list in the scroll
- If you are having a hard time financially, we can help find assistance
- If you or another congregant is getting out of the hospital and needs a meal train set up
- If you or another congregant is homebound or in a nursing home and wants company or communion
- If you are in need of transportation to church or medical appointments

We are also looking for volunteers. There are parts of our ministry that we would love for our congregation to join us in. Let a deacon know if you are interested.

- Join the prayer chain
- Go visit our homebound congregants

- Go on hospital visits
- Be on the list to help provide meals
- Join the transportation list

In other news, the Christmas season is upon us. We will be selling poinsettias again. We will be taking orders on November 30, December 6, and December 13. Please see a deacon for information.

We are also planning a Prayer Walk on December 21. Keep on the lookout for more information.

Your Deacons:

Marcia Brown—(413) 346-8295
Brenda Burdick—(413) 358-8748
Larry Burdick—(413) 441-3895
Annette Czarnecki—(413) 884-5671
Jason McCausland—(413) 346-8712
Matt Rowett—(413) 672-8246
Tammy St. Pierre—(413) 441-6489
Krista Tower—(413) 672-8808

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

EMERGENCIES . . . KEEP US POSTED!

PLEASE contact us in the event of an emergency—trips to the ER, surgeries, hospitalizations, or other crises.

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

LET IT SNOW!

Each year we seek volunteers for snow removal—an as-needed team specifically designated to remove snow around our church building. While many on the team are retirees, added help is needed. If you can be 'on-call' and are able to help, please speak with Pastor Dave.



WOMEN OF THE WORD

A PONDERING HEART

"Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart..." (Luke 2:19)

I love this verse, especially the word "ponder". It's not a word that we often hear, let alone put into practice. What did it mean that Mary pondered on these things? It meant that she meditated on, reflected deeply about, and mentally collected the significance of the Angel's announcement that she was chosen to deliver the Savior of the world. Mary treasured these experiences in her memory to gain wisdom and to remain faithful to God's plan. How often to you take the time to reflect on the goodness of God and the importance of having Jesus and the Holy Spirit a very part of your being? How often to you pray that His will and plan for your life be fulfilled?

There is so much to ponder about Christmas - it is as much a walk down memory lane as it is deciding on the perfect tree, gifts to buy, cookies to bake, events to attend, etc. But the most important thing we can ponder is the life-changing miracle of The Christmas Story - the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Some of the relevant scriptures are:

- Isaiah 9:6-7 ▪ Matthew 1:18-25
- Luke 2:1-7 ▪ John 1:14
- Revelation 12:1-6

It can be fun to reminisce about the Christmases of our youth and the various seasons of life we experienced as adults. We might recall times when money was in short supply and bills were piled high. In those moments we struggled to figure out just how we could possibly put gifts under the tree. And then there were the Christmases when we watched a loved one beam with delight upon opening that perfect and longed-for gift. Their joy and excitement were a delight to behold!

While Christ is at the center of the Christmas story, there were lots of other important elements as well. Let's see - there were the prophets, Joseph, the angels, the shepherds, the star, the wise men, the innkeeper, even the lowly donkey who carried a very pregnant Mary on his back to that forlorn stable.

Now close your eyes for just a minute and picture the manger scene. Try to imagine the awestruck wonder of those who were huddled together in that lowly stable. They were experiencing a miracle of God as they gazed down at the Baby Jesus. I wonder what they were thinking and what they might have written down had they kept a personal journal.

What would you have thought?

You see, there is significance to every piece of this amazing story; just like there is significance to our lives and our stories - even the unglamorous, mundane, challenging and seemingly boring parts of it, because God is in the details. He has a plan and a purpose for all of it, just like He did on that very first Christmas.

So what do you say this year we take just a little extra time to slow down and savor all of it - the sights, the smells, the sounds surrounding this miracle of the Christ Child's birth. May we appreciate the ordinary and strive for the extraordinary in honoring God. I hope that in your pondering you find yourself with a smile on your face and a bit of joy in your heart, just like Mary did on that very first Christmas.

