



First Baptist Church in Wickford

THE GOOD NEWS

August 2005

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Rally Day	1
Special Church Meetings	1
"Let's Talk"	1
"The Dilemma of Church Growth"	2
Dr. Cliff Hockensmith	
Active Membership	
Trends	3
Fall Bible Studies	3
Open Invitation to Choir	3
September Birthdays	3
Ladies Guild News	4
Membership & Care	4
Secret Place Devotional	4
"Anyway"	4
From the Moderator	insert
05-06 Diaconate	insert
"Wickford Baptist Respite"	insert
Missions Moment	insert
A Little Humor	insert
Church Calendar	insert

STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Clifford R. Hockensmith

Administrative Assistant
Cricket Genest

Director of Music Ministries
Elaine Alexander

Church Phone
294.4595

Email
fbcwickford@verizon.net

Website
www.wickfordbaptist.org

It's that time of year again...

...so come see your friends and make new ones at...

RALLY DAY
Sunday, September 11th

CRAFTS

MUSIC

VIDEO

LEARNING

FELLOWSHIP

Meet the Teachers and learn about our exciting new program

We have made some changes.....but not too many

OUR GOD IS AN AWESOME GOD

9:30 UNTIL 10:30 IN THE CHAPEL BUILDING FOLLOWED BY THE WORSHIP SERVICE AND A PIZZA AND SALAD LUNCH

SPECIAL CHURCH MEETINGS

**TUESDAY, SEPT. 6TH AT 7 PM AND
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 7TH AT 7 PM
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL**

All are invited to attend both nights. If you are unable to be present on both nights attendance at at least one night is encouraged. Childcare will be available in the nursery on both nights.

"LET'S TALK"

Better Ways to Communicate in Our Marriages

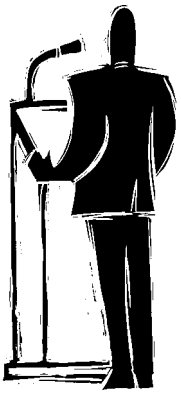
Please join our Marriage Enrichment Group (The Armstrong's Curtis', Gurnon's and Kirwan's) for a short program on how their group was formed, what they study and communication techniques.

"KEYS TO A HEALTHY MARRIAGE"

will be presented on **Sunday, October 23rd** at 9:30 am, in Fellowship Hall. Then on Saturday, November 19th our certified facilitators, Bill & Sue Comstock, will be here to initiate a new group on a path to healthier marriages!!

Please mark these dates on your calendars...more information is forthcoming

THE DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF THE GOOD NEWS IS WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST



THE DILEMMA OF CHURCH GROWTH

By Rev. Dr. Clifford Hockensmith

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... Matthew 28:19a

Since March of 2000, this church has run through a complete growth cycle. A new minister was called. A new strategic planning committee was formed. New ideas, new staff, new programs, new worship services and new members followed. At the apex of this growth, resistance formed to the changes that entailed. The new services were curtailed. The new staff person left. New programs and new ideas were cut back. Attendance returned to what it had been before March of 2000.

There is no one to blame for this. In fact, this is a normal and even predictable cycle of church life. There is an unseen boundary to church growth that church consultants and "experts" call "The 200 Barrier." (C. Peter Wagner, "How to Break the 200 Barrier", Fuller Institute of Church Growth, Pasadena, CA 1991) Simply stated, the 200 Barrier is the natural boiling point for active adult members in a one minister church. At last count, interestingly enough, our active church membership stands at 201.

According to church growth pundits, 200 is the maximum comfortable number for active church members where only one minister is employed. The reasons for this invisible barrier are many. Here is just a sampling:

Beyond 200, it is difficult for members to "know everybody"

The typical sanctuary that seats 200 actually comfortably seats 150, and is perceived "full" at significantly less

Off street parking for over 50 cars is unusual

The typical Pastor can, with variations, provide personal pastoral care for up to 200 members. Even they will not all know the pastor well.

