



The *May 2018*
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 ~
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As we enter the month of May, we think of both Mother's Day and Memorial Day. It's a month set aside for remembering.

We honor our mothers and what they have meant to us over the years. We can reflect on how women are role models for their children. They are role models in our church. They teach us how to love unconditionally and how to see beyond flaws. I'm always keenly aware that not all women were able to have biological children and have helped with foster care and adoption or even as serving as mother figures to those in our families such as our nieces and nephews and neighborhood children. Some have been moms to their pets ensuring they had what they needed and providing love to them as their own children.

Regardless, women I believe, were created to love... It's innate in their genes.

Proverbs 31 talks about the character of women and how their children will call her blessed. If you are a mother, this month we honor you.

Additionally, this month we remember those who served our nation in uniform in the military and died while doing so. These brave men and women fought and died to protect the freedoms that have been bestowed on us. Let us remember those who sacrificed for us, for our children and for our grandchildren. May we remember the families of those who lost loved ones in Service, as they remember that ultimate sacrifice. May we also keep the men and women in uniform today in our prayers as they are in the trenches putting their lives on the line even today.

I'd like to close this month in paying tribute to Pastor Mark Gerstell and his wife Susan. I've enjoyed serving alongside of Mark being his wingman for nearly four years. He has been a true inspiration and mentor to me. He has led our church gracefully, professionally, and with care and compassion. He has been a leader locally and regionally for our church and association.

We were really saddened when his resignation was read. But, we all understand the need for him to focus on his health.

Mark has shown me the importance of loving people for who they are, and celebrating their uniqueness that God has given them in the personalities and talents. Above all else, he has shown me how to love the Lord even through the trials of recent health challenges. Mark never gave up on us, and we've never given up on him.

The Gerstells are a part of us, and wonderful members of the church. Seeing and visiting them each week is a blessing to all of us. We celebrate with you as you recover.

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Mark's ministry has impacted so many of our lives that every time I see him, I see love for me and our church. I hope I can be half the man of God he is. I believe we can be the church that Mark cast a vision for.

Let us continue to lift Mark, Susan, and Holly up in our prayers. I do believe God's healing will come & I've always believed that. But I've come to realize it's not on my time or the Church's time, but, it will have to come in God's perfect timing.

I would ask you to be in prayer for the church leadership as our church moves into a transition period. We must all believe that God has a perfect plan waiting for us, which will fulfill his mission for the church.

Meanwhile, if you have any special needs, or are in need of a visit, prayer, or call, please contact your Deacon or let Susan in the church office know.

May God continue to be honored and glorified by the work we are doing at First Baptist Church. Happy Mother's Day and Happy Memorial Day!

Love to you all.

Pastor Toby





Camp Cowen applications are now available in the church office. Again this year, Captivate has provided the opportunity for High Schoolers to attend Camp Cowan at no charge this summer. *If you would like to help sponsor a youth, please let Pastor Toby know.*

Four high schoolers are signed up for Brotherø Keeper this year. If you are an adult male and willing to help chaperone this group, please contact Susan West. **Zack Graham, Nikki Nicholson, John Wagoner and Aaron Wagoner** have signed up to participate. Church scholarships have provided these young men opportunities to serve without a cost.

On another note, as far as recognition, the church wants to congratulate **Zack Graham** one of our Captivators for his performance in the play "To Kill a Mockingbird." *He did a wonderful job.* This full scale community production was held in Parkersburg and was packed about each performance.

Another Captivator we would like to recognize is **Nikki Nicholson.** *Nikki took part in the Civil War reenactment in Ravenswood in April.*

I want to say congratulations to the graduating seniors that are from our church: **Nathan Hall, Josh Ritchie, Riley Stewart, Katie Mellinger, Blake Bennett, and Cody Williams.** *May God always bless you as you move into the next phase of your lives.* Remember to find an active college ministry group. Know that your church family is here for you. Please stay in touch. Make sure your senior profiles have been submitted as you will be featured this month in the bulletin.

We also congratulate **Sami Wagoner** for ending her reign as Queen of the Ravenswood Ohio River Festival last month. Sami fills in as an occasional Captivate substitute leader and chaperone when needed.

Lastly, we would like to thank **Rhonda Ritchie** for organizing family bowling. There were several youth involved. It was a great night for everyone.

Stay tuned for more exciting youth events coming up.