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel - God with us." (Isaiah 7:14)

KIDS KORNER

Shepherding sheep is NOT the most glamorous job in the world! Doctors save lives, presidents lead nations, and shepherds take care of sheep. It's probably not the job you dream about as a kid. However, shepherds were exactly who God chose to deliver the news of Jesus' birth to the world. The shepherds were minding their business, taking care of their sheep, when "WHAMMO!", an angel appeared to them out of nowhere. The shepherds must have been shaking in their sandals. The angels said, "Be not afraid", and then told the shepherds about the birth of Jesus! The shepherds believed and were amazed. They quickly made their way to the manger where baby Jesus lay. There they worshipped and rejoiced because they believed they were in the presence of the Son of God. As Christmas gets closer, imagine yourself as one of those shepherds looking into heaven at the angels. Imagine yourself standing in the stable looking down on the baby Jesus, the Son of God. Let your heart be filled with joy, and may your mind be filled with the belief that Jesus is real, He's alive, and He loves you more than you could ever imagine. Merry Christmas!

PARENTS SPOT!

Try these great ideas to keep the Christmas spirit in full swing (when the family is together and after all the presents have been opened). Read a few of your Christmas cards out loud, then pray for the person who sent the card. Have a contest to see who can stack all the cards from shortest to tallest the quickest. Wrap a jigsaw puzzle that the family will open and do together on Christmas afternoon. Make popcorn and hot cocoa, or some other favorite holiday treat. Have the kids get out their bath robes and dress as Mary,

Joseph, the shepherds, etc., and then act out the Christmas story. Video it and play it back for everyone to watch. Get ready for some fun!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

- December 1st: Christmas Play Practice 5:30-6:30
- December 3rd: Kids Club and Youth Group 6:30-7:15
- December 5th: Youth Group Fundraiser of Musical Bingo 6:00 at The Goat. Chance auction and bake sale. Tickets are \$25 each. Please see a youth group member.
- December 6th: Looking for a group of men and a truck to help move the Nativity Stable and build it in front of the church. Please speak to Terri if you can help.
- December 7th: Advent! No Sunday School. Regular Nursery. Join us after service for Advent Workshop, a time for crafts and a time for fellowship with a soup luncheon. Adult craft will be provided for a \$5 donation. We are looking for crock pots of soups. Please let Terri know if you can help. Kathy Church will have the children's message.
- December 8th: Christmas Play Practice 5:30-6:30
- December 10th: No Wednesday Kids club or Youth Group
- December 12th: Join us for Dave Pettigrew in a coffee house-style concert at FBCNA at 7:00.
- December 13th at 10:00. Women's Ministry Christmas Party. Bring an item to share. All Secret Sisters join us to reveal yourself to your sister. Bring a Christmas sock to exchange for up to \$20.
- December 13th: Artsy Avenue Christmas craft 6:00. See youth group members for tickets. Cost \$30. Craft and Bake Sale.

- December 14th: Sunday School and Nursery. Youth Group until 12:30. Following service Autumn Years will have a Christmas gathering. Bring an item to share and a gift for up to \$10 to exchange.
- December 15th: Christmas Play practice 5:30-6:30
- December 17th: Kids & Youth Christmas Party bring something to share and a \$5-\$10 gift.
- December 19th & 20th: Our live Nativity will be back! If you would like to dress up and volunteer please speak to Terri. We will be outside from 5:00-7:00 both nights. Volunteers of all ages welcomed.
- December 21st: Sunday School and Nursery. Christmas gathering for Sunday School. Bring a \$5 gift to exchange and an item to share.

- December 22nd: Christmas Play Practice 5:30-6:30
- December 24th: Christmas Eve Service 6:00
- December 25th: Merry Christmas
- December 27th: Christmas Play Dress Rehearsal 12:00-2:00
- December 28th: No Sunday School or Nursery Christmas Play Service. Following Service there will be a celebration. Charlie Brown's Christmas 10:00. No Kingdom Kids
- December 31st: No Kids Club or Youth Group
- January 4th: No Sunday school. Regular Nursery. Youth group Christmas Party until 1:30 bring an item to share. Bring an exchange gift up to \$10.



