



FELLOWSHIP BUILDER ~ OCTOBER 2026

“Growing Spiritually as Individuals and as a Church”

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Two weeks ago, it rained and last week I was out of town on vacation. In that time, I lost control of my garden. When I returned, I could hardly recognize the jungle that had taken over. After a heartbreaking assessment of my too-far-gone garden, the lawn mower reclaimed half of the space. Today, I had to drive my tractor through a part of the remaining, weedy mess to make a repair on a building. It is heartbreaking to watch over ripe produce being crushed beneath the tires of one's own vehicle; produce I should have eaten. The relationship between gardens and people who tend them are like that. Carefully nurtured gardens produce an amazing harvest, reminding us of the incredible abundance of Creation. It seems as if the soil is actively eager to nourish crops for our good. But we need only neglect our cultivation duties to cause irreparable damage, leaving us with only memories of weeds, regrets and seed catalogs to see us through the coming winter. Flipping the pages of the catalogs on cold winter nights we dream of next year as we promise ourselves we'll do better next time.

The people in the Bible had similar problems. One only needs to turn a few pages to find references to crops, orchards or vineyards. Our Bible passages for this week are fixated on the problems of vineyard management. *Isaiah 5:1-7* is titled, The Song of the Unfaithful Vineyard. That says a lot! Like me, the owner of a vineyard (or garden in my case) that was not producing decided to clean the slate and start again. *Matthew 21:33-46* is titled, The Parable of the Wicked Tenants. In this story, the vineyard is not the problem, but the people who were supposed to be managing it. Again, I find myself in the narrative, having left a somewhat weedy garden to go fishing for a week. What did I expect to find? A pristine cornucopia of miraculously preserved produce waiting for my return? It says more about me than I want to admit because I knew what I would find. I smelled the rotten tomatoes before I opened the gate.

“C'est la Vie” say the French (A succinct way of saying, this is how life is and whaddya gonna do? Just accept it.) We plan and we fail. Still, God expects us to make the effort and I take comfort in that. I have eaten out of the garden for a good part of the summer. I hope next summer's efforts will be more diligently maintained and I doubt it. Whatever the outcome, I live in gratitude for a life that gives me the opportunity to spend idyl evenings in my garden, pulling weeds and smelling the wonderful scents of a garden green and growing. Maybe the garden harvest, like the tangible rewards we get from the rest of our efforts in life are always secondary to the pleasure of living and working in nature, occasionally enjoying the rewards. After all, this week usually brings the first killing frost anyway. Everything I get after this coming Sunday was bonus anyway!

Speaking of Sunday, come to church at 9:30 to hear more about living in ways that brings God and us mutual pleasure, remembering that it isn't about the harvest as much as it is about the effort in His name.

Blessings, Pastor Walt

Circle of Caring

Ray Thomas, Lois Strothman, Mike Soderberg, Richard Poff, Steve Najdowski, Brian McDougal,
Ronald Kelley, Kevin Hayden, Jolene Hall, Pam Gribou, Debbie Giles, & Shirley Baptist

(Names will remain on the prayer list for four weeks unless the office is notified.)

Here to Serve in Ministry

Walt Hoshaw, Pastor

Alyssa Higginbotham, Office Administrator

Kathy Mentele, Choir Director

Peggy Pleasant, Organist

Worship Service 9:30 am

Contact Information

Telephone: 608.365.8455

E-mail:

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Website: www.firstbaptistbeloit.com

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www.facebook.com/firstbaptistbeloit

Board and Committee Chairs: The Finance Committee would like to receive your 2027 budget requests by the end of October.

Church Staff Relations: meeting October 8th at 10:00 am

Church Renewal: meeting October 13th at 10 am

182nd Annual Gathering: will be held on October 9th & 10th at Emmanuel Chin Baptist Church 4330 S. 84th St. Greenfield, WI.

Family Movie Night: Saturday, October 17th at 6:00 pm. The movie is “*Hotel Transylvania*”.

ABW: October 21st at noon bring your lunch. Program is “*Daughters of the Greatest King*” By Doreen Peterson. All are welcome to attend.

Trunk or Treat: October 31st activities will include games, food, & decorated vehicles.

