

First Baptist Church
1140 S. 10th St. / P.O. Box 38
Coos Bay, OR 97420



THE LIFE-LINE

January 2020

Where Faith and Life Collide

By Pastor James

A new month. A new year. A new decade. Remember Y2K? The world was going to come to an end! Or at least the financial world. Our computers were all going to stop working. Financial disaster was eminent. Then January 1 clicked on the clocks. Computers still worked, banks still functioned, credit cards still showed how much money we owed.

Twenty years later, God is still firmly on the throne, sovereign and in control. 1 Timothy 6:15 tells us that, “he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” (ESV) So, no matter what we faced in 2019 or what we may face in 2020, we can rest in the fact that God is sovereign; in fact, only God is sovereign. No one else. No person, not angels, not even Satan. Only God.

So, what does it mean when we say that God is sovereign? According to the New Oxford Dictionary, when used as a noun, sovereign is “a supreme ruler, especially a monarch.” When used as an adjective, it is one “possessing supreme or ultimate power.”

Supreme ruler? Ultimate power? Let’s see. How about Napoleon, Alexander the Great, Stalin, Fidel Castro, Mao Zedong, Attila the Hun, Genghis Khan, Augustus Caesar, or Adolph Hitler? The tragedies that these men caused cannot be understated. They were horrendous—Hitler alone caused the mass murder of 5 million Jews and 6 million other minorities, along with the death of 12 million Germans. Think about it. One man had a part in the death of 23 million people. That’s the population of 575 Coos County’s, almost 6 Oregon’s, or the population of Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

As much power and control that these men, and others like them, may have held, they did not possess supreme nor ultimate power. They were not sovereign. Ultimately, death held its personal victory over these men. Today, these men are but reminders to us of the terrible consequences of and the almost limitless nature of sin.

As believers, we have the assurance from 1 Timothy 6:15 that God is sovereign; in fact, he is the only one who is sovereign. We also have the assurance from 1 Corinthians 15:54-58 that death has been defeated by Jesus. Therefore, we are to be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And we have the promise that our labor will not be in vain.

So, my beloved brothers and sisters—let 2020 be a year of fruitful labor for the Lord. It will not be in vain.



January Calendar of Events

01/06	Craft Morning	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	01/13	Craft Morning	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
01/08	Prayer Meeting	10 a.m.	01/15	Ladies Luncheon	11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
01/09	Trustees Meeting	5:30 p.m.	01/20	Craft Morning	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
01/12	Missions Meeting	After Church	01/27	Craft Morning	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
01/12	Board Meeting	5 p.m.			

January Birthdays and Anniversaries

01/03	Peggy Ahlgrim	01/22	Clyde Haga
01/05	Mary Jane Fearell	01/23	Carol Kosht
01/16	Chris & Stephanie Marler	01/23	Melissa Kruse
01/16	Susie Main	01/26	Fern Campbell
01/16	James & Sondra Sperling	01/26	Krew McMillian
01/18	Paul Warf	01/26	Bud Simonson
01/19	Linda Warnock	01/27	Titus Hoffine
01/19	Peggy Bohannan		



Monday Morning Craft Time



Join us on Monday's for craft time. If you have a craft or art project you're working on, bring it to the church Monday mornings at 9:00 a.m. to noon and join a group of like-minded crafty people. It's no-host, and you can come and go as you want. Coffee provided.



From the Moderator's Desk by Fran Worthen

I like to use the week between Christmas and New Years to review my goals from the year that is passing, and to develop my goals for the coming year. I don't make resolutions, but I do establish goals and benchmarks that help me keep my daily life focused on my true priorities. Of course, life happens and often seems driven by the urgent rather than by those intentional priorities I've established for myself. At any rate, it is a good time to reflect on those tasks accomplished and memories made and to lift praise and thanksgiving to the God that guarded all my ways and led me into His path for my good. At our December board meeting, Pastor James encouraged us with this thought as well. Look back at our victories and successes this past year. Celebrate the good things that our Heavenly Father has accomplished among us! And imagine what blessings lie ahead in 2020 and find out where He wants us all serving in His grand design for His church. We are full of potential and promise for an amazing New Year!

The Constitution Committee has been working on a new constitution and by-laws for our church. The current document was developed in the 1980's and did not include any by-laws. Our board wants to strongly define our mission, purpose, statement of faith, and organizational structure in the constitution. The by-laws will further expand on the constitution's principles and seek to align our operations with the Word of God in the process of decision-making, financial stewardship, and outreach. Policies and procedures are currently being developed by each board director involved in their particular areas of ministry. We hope to present our new constitution and by-laws at the annual business meeting in late February. Please pray for our efforts to be complete, concise, and acceptable to God's will for our church.

