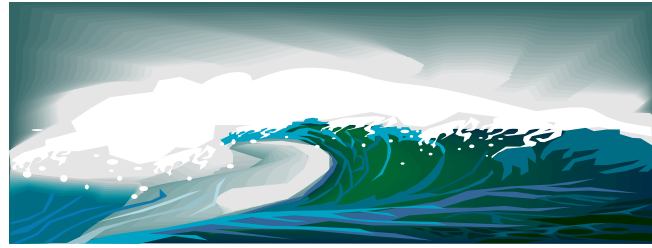




# The *February 2018* Anchor

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



**First Baptist Church , 215 Ann Street, Ravenswood, WV 26164 ~ 1-304-273-9910  
Pastor Mark Gerstell ~ 1-304-377-2812 ~ [www.fbcraenswood.org](http://www.fbcraenswood.org)**

February is the month we celebrate Valentine's Day, a day set aside to remember the people in our lives that we love. The entire ministry of Jesus Christ was one of love. It is truly the greatest love story ever told. One of the first verses many people memorize is *John 3:16*:

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish but have everlasting life.**

For God so loved the world is an awesome thought, but what is even more awesome is to know of all things He created, God loves us the most! Look at the beauty of nature, consider the wonders of nature and know that the God that created these things, loves you more! When we think of the universe with all of its beauty and mystery, God loves you more! *It is a miracle to think that He allowed His own Son to die so that **WE** might have eternal life.*

We were made to be in fellowship with our creator. This relationship is by our own free will. There are so many side attractions, many of which we are warned about in the scriptures. Satan knows our carnal nature and knows how to bate us from a very early age. This is why it is so important to have children in church when very young.

Life is a journey which seeks refuge. There are many places people find a safe haven, however, a good refuge must have a solid foundation. God gave His only begotten son. I can't think of a firmer foundation on which to rest our future. How do your priorities line up, when we list the things we love in life? How are you using this greatest love story in your life? It is fair to say that when you love something, you make it a true focus in your life.

On Valentine's Day, we give those we love special gifts. The only gift Jesus asks for is that of our selves. Having good priorities is important in our relationship with Jesus Christ. So as we pause and consider our relationship: How often are you praying? How often are you reading scripture? etc.

It is so important not to take our relationship with Jesus for granted. Satan loves a casual love affair with Christ, because it becomes easier for him to create interference. You should desire to have a very clear line of communication with God. The gift of the Holy Spirit is often the most underutilized gift we are given. I think the more it is used the easier it is to hear.

So this Valentine's Day, what are you getting the ones you love? What is most important is not found on any shelf in a store. It is to be Christ-like in our love for others and always remember that the greatest supplier of pure love is from Christ. What gift will you give back to Christ this Valentine's Day?

In Christian Love,  
Pastor Mark



The month of February is here which means the Super Bowl, Valentine's Day, and of course the return of the groundhog. The month will be very busy for our youth programs at First Baptist. This Sunday, the youth will hold their annual **Super Bowl party** which will begin at 6:00 p.m. All food will be provided. There will be games spread out throughout the fellowship hall similar to our End Zone layout. There will be pizza and some chicken and other goodies. *If you're at church this Sunday evening, feel free to swing by and hang out with us a while.* Special thanks to Bill Stewart for agreeing to help get the game on the Big Wall in the fellowship hall this year.

I want to pause and pay tribute to *Darylene Dow* who passed in January. Darylene was very supportive of me as a youth pastor and was encouraging to our youth. She was always willing to make a donation or provide a treat for the program. We will miss her dearly in our choir and seeing her every week. While Darylene was a quiet and humble soul, she lived a life that spoke volumes of her love for the Lord and others.

In January, Captivate traveled to Parkersburg to watch one of their own in Zack Graham perform in a community play. He did a wonderful job and everyone had a great time. Coming up this month, the high school youth group will be not only having the Super Bowl party I mentioned, but will also be hosting the **annual Valentines Dinner** at the church which will be a spaghetti dinner. Special thanks to those of you who plan on attending. **Cost will be a donation and all money collected will go to the Lance Ritchie scholarship.**

Later in the month, Captivate will be heading to the *West Virginia Baptist Convention's Senior High Convention* in Hurricane. We will travel up and back in the same day. If you know a high schooler that would like to attend, please let me know.

