

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
460 BROAD ST  
MERIDEN CT 06450

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the SPiRE

Newsletter-Volume 30-Issue 8  
SEPTEMBER 2009

**He changes  
times and  
seasons; he sets  
up kings and  
deposes them.  
He gives wisdom  
to the wise and  
knowledge to  
the discerning.  
~Daniel 2:21**

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

460 Broad Street  
Meriden, CT 06450  
Phone 203-237-5529/Fax 203-634-4322  
Find us on the web at [www.fbcmeriden.org](http://www.fbcmeriden.org)

**CHURCH STAFF**

Rev. Dr. Robert Prescott-Ezickson, Pastor  
Steven Eidukonis, Director of Music/Organist  
Stacey Czepiel, Minister of Christian-Ed/Youth  
Tony Maietta, Sexton  
Traci, Secretary

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Mon-Fri: 8:30 am-2:30 pm  
Dr. Rob is available  
Mon-Thurs: 9:00 am-12:00 pm  
Other hours by appointment

**CHURCH SCHEDULE  
SUNDAYS**

8:00 am-Early Service  
9:30 am-Sunday School  
11:00 am-Worship Service  
COME WORSHIP WITH US!

## HISTORY OF BAPTISTS (PT. 2)


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Little is known about the early life of Thomas Helwys except that he hailed from Nottinghamshire on an estate which had been in the family for several generations. Helwys received a good education at Gray's Inn and after some years in London, he returned to his country home, Broxtowe Hall. From Puritan references it is known that Helwys' home was a haven for early dissenters and Helwys himself probably aided their cause financially. At some point Helwys was introduced to John Smyth and with Mrs. Helwys joined the Separatist congregation at Gainsborough prior to 1607.

The relationship between Helwys and Smyth was very deep. Helwys reflected: "Have we not neglected ourselves, our wives, our children and all we had and respected him? And we confess we had good cause to do so in respect of those most excellent gifts and graces of God that did abound in him." Even later, when Helwys and Smyth had parted, Helwys could write: "All our love was too little for him and not worthy of him."

The voyage to Holland took place in 1608. When they arrived in Amsterdam, a welcome haven for 17th Century prisoners of conscience, they were given hospitality by the Mennonites and housed in the great bakehouse of Jan Munter. Here they were free to worship according to the dictates of their conscience as guided by the New Testament and also free, as one historian observed, to experience "all the evils of overcrowding, from exacerbated tempers to the plague."

The congregation in exile energetically examined basic conceptions regarding the true nature of the church as set forth in the New Testament. Smyth came to the view that baptism should be administered only to believers. This led Smyth to baptize himself and then the rest of the group beginning with Helwys.



# Be transformed

It's the beginning of a new school year, and you'll be growing and changing every day. Below is an important lesson that God wants you to remember.

Color in the letter boxes that have an asterisk (\*).  
Then write the letters that are left on the lines below to finish Romans 12:2.

c	h*	o	n	d*	f	t*	q*	o	s*	r	a*	b*	r*	m
x*	p	j*	e*	a	t	m*	t	o*	c*	p*	e	r	k*	n
w	d*	o	s*	r*	j*	r	g*	l	b*	l*	i*	n*	d	y*
t	r	i*	a	t*	n	s	r*	f	o	r	v*	m	e	d
r	d*	e	n	h*	s*	o*	e	r*	w	i	t*	n	m*	g
c*	a*	m	b*	u*	i	p*	z*	n	j*	r*	d	y*	o*	u*
a*	r*	s*	t	e	o*	w*	s	k*	v*	f*	l*	t	e*	a*
a	p	e*	r*	p	i*	r	g*	o	n*	v	h*	j*	p*	e
n*	o*	G	b*	i*	o	s*	d	a*	l*	l*	s	e*	t*	h*
s*	p	l	m*	e	y*	a	s	o*	r*	i	n	c*	g	n*
p	e	t*	i*	r	f	w*	t*	e	m*	l*	c	d*	a*	t