Over the course of 2020, each board director will take a month to write an article in **The Lifeline** that describes the work of their department. Perhaps God is calling you to a particular area of service in the new year. He will *equip* those that He *calls* into His service. May your goals reflect His grand design and purpose in the year ahead and may He bless our efforts to His glory in His church!



Elders Note by Randy Hoffine

It's the beginning of a new decade and a lot of people are talking about goal setting this time of year. Others might be saying, "bah humbug!" A few verses to ponder:

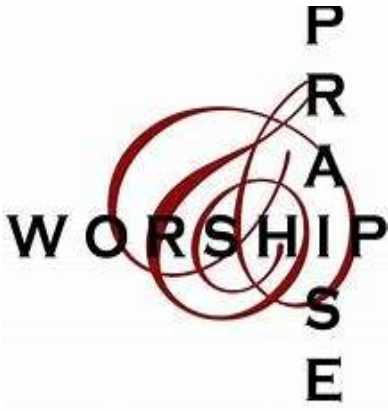
Proverbs 21:5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to abundance, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty. (ESV).

2 Chronicles 15:7 But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded. (ESV).

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

I would like to encourage everyone to select a Bible Reading Plan and have your goal be to stick to that in the year 2020. There are many different plans whether it's a chronological reading of the Bible, reading the whole Bible in a year in parts or in order from Genesis to Revelation. If the whole Bible sounds like too big of a challenge take on just the New Testament or just the old or commit to a two-year plan. *Psalms 37:4* "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." (ESV)

Worship by Yvonne Woytus



Gatekeeper. Greek—thyroros. My new name. What a random thought, but no. In my quiet time, one morning, as I was pondering my call into ministry, and why, this name—Gatekeeper, came to me. I know God changes names, it's in the Bible. Jesus was calling me His Gatekeeper. I looked up its biblical meaning. A servant who attends to what comes in and out a particular door to the kingdom and is given the keys to that particular door (Mark 13:34).

This was my ministry, to be set apart by Jesus to minister in holiness in the house of God. Armed with passion, focusing on the things of God, I was armed with all that I need to do this ministry, protecting the people of God from the enemy, the one who would do us harm.

In one church I was called to, I was put in the music ministry right away. As I was rehearsing on a Friday, alone, the Pastor comes on stage to chat. We are talking and he quietly shares that he cannot resolve Jesus as God's Messiah and Savior to the world. This is blasphemy, coming from a Pastor of a Christian Church! I gently said to the Pastor, what about this scripture. "For our sake He made him to be sin who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV).

He replied I don't believe that! I walked away from that conversation, Jesus help me, what do I do, we will have church on Sunday! After he left, I put myself in prayer, asking for the Lord's anointing, to do the right thing. The Lord showed me to anoint the doors of the church with oil, reading scripture, appropriate to the situation—war scripture. I walked away in agony. Jesus is Captain of the Army, not me. The next day I received a phone call from the Executive Head of the Denomination. The Pastor had resigned, saying that he needed some time without leading a church. Jesus the captain of his Army—Victorious!

Education by Howard & Bonnie Kubli

New Year Encouragement!



Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a Light to my path. (Ps. 119:105, NKJV). What an awesome Bible verse to start out the year of 2020 with. In the coming year, in good times and not so good times, remember that Jesus wants to give us a light for whatever path we follow. We need to read His instruction book, the Bible, and be open to wherever we are led. The important thing is that we remember to develop a Bible reading habit that we do every day.

Do you have certain things that you struggle with? Maybe it is an old habit. Maybe there are friends that would like to get you involved with unchristian activities. The list goes on..... "I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You" (Ps. 119:11, NIV). Read your Bible regularly and strengthen your spirit to stand strong in your faith.

Do you crave the blessings of God? Do you sometimes wish that God would prosper you? Well, the solution is found in Ps. 1:1-3 (NIV). "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the way of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord. And in His law, he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither." Whatever he does will prosper. Get into the Word of God each day and you will realize how truly blessed you are. Come to understand that all good things come from God. We are very prosperous, because Jesus loves us.