Beyond 200 active members, the leadership will perceive a loss of control

Beyond 200 active members, the church loses its sameness, its comfort and its familiarity

Beyond 200 active members, the talents and interests of the membership are no longer similar, but varied, placing more demand on staff and programming

As a church, we now have some important decisions to make. Among them is this: do we seriously want our church to grow beyond the present 200 active members? During the past 5 years, many of us have said, "Yes, we want the church to grow." But our actions and our resistance to that very growth, among us, have indicated "No." Some complain that our numbers are "down." Some of those same complained when our numbers were "up." So which will it be?

Perhaps now it is time to reexamine our desires regarding our church. Do we want this church to grow? Are we willing to pitch in and make the commitments and perhaps sacrifices necessary for that growth to occur?

Let us ask God's wisdom and counsel regarding this important matter. Christ's Great Commission beckons us.

WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAYS

9:30 am

Sunday School
Chapel Building
and
Adult Bible Study
Stafford House

10:45 am

Worship
Sanctuary

11:45 am

Fellowship Hour
Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAYS

9:30 am

Prayer Group
Stafford House

10:15 am

Bible Study Fellowship
Stafford House

1 pm

Ladies Guild (2nd Wed.)
Craft Workshop
(1st, 3rd, & 4th Wed.)
Stafford House

THURSDAYS

7:15 pm

Choir Rehearsal
Choir Room

First Baptist Church in Wickford's Active Membership Trends

Source: Annual Clerk's reports

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Active Members:	154	183	179	171	170
New Members:	3	29	1	18	8
Baptisms:	1	8	0	13	1
	1996	1997	1998	3/1999	12/1999
Active Members:	170	170	159	168	168
New Members:	16	4	0	11	7
Baptisms:	5	0	0	7	3
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Active Members:	185	188	204	207	201
New Members:	38	8	28	11	2
Baptisms:	7	3	8	5	2



Fall Bible Studies

**The Pastor will be teaching two Bible classes
beginning in September.**

THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

begins Sunday, September 11 (Rally Day) at 9:30 AM in the Stafford House.

Participants bring in newspaper articles of interest, and the Pastor and class discuss how the Bible might address the issues that emerge. Discussion is always current and lively, and is faithful to interpret Baptist and Christian traditions. The class continues then each Sunday morning.

STUDY OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Wednesday mornings beginning Wednesday, Sept. 21st at 10:15 AM in the Stafford House. This will be an in-depth study on The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1 - 7:29) and other related teachings of Jesus.

All are invited and encouraged to take part in one or both of these opportunities!



OPEN INVITATION

Haven't you always wanted the opportunity to sing exciting, inspiring music with others who share the same feeling? Well, this is the time to join the choir at First Baptist and become part of the music ministry! Whether you are soprano, alto, tenor or a bass - there is room in all sections. Please take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity to fill your soul with music and make your spirit soar! Rehearsals are on Thursdays at 7:15 PM. The first rehearsal will be on **September 22nd at 7:45** (note time change just for this night). The door is open - come and sing with us.

Elaine Alexander - Director 782-2092



COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Monday, Sept. 12th
7:00 PM

Buildings & Properties
Fellowship Hall

Monday, Sept. 26th
6:30 PM

Diaconate
Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, Sept. 27
5:00 PM

Missions
Stafford House

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Church Meetings

Tuesday, Sept. 6th
and

Wednesday, Sept. 7th
7:00 PM

Fellowship Hall

RALLY DAY and Pizza Lunch

Sunday, September 11th
Before & After Worship

Ladies Guild Meeting and Pot Luck Luncheon

Wednesday, Sept. 14th
12:00 pm

Stafford House

Gal's Night Out

Monday, Sept. 26th
7:00 PM

Stafford House

SEPTEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

(Dates taken from the
Membership Forms)

2nd Erik Mills

19th Tracy Schofield

24th Melanie Gibson

29th Caleigh Pearce



NEWS FROM THE LADIES GUILD

Our regular monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 14 at 12 Noon. (Please note time change) We will gather for a Potluck Luncheon. Please bring a dish to share and your own place setting. Dessert and beverage will be provided. Call Linda Lundblad (294-7518) if you have any questions.

GAL'S NIGHT OUT

Summer has been fun in the sun, great for boating and a challenge for gardeners. We are hoping that Fall will bring you back to Gal's Night Out. All women in our church are encouraged to join us on the **fourth Monday evening** of each month from **7 to 9 PM at Stafford House** for a few hours of crafts, conversation and coffee.

Please help us get the word out and invite a friend or neighbor too.

We will meet on the 26th of September. The first get together will be conversation with samples of some of the crafts we will be doing. There will be an opportunity to create a purse using a neck tie as seen in Threads Magazine.

Betty Lou Pease will be showing us how to braid and hook a rug on October 24th. This is your chance to learn a new skill or just watch while Betty Lou does it for you.

November is open for **YOUR** suggestions. Perhaps someone can teach us how to make a simple side dish for Thanksgiving. We will plan to do another floral arrangement using fresh greens and candles for December.

Mark your calendar for Gal's Night Out.

A Note From Membership and Care

The Fellowship Hour, which is held after church each Sunday, has become a wonderful time for our church family to connect with each other and to welcome new people into our midst. This hour "happens" thanks to all those who are willing to take a turn hosting. The Membership and Care committee has a new sign up board in Fellowship Hall for the coming year. Please choose a Sunday or two that is convenient for you to host a Fellowship Hour.

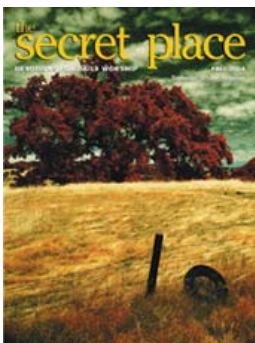
The Church provides: Coffee (decaf), sugar, napkins, cups and a plastic tablecloth

The Host provides: Milk or cream, punch, simple finger food and table decorations

As always we thank you for your participation and please "keep it simple."

The **Over 80's Luncheon** will be held on **Sunday, November 13th** after church. If you had an 80th birthday this year please let a member of the committee know so that you will be included in this fun time.

Membership and Care Committee: Pat Curry, Breta Gammell, Cholly Kochhan, Linda Lundblad, Elaine MacKay, Bette Lou Pease, Al Schmid, Gladys Sherman, Jan Soban and Carolyn Bassett, chair.



The Secret Place Devotional

The Fall 2005 edition of *The Secret Place* devotional is now available in Fellowship Hall.

The Secret Place is a daily devotional book designed to draw you closer to Christ through daily scripture readings and prayers. Please take a copy to use during your daily quiet time. An offering box is located next to the devotionals to help offset the cost of each book. Thank you for helping to keep this ministry going.

May the Lord richly bless you as you draw closer to Him through these readings.

ANYWAY

written by Jim Davidson, submitted by Libby Urish

"People are often unreasonable and self centered. Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway. If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway. The good you do today, may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway. Give the world your best and, and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway."

To me, this really puts the cookies on the bottom shelf. While we may worry and fret about relations with our fellowman, in the end we have to be accountable to God for everything we do.

FROM THE MODERATOR

Thanks to all who helped make our Art Festival a fun time and a financial success. Our net profit of **\$11,000** matched last year's results. Proceeds will be used by the Guild, Missions, Outreach and our general fund to support our programs and ministries.

The Diaconate Chairs have formed their committees and have begun developing goals and plans for the year. Please plan to attend the listening sessions on September 6 and 7. We need your help to plan programs and activities to meet the needs of our church family. If you haven't joined a committee yet, contact Beth Blink, Stewardship chair, to learn where your time and talents can be used.

We are preparing a program and event calendar for the church year and plan to have the first copy available soon. In the meantime I invite you to see the calendar of events for September in this newsletter.

Have you checked out our website lately? Cricket and Allen Gunn, Jr. have made some changes. When you can't find your copy of this newsletter later this month --call up www.wickfordbaptist.org and click on "Good News". More improvements are in the works

2005-2006 DIACONCATE

REV. HOCKENSMITH	Pastor	CAROLYN BASSETT	Membership & Care
KEN LAWRENCE	Moderator	DAN URISH	Mission
CAROLE KONRAD	Church Clerk	CAROL HOCKENSMITH	Outreach
HARRY SLEICHER	Treasurer	MARY ALICE GUNN	Personnel & Administration
MARY JEAN JOHNSON	Financial Secretary	BETH BLINK	Stewardship
AUDREY SCHMID	Buildings & Properties	BILL JOHNSON	Worship
MATT BELLISLE	Christian Education	ELEANOR REARDON	Deacon At Large
LINDA LAWRENCE	Finance	JIM CHARTIER	Deacon At Large

WICKFORD BAPTIST RESPITE – JULY 9TH & 10TH

They Came. They marveled. They rested. On two July Art Festival days, two hundred and forty-five people visited our sanctuary. And that number doesn't count a dozen people looking for the St. Paul's concert. Mary Ostiguy, Mary Beth Burnham, and Pat Curry took two hour turns greeting a variety of visitors from Oregon, Massachusetts, Warwick, Scituate, Shawmut Baptist, Greenville Baptist, Spring Green Baptist, St. Bernard's, from across town, from across Main Street and from 'Old' England. Our British couple appreciated the feeling of community they felt here in "New" England. We old timers had the privilege of seeing our sanctuary through the eyes of visitors.

Listen: "Beautiful! A wonderful restoration – So peaceful – so neat and clean (we wondered what their church experience had been) - What a beautiful organ."

And there were questions: "Do you still have masses here? - Do you have a choir?" Also, "When is your service tomorrow? We'd like to come." A Spring Green Baptist asked the unanswerable. "What's happening to our churches? Our congregations get smaller and smaller, yet big churches get bigger and bigger." Our favorite comment came from a four or five year old boy, "Wow! This is a real church. Do you think they have a Christmas play?" Most satisfying, however, were the visitors who came reverently to sit in silence. It was obvious that they felt God's Spirit in this special place. Amen.

Note: Should we consider planning a concert appropriate to our form of worship during times, which would compliment those at St. Paul's' church?? - Pat Curry



MISSIONS MOMENT...

The special offering this month will be for the
RELIEF OF THE VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA.

Our offering will be provided through the One Great Hour of Sharing organization. They have provided some immediate support funds to assist, but the situation is in great need of much more. Please put your offerings in the Communion envelopes during the worship service and designate as HURRICANE RELIEF FUND.

Put the **Annual Mission Celebration Dinner** on your schedule!

It will be held Monday, September 26 at 6 PM at the Coventry High School.

This is a very enjoyable affair where you will have mission inspiration, a good dinner, and good companionship. Please provide your name to Dan or Libby Urish for a reservation.
(the cost of the dinner will be taken care of by the Mission Committee)

A LITTLE LAUGH...

A daddy was listening to his child say his prayer "Dear Harold." At this, dad interrupted and said, "Wait a minute, "How come you called God 'Harold?' The little boy looked up and said, "That's His name. You know," Our Father, who art in Heaven, Harold be Thy name."

Reverend Billy Graham tells of a time early in his ministry when he arrived in a small town to preach a sermon. Wanting to mail a letter, he asked a young boy where the post office was. When the boy had told him Dr. Graham thanked him and said, "if you'll come to the Baptist Church this evening, you can hear me telling everyone how to get to heaven." "I don't think I'll be there," the boy said. "You don't even know your way to the post office."

Squirrels had overrun three churches in town. After much prayer the Elders of the first church determined that the animals were predestined to be there, who were they to interfere with God's Will they reasoned. Soon the squirrels multiplied. The Elders of the second church decided they couldn't do anything to harm God's creatures so they humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free outside of town. Three days later the squirrels were back. It was only the third church that succeeded in keeping the squirrels away. The Elders baptized each squirrel and registered them as members, now they only see them on Christmas and Easter.

From Church Bulletins:

"This afternoon there will be a meeting in the South and North ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends."

"This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar."

"Ushers will eat latecomers."

"Evening Massage – 6 PM"

"The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of Rev. & Mrs. Julius Belzer."