

The purpose of the First Baptist Church of Auburn is to glorify God by developing disciples who know Christ personally as prescribed in God's Word, through worship, teaching, fellowship, and outreach to our community and world.

From the Pastor ... "Journey to Easter"



Easter is on its way. I know, I know, it does not appear until April 20, 2025. If you are reading this newsletter on Sunday, March 2, Easter is still about seven weeks away. We begin preparing for Christmas four or five weeks ahead of the actual date so this year Easter will be the same.

In preparation for this most important of events, I am planning a four week sermon series called "Journey to Easter." Although the sermon topics are subject to change, the messages for our "Journey to Easter" are the following titles and biblical texts.

March 30, 2025 – No More Mr. Nice Guy - Romans 7:14, 17, 18a

April 6, 2025 – I Am Suddenly Aware That Something Is Not Right - Acts 9:1-9

April 13, 2025 Palm Sunday – Jesus reveals Himself as Messiah (text to be determined)

April 20, 2025 Easter – Who Is My Deliverer - Romans 7:24-25

Our "Journey to Easter" is a journey to the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and is designed to get our minds focused on what the cross and resurrection teach us about ourselves and Jesus.

Our preparation will not be about purchasing gifts or decorating the house, but rather on the reasons the death of Christ and His ultimate resurrection are so important, even vital, to our lives.

I encourage you to prepare for Easter. Think through the reasons Jesus had to die. Think about our own inability to redeem ourselves. Bask in the power of the resurrection.

My prayer is that our desire and priorities would mirror the Apostle Paul's when he says:

⁷ But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ — yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. *Philippians 3*

Let's go all in and be ready to fully rejoice in the resurrection.



Upcoming Events

Every Sunday –

Sunday School – 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service – 11:00 a.m.
Prayer Meeting – 4:00 p.m.
Small Group Service – 4:45 p.m.

Every Wednesday –

Game Time – 4:30 p.m.
15 minutes of Prayer – 5:30 p.m.
AWANA – 6:00 p.m.

Every Thursday – Quilting Circle –
9:00 a.m. thru 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 1 –

Men's Breakfast – 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, March 5 –

Ash Wednesday

Sunday, March 9 –

Daylight Savings Time Begins

Tuesday, March 11 –

Advisory Board Meeting –
7:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 16 –

All Church Potluck
(right after the morning service)

Monday, March 17 –

St. Patrick's Day

Thursday, March 20 –

First Day of Spring!

Tuesday, March 25 –

Women's Breakfast at Cracker
Barrel in Bay City – 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, March 29 –

Happy Birthday, Pastor Ed!

Sunday, March 30 –

Food Pantry

Finances through February 16, 2025

We are currently in the RED — \$1,921.94

A Poem by Brandon Pawley

Freedom From My Strife.

*My Lord, I am so weary.
Dear Lord, I am so faint.
My insides ripped, my mind is torn,
I cannot hold this weight.*

*I set my sight toward evil, Lord.
I set my heart toward sin.
I grieved your Spirit in my heart,
Denying You once again.*

*My pain is great, my sorrow soars,
I have no place to go.
I cannot find this peace
I truly wish to know.*

*But You tell me, my sweet Lord,
Of freedom through Your Son.
Please help me lose these burdens
And with Your Christ be one.*

*I wish to stop these thoughts of sin,
I hope to grieve no more.
Please help me Lord to overcome
And be Yours evermore.*

*Guide my feet in righteousness,
Shine Your light ahead.
Let me heed your warnings
That keep me from the dead.*

*Thank you for Your promise
Of everlasting life.
I love you Lord and come to you
For freedom from my strife.*

14 September 1991



JAMES THOMAS DRINVILLE

July 7, 1937 - February 10, 2025

James Thomas Drinville
Helena, Montana
July 7, 1937 - February 10, 2025

Tom was born on 7/7/37 in Missoula, Montana, the second of four children to Alberta and George Drinville. A natural athlete, Tom excelled in football, basketball, and track during his high school years, showcasing a competitive spirit that would define much of his life. While delivering newspapers, Tom met the love of his life, Priscilla Podoll. They married young, building a life filled with love, faith, and adventure. Together they raised four children: Brian, Christine, Bradley, and Teresa.

Tom started his career with the Missoula Police Department, serving until an on-the-job injury led him to change paths several times. Embracing his passion for the outdoors, he moved his family to the Bitterroot Valley where he started a youth wilderness survival camp. An avid outdoorsman, Tom found peace and purpose in the wilderness. Tom spent much of his time outside, hiking, fishing, and hunting. He often slept under the stars with nothing more than a rock for a pillow. His passion for the wilderness led him to become a hunting outfitter,

guiding trips in the mountains along the Idaho border for over a decade.