"Do not \_\_\_\_\_ any longer to the \_\_\_\_\_  
of this \_\_\_\_\_, but be \_\_\_\_\_  
by the \_\_\_\_\_ of your \_\_\_\_\_. Then you will be able  
to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ what \_\_\_\_\_ will is — his good,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will." *Romans 12:2, NIV*

Answers: conform, pattern, world, transformed, renewing, mind, rest, approve, God's, pleasing, perfect

## TRUST IN GOD

University of Oklahoma quarterback Sam Bradford won the coveted Heisman Trophy in 2008. That season, the 6'5" team leader threw 50 touchdown passes, with only eight interceptions in 483 attempts. The Sooners had a 12-2 record that year.

Accolades aside, Bradford quickly but humbly acknowledges Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. Upon receiving the Heisman, Bradford said, "I feel like that's another blessing God gave me."

Bradford, a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, exercises compassion and is known for his integrity. Before every game, he reportedly reads the account of David and Goliath.

In a church newsletter, Bradford said, "I know that everything God is doing has a reason. I have learned the power of patience and perseverance. God has a purpose for everything, and I just need to trust God."

## RALLY DAY SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

EARLY SERVICE - 8:00 AM  
BREAKFAST - 9:00 AM  
SUNDAY SCHOOL - 9:30 AM  
WORSHIP SERVICE - 11:00 AM  
PICNIC AT THE PARSONAGE - 4:00 PM

MAKE RESERVATIONS BY CALLING THE CHURCH  
OFFICE OR THROUGH THE BULLETIN INSERT.

By this move, the group had removed themselves from the state church on the grounds that they had not been validly baptized as infants. It also marked a separation from their fellow Separatists. Indeed it would not be many years hence when William Bradford and his companions would decide in 1620 to emigrate to America where they would establish Plymouth Plantation on strict Separatist principles.

About February 1610 Smyth and about 31 others came to the conclusion that they had been in error baptizing themselves and sought fellowship with the Mennonites in Holland.

Thomas Helwys and about a dozen others disagreed, rejecting totally the idea of any necessary succession in the Church of Christ. It was "contrary to the liberty of the Gospel, which is free for all men at all times and in all places: yea, so our Savior Christ doth testify—wheresoever, whosoever, and whensoever two or three are gathered in his name, there is he in the midst of them."

Helwys and his small band became convinced that they had been wrong to leave England. Though parting with Smyth caused him great personal pain, Helwys believed that the "days of great tribulation spoken of by Christ" had now arrived. He must get back to England and appeal to James I to stop persecuting the faithful.

Peace,

*Dr. Rob*

## A TABLE BLESSING FOR CHILDREN

We thank you, God, for happy hearts,  
for rain and sunny weather.  
We thank you, God, for this our food,  
and that we're all together. Amen.

## FROM THE MUSIC DESK

We start a new season here at FBC. The choirs will all start up the week of Labor Day, September 6th.

The Worship Choir, open to all adults, will begin rehearsal in the Music Room on Thursday, September 10th, from 7 to 8:30PM. This choir sings at all 11AM services except during the Summer, as well as some special services and will be directed by myself.

The Children's Choir, open to children grades K-5, will rehearse on Sundays from 9:45AM to 10AM in the Chapel starting September 20th. This choir sings periodically throughout the church year, including our Advent Music Program, Easter Sunday and Promotion Day and will be directed by myself.

GENESIS, a youth vocal choir is open to youth grades 6-12. They lead the Praise and Worship segment of the 11AM service starting Sunday, September 6th and participate in other special programs, such as the Martin Luther King service in January. This choir rehearses on Sundays from 12:30 to 1:15PM in the Sanctuary starting September 6th and is directed by Dr. Rob.