I also want to take a moment and thank each of you for your support while I have been filling in for Pastor Mark on Sunday. It really is humbling and enjoyable at the same time. I look forward to our Pastor's return, but I stand ready to serve as long as needed. *Keep praying that we are always doing as God needs.*

I want to end this month's message with a reminder as we enter the love month, to let love abound in knowledge and judgment, as Paul wrote in Philippians 1:9. ***Look to love first in all things.*** Jesus told us the greatest commandments are to love God and love each other. Let the month of February serve as that reminder to us all. *We cannot escape God's love.* That message in and of itself, should be comforting to us all. **You ARE loved.** Until next time, may God bless you and our church now and forever.

Love and Prayers, Pastor Toby

### Monthly Meetings & Activities

Feb 3- Church Officer Training @ PVCC  
Feb 4- America For Christ Offering begins  
Ravenswood Choral Dinner Theatre  
Youth Super Bowl Party @ 6  
Feb 5- Trustee Meeting @ 7 pm  
Feb 9- Movie Night @ 7 pm  
Feb 11- Youth Valentine Fund Raiser  
Feb 12- Finance Committee @ 6 pm  
BOCE @ 7 pm  
Deacon Meeting @ 8 pm  
Feb 13- Men's Fellowship @ 6:30  
Feb 14- Ash Wednesday  
Feb 15- CIRCLE @ 7 pm  
Feb 22 Ladies Night Out  
Feb 23-25 Senior High Convention  
Feb 24- Men's Prayer Breakfast  
Senior High Convention  
Feb 25- Soup to Go @ noon  
(Mar 1) - Scholarship Girls Application Due

### Nursery Workers

Feb 4 Deb Lyons  
Feb 11 Bev Stephenson  
Feb 18 Jennifer Wagoner  
Feb 25 Jessica Morgan

### Children's Church

Feb 4 Susan Gerstell  
Feb 11 Helen Johnson  
Feb 18 Leanne Thompson  
Feb 25 Eugene Morgan

### CommUnity Kitchen

Feb 3 Burt Lyons  
Feb 10 FUMC  
Feb 17 Susan West and crew  
Feb 24 Helen Johnson

### Deaconess for Communion

Andrea Crow



### Focus on Sunday School:



Unfortunately, the weather did not allow us to have our *Breakfast with the Wisemen*. The intense cold was too much for a lot of people so we cancelled the event for this year. But next year, be prepared! We will enjoy those Visitors from the Past!

With Christmas over, it may seem like a lull time at church and Sunday School. ***But that's not true!*** Studying the scriptures, learning about what God has to say to us, having fellowship with others who are hungry for His word are all things that continue on, no matter the weather or the season.

*Easter is early this year—April 1.* That may seem a long time away but **Ash Wednesday**, the day that we begin to prepare our hearts for His resurrection, is on *February 14*.

Before Jesus began His ministry, He was baptized and then spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness. Jesus' fasting focused His attention on obeying His heavenly Father and turning away satanic temptations that were pressed upon Him.

Likewise, our observance of Ash Wednesday begins a journey to help us focus on the will of God in our lives, the sacrifice of Jesus our Savior and the joy of His miraculous resurrection that proved to the world—***Jesus IS the Son of God!***

Our journey in Sunday School continues to lead us in the way of the Lord. Our studies open our hearts and minds to all the wonderful truths that can be learned about the Holy Spirit, the Holy Father, and Jesus Christ as Savior. **Don't miss this opportunity!**

Bring your family to **Sunday School!**



Submitted by Susan West



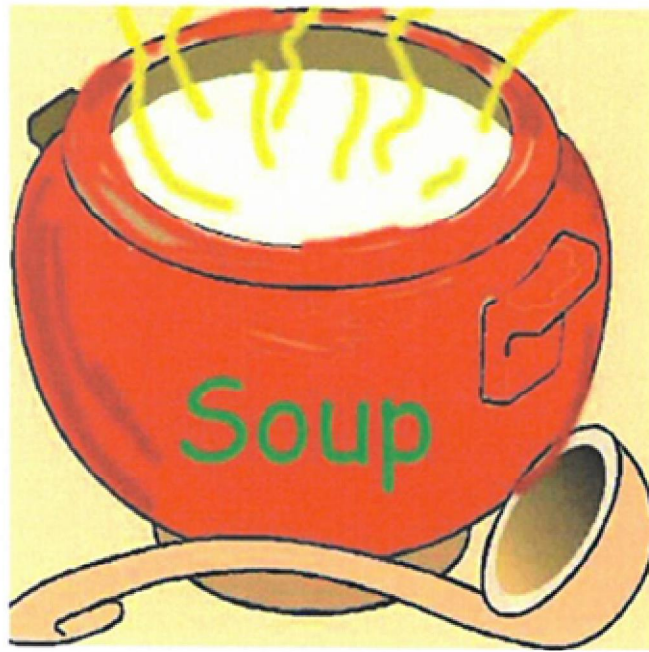
## COLLEGE SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2018