World Mission Offering: during October, we will be collecting the World Mission Offering. ABC international has over 100 Global Servants (missionaries) throughout the world. This offering supports the General Fund which is used to help Global Servants get to the mission field and help pay for emergencies when they arise. Feel free to “pick” an apple from the apple tree in the Narthex for the amount you will contribute. Please consider a generous gift to this important offering.

Donuts: Do you enjoy donuts at Coffee Hour? Please consider sponsoring a Sunday for \$60.

Bible Study: every Thursday at 6:00 pm

Choir Practice: every Thursday at 7:00 pm

Caritas Needs: Canned pasta, Individual Applesauce & Fruit Cups, Microwaveable Mac & Cheese. Personal Care Needs include: Shampoo, Toilet Paper, Bar Soap, individually packaged Toothbrushes & Toothpaste.

Caritas Volunteer Needs: greeting neighbors at the Drive thru & loading the food in their car, assisting parents in the Baby room with clothing & diapers. Positions are 9:45-12 or 11:45-2:15 Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday. We are looking for individuals to unload the Second Harvest Truck on Fridays between 7:30-9 a.m.

Our Daily Bread Devotionals: mission is to make the life-changing wisdom of the Bible understandable and accessible to all. Please remember to leave a \$0.50 minimum donation.

Worship Leaders: We need more volunteers. Worship leaders are people who lead others in worship & glorifying God. Let Diaconate know if you are interested in learning more.

Wear Red: please wear red on the first Sunday of each month to support our military families.

New Ways to Give: please read the Baird flyers in the Narthex. Questions, see Ed Hansen.

Prayer Requests: please fill out the gold card in the narthex and put them in the offering plate or give them directly to Pastor Walt.

Board & Committee Chairs: Please to turn in a copy of your minutes to the church office.

2026 Worship Bulletin Recognition: sponsor a Sunday bulletin in memory or honor of a loved one or a special occasion. Fill out the white form in the narthex, include a check for **\$20**, & drop it off in the office. You'll be notified if the date is not available.

Youth Group Fundraiser: Don't forget to buy your eggs. All proceeds go to our youth!

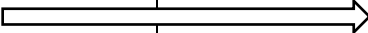
Midweek Message: If you need something printed, turned in to the office the Sunday before. If you would like to receive the Midweek Message, please contact the church office at 365-8455.

Feeling Ill: you have the option to watch our Sunday service from home at www.facebook.com/firstbaptistbeloit

October Birthday's & Anniversaries

2	Jane Rebone	8	Brian Crowley	16	<i>Ron & Vivian Parker's Anniversary</i>
2	Lana Ames	10	Bart Bingham	18	Crystal Rebone
3	Janice Egleston	10	Dakota Jones	18	<i>Curt & Barb Lansbery's Anniversary</i>
4	<i>Marshall & Cathy Bown's Anniversary</i>	11	Alex Newsom	20	David Winters
7	Betsy Morris	11	Alyssa	24	Taylor Hayden
7	Jennifer Yeadon	16	Kathy Mentele	26	<i>Mike & Diane Brunner's Anniversary</i>

OCTOBER 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Bible Study 6pm Choir 7pm	2 TOPS 8-10am	3
4 Trustee Meeting 8am	5 Diaconate Meeting 10am	6 Church Renewal Meeting 10 am	7	8 Church Staff Meeting 10am Bible Study 6pm Choir 7pm	9 Annual Gathering  TOPS 8-10am	10
11	12 Scoopie Night 4 – 8pm Church Council 7pm	13	14	15 Bible Study 6:00 pm Choir 7:00pm	16 TOPS 8-10am	17 Movie Night 6:0 pm Movie is “ <i>Hotel Transylvania: Family Vacation</i> ”
18 C.E. Board Meeting 8:15am Member Appreciation Sunday	19	20 PEO 11:30am Mission Board Meeting 6:30pm	21 ABW Noon	22 Bible Study 6:00 pm Choir 7:00pm	23 TOPS 8-10am	24
25	26	27	28	29 Bible Study 6:00 pm Choir 7:00pm	30 TOPS 8-10am	31 <i>Happy Halloween</i> Trunk or Treat