Joyful Ensembells II, a youth handbell choir, is open to youth grades 6-12. They ring periodically throughout the church year. They rehearse on Sundays from 8:50AM to 9:25AM in the Sanctuary balcony starting September 28th and are directed by Catherine Souza.

One Achord, an instrumental ensemble, is open to interested adults and teens. They accompany GENESIS at the 11AM service. They rehearse Sunday morning from 9:15AM to 9:30AM in the room across from the Director of Music office and are directed by Dr. Rob.

If you are interested in any of these choirs, please see the respective directors. Starting September 20th, I will be doing a prelude and postlude series on the history of organ music. Sometimes the choir anthem will be part of this. I will begin as early as the 14th century and end around June with the 20th century. I will be including program notes with the bulletins.

Finally, on October 25th, we will have another revival service, this one with Reformation as the theme (October is Reformation Sunday). All of the choirs will be participating. More info on that will be forthcoming.

In Christ,  
Steven Eidukonis, Director of Music

## BIBLE QUIZ

Salt is necessary for the human body and has also been used as a preservative for meat and other foods. In the Bible, salt represents permanence, loyalty, fidelity, use-fulness, value and purification.

In Matthew 5:13, Jesus tells his followers they are the salt of the earth. But, he adds, "If salt has lost its taste .... it is no longer good for anything." What was Jesus' message? Choose the correct answer below.

- A. Jesus' friends should remember him when they put salt on their food.
- B. Jesus' friends are important, but if they fail to serve him and tell others about him, they will have neglected the roles he has for them.
- C. Bad salt is good for nothing.
- D. Christians should have a positive influence on the world.

## NO SUBSTITUTE

The Christian community plays an important role in the life of discipleship because this community is nothing less than the body of Christ in the world today. It is among brothers and sisters in faith that we:

- experience the presence of Jesus Christ, living and incarnate;
- come together for worship, confess our sins, hear the gospel and receive Communion;
- accept church discipline through the gentle guidance of others;
- learn, through the successes and failures around us, what it means to live a life of discipleship.

"There is no substitute for living around other Christians," write Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon of Duke Divinity School. A "primary way of learning to be disciples is by being in contact with others who are disciples" (Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony). We grow in discipleship as we strive with others to hear God's Word, feed the hungry, welcome strangers and love one another.

—Homiletics

## WISDOM FROM ST. JEROME

“Be at peace with your own soul, then heaven and earth will be at peace with you.”

**“Keep doing some kind of work, that the devil may always find you employed.”**

These two statements are from the very quotable St. Jerome. Everyone who admires insightful, witty quotes should know about this gifted man. Born about 340 A.D., Jerome became a Christian at age 20 and was ordained at age 39.

Jerome was a brilliant scholar of the Bible. He translated the Old Testament from the original Hebrew and the New Testament from the original Greek into Latin. That Bible, known as the Vulgate, is still cherished by readers of Latin. Jerome died in 420 A.D.

## BE TRANSFORMED

It's Labor Day weekend — a time to rest from our labors. But this is also an opportunity to reflect on our daily work and discern whether our effort is thankless and uninteresting or something that gives us deep and lasting satisfaction. God intends for our work to be much more than a job, much more than a daily grind. It should be, instead, a vocation — which means, quite literally, a “calling.”

In Romans 12:2, Paul challenges us with the words: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

The apostle's advice, then, is to be transformed by the renewing of your minds. Paul says be transformed by discovering what the Lord God is calling you to do. —Homiletics

## YOUTH NEWS

Junior high and high school Sunday school classes begin on Rally Day, September 6th. Invite a friend! This month's youth activity will be apple, pear, & pumpkin picking at Lyman's Orchard. Time is TBA.

*Autumn is a second spring  
where every leaf is a flower.*

—*Albert Camus*

## A NOTE FROM THE SEXTON

VBS clean-up is complete. After I finished with the chain saw in Kyle's room the small trees were easy to carry out, finding a home for the snakes, frogs, birds and bugs was a little more difficult but I think we are all set now. There are still some items in the Sunday School area that belong to some people so if you have things you brought in and need back feel free to pick them up at any time.

