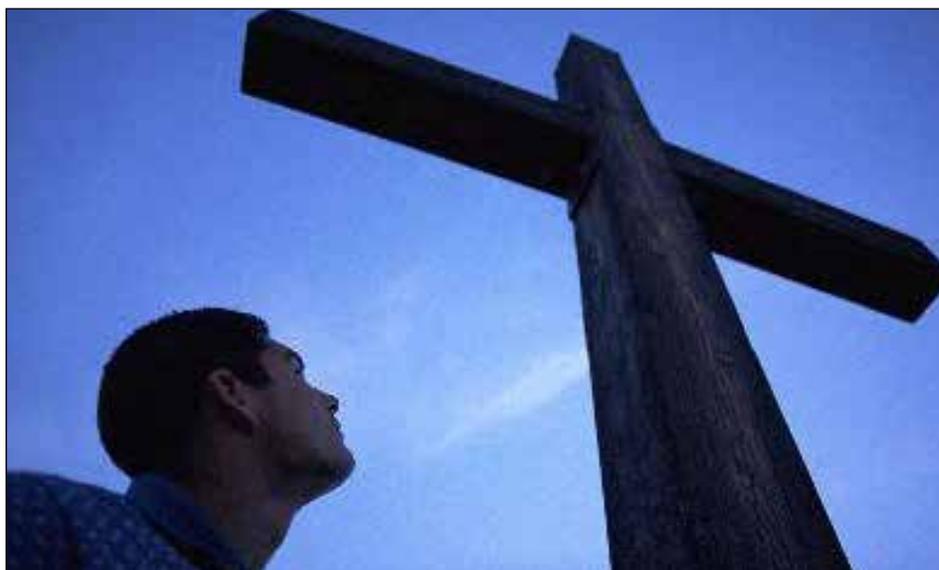


Falls Fellowship



Let's Talk About the Future

Mark Twain said, “Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.” Many people talk about the future of the church, but nobody seems to do anything about it. Now I know that the church belongs to Jesus Christ. It is his church, built on his Body. I know, also, that Christ accomplishes his purposes for the church through us — rugged sinners that have been saved by grace. Having said that as a statement of faith, we must not be content to ride the wave of former days until the wave disappears and we find ourselves in the ER on life support.

I want us to do something about the future for Falls — make good plans which will enable us to achieve God’s purpose for us.

Remember, I told you in the newsletter last month that God has plans for us. Let’s explore, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, what those plans may be for us. If we come before God with faith, he can empower us to make good plans for our future as a church. Here is what I want to do to help us make good plans for the future of Falls.

Beginning on Wednesday, March 4, we will explore the possibilities for our future as a church. We have talked about this before; it is now time for us to go deeper. On March 4 I will lead us through a discussion about the measurable, physical realities of our community such as how many people live in our ministry area, how old are they, what is their ethnic background,

See Future on page 4

The Season of Lent

Ash Wednesday was February 26. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of preparations for Easter. The Ashes used to make the sign of the cross on congregants’ foreheads in the Ash



Wednesday service traditionally come from the burning of the Palm leaves that were used on Palm Sunday the previous year. Palms used one year make ashes for Ash Wednesday the following year. The themes of the Christian year with its multiple liturgies circle around each year. Christmas leads to Easter which leads to Pentecost Sunday and, well, you get the idea. We repeat celebrating the major themes of our faith every year.

March 1 is the first Sunday in Lent. I am promoting a theme for Lent at Falls: “Boot Camp for Easter.”

See Lent on page 3

Mission Donations

We will be collecting non-perishable food for Baptist Children's Homes all during the month of March. Please leave food in bags in the vestibule.

We will be collecting diapers of all sizes, wipes and ointment and baby and children wash. If you have any questions or need more information please contact Angie Harris.

Senior Adult Bible Study

On March 31 Falls is starting a "Brown Bag Bible Study" for senior adults. Let me break this down: you know what Bible Study means. Some of our senior adults have expressed an interest in having Bible study for them on a week day. Brown Bag is simple: bring a brown bag, or other suitable container, with your lunch — sandwiches, fruit, rollups — your choice and we will study the Bible and then have lunch.

The church will not be furnishing lunch, in fact, the only beverage the church will have is water. Bring your Bible, your lunch, and your beverage of choice and join us at 11:00 on March 31. Thereafter we will meet on the last Tuesday in each month.



Food Bank volunteers

We had 12 people volunteering at the Food Bank on February 15. We helped pack 26,000 pounds of food in about 2 1/2 hours! About 90 people total were there from other churches and civic organizations.

Let's Make A Joyful Noise!

Falls Baptist Church Choir needs you to help us make that joyful noise. We're gaining new members — come be part of it! New voices are always welcome! It does not matter if you can sing or not, most of us can't, but we do enjoy making a Joyful Noise as we are told to do in Psalm 100, verses one and two.

We are currently working on music for Easter and learning a lot.

Choir practice is on Sundays at 4:30 PM. We have a lot of fun and the fellowship is hard to beat. Join us!

