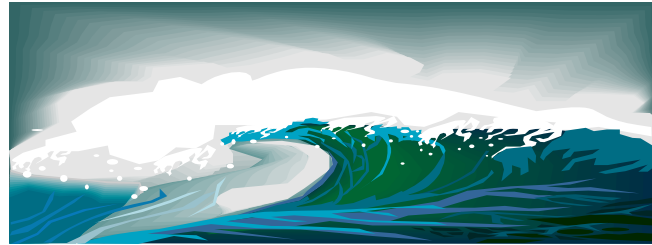




The *October 2017*
Anchor



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

First Baptist Church , 215 Ann Street, Ravenswood, WV 26164 ~ 1-304-273-9910
Pastor Mark Gerstell ~ 1-304-377-2812 ~ www.fbcravenswood.org

GOD IN EVERY SEASON

Early Fall is my favorite season. The beautiful blue sky, leaves beginning to change into vivid colors are just a few things that come to mind. God is the great artist of the splendid tapestry of all seasons. Fall is a time we enjoy a magnificent full moon, with soft reflections of the brilliant sun, which God set in place to provide a warmth that blankets our planet. Christians can feel the warmth not only in a physical way but also a deep spiritual sense of peace and reassurance, because of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 states *there is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to uproot.* God is the creator of the seasons of life: birth, childhood, adulthood, middle age, golden years and death. Just as the seasons change, so do our life circumstances. Ecclesiastes Chapter 3 speaks of various sorts of blessings as well as trials and tribulations. As we consider life, we soon come to realize that life is not always a bed of roses. There is a time for everything under heaven but let us not forget there is purpose. Faith is about trusting the path that is leading to life experiences will make you stronger not weaker. It is important to keep your mind on things that are pure and wholesome. It is true that we can become what it is that finds a home in our thoughts and actions.

Being the best you can be is found in a journey of becoming Christ-like. The Holy Spirit is the Enabler that clears a path for this to happen, for all who desire Christ in their heart. It is a journey that takes you from who you once were, to who you can be. This journey requires a turning away from sin, but somehow it is not by any effort to follow a law. It is about following your heart. A heart changed is one that makes it easy to follow Christ.

The seasons of life closely parallel the seasons of a leaf: sprouts of new life, growth and maturation, golden bright colors, withering and death. For the non-Christian there is no hope beyond aging and death. However, for the Christian, perspectives on life's circumstances are changed through a renewal of purpose, hope and faith. Death is defeated for all believers through God's eternal promise of Heaven. Heaven will be the Christian's final season, ending in perfection.

Despite the changing seasons of life, God always remains our true constant. He is the source of strength, truth and light. May we be ever mindful to seek His plan for our life, regardless of our circumstances. Only with His assistance can we find our most vibrant colors.

Fall Blessings,

Pastor Mark



Fall is underway and you can easily tell as leaves are changing colors and the morning chill in the air provides notice of the soon coming frost.

I want to thank our church for continuing to make the **End Zone** event a wonderful outreach of our church. Where else can 150 or more kids come to a safe place to enjoy music, food and fellowship in a safe, Christian environment? Thank you to those of you who volunteer your time to chaperone, make or donate cookies, provide soda and snacks and for helping clean-up afterward. *Each component of the **End Zone** is a ministry* - from serving others, to showing love and compassion, to showing unity of believers. Our **End Zone** is recognized by other churches as successful. We should be so thankful!

Community Carnival Block Party - celebrating the importance of being drug free - is coming up October 14. We hope you are making plans to attend. Encourage your children or grandchildren to come and bring a friend. Check out the Anchor for more details. I cannot wait to see the Velcro Fly Wall or Bungee Run inflatables. Kids and adults can enjoy those inflatables.

Children's Church needs volunteers. I know it's hard to volunteer sometimes because everyone is limited on time, but I really need your help. As Youth Pastor, I can tell you Children's Church serves multiple opportunities of impact in the church. First, for the children it provides an age appropriate lesson whether it's a story read, a craft to go with a story, or even a game to reinforce the lesson. For the parent, it provides a break from their children so they can concentrate on worship and their relationship with Jesus. *For some single parents, children's church may be the only time they have alone to seek the Lord.*

For the church as a whole, we understand children's church is an opportunity to instill in children the love of Jesus and that church is fun. For me, when I take a turn each quarter in children's church, I love to really make the story sound big....why? Because we serve a **BIG God**. If you are willing to take on children's church one or two Sundays a quarter, you are a part of this ministry. You are changing lives. We have a growing church because we invest in our youth. **The Bible is clear about us training up a child in the way they should go...that's not just for parents, that's for the Church.**

I hope you will help me make our children's church the best in Jackson County. How? Because we have some of the best, we'll-equipped teachers, parents, grandparents, and simply others who love kids. If you need a lesson to read, a craft, or game... we can help get you that to make your turn fun. *Perhaps it's been years since you taught a class. If so, this article might just be for you.*

Thank you all for your continued support of our children's ministry at all levels in the church.

Love and prayers,
Pastor Toby