After their children grew up, Tom and Priscilla settled on a ranch in Sheridan, Montana, where Tom became a familiar face at the local bakery, always quick with a smile and a story. In the early 2000s, they moved to Helena to be closer to family. Tom loved three things consistently throughout his life: God, Priscilla, and a strong cup of black coffee. Known for his hard work and practical skills — often involving duct tape or twine — he was always ready to lend a hand.

On February 10, 2025, Tom passed away surrounded by family after battling Alzheimer’s disease. He will be remembered for his resilience, enthusiasm for the outdoors, and love of the Lord.

Tom is survived by his wife of 66 years, Priscilla; his four children, Brian (Carrie Ann), Christy (Marty), Brad (Maureen), and Teresa (Kevin); his eleven grandchildren; and several great grandchildren.



Our condolences to Leslie Lawrence on the passing of her brother.



FEBRUARY 2025

IN THE MIDST OF A ROAD TRIP

Praises

- Two new staff were chosen and are now being trained in the pathology lab.
- There were ten pathologists from the US who volunteered to read slides while Rick is gone.
- Safe travel through the first two months of our furlough (especially through snowstorms) and wonderful times with family, friends/supporters, and churches!
- Brendaline was discharged from the hospital, and her diabetes is under control. She is waiting for her stump to be ready for her prosthesis.

Prayer

- Continued safe travel and good connections with remaining churches and supporters.
- Dr. Mbanga and the volunteer pathologists to be able to keep up with the work.
- Patients to be able to get to the hospital for the care they need, and the light of Christ be evident to all who come to MBH.
- The remaining days we will have with family, goodbyes (never easy!), and packing!

As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

1 PETER 2:9B (NLT)



Family reunion time!

Greetings dear friends and family,

Today we are writing from the USA. We arrived on December 16 for a three-month home assignment to report to supporting churches and friends on what God has been doing at Mbingo Baptist Hospital. We have also been able to spend some wonderful time with our kids, their spouses, and our six grandkids! We even squeezed in a quick trip to Abilene, Texas, to see Rick's sister, her husband, and family, where we were



Speaking with Rick's sister Carol at HSU.



asked to participate in a class on leadership that our brother-in-law teaches at Hardin-Simmons University.

The journey from Cameroon had a frightful start. We had traveled to Bamenda, the closest large city from Mbingo, to stay overnight before leaving the next morning for the airport in Yaoundé (a six- to seven-hour ride). While walking on the Baptist Center compound, Debbie stepped in a hole and suffered a deep gash in her leg. This threatened to cancel our onward travel, but, with the help of dear friends in Bamenda and advice via WhatsApp by friends in the US (a surgeon and a wound care nurse), we were able to care for the wound properly throughout the trip, and the Lord carried us through. The gash is now healed over without complication.

We are currently in the midst of a six-week road trip to speak at churches in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Ontario, Canada. At every stop along the way, we have been very blessed by the kindness and



Speaking at Cross of Hope Church.

In His Matchless Love,

Rick & Debbie Bardin

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interest of the brothers and sisters we interact with. It is a real privilege to have the opportunity of giving testimony to the goodness of our loving Lord and of what He has done and is doing.

We would like to make you aware of a new opportunity to help upgrade the pathology laboratory in Mbingo. When we started to process tissue back in 2011, the electrical supply of the hospital was very erratic and often ruined laboratory equipment and other electronic equipment in the hospital.

For this reason, we chose to do the processing manually. This method has been in place ever since and has made it possible for us to provide pathology services, but it is not optimal. Now that we have reliable hydroelectric power, it is time to upgrade to an automated system.



A Leica TP1020 tissue processor.

The cost of an automated tissue processor is more than I could expect the hospital to meet, especially with the loss of revenue incurred by the current civil war (going on nine years now). So, our mission organization, the NAB, has agreed to establish a special project to raise \$40,000 to go toward the purchase, shipment, and installation of an automated processor. This can be accessed through the NAB website. TO GIVE, GO TO: nabconference.org/give/special-projects, and scroll down to find the project titled “Mbingo Laboratory Equipment.”





FEBRUARY 2025

FROM DOWNS TO UPS

Praises

- For God blessing our mission students’ hard work at fundraising for their mission trip near Thailand on the 16th.
- For more new pastors and church leaders attending our ministry equipping courses.
- For the missional prayer ministries that continue and are starting up.