MONTHLY EVENTS / BIBLE STUDIES

HOUSE OF PRAYER

1st & 3rd Tuesdays | 6:30 P.M.

Our church needs prayer more than anything else. To become more, we need to be seeking His will above our own.

BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesdays | 10 A.M.

Thursdays | 6:30 P.M.

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

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

1st and 3rd Wednesday | 6 P.M.

Women are invited to the church for a time of fellowship and study. Come and discover God's word together. There is always room for more.

COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Thursdays | 10 A.M.

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

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Saturday, December 6 | 8 A.M.

Come and partake in culinary delights and great conversation.

ADULTS UNLIMITED

Friday, December 19 | 6 P.M.

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

FIGHTING WITH FAITH

Sunday, December 21 | 6 P.M.

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

MUSICAL BINGO FUNDRAISER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5 | 6 P.M.

Join us at The G.O.A.T. for this Youth Fundraiser. There will also be a chance auction and bake sale. Tickets are \$25 each.

Please see a youth group member to purchase. Be sure to bring your family and friends!

ADVENT WORKSHOP

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

Join us as we fellowship together with lunch and crafting—for both children & adults! (An adult craft will be provided for a \$5 donation.)

We are looking for crockpots of soups and homemade breads. Speak to Terri if you can donate.

DAVE PETTIGREW CONCERT



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12 | 7 P.M.

Join us for an evening of worship in this coffee house-style concert. A free-will offering will be taken.

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 | 10 A.M.

Join us for our annual sock exchange and come find out your secret sister from 2025! We invite all women in our church to come join us. We will have a brunch, so bring a dish to share. (The sock exchange

is 100% optional. If you choose to participate, simply fill up a pair of socks with fun little treats—\$20 limit—and we will trade them off in a game!)

CHRISTMAS CRAFT NIGHT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 | 6 P.M.

Join us at Artsy Avenue for this Youth Fundraiser. There will also be a craft & bake sale. Tickets are \$30 each. Please

see a youth group member to purchase. Bring your family and friends!

AUTUMN YEARS CHRISTMAS GATHERING

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14 FOLLOWING WORSHIP

The over 60's group will be gathering to celebrate the holidays! Bring a dish to

share and a gift to exchange (\$10 limit). Join us for this special fellowship event.

LIVE NATIVITY

DECEMBER 19 & 20 | 5-7 P.M.

Bring your family and friends and join us in an experience that will make your Christmas season even more special. We still need more volunteers! Costume up and stand in the stable with the animals, listen to the music, and watch the magic on the faces of those who gather.

Please note: on December 6th, we are looking for a group people, and a truck, to help move the Nativity Stable and build it in front of the church. Please speak to Terri if you can help.



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24 | 6 P.M.

This will be a worship extravaganza designed for all generations! Join us for lots of great music, a Christmas message, and

the circle of light as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. Be sure to bring your family and friends!

CHRISTMAS PLAY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28 | 10 A.M.

This year, we are bringing back a Christmas Play. Join us for this special event as our children, youth, and adults bring you 'A

Charlie Brown Christmas'. We hope that you will join us in worship to show them your support.

GOD'S MASTERPIECE: WHAT IS IT? BY GRANT HAWLEY



"For we are His masterpiece..."
(Ephesians 2:10)

Ephesians 2:10 is one of those fantastic verses that can just utterly change the way you live. Ephesians is full of verses like that, but I want to focus on this one right now. It says, literally, "For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, in order that we should walk in them."¹

Some translations translate the word for "masterpiece" here as "workmanship" but that is unfortunate for a couple of reasons. First, the word workmanship is a bit pedestrian for this word, especially in this context. The word is *poiēma* which is where we get the English word *poem*, and the word really means masterpiece. We are His masterpiece, His crowning achievement.

The second reason why "masterpiece" is a better translation than "workmanship," is because masterpiece is singular, like the Greek word behind it. Workmanship can be either singular or plural, and like the rest of us, I so often gravitate toward making the Bible out to be all about me individually, missing the big picture. Even many of those who know the word means "masterpiece" still take it as if it were about the individual Christian. Saying, "I am God's

masterpiece" just isn't Biblical. It's Biblical to say, "We are God's masterpiece."

