



God Centered Growth

First Baptist Church of Norton

April 3, 2018
Volume I, Issue No. 14

(Ed note: Pastor Mark is with his family in Charles City. This week's devotional is by Rev. Alex Martin, a long-time friend of Jim Collie's. Rev. Martin, like Jim, served as a campus minister for a number of years and is now the pastor at Calvary Baptist in Mt. Airy, NC. Read his daily devotional "From the Office" at ruralrev.net.)

In the Office: Of Blessing, Bricks and Bondage

Today's Old Testament lesson ([Exodus 5:1 to 6:1](#)) offers a window into the bondage of God's people before the LORD delivered them through the wonders of the Exodus. At the LORD's command, Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh and deliver God's message: "Let my people go so that they can worship me in the wilderness." But Pharaoh is hard of heart and more concerned about productivity than about people; and so, he doubles down on the burden of their slavery: "You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota." (5:7-8)

Now, I suspect that there's a "labor-friendly" message in there somewhere about the manner in which workers are still often called upon "to do more with less." But rather than dwelling there, let's simply note that the people are upset about these new demands, which turn out to be impossible to meet. And in their frustration, they turn on Moses and Aaron: "May the Lord look on you and judge you!" (5:21)

This is a rather far cry from the attitude they displayed at the end of the previous chapter. There, Moses and Aaron had gathered the people together and had told them everything that the LORD planned to do for them. And the scriptures say: "They believed. And when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped." (4:31)

Why did their attitude change so dramatically? Well, *the increase of their suffering probably played a role!* (Duh!) But then, too, I think it's fair to say that they "forgot the blessing." They had been given a revelation of the LORD's concern for them and of His plans to set them free, but they allowed their bondage to seem *bigger* than the blessing. Like Peter when he stepped out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus, they "saw the wind," and they started to sink back down into the abyss of their slavery.

What about us? Where will our hearts be focused today: on the various forms of bondage that make unrealistic demands and weigh our spirits down? Or on the blessing of knowing that the LORD is concerned about us, knows our burdens, and has promised to set us free?

Paul writes, "I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38) May we trust that blessing today — and discover along the way that it offers us a kind of freedom that no challenge can destroy.

So I pray that God, who gives you hope, will keep you happy and full of peace as you believe in him. May you overflow with hope through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13



Jill Francis Dawson Dixon born March 6, 1955 passed into heaven around 3:36 a.m. on Thursday, March 29, 2018. Her spirit passed as she slept in answer to many prayers. Her mother, Evelyn Stowell Dawson, brother, Jack Dawson and his wife Charme, along with Jill's niece, Tara and nephew, Brett loved her dearly. Jill was the best Momma in the world to Lisa Annette Dixon, Mark James Dixon Jr. and Jr.'s wife Alex, who always knew Jill was on her side and loved her from the beginning. She also came to love Aaron LaPastora as if he were her very own. She was a far better wife than Mark could have asked for or imagined. She was the light of our lives and a joy to all

who came into contact with her through her teaching and counseling career in Hampton and Newport News. It is a fond memory to think of her and her "Lunch Bunch" at Reservoir and Dozier middle schools to whom she was the embodiment of unconditional love. Jill was the source of joy in our family; her laughter and smile were always uplifting and contagious. We teased her about reading obituaries in cities where she knew no-one and getting frustrated when it didn't include how they died. So she had Multiple Systems Atrophy, a rare disease which doctors cannot yet explain. The disease causes a steady loss of communication between her brain and body. She lost the ability to walk, use her hands, move her head, speak, and finally, to eat. Her care for the past 15 months has been in her daughter Lisa's loving hands. Adjusting to life without Jill is only possible because of the joy of having had her in our lives. She loved God and Jesus is her Savior. She was as happy planning and doing crafts with kids at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church as she was eating, and eating good food was a great joy to her. We will celebrate her life on Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, 19300 The Glebe Lane, Charles City, VA 23030. Early in our marriage she warned us not to go out for pie and coffee after her funeral but her faith grew so much that we promised to do just that after the celebration of her homegoing.

Mark Dixon, Sr.
Lisa Dixon
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Charles City VA 23030

Mark & Alex Dixon
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Norton, VA 24273

Prayer requests from Sunday:

- The family of Jill Dixon.
- Diane Clapp will have gall bladder surgery on Thursday.
- The family of Shirley Robinette.

Vacation Bible School

June 4-6

“Game On!”

Contact Mary Hagy

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

Sunday, April 15
immediately
following worship
service



All funds raised will support our youth
attending Camp Bethel.

Contact Mary Hagy if you can help.