Prayer

- For protection, good health, and impact as Claire leads the students on their mission trip February 16–26.
- That our students would learn much from the biblical training we provide and unlearn incorrect perspectives.
- For the “good problem” of a shrinking campus as BCCL’s ministries have expanded and more space is needed.

[W]eeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

PSALM 30:5B (NIV)

I’ve always found, during decades of ministry and of being a believer, that after much sadness or trials, God always brings joy and encouragement. After all the deaths, disasters, and difficult times we experienced last year, God brought forth a series of encouraging developments.

“Holy Book”

“This story comes from the Bible,” one of our mission students declared as she starts sharing a parable to our young Indian friends. “Do you know what the Bible is?” she continued.

The small group immediately replied, “It is a holy book, *a-tel!* (older sister, in Filipino).



We are so blessed to see how attentive our young Indian friends have been listening to the Bible stories our mission students have been relating to them. This is

the second month, during our monthly *Sangati* (gathering, in Hindi) that our mission students have been

practicing their orality Bible storytelling skills. January 24, they shared about the parable of the weeds. We were so pleased to see that within five minutes of listening to the story repeated twice, our young Hindu friends were able to retell the story to friends who have just arrived. The discussions about what stood out to them in the story, etc., were also quite interesting.

It is wonderful to see how excited our Hindu friends are each time they come to our monthly *Sangatis*. It’s exciting that we are now able to intentionally plant God’s Word in their hearts. We started off in May 2023 with our mission students sharing their “life stories,” or testimonies. Now, almost two years later, as we have developed deeper friendships with them, we are able to have these conversations about the “Holy Book.” Praise be to God!

Blessing and Being Blessed

We were amazed by our mission students’ determination and commitment to raise funds for their mission exposure trip near Thailand (coming up this February). Last December, they decided to visit Christian friends’ homes as well as offices to cheer them up with Christmas carols as their way to solicit funds as well.



Caroling is a Christmas Filipino tradition where groups, especially kids, go around the neighborhood with makeshift instruments, like an empty tin can or a string of flattened bottle caps, and sing a few Christmas carols, expecting the families to give them “*pamasko*” or Christmas money.



Our mission students got creative, rehearsed a medley of Christmas carols, and then, armed with a guitar and a tambourine, they put on shimmering cultural

costumes and went around communities and government offices to spread the cheer and share about God’s love for two weeks last December. Rain or shine, morning and evening, they went to different communities in the area. They set aside timidity and sang with all their hearts. Wherever they went, they took the opportunity to encourage and pray for the people and the local government offices.

As a result of all their hard work, they were able to raise some funds to buy round trip tickets to Thailand! They also pooled together used clothing and items and did an online auction for a cause. Through this experience, they get a deeper appreciation of how difficult it is for missionaries to raise funds to go to the field. This way, they can tell their churches to pray more specifically for the needs of missionaries and help hold the rope for them.

The Power of Art

Mid-December last year, a participant of the short-term mission team that we hosted earlier in August, in partnership with Overseas Missionary Fellowship, came back to Legazpi to do an arts outreach ministry called Art Walk.

We invited local artists and art enthusiasts to come and do art together at a scenic location in the city. Sharla, the Christian professional artist who led this activity, has been doing this kind of outreach in her hometown in the city of Baguio. This event allowed us to connect with art societies for possible future outreach to them. This is our

Claire & Tim Marker

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way to engage churches to more creative local outreach ministries and at the same time allowing cross-cultural exposure and a platform for believers from other places to reach people in Bicol for Christ.

The highlight, though, was after the event when I took Sharla to the Mayon skyline, since she wanted to paint the volcano. When we arrived at the place, it was so foggy we couldn’t see the volcano at all. Oh well, she just taught me some basics in watercolor painting. I paint as well, but with acrylics, so it was also a rare time for me to unwind with a fellow artist.

As we were enjoying our little art session, a few kids started to peek behind us and were interested in what we were doing. Then some of them wanted to try it out. Before we knew it, around fifteen kids were gathered around us! That’s the power of art as a tool for outreach.



We thoroughly enjoyed engaging with the kids, and Sharla is coming back in March to do more art-related ministries, including an art outreach to kids.

Equipping More Church Leaders

We’re experiencing a surging interest in equipping, as more churches are sending their leaders to get biblical ministry training at BCCL. Around twenty students attended the Systematic Theology class in January, and now thirty students are currently attending the Spiritual Warfare class that started this week.



We continue our commitment to provide affordable, relevant, immersive, and effective biblical ministry training to pastors and church leaders in Bicol and beyond.

