

The VISITOR

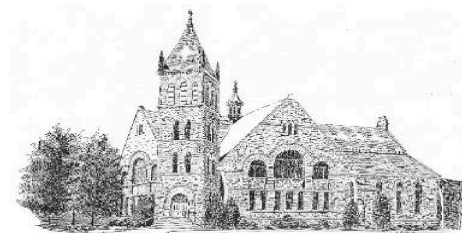
April 2025

Well, I've only been with you a few weeks, and what an incredible time it has been so far. My first Sunday here you announced a pastoral candidate coming in two weeks and now a vote has been taken and we move forward with renewed excitement and anticipation. I'll still be here for a little while, so there is work to be done. I am excited!

As we move into April we are looking toward the end of Lent, the arrival of Palm Sunday and the reminders of God's love and grace through Holy Week. And then comes the excitement of Easter Sunday with the promise of new beginnings, new life, new opportunities for service and the next chapter in our walk with Jesus. Right after Easter many of us have opportunity to attend the ABCCR Senior Adult Retreat in Great Bend. I've been a part of this retreat for many years and it is still one of the best spiritual outings offered by the Central Region. Check elsewhere in the newsletter for more detailed information. For those interested, a bus will be available for a limited number of people. It will leave from FBC, Topeka at a cost of \$25 per person. That's a real bargain for those not wanting to worry about the drive to Great Bend. Those are just some of the things we're looking forward to. But what about the things God is calling us to right now? I was impressed when I drove into Ottawa at the beginning of my time with you. A sign on the highway into town caught my attention. It made a bold declaration: "We are Building an Inclusive Community." I'm not sure who placed that sign, but I was moved by the fact that it resonates with the invitation of Jesus. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28) This is God's invitation to any and all who will accept it. There is no one outside of God's invitation. The real question is whether or not we are extending the same invitation. Do our words to friends and neighbors, to the people we see daily, to the people who live around us match the words of Jesus? I know there is a great commitment to reach out and make certain people know First Baptist Church has open doors for all who would come. We offer a weekly meal, we provide warm shelter when the weather gets too cold, we open our space for others to utilize and we seek to be a people whose hearts are open just as wide as our doors. We are working with First United Methodist Church to provide an early summer experience for children in our community to draw them into a closer walk with Jesus. And our commitment to send children to camp this summer drives home the point that we really do care. But is there more? One of the key verses for my walk with Jesus comes from the prophet Micah (6:8). He makes a very clear statement about what God expects from me: But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women.

It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously— take God seriously. Do what is fair and just to your neighbor. This goes farther than opening doors and inviting people in. It has to do with how we treat one another. It has to do with attitudes and actions more than words. It incorporates those things we do to make things right for others, regardless of who they are and what they believe. Be compassionate and loyal in your love. This is not about loving words and kind conversations. It is about a depth of love for others that reaches into the vulnerable places of their lives and does what is needed to provide hope and strength and life regardless of the cost. And don't take yourself too seriously— take God seriously. You are not number 1, God is. And what that means is pretty simple. You don't know everything. You don't make the rules. Your faith in God is not about you. Step aside and make room for God to do what God want to do in your life, in the lives of others, and in the life of your church. Get out of the way and watch what God is doing, and then join in God's work. I am certain that if I pay attention to those simple instructions I will be in a place where God can and will use me to do what God is seeking to do in our midst. I think this holds true for you as well. In this exciting month, with so much going on around us, let us make certain we are living the way God wants us to live; and in so doing, demonstrate how wide open our doors really are.

Blessings,
Pastor John



**JOIN US
SUNDAY MORNINGS
WORSHIP BEGINS AT 9:30**

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Follow us on Facebook:

@firstbaptistchurchottawa

Live Stream of worship each week!

You are invited and welcome.



First Baptist Church of Ottawa is part of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region (ABC/CR and American Baptist Churches, USA (ABC/USA)).