Well.... maybe you think that those writings from Psalms and the Old Testament were well and good for those folks a couple thousand years ago, but what does that have to do with me, in 2020. And the answer is.... Romans 15:4 (NIV) "Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." Endurance and encouragement lead to hope. The Bible tells us that the only hope for a fallen world is a Savior, Jesus. The reality of Jesus fulfills any hope we may have. Read about it each day and be encouraged.

Thank you.



- As a church we budget 10% of yearly estimated giving to Missions. It is the responsibility of the Mission department to manage how this budgeted mission money is distributed to overseas, United States, and local missions.
- We work to keep the church body updated on all the mission and missionaries the church supports by putting updated newsletters in the Narthex from different missions and missionaries as they come in.
- We pray and keep in touch with church supported missions and missionaries.
- We do fund raisers at various times during the year for various church supported missions and missionaries. Two of these fund raisers is for the World Missions and Retired Missionaries and Ministers through American Baptists Churches USA.
- The Mission department also looks at different missions and missionaries that ask our church to possibly support them financially or with prayer or both.
- We work to arrange to have missionary speakers come and talk to the church about their mission.
- When a short-term mission trip opportunity is suggested or becomes known, it is our responsibility to let the congregation know about it and see if the congregation is interested enough to pursue it.

May GOD bless each of you.



Woman to Woman by Patty Alexander

A new year, a new season of life—whether I am ready or not. Suddenly today, I felt that time was eluding me. I realized that my grandson would soon be 20, serving our country in Cuba. When did THAT happen—him growing up so fast?? I look in the mirror, and I see a grey-haired woman I don't recognize, and she reminds me a bit of my mom. Nostalgia sets in, reflection, regrets and "if only"—I could let myself sink into sadness and depression over lost opportunities and regrets, or I can take this season of my life and grow with it.

Oh, the grey hair won't go away (unless I color it), and I can't keep Kerrigan from growing up, but I can embrace this season and continue to become the woman God wants me to be. I can take my experiences and mentor other women. I can weep with those who weep and laugh and giggle and not care who is watching. You see, although the years, at times, have not been kind to me with their aches, pains, and aging process as well as heartaches, God has been growing me up. I still am discovering new things in His Word that I haven't seen before. He still plants new people in my life with whom I can share His adventure. He still is growing His fruit within me—and He still surprises me with His beauty around me in unexpected places. Scripture tells me that "If any person be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away and behold all things have become new." And they are still new--- embrace this season, my precious friends. Something to think about...

Membership by Ted & Penny Noble



Hello church family! I am in the process of planning a new ministry group and looking for a couple of helping hands. This is a special group for our beloved Widows and single women. It is a very important ministry and desperately needed here at our church. We have many women that may have lost a spouse, went through divorce or are still looking for that right companion. Now a days it's hard to find the right company.

Some of ideas for potential programs are still in the works and I have been reaching out to several of these ladies to find out what we could do to help serve them and for them to be more willing to enter the social groups and not be so lonely. First, to have a ministry group such as this, we will need much prayer. I am asking for all to pray about this to come about in bountiful measures as we reach out to grow together in faith. Here are just a few ideas that I know we can start with:

- A dedicated day starting once a month and perhaps growing into twice a month; to meet and have coffee, breakfast, lunch or even ice cream. This is a great way for the ladies to talk about the same things as they might carry so many feelings have been in the same position of losing a spouse or loved one.
- Dedicate a day to take a widow/single lady for a walk or a drive, and visit with them.
- Help do some light cleaning or yard work for them.
- Bake day at the church

These are just the beginning of ideas that we can all pull together and show how they are loved, and I will have faith that this ministry will come to fruition

In closing, I will continue to pray that there might be a couple ladies that would like to help lead in this very important ministry.

Ladies, if you feel led to be a part of this Widow's Ministry please contact me. My vision to start this is March of 2020.

Blessings,

7 Things Every Church Member Needs to Know About Charitable Contributions

By Richard R. Hammar, J.D., LL.M., CPA

This applies to 2019/2020 as well.

1. If I make a contribution in early January 2019, can I claim it on my 2018 taxes? No, charitable contributions must be claimed in the year in which they are delivered.

the value of his donated labor, but he can deduct the value of materials he purchased in performing the donated labor.

Example: Mary writes a check to her church on December 31, 2018, and deposits it in the church offering on Sunday, January 6, 2019. Her check is not deductible on her 2018 taxes. She can claim it on her 2019 tax return.