As tradition, each Sunday after New Year's Day, we have the college students conduct the morning worship service. This year our collegiate Christians presented a wonderful service. Thank you to Marc Delong for the meaningful sermon! Thank you to all who were willing to participate. You did a fantastic job!



Marc will be going on a mission trip to Brazil later in the year. If you would like to help with the cost, join us for the **SOUP TO GO** on February 25 after morning worship OR you can go to [www.overlandmissions.com](http://www.overlandmissions.com). You can donate any amount and put Marc's name in the donation memo line.





**TO-GO**

**(Take hot soup home for lunch!)**

**Containers provided!**

**FEBRUARY 25!**

**(AFTER MORNING WORSHIP  
IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL)**

Chicken Noodle

Corn Chowder

Vegetable Soup

Chili

Broccoli Cheese Soup

Potato Soup

**(and more !!!!)**

**All donations will support Marc DeLong on  
his mission trip to Brazil.**

## Church Officers Training

On February 4, we have 4 of our church officers going for training at the Parchment Valley Conference Center.

Each year, the Conference offers a variety of training in different aspects of our church life. Also, this year, **Kathy Hudson** will be presenting 2 sessions for the ABWM leadership.

Those who will be attending are:

- **Jon Moore** - Church Security
- **Liz Stewart** - Children's Ministry and ABWM Leadership
- **Dena Williams** - Dealing with Addiction and Senior Adults
- **Toby Wagoner** - Young Adult and Youth Ministries.

We are grateful to our leaders who are willing to learn more to promote Christ in our church and community.



## Scholarships

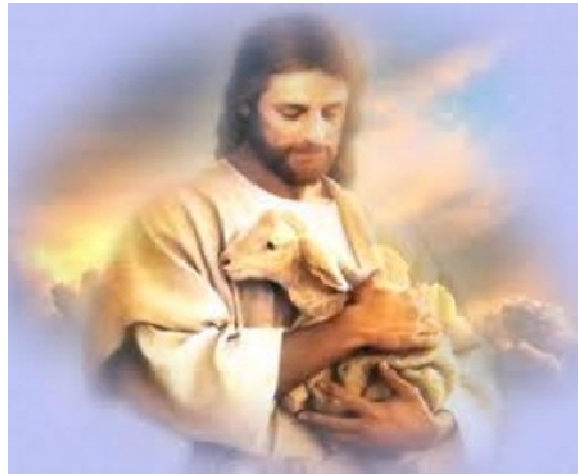
To all our girls that will be graduating from high school, are still in college, or some college girls that do not know about our Scholarship/Loan Program, now is the time to prepare your applications.

The requirements are on the web at [wvbc.org/partners/WVBC](http://wvbc.org/partners/WVBC) Auxilliarries.

You need to contact Jane Mullen personally to request an application. You can do this by mail, phone or email. *Jane does not text.* Her address is PO Box 257, Harrisville, WV 26362 and her phone is 304-643-5993.

**All applications must be in her hand by March 1.**

***Get you application and apply now!***



*Said a precious little laddie  
To his father one fair day,  
"May I give myself to Jesus,  
Let Him wash my sins away?"*

*"Oh, my son, but you're too little;  
Wait until you older grow.  
Bigger folk, it's true, do need Him,  
But little folks are safe, you know."*

*Said the father to his laddie  
As a storm was coming on,  
"Are the sheep all safely sheltered,  
Safe within the fold, my son?"*

*"All the big ones are, my father.  
But the lambs, I let them go.  
For I didn't think it mattered,  
Little ones are safe, you know."*

*Oh, my brother! Oh, my sister!  
Have we too made that mistake?  
Little hearts that now are yielding  
May be hardened then - too late.*

*"Ere the evil days come nigh then,  
Let the children come to me,  
And forbid them not," said Jesus,  
"For of such shall His kingdom be."*

*-author unknown*



# Senior High Convention



Hebrews 12:1-3

## Date:

February 23-25, 2018

## Location:

Mt. Vernon Baptist Church  
2150 Mt. Vernon Road,  
Hurricane, WV 25526

**COST: \$35.00...**if

postmarked by Monday, February 12th.

