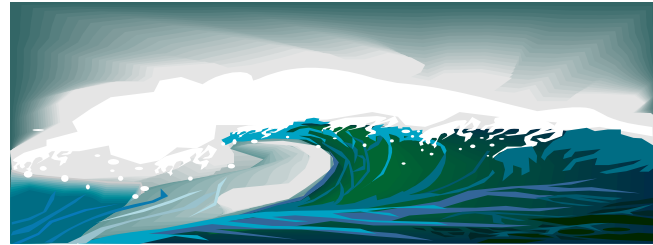




The *March 2018*
Anchor



We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul...Heb.6:19a

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Winter is the time that change of weather can have many extremes. This year has been no exception with bitter cold temperatures, snow and now flooding. I guess it is the time of year to expect the unexpected. The same can be said about our health and other realities in our lives. Using the weather as an analogy, there will be times of fair weather skies and times of great drought or storm clouds.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (KJV) speaks of life

¹ *To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:*

² *A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;*

³ *A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;*

⁴ *A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;*

⁵ *A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;*

⁶ *A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;*

⁷ *A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;*

⁸ *A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.*

There will be times of great sadness and other times of immense joy. God has allowed life to be this way. They say that what does not break you, makes you stronger. Speaking for myself, I know I will have much more empathy and compassion for those who are hurting, as a result of my experiences with a mini stroke. Just as it takes time for seeds to germinate and develop, so does God's will for our lives. Many times, we find it hard to have patience as we wait on the Lord.

God's seasons are predictable. We are assured that after winter, spring will arrive with new life. Spring has always been my favorite time of the year. The promise of new life has a way of lifting our spirits to a new height. I look forward to the sound of the peepers and the songs of the spring birds coming back to nest.

At some point in everyone's life there will be a time of winter. Keep in mind that spring is just around the corner.

We like to think that life will always be peaches and cream. The scripture referenced reminds us that there will be times of hardship. In these times, our prayer life is probably most active. Maybe God understands how we need times in our life that we are forced to turn to Him in prayer. Life will have those difficult periods when we wonder what tomorrow might bring. We are called to hold fast to the solid rock of our salvation and the storm will pass one way or the other.

God's love goes beyond anything we could fathom. Therefore, we stand firm, growing in our faith, looking to be in God's will through all things.

In Christian Love,
Pastor Mark



I want to start by thanking the church for your continued love and support of me filling the pulpit during Pastor Mark's illness and recovery. They're big shoes to fill but your support has been encouraging. *I will continue to do my best in sharing God's love with you.*

As we enter the month of March, I am excited to announce that Captivate has begun working on our annual Easter Sunrise Drama. The production this year is called *öThe Untold Story... of Amazing Love.ö* I don't want to give the plot away, but I can say we have a fantastic cast. This year, the production will include not only members of Captivate, but also will include Helen Johnson and Hannah Wagoner. We will also have special live music with Cari Mize and Sami Wagoner. **It really is a unique play telling the Easter Story from another perspective.** There are monologues, interaction, humor and drama. Make plans to join us for the Sunrise Service April 1. Captivate will be spending the month of March preparing for the production.

The church had 8 registered for the West Virginia Baptist Convention Senior High Convention at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in Hurricane. Teens were treated to lunch as part of the program and First Baptist provided both breakfast and dinner for the kids. They enjoyed three sermons throughout the day and small group studies focusing on their walk with God.

Would you be interested in helping chaperone **Brothers Keeper** this year? Each year, we send male and female teenagers to **Brothers Keepers**. We will need both a male and female chaperone. If you are willing to help in that role, please let me know. I am unable to attend. I do try and treat the kids out to a dinner, usually in Parkersburg on Wednesday of that week. *Any high school student wanting to participate in **Brothers Keeper** must have a both a registration form and health form notarized.* The Youth Budget is covering half the costs of our teenagers who want to attend. We will be doing the same for Camp Cowen. First Baptists Camp Budget will pay half of one camp for each youth. If you would like to sponsor a youth for camp, please let me know. Thanks to your support, we have been able to send our high school students to camp without a fee.

I want to give a special shout out to our youth volunteers like Liz Stewart, Ann Johnson and Helen Johnson for their tireless work with our young people. You are planting seeds that are changing lives. I also want to thank the volunteers who make children's church and the nursery a safe, fun, place for our children. We do have several of our youngest students heading to Play Dates with Liz for a day of fun the first week in March. We also have several signed up for the Children's Rally at Parchment Valley.

In closing, I will be missing two Sundays this month, March 18 and 25, as Jen and I will be going on a vacation to recharge our batteries. Rest is important, and I usually try to take a mini vacation three times a year. This is the first. No worries, Sami Wagoner is covering Captivate in my absence. I expect to come back and be ready to crank it up a bit. *I'm excited what God is doing in our church. **I'm excited about Easter!*** Keep me in your prayers when we travel. Love you all!

In His service,

Toby