Example: Several church members go on a short-term missions project to another country. The value of their labor is not deductible, but they can deduct their unreimbursed travel expenses (transportation, meals, lodging) incurred in performing the project.

2. If I mail my contribution in December 2018, but it doesn't reach my church until January 2019, for which year should I claim it? On your 2018 tax return. A check that is mailed to a charity is deductible in the year the check is mailed (and postmarked), even if it is received in the next year.

Example: Mary mails (and postmarks) her check in December 2018. Her church doesn't receive the check until January 2019. The check is deductible on Mary's 2018 tax return.

3. Can I deduct the value of volunteer work I did for the church? No, the value of personal services is never deductible as a charitable contribution. However, unreimbursed expenses you incur in performing services on behalf of a church or other charity may be. For 2019, you can use a "standard mileage rate" to compute a deduction for any miles you drive in performing services for your church. Be sure to maintain accurate records.

Example: John is an electrician and donates 10 hours of time to his church's construction project. He cannot deduct

If you designate a \$100 gift to the church benevolence fund, it is deductible, unless you specify that your contribution be applied to a named individual; then no deduction is allowed.

Contributions to a church or missions agency that designate a particular missionary may be tax-deductible if the church or missions agency exercises full administrative control over the contributions and ensures that they are spent in furtherance of the church's tax-exempt purposes.

7. What kind of records do I need in order to prove I made a contribution?

For individual cash contributions of under \$250: You must have a bank record (such as a cancelled check) or a receipt from the church containing the church's name, and the date and amount of each cash contribution.

For individual contributions (cash or property) of \$250 or more: You must receive a written receipt from your church that includes the church's name; the date of the contribution; the amount of any cash contribution; a description (but not the value) of noncash contributions; and one of the following: (i) a statement that no goods or services were provided by the church in return for the contribution; (ii) a statement that goods or services that a church provided in return for the contribution consisted entirely of intangible religious benefits; or (iii) a description and good faith estimate of the value of goods or services other than intangible religious benefits that the church provided in return for the contribution.

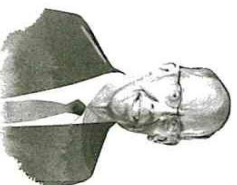
The church may either provide separate receipts for each single contribution of \$250 or more or one acknowledgment to substantiate several single contributions of \$250 or more. Separate contributions are not aggregated for purposes of measuring the \$250 threshold.

If you've made individual contributions of \$250 or more, don't file your federal income tax return until you receive a contribution statement from your church that satisfies

these requirements. Otherwise, your contributions may not be deductible. Canceled checks cannot be used to substantiate cash contributions of \$250 or more.

For noncash property valued at \$500 or more: Other rules apply (see the instructions to IRS Form 8283). If the value is more than \$5,000, you must obtain a qualified appraisal of the property and attach an "appraisal summary" (IRS Form 8283) to the tax return on which the contribution is claimed. Some exceptions apply.

For contributions of cars, boats, or planes: If a church sells the donated property without significant use, the donor's contribution deduction is limited to the sales proceeds. In addition, the church must provide the donor, and the IRS, with a written acknowledgment (use IRS Form 1098-C) by the deadline prescribed by law. If the church significantly uses the property, the donor can deduct the market value. However, the church must still provide Form 1098-C to the donor and the IRS. Qualified appraisal and appraisal summary requirements apply if a deduction exceeds \$5,000 (see instructions to Form 8283).



About the Author. Richard Hammar, a graduate of Harvard Law School, is an attorney and certified public accountant specializing in legal and tax issues for churches and clergy.

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Finance By Peggy Ahlgrim

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- Laypeople have the opportunity to use their gifts in ministry and see God working through them
- Pastors have more time for other areas of ministry
- Congregations have a powerful tool for reaching out with Christ's love to the community
- The congregation becomes a warmer, more loving place





FELLOWSHIP TIME REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE

JANUARY

January 5	Adult Sunday School Class
January 12	Christian Education Committee (All Sunday School Teachers)
January 19	Worship Team — Vocals and Instrumentals
January 26	Membership Committee

FEBRUARY

February 2	Adult Sunday School Class
February 9	Christian Education Committee (All Sunday School Teachers)
February 16	Worship Team — Vocals and Instrumentals
February 23	Membership Committee

MARCH

March 1	Adult Sunday School Class
March 8	Christian Education Committee (All Sunday School Teachers)
March 15	Worship Team — Vocals and Instrumentals
March 22	Membership Committee
March 29	Trustees