Event Calendar

- March 1 — Deacons Meeting 3:30 PM
- March 3 — Women's Bible Study 6 PM
- March 10 — Women's Bible Study 6 PM
- March 14 — Men's Fellowship Breakfast 8 AM
- March 17 — Women's Bible Study 6 PM
- March 24 — Women's Bible Study 6 PM
- March 31 — Brown Bag Bible Study 11:30 AM
- March 31 — Women's Bible Study 6 PM

March Birthdays

- 1 Junior Jackson
- 12 Kevin Barham
- 13 Diana Harney
- 16 Rich Harney
- 19 Alice Tate
- 22 Geneva Holste
- 26 Billy Chappell



Continued from page 1

Lent continued ...

Some of you have been to a boot camp. Military service begins with boot camp. Some companies require a boot camp for new employees. Management gurus lead boot camps to prod managers to develop new skills and strengthen existing ones.

What about a Boot Camp for Christians, a time when we rigorously exercise our faith making it stronger, confess our sins, turn with new dedication to Jesus Christ and give up everything that distracts us from Christ? Sounds like a challenge. But to follow the disciplines of a spiritual boot camp can prepare us for Easter with a new understanding of its meaning for us. Perhaps we can find methods for stretching and developing our spiritual lives much like we develop the body through stretching and exercising our muscles. Here are some suggestions for you to follow during our “Boot Camp for Easter.”

Bible Study. Reading the Bible, studying its teachings and applying them to our lives will make all of us more fit spiritually. My recommendation is to read the Bible daily. Perhaps, like me, you would find it helpful to follow a guide in your reading of the Bible. A popular guide is “Our Daily Bread” produced by Our Daily Bread Ministries. This is a quarterly publication. The next quarter begins the first Sunday in Lent, March 1, and continues through May 31, Pentecost Sunday. Each day has a passage of scripture to read and a few comments about it. Copies are on the credenza in the vestibule.

Prayer. A survey taken among pastors revealed that most pastors spend less than five minutes per day in prayer. Yet, as pastors, we all preach about the benefits of prayer. I am determined to spend more time in prayer. “Boot Camp for Easter” is a good time to start. I find it is helpful to have a specific time each day for prayer and a designated place where I pray. For me, early morning works best, and I pray in my study at home. You may have a special chair that you sit in to relax. Why not dedicate that chair to God as an altar and retreat to it each day for reading the Bible and praying? A little practice here will bring immeasurable benefits.

Gratitude. Have you noticed Christians, as a



group, do a lot of complaining? I have and it makes me weary. We complain about people not being friendly to us. We complain about the weather. We complain when we feel slighted by other people. We complain about the preacher’s sermons and the temperature in the sanctuary and, here is a popular complaint, somebody didn’t act toward us like we thought they should. We become upset over trivial matters. “He didn’t speak to me.” “They didn’t invite me to go out with them.” “The preacher didn’t greet me at church.” “I detected a tone in his voice that upset me.” We are good at imagining actions wjocj never really happened, or at least didn’t carry the meaning we attach to them. Get in “Boot Camp for Easter” and stop negative behavior.

There are other exercises I could add to “Boot Camp for Easter.” But this is a starting place. Use Lent as the season to read deeper in the Word of God, spend more time in prayer and practice constructive behavior in your relationships with other people.

— Tom Jenkins

Deacons

Linwood Barham, Chairman	919-418-1162
Hubert Jenks, Vice Chairman	919-270-8765
Alan Watkins, Secretary	919-793-5548
Kevin Barham	919-618-4214
Brandon Long	252-903-4662
Mike Harris	919-746-5697

Future continued ...

how much money do they have, what do they want from life. As a consultant with churches over the years, looking at the church's community has always been the place to start.

Then on successive Wednesday nights we will look at the characteristics of churches who are in decline and of those who are thriving. We will be able to plot our place on the continuum between declining and growing. To help us, I will be using some material published by Thom Rainer and Ed Stetzer. The two of them conducted research on what factors cause churches to wither on the vine and eventually die. Their research was presented in a book, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*. They explore topics like "The Past is the Hero", "The Great Commission becomes the Great Omission", "The Church Rarely Prayed Together," and "The Church Obsessed Over the Facilities." The authors also provide twelve suggestions for keeping a church alive and healthy. In addition, I will use some material from Peter Steinke's book, *Healthy Congregations*. And, of course, I'll mix in some of my conclusions about projecting a church's future.

The purpose of looking at these topics is not to diagnose Falls and put us somewhere among the ranks of dying churches. We are not a dying church. We are alive. Instead, by looking at these topics we can be good stewards of our church and prayerfully make plans for a future that keep us healthy.

— Tom Jenkins



Newsletter articles needed

We have had a newsletter each month for the past 2 ½ years.

But, we need news and articles from all of our committees to let everyone know what you are doing and when you are doing it.

Our website is generating interest and bringing people into our church. Please bookmark it at www.fallsbaptistchurch.org. In addition, our mobile app is in use by 72 people in three countries at this writing. It is available for Apple and Android devices, so search for Falls Baptist in your App Store or you can use the link on our website.

Communication is very important, so send your news and articles to Frank at fbpowell@mac.com

Thanks!



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www.facebook.com/fallsbaptistchurch