So, what does Paul mean by saying, "We are His masterpiece"? Who are the "we"? The "we" is the Church, not the local church and definitely not the building where we meet. Those buildings can be beautiful, but at best they are man's masterpiece, not God's. The "we" is the universal body of Christ—all believers in Jesus Christ from the dawn of the Church to the moment the Lord returns to collect His saints in the air.

We are His masterpiece. We had been lost, dead in trespasses and sins, pretty much a disaster (2:1-3). God gave us new life and fashioned us into the very Body of Christ (1:22-23).

He has destroyed the things that divide people from each other outside of Christ. Race, class, and gender distinctions need no longer keep people from having loving fellowship with each other (Gal 3:26-28).

He broke down, even abolished (Eph 2:15), the Mosaic Law which divided Gentiles from the Jewish people (Acts 9:6-10:48; Rom 6:14; Eph 2:14-16). And He destroyed the man-made religious laws that make us judge each other and have contempt for those who don't hold to our opinions (Romans 14; Col 2:11-23.)

He gave us each unique spiritual gifts, so that we would each be valuable to the whole, but also that we would all need each other to fill up where we were lacking (1 Corinthians 12). You can do things that I can't, and visa-versa, and God did that on purpose to create unity.

This thing God has done in fashioning us into a holy temple, the dwelling place of God (Eph 2:19-22), is really incredible. God did an amazing thing when He made the universe—the planets, stars,

and a host of other breathtaking creations. He did an amazing thing when He made angels, glorious creatures that leave men in awe. He did an amazing thing when He created men in His image, made from dirt yet capable of art, science, and poetry. But He outdid all of that when He made the Body of Christ, His Church, His masterpiece, us.

So, practically, there are a lot of things to take from this. The first is just understanding where we fit in to the whole scheme of things. Second, falling in love with His Church and with the sheer beauty of what Christ has done in us will help us to

heartily endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:3). Lastly, it helps us understand better what God has in store for us in eternity.

¹ Some people change the word *should* into *will* and take this verse to undercut what Paul has just said in 2:8-9, that we are saved by grace, through faith, apart from works. Works can't contribute to our being saved, and they don't inevitably flow out of being saved either, but that's a discussion for another time. God certainly does have good works in mind for us, I'll address that too, but for now I'll just say they have to be kept in their proper place—separate from salvation.

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (Luke 2:14)

What gives you awe? What things cause you to become speechless when you see them? Is it the sight of a family member you haven't seen in years? Is it visiting a majestic place like a mountain or a historical place like the ancient pyramids of Egypt? The night Christ was born was the most monumental and awe-inspiring event that as ever occurred in human history as God sent His one and only Son to earth so that we could ultimately have eternal life. There has not been an event in history before or after Christ's birth that resulted in such celebration that the angels themselves made their physical presence known and their voices heard in song. Can you imagine how the shepherds' jaws must have dropped at the site and sounds of the angels? That moment was so majestic that we probably cannot fully comprehend what it was like because honestly, none of us have encountered such a sight.

It seems like people tend to have fewer experiences these days of complete awe. Technology has brought so much of the world to our living rooms and fingertips that we can see anything we want and feel like we are at anyplace we want to be. Unfortunately, most of us probably have fewer awe-inspiring moments with God like we should. Our relationship with Him often becomes too comfortable and even ordinary. This Christmas, make an attempt to regain those awe-inspiring moments with God. Strive to make your relationship with Him something so inspiring that it causes you to rejoice like the angels did. Don't let your relationship with Him be ordinary, but rather make it extraordinary.

Questions:

- Describe some of the awe-inspiring moments you've had with God. How have these moments impacted you?
- What changes do you need to make in your life so that you can start having more awe-inspiring moments with God?



Holiday To-Do List

1. ^{Be} ~~Buy~~ Presents

2. Wrap ~~Gifts~~ someone in a hug

3. Send ~~Gifts~~ Love

4. ^{Donate} ~~Shop for~~ Food

5. Make ~~Cookies~~ Memories

6. ^{Be} ~~Hang~~ the Lights



the SCROLL



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

131 Main St.
North Adams, MA 01247