**\$45 if AFTER**

Feb. 12th or at the door.

*(Money must accompany registration in order to receive early-bird cost. Phone calls will not be accepted as early registration.)*

## Housing Deadline: Feb. 12th

*All housing requests **must** be postmarked by February 12th, no changes or additions to housing will be accepted after this date...**NO Exceptions!!** Housing should **NOT** be requested by anyone who has made personal arrangements to stay with specific individuals.*

## Schedule:

### Friday:

7:00 PM Registration  
8:00 PM Chris Campbell/Render the Hearts  
9:30 PM Dismiss to Housing

### Saturday:

9:00 AM Chris Campbell/Render the Hearts  
10:30 AM Interest Groups  
12:00 PM Lunch  
1:00 PM Training Time  
2:15 PM Chris Campbell/Render the Hearts  
3:30 PM Free Time  
6:30 PM Chris Campbell/Render the Hearts  
9:30 PM Dismiss to Housing

### Sunday:

9:00 AM Chris Campbell/Render the Hearts  
10:00 AM Head Home to Run Your Race

## Band: Render the Hearts

The band name comes from Isaiah 6. Verse 10 says to "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, and their eyes dim, otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed." The band may be young, but they are making a mark on the Christian music industry. Render the Hearts' driving Pop Rock sound is enhanced by splashes of melodic guitar & keyboard/synth lines, smooth vocal harmonies, and intricate drum rhythms. September 2016 marked the international release of their newest album *Run to Love*. To listen to their music, go to [www.renderthehearts.com/music-2/](http://www.renderthehearts.com/music-2/).



## Speaker: Chris Campbell

Chris is the president of Resolutions, Inc. and the founder of Generation Freedom U.S.A. As a professional counselor and youth specialist, Chris works on local, state and national platforms to impact teens. He regularly works in some of the most marginalized areas of teen culture; from rural Appalachia, to urban America, to Native American reservations and beyond the borders of the U.S. including refugee communities in Europe and Africa. Chris is involved in the prevention and recovery efforts for human trafficking and works with the WV Attorney General's office in the fight against opiate addiction here in his home state. His dream is to build a network of Christian counseling clinics in strategic locations throughout WV that will specialize in serving teens with the life changing message of freedom in Christ.

Chris lives in north central WV with his wife Cynthia and has two teen daughters. Chris loves to travel, loves to be outdoors and LOVES to cycle.



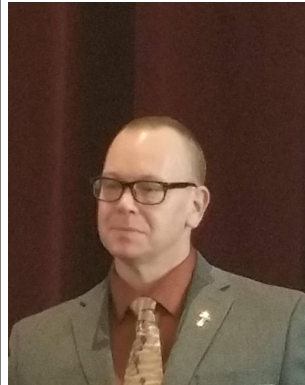


## Riley Shares Her Song



Miss Riley Lathey Stewart blessed us with special music on January 14.

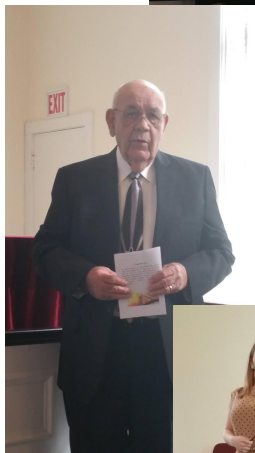
## Ordination Service For Bill And Toby



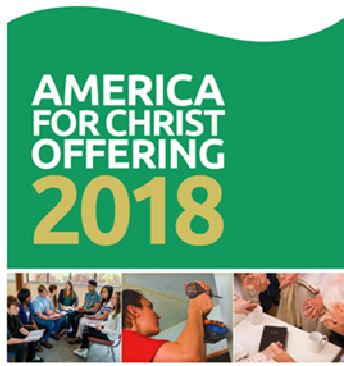
Close to a hundred people shared in the ordination and celebration for **Pastors Bill Stewart** and **Toby Wagoner** on January 28.

The double ordination service was the culmination of the studies, questionings and reviews the two have undertaken the past years.

