

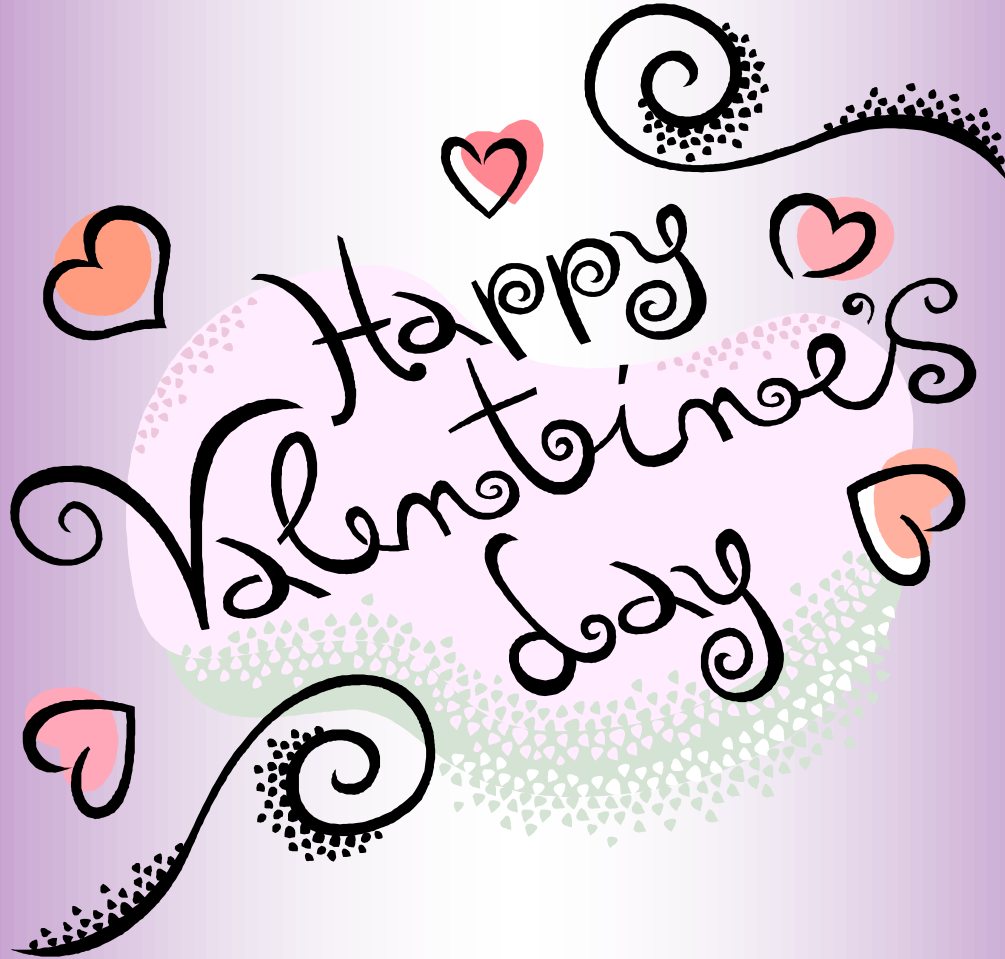


The Baptist Bridge

February 2014

By the grace of God, the Philippi Baptist Church shall **Embrace, Model, and Share** the love of God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Philippi Baptist Church ♦ 107 Church St. ♦ Philippi, WV 26416 ♦ (304) 457-3206



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Jon Villers, Pastor Jud Bracey, Choir Director

Eddy Poling, Youth Director
Michele Moore, Pianist

Caleb Villers, Praise Team Leader