The air conditioning system in the church seemed to perform very well during the two weddings this Summer. I think it was great that all the services this Summer were in the Sanctuary and didn't have to move to the Memorial Building because of heat and humidity.

Rally Day is coming up and I hope to have everything ready to start the new church season. If anyone needs anything special for Sunday School or other activities feel free to contact me and I will do my best to accommodate your needs.

Thanks,

Tony

## DEACON'S REPORT

I would like to thank everyone that participated this Summer to fill in during Dr. Rob's vacation. Bob Souza and Randy McArthur did an excellent job bringing spiritual messages. Diane Henry's presentation on new and existing missionaries was very informative. My presentation on church history was fun researching but nerve racking presenting it. The talent in this church not only filling in for Dr. Rob, but also the musical performances by Laura and Ashley Crean, Bob and Blanche Fox and Diane, Emily and Caroline Henry, Krista Lastrina and Kate Rudnicki was extraordinary.

I would also like to thank all the deacons, past and present, for their work year round to serve communion.

I can't say thank you enough for the help that I have received from Cathy Souza. If not for her guidance with church service and announcements I might have locked the door and gone home.

Last but absolutely not least our church secretary Traci, put up with a whole summer of my deadlines, changes and last minute work not only for the bulletins, but her work and talent on my church history project. I know it couldn't be done at all without her.

Thank you and may God bless all of you,  
Tony Maietta - Chairman, Board of Deacons

## PRAY WITHOUT CEASING 1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

- ✠ Heather Robinson - spent some time in the hospital in August.
- ✠ Lucy Dioguardi - making slow progress after hip surgery.
- ✠ Betty Lavender - Debby Wyskiel's sister receiving chemotherapy
- ✠ Dolores Mettica - at home recovering from a fall.
- ✠ Ron Downes - recovering from cancer surgery.
- ✠ Robin Bixby - recovering from heart surgery.
- ✠ The new church year - Rally Day and all activities, new Sunday School year - new music year.

## DOOR-OPENER

When the book of Acts (see 16:25-26) reports that Paul and Silas sang in the Philippian jail at midnight, it doesn't record whether they were basses or tenors. It doesn't even report if they sang on key. It simply says they sang. And as they sang, there was an earthquake and the prison doors were opened.

Many of life's doors open more easily when we sing. So why not open some doors by joining the choir?

## WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Take a look at this line of type: GODISNOWHERE

Did you read it as "God is nowhere"?

Or are you an optimist who read it as  
"God is now here"?

When our lives are focused on God, awe and wonder lead us to worship God, filling our inner being with a fullness we would never have thought possible. Awe prepares the way in us for the power of God to transform us, and this transformation of our inner attitudes can only take place when awe leads us in turn to wonder, admiration, reverence, surrender and obedience toward God.

—James Houston, The Transforming Power of Prayer

## BOARD BULLETINS

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Young adults - ages 20-30 are invited to dinner with Dr. Rob on Friday, September 4 at 6:30 PM. Bring your favorite dish and your suggestions and ideas. RSVP through the church office.

The Baptist Men's Fellowship is sponsoring a trip to the Rockcats Game on Sunday, September 6. Tickets are \$4.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children 10 and under.

Pizza, Prayer and Praise will kick off our new church year on Friday, September 11. We will begin at 6:15 PM.

Rally Day is Sunday, September 13. Our Fall schedule will resume with Early Service at 8:00 AM. A special Rally Day breakfast will be held at 9:00 AM. Sunday School begins at 9:30 AM. Worship Service is at 11:00 AM.

The Board of Missions is planning a special Fellowship Hour for Sunday, September 27. Make plans to stay after church and learn more about missions.