We are blessed to have Bill and Toby be a part of our family of believers. *Congratulations to both of you!*







CULTIVATING  
LEADERS  
**EQUIPPING  
DISCIPLES**  
HEALING  
COMMUNITIES

Ephesians 4:11-13

Your America for Christ offering is making life-changing impact through ministries and resources that vitalize our congregations and communities across the United States and Puerto Rico with the hope of Jesus Christ.

## MISSIONS AND MOTIVATION

Instructions are important and are usually a result of serious thought and preparation ó especially final instructions. A sports analyst recently reported that Nick Sabin (Alabama Crimson Tide coach) agonizes over his final instructions for the team prior to each game. One might wonder why that should be so important. Perhaps it is because this just might motivate them and impact their performance during the game.

Jesus' message and final instructions to His followers prior to His ascension are recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8. He told them: **“I have been given complete authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach those new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”** (Matthew 28:18-20 NLT) and **“when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere ó in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”** (Acts 1:8 NLT)

Notice that these are **commands**, and not merely suggestions. They are intended to indicate the importance of not only sharing the message of salvation, but also teaching (discipling) new believers our Savior's instructions for righteous living and our responsibilities as His children. In His final words to His followers, Jesus is, in fact, actually commissioning them as missionaries and mentors (teachers.) He is sharing with them that **every believer is a missionary** and **every unbeliever is a mission field**; therefore, our responsibility as believers is tremendous and can only be accomplished through daily communication with Him and obeying His instructions.

As we approach the season of our emphasis upon the **America for Christ Offering**, please pray earnestly that the offering will honor our Savior, and seeking God's will for your life in the areas of personal involvement as well as financial support. In His Word, God promises blessings for those who are obedient to His leadership ó and **GOD ALWAYS KEEPS HIS PROMISES!**

***Our goal for the America For Christ Offering here at First Baptist Church is \$850. Please pray for the Lord to lead your giving.***



# *American Baptist Men of West Virginia*



## *Annual National Prayer Breakfast*

***February 24, 2018***

All men of the Good Hope Association churches will be gathering at Parchment Valley Baptist Church in Ripley for the Annual Men's Prayer Breakfast. The gathering will start at 8:30 on February 24. The men of First Baptist Church are invited to come for prayer, fellowship and breakfast.



**Men, mark your calendars for February 24 at 8:30 a.m.**

*Our mission is to bring men into a saving relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

# Announcements and Upcoming Events

**Announcement – The 2018 West Virginia Baptist Convention Annual Meeting will be held on Friday and Saturday, October 19th and 20th at South Parkersburg Baptist Church. Women's Day will be on Friday in conjunction with that event instead of Thursday as in the past. Please help spread the word!**



Women's Leadership Academy  
Session #8 Kathy Hudson, Speaker  
Parchment Valley Conference Center  
Church Officers' Training Event  
February 3, 2018

WV American Baptist Women  
State Executive Board Meeting  
Parchment Valley Conference Center  
March 10, 2018



**BOARD MEETING**



Third Annual Women's Camp  
Independently Sponsored  
Camp Cowen  
April 13 – 15, 2018

Women's Conference  
Kim Mack, Coordinator  
Parchment Valley Conference Center  
June 1-3, 2018



**Women's Conference**



Spiritual Growth Retreat  
Jeane Fisher, Coordinator  
Good "Fer" You  
Parchment Valley Conference Center  
September 21 – 23, 2018

2018 WVBC Annual Meeting  
South Parkersburg Baptist Church  
ABWM Board Meeting and Dinner – October 18  
Women's Day Friday, October 19  
October 19 and 20, 2018





# **First Baptist Church Officers**

## **2018**

### **Deacons**

2020-John Stephenson  
2020-Tom Lookabaugh  
2019-Bob Johnson  
2019-Alan Arrington  
2018-Ben Mize

### **Deaconesses**

2020-Helen Johnson  
2020-Rose Stephenson  
2019- Carolyn Brown  
2018-Phyllis Massey  
2018-Andrea Crow

### **Trustees**

2020-Richard Massey  
2019-Tom Stephenson  
2018-Bill Stewart  
2018-Doug Bashaw  
2018-Eugene Morgan  
2018-Burt Lyons