Silent Auction

Along with the spaghetti dinner on April 15
a silent auction will be held to raise funds for
Camp Bethel youth. All items except clothing
are welcome.



Our dear friend Helen Bass fell recently and fractured her arm in two places. She is also recovering from cataract surgery. Helen is feeling homesick and is eager to return to her home in Wise. Let's show Helen some love and send her a card:

Helen Bass
4 Longfellow Place
Apt. # 311
Boston, MA 02114

Baptist Collegiate Ministry

The Baptist Collegiate Ministries (BCM) is located in a building adjacent to The University of Virginia's College at Wise campus. As a part of the Virginia Baptist Collegiate Ministry, the mission of the UVa-Wise BCM is building community, making disciples for Christ, and developing Christian leaders. BCM has been a part of collegiate ministry at UVa-Wise since 1958.

Membership in UVa-Wise BCM simply requires a willingness to participate, Baptist affiliation is not necessary. Annually, less than one-third of active BCM members are Baptist.

The BCM facility is open and available to students throughout each day and evening, and includes a prayer room, conference/meeting room, library/resource room, and a fully-equipped kitchen. Weekly opportunities include a home-cooked fellowship meal and Bible study every Tuesday evening.

For more information please contact the director, Pastor Mark Dixon (mjd8f@uvawise.edu) or BCM student president Ahliyah Gavin (acg4r@uvawise.edu).

BCM Meals and Bible Study

Mark and the students meet at 6 p.m. to prepare dinner. If you would like to help cook or contribute food, please let Mark know the Sunday before the meeting. They usually have from 10-20 students. Below is their menu for the rest of the semester.



- April 3 ~ ham, green beans, mac & cheese
- April 10 ~ gumbo
- April 17 ~ chicken casserole
- April 24 ~ Boston Butt, cole slaw, pasta salad
- May 1 ~ cheesesteaks, chips

**As you pray this week,
please remember the
following.**

David & Jewell Ball
Helen Bass
Libby Bowman
Gail Buchanan
Jim Campbell
Dottie Chittester
Diane Clapp
Virginia Collins
Linda Cooke
Tim Cox
Jill Dixon
Rhonda Elliott
Rue Gembach
Wayne Harrison
Emma Harrod
Alana Hash
Mary Haynes
Sue Hobbs
Rosalind Hunt
Elee Large
Maddie Lewis
Jim & Wanda Manicure
Eugene Mullins
Tracy Ott
Donna Owens
Robert Owens
Wilma Redman
Leah Riley
Margaret Riner
Bea Simmons
Tammy Sturgill
Glenn & Marilyn Teasley
Joseph Thomas
Mike Todd
Beverly Viers
Susan Gillenwater Wells
Brenda Whitaker
Little Ed Withrow
Our country's leaders
First responders, volunteers
Armed Services men and women
Missionaries
Nursing home patients



Please send prayer requests to
lindawellswalker@yahoo.com

*The tea party is this
Saturday at 10 a.m.*

- ◆ Our guest speaker is Rev. Sandra L. Jones, pastor at Williams Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church.
- ◆ Entertainment provided by the "We're So Bad We're Good" repertory theater ensemble.
- ◆ We will sing
- ◆ Bring a door prize
- ◆ Bring a dish to share.
- ◆ Wear a hat



April Birthdays

6 ~ Beth Walker
9 ~ Fred Ramey
21 ~ Elliot Walker
22 ~ Phyllis Still
25 ~ Virginia Collins
29 ~ Elizabeth Zody

April Anniversaries

6 ~ Jim & Shirley
Campbell
10 ~ Ed & Jackie
Withrow



First Baptist Church of Norton gives anyone the chance to come together and worship with like-minded congregants as members of a strong, loving community. Whether you're looking for peace of mind, a way to give back, or simply want to be a part of a loving family — First Baptist Church of Norton welcomes you. Join our community, and start your journey to God-centered growth with us!

How to join FBC Norton

- Baptism—You desire to express faith in Christ through baptism.
- Transfer—You wish to transfer membership from another church.
- Statement of Faith—You are a baptized believer and come on statement of faith.
- Watch Care—You would like to be connected to our church family without official membership.

Deacons

Charlene Bates, 276-219-4251, charlenebates715@yahoo.com

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Marty Hagy, 276-219-9949, martyhagy@gmail.com

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Visit us on the web at
www.fbcnorton.com or
connect with us on
Facebook.

Or better yet, come and visit
us in person!



This newsletter is published every Tuesday morning on the church's web page. Please send news, photos, and announcements to cornettdiane@gmail.com.