### MEETINGS:

Christian Ed., Diaconate, Missions & Trustees - Monday, 9/14 at 7:00 PM.

Pastoral Relations - Monday, 9/28 at 7:00 PM. The congregation is invited to bring feedback about our staff from 7:00 - 7:30 PM.

*If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

*2 Chronicles 7:14*

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:** Rally Day is Sunday, September 13. We will have breakfast at 9:00 AM, Sunday School at 9:30 AM. We also have the picnic at the parsonage beginning at 4:00 PM. Everyone is invited.

**DIACONATE:** Thanks for all the help with our church services, the responsive readers, ushers, lay readers, and greeters throughout the Summer and all year round.

**FINANCE:** A reminder to all board chairs - remember to have the 2010 budget on your agenda for the September meetings. We need all 2010 proposed budgets by October 4. We advise keeping in line with this year's budget as much as possible.

**MISSIONS:** September is Missions Month at FBC. We will be introducing our new missionaries that we support with our giving to International Ministries. We also have a special Fellowship Hour planned for September 27.

**TRUSTEES:** Our building is open for use by members for special events. Remember to get your request in at the earliest possible date. We operate on a first come - first serve basis.

**ATTENTION ALL BOARD CHAIRS - PROPOSED BUDGETS FOR 2010 ARE DUE TO THE BOARD OF FINANCE BY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4.**

### LAY OFF ON LABOR DAY

Pope Benedict XVI would appreciate our Labor Day holiday. Recently, while addressing a large audience, the Pope warned against working too hard. It is "bad for the spirit," he said.

He quoted the 12th-century writings of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who spoke of "the dangers of an excessive activity, whatever the ... office held, because many occupations lead to a hardening of the heart."

Whatever our work, we must take at least one day each week to rest. For most people, this will be the Lord's Day, the Christian sabbath. As the Bible says: "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work ...." (Exodus 20:8-10, NRSV).

# SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
					1		2		3		4		5
										DINNER WITH DR. ROB 6:30 PM			
<b>COMMUNION</b>	6		7		8		9		10		11		12
Sunday School 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM GENESIS 11:15 PM Rockcats Game 1:35 PM								CHOIR PRACTICE 7:00PM		PIZZA, PRAYER & PRAISE 6:15PM			
<b>RALLY DAY</b>	13		14		15		16		17		18		19
Early Service 8:00 AM Breakfast 9:00 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM GENESIS 12:30 PM Picnic at Parsonage 4:00 PM		Christian Ed., Diaconate, Missions & Trustees 7:00 PM						CHOIR PRACTICE 7:00PM				MEN'S BREAKFAST 8:30AM	
	20		21		22		23		24		25		26
Early Service 8:00 AM Joyful Ensembells 9:00 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM GENESIS 12:30 PM								CHOIR PRACTICE 7:00PM					
<b>MISSIONS SUNDAY</b>	27		28		29		30						
Early Service 8:00 AM Joyful Ensembells 9:00 AM Sunday School 9:30 AM Worship Service 11:00 AM GENESIS 12:30 PM Fellowship Hour after service		Pastoral Relations 7:00 PM Congregation invited to bring feedback on staff from 7:00-7:30 PM						CHOIR PRACTICE 7:00PM					

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

3 Kathleen DeJohn  
11 Matthew Maniscalco  
16 Rebecca Wyskiel  
17 Debbie Embler  
17 Caroline Henry  
19 Emily Henry  
20 Dawn Angry  
26 Larry McDonald  
29 Jennifer Ballard

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO...

15 David & Linda Morley  
24 David & Debby Wyskiel  
25 Dr. Rob & Rev. Barbara Prescott-Ezickson

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO...

7 Labor Day  
11 Patriot Day (remembrance of Sept. 11)  
13 National Grandparents Day  
14 Fall Schedule Resumes  
9/15-10/15 National Hispanic Heritage Month  
22 First Day of Autumn