### **Board of Christian Education**

2020-Jackie Bailes (Missions)  
2020-Toby Wagoner (Youth)  
2019- Jane Moore (Chairman)  
2019- Liz Stewart (Children)  
2018-Dena Williams (Sr. Adult)  
2018- Rhonda Ritchie (Family Life)  
2018-Open (Leadership)

### **Sunday School Superintendent**

Susan West

### **Sunday School Clerk**

Bev Stephenson

### **Church Clerk**

Marie DeLong

### **Financial Secretary**

Connie Staats

### **Treasurer**

Amy Starkey

### **Care and Concern Committee**

Liz Stewart                      Amy Starkey  
Margaret Johns

### **Moderator**

Tom Lookabaugh

### **Social and Fellowship Committee**

Tim & Connie Staats      Susan Gerstell  
Jim Frazier                      Jennie Wise  
Bev Stephenson              Sharon Adkins  
Christie Mize                  Carolyn Torris  
Carol Crow

### **Finance Committee**

Financial Secretary      - Connie Staats  
Treasurer                      - Amy Starkey  
At Large                          - Dan Williams  
At Large                          - Phyllis Massey  
Deacon Chairman              - Bob Johnson  
Trustee Representative      - Burt Lyons  
BOCE Representative      - Rhonda Ritchie

### **Nominating Committee**

At Large                          - Geraldine Wright  
At Large                          - Debbie Bashaw  
Deacon Representative      - John Stephenson  
Trustee Representative-  
BOCE Representative      - Liz Stewart

### **Ushers**

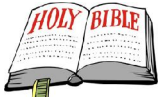
Jon Moore                      John Stephenson  
Bob Johnson                  Burt Lyons  
Richard Massey              Ben Mize  
Bill Stewart                      Kevin Woods  
Bryan Crow                      Jared Torris  
Dan Williams

### **Flower Committee**

Susan West                      Jane Moore

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Bible Book of the  
Month  
February 2018  
Esther**



Do you know where this  
is in the church?



**Men's Prayer Breakfast  
will be  
February 24 at 8:30.**



**Attention high school seniors and college ladies!  
ABWM scholarship applications are *due March 1!***

### February Birthdays

**Connie Staate—2/6  
Cindy Rupert—2/5  
Jared Torris—2/16  
Anna Davis—2/16  
Carolyn Torris—2/20  
Mike Graham—2/23  
Dave Williams—2/27**



**Youth Super Bowl Party!**  
Root your favorite team to victory!  
Sunday, February 4 @ 6 pm.

**Church Officer's  
Training at Parchment  
Valley Conference  
Center**

**February 3 at 9:00**

**Feb 5 Meeting**  
Trusteesô 7:00

**Feb 12 Meetings**  
Financeô 6:00  
BOCEô 7:00  
Deaconsô 8:00

**SOUP TO GO!**



**February 25 after church**

**February Movie  
Night!  
February 9 at 7:00.**



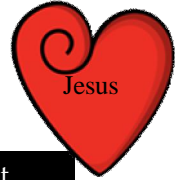
**Please return your baby bottles  
for The Women's Care Center on  
February 11. Thank you!**

**Have you checked out the prayer calendar today?**

## CHURCH PRAYER CALENDAR

Prayer for our fellow members is an important part of our relationship with the Lord and helps us to grow closer as a church family. Each day during this month there is a different individual or family that you are asked to include in your prayers.

### February 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Ross & April Mellinger, Katie Logan, Peyton	2 Ben & Christie Mize, Joshua	3 Cari Mize
4 Jesse Mize	5 David & Mary Jo Moore, Hunter	6 Jon & Jane Moore	7 Junior Moore	8 Rick & Cathy Murray	9 Leigha Myers	10 Nikki Nicholson
11 John & Jennifer Ortt	12 Allen & Holly Palmer	13 Adam Palmer	14 Tyler & Jennifer Pitts, Owen, Isabella	15 Mick & Susan Price	16 Mary Proctor	17 Amy Purdue & Destiny Taylor
18 Kay Pursley	19 Roger & Belinda Rader	20 Lee & Connie Reynolds	21 Tyler, Michelle Ritchie, Josh, Mary Beth	22 Rhonda Ritchie	23 Brent & Angel Ritchie, Connor Lincoln	24 Rankin Roach
25 Tim & Cindy Rupert, Katelyn	26 Darrell & Camille Smith	27 Jim Speer	28 Bill & Liz Stewart, Michael, Riley, Mary Beth			

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

John 3:16

