



January 2018

First Baptist Church of Clewiston

On Sunday afternoons, I often contemplate the message that I gave in the morning service. Could I have said it better? Did I get in the way of what God wanted to come out? Did I pray enough before? Did I tone down the controversial truth as to not offend? I get very analytical in the critique of my work. I wasn't always so grave and realize that I have become more so with age.

I used to be filled with incredible wonder, even to a fault at times. I remember as a kid being chased inside by a violent thunderstorm. I stood on the little back porch of my grandmother's place watching intently as the storm came at me and then waned, leaving the many scents of wet flowers and rain. I remembered how small the thunder and lightning made me feel. But I also remember how being soaked by the rain made me feel a part of it all.

I used to go down to the creek that runs through all the lives of my kindred. I would try to touch and feel the ripples as the water ran around the stones. I recall a great sense of accomplishment when once I was able to dam it up enough to swim in it, only to be reminded by the snakes that I am not so dominant. I can recall hiking through the woods many times and being stopped in my tracks by another revelation of nature. Many summer days were spent lying in the grass looking at clouds and evenings starrng at the stars.

I am incensed by not being able to hear the critters of the forest when I awake in the night. I have grown up. I now refrigerate myself indoors that I may be so very comfortable. The only meat I eat comes wrapped in plastic with a secure amount of chemicals to assure it taste fresh even if it deteriorates my insides.

I long for the wonder that God gave me as a young man. As the great Rabbi, Abraham Joshua Heschel said, "*A philistine will stand before a Claude Monet painting and pick his nose; a person filled with wonder will stand there fighting back the tears.*" I'm afraid our world as a whole is loosing its sense of wonder. We are so obsessed with the words we speak, the organizations we conceive and the stuff we accumulate that we are becoming immune to the wonder and glory of creation. What embarrassment, that the work of God should be reduced from theophany to nuisance.

God clearly intends for us to discover His loving presence in the world around us (Romans 1:20). Our world is saturated with grace and mercy, and the discernible presence of God is revealed, not only in spirit, but also in matter - in a raindrop perched on the rose petal, the flight of an eagle or the moon glow on a child's uplifted face.

My prayer for the New Year is that God will fill us with the wonder of our youth. I pray that we will see Him in His handiwork and in the faces of strangers. I pray that we will understand that the bright days and dark days are both expressions of God, and that we are revealed in being close to the Great Holiness.

Pastor Mike Brennan

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	New Year's Day Office Closed		6:30 PM Bible Study 6:30 PM Children & Youth Ministry			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:00 AM Sonrise Cafe 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:55 AM Worship		6:00 PM Gideons' Meeting	12:00 PM XYZ Luncheon 6:30 PM Bible Study 6:30 PM Children & Youth Ministry			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:30 AM Sunday School 10:55 AM Worship 12:15 PM Finance Com- mittee 6:00 PM Deacons' Meeting	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday		6:30 PM Bible Study/Church Conference 6:30 PM Children & Youth Ministry		Youth Disciple- ship Outing to Fisheating Creek	Youth Disciple- ship Outing to Fisheating Creek
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:30 AM Sunday School 10:55 AM Worship			6:30 PM Bible Study 6:30 PM Children & Youth Ministry			
28	29	30	31			
8:30 AM Brotherhood Breakfast 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:55 AM Worship			6:30 PM Bible Study 6:30 PM Children & Youth Ministry			

XYZ Program & Luncheon

XTRA YEARS OF ZEST

Senior Adult Fellowship

Wednesday, January 10

12:00 PM

Bring a covered dish and join us for a wonderful time of fellowship.

Sun Rise Core

Sunday, January 7

9:00 AM

Come join us in the Fellowship Hall for breakfast before Sunday School.

Nursery Coordinator Needed



We are looking for a volunteer to be the Nursery Coordinator. The responsibilities of this position are as follows:

- Recruit and schedule volunteers.
- Assure volunteers are present Sunday School and Sunday Morning Worship.
- Fill in for absentee volunteers or find a replacement.
- Assure volunteers are reminded of weekly duty via phone, e-mail and or text message.

If you are interested in serving in this capacity, see Pastor Mike.

January Nursery Schedule

Sunday Morning Toddlers

- 01/07 - Monica Brennan
- 01/14 - Michele Dowdle
- 01/21 - Lydia McClusky
- 01/28 - Diana Porter

Sunday Morning 3 Yr. Old/ Pre-K

- 01/07 - FeBeth Yongco
- 01/14 - Meredith Kane
- 01/21 - Erica Kindred
- 01/28 - Diana Porter

For those of you who are scheduled for the toddlers; if you find yourself with no kids in your class, please stop by the Kindergarten room to see if the volunteer needs your assistance. Thank you in advance for your help

January Birthdays

- 01/01 - Janessa Gutierrez
- 01/02 - Sassy Whitehead
Meredith Kane
- 1/03 - Gabriel Zaldivar
- 1/13 - Blondell Phillips
- 1/18 - Bill Houghtaling
- 1/19 - Sue Wall
- 1/21 - Sue Phelps
- 1/22 - Danny Williams
Virginia Polhill
- 1/23 - Wyatt Fleming
- 1/31 - Richard Sands
Paige Fleming