First Baptist Church Ottawa is a Welcoming and Affirming Congregation
The radically inclusive love of Jesus inspires us to be a fully welcoming and affirming congregation. All are loved here. All are safe here. All are invited to full participation in our life together.
Based upon calling, gifting, talent, experience and maturity, we celebrate baptism, communion, marriage, leadership, teaching and ordination with any gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation or identity.



*Sunday School following worship
for all ages!*

Communion April 6

Celebrating the Lord's supper.

Those of you worshipping with us at home, please have your elements ready so that you are able to take communion along with us.



Continuing this Sunday, whenever we celebrate communion, we will encourage giving to the deacon's fund for benevolence

Deadline for the **May** newsletter is **April 23**, please have any information emailed to the office by this date for inclusion in the newsletter. Information received after the deadline will be published in the next month's newsletter.



PRAYER TIME: Wednesdays at 12:30 EH. If you have a prayer request for Wednesday, call or email the church office.

PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Bob Lovett (Kim Randel's father); Norma Coble (Dana Coble's mother); Nathan Ball; Shelly Frank; Tom Lantis (Kelli Ball's father); Janet Wolken; Bill Kern
Shut-Ins: Dana Coble; Sylvia Starky; Bev Hughes; Golden Peterson; Gloria Terrill; Carol Allen; Marsha Hermreck; Gene Bromert

Military Service People: Brad Davis-Kuwait (Bill Kern's grandson); PFC Aaron Bigge-Fort Meade, Maryland (Sandy Holbert's grandson); Lt. Matt Ashwill (Melissa Ashwill's son)

We make every effort to keep this list updated. Please inform us when there are changes.

TITHE ONLINE

It's simple!!

Through First Baptist's website (fbcottawa.org)

you now have the capability to make your contributions electronically using Tithe.ly. It can be a one-time gift or recurring. To make a contribution, go to the **Give** tab and click on **Donate**. Contributions will be

tracked through our membership software & reflected on contribution statements.



Branson Trip

Our FBC Branson trip will be **June 20th and 21st**. This was a great trip last year and we are looking forward to it again this summer. Deposit is due **April 6**, final payment is **May 6**.



We will be collecting for Hope House the first Sunday of each month.

Canned Peas, Mixed Vegetables, Saltines, Ramen Noodles, Bar Soap

Toilet Paper, Kleenex, Paper Towels always needed
 *No longer needing plastic containers

Radio Ministry



First Baptist Church believes it is important to keep the Radio Ministry funded, as this is a blessing to many in our community.

Please designate contributions

to: Radio Fund.

Men's Bible Study will meet on Saturday, **April 12th at 9am**. We will be studying the 5th chapter of Matthew. Come join us for study and fellowship with one another. We will meet in the **Homebuilder's Room**, the North Sanctuary door will be open.

Please join us for **Thankful Thursday on April 24, 5-6:30**, help prepare, serve, bring a dessert or simply come eat, share stories and a smile.

Church Leadership



Fellowship Committee

Meeting is April 14, 9:30am EH

Outreach

Meeting is April 9, 6:30pm



Church Council meeting is April 15th at 7:00pm

Committee chairs, please have your previous meeting minutes emailed to the Church office.

Help Support Our Church



Price Chopper Gift Cards are available at the office for purchase. We get 5% for each sale and YOU get the FULL VALUE of each card you purchase.

Thank you for supporting the mission and ministry of our church!

Price Chopper cards can only be purchased in \$100 increments.

Book Club

We will be discussing [Real-Life Discipleship](#) by Jim Putman and [Disciple Shift](#) by Jim Putman and Bobby Harrington with Robert E. Coleman. If you are interested in this series we will discuss it once a month please contact [Jordan Fritz 785-342-0539](#).



Message from Carolyn Kimbrel
Spring is here. Take some time out, enjoy the weather, and read a book from the library.

ABCCR Senior Adult Retreat

The Senior Adult Retreat will be held on April 23-24, 2025 at Central Baptist Church in Great Bend, KS. There will be lots of fellowship, food, fun and focus on learning. The keynote speaker will be Rev. Dr. Robin Stoops. There are some exciting workshops being planned: Handbells with Jan Smith
Walking with Jesus led by Mike Justice & Jerry Neeley
Choir led by Bob Artz and Ruth Clark
All Group Bible Study with Waylon Upchego
Craft Class led by Janet Crowl
Spiritual Gifts with John Williams

Register Here
[Senior Adult Retreat 2025](#)

American Baptist Women's Ministries

We will meet at 9:30 on April 16th in Elliott Hall. Hostess is Vangie Webb. Janet Wolken will lead the bible study on 2 Chronicles 5:7 as it relates to our theme, Be Strong, Be Courageous. Our local Mission Project will be hygiene items for Willow Domestic Center.

We will be privileged to host the Luther Rice Association of ABWM on Tuesday, April 22nd. We invite all women to attend. Registration and welcoming coffee will be at 9:30. The program and meeting will follow and close with a light lunch at noon. The program will be presented by Angela Boles, Founder, Exec. Director of Project 2 Restore. This project offers hope to women who have been victims of Sex Trafficking. Even if you have never attended an ABWM meeting, come hear this wonderful message of restoration of women to new life in a Christian setting.

We look forward to ABWM Region Conference June 6-7, in Herrington. Registration information will be available soon.

America for Christ

Thank you for giving \$1762 to America for Christ last month.

FBC Puppet Ministry

New FBC Puppet Team! First Baptist Church is looking to start a new puppet ministry to spread joy and God's word through the fun and creative use of puppets. We would like to invite anyone, middle school age or older, that has an interest in being part of this new ministry to join us. No experience required. Practices will take place weekly in Elliot Hall after the conclusion of our fellowship time following Sunday services. Contact Eric or Josh with any questions

ZEPHANIAH

April 2025 Book of the Month ABWM FBC OTTAWA

“Purpose: **To shake the people of Judah out of their complacency and urge them to return to God.**”NIV

I believe the book comes close to home. Zephaniah wrote to all nations. Probably near the end of his ministry (640-621 B.C.), when King Josiah was working on his “Great Reformation” to bring the people back to Almighty God after the two previous kings of Judah (Manasseh and Amon) allowed evil and idol worship to infiltrate Judah and the nations. Perhaps Zephaniah’s prophecy may have been Josiah’s motivation for the reform.

Zephaniah was a contemporary of Jeremiah. I expect the people were not very receptive to the message of being told to look forward to a day of wrath and warnings of destruction and God's judgment. After all, life is good, and comfortable. “One of these days I’ll meet all my goals and be happy and maybe invite God into my life.”

A prophet's life, like the life of a missionary or evangelist, or preacher, must feel that no one is listening. Our creator loves us, he sent Jesus to earth proof of his unfathomable depth of his love. “Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility, perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD’s anger.” Zephaniah 2:3 Chapters 1:1-3:7: speak of **The Day of wrath**. Chapters 3:8 – 20: He will restore his people and give us **HOPE**. A promise “It’s in the book”.

I praise God, he is trustworthy. The scriptures are true, history repeats and God's timing is perfect. He is against Philistia; Ch 2:4-7: against Moab and Ammon Ch 2;8-11; Against Cush Ch 2;8-11; Against Assyria v 13-15 Ch. 3; Even Jerusalem has fallen But due to the Oracles of God's promise to the nations, Judah and Jerusalem, look for **The Day of Hope** Ch.3:8-20 Everyone is welcome to join us for our free meal tomorrow 5-6:30 “At that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the people on the earth when I restore your fortunes before your eyes,” says the Lord

Grace & Peace

For the month of May Malachi

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Visitor

Published by the First Baptist Church

fbcottawa.org

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Ottawa, KS 66067



Briley Huggard 4-2
Eldon Rader 4-2
Raygen Paddock 4-3
Nathan Ball 4-4
Cheryl Dryden 4-4
Heidi Duderstadt 4-4
David Alderman 4-8
Therese Payne 4-9
Tim Van Leiden 4-10
Karen Campbell 4-13
Brian Fast 4-17
Brian Lewis 4-17
Lex Gislar 4-19
Gloria Tyler 4-28
Patricia Larkin 4-28
Dawn Cubbison 4-28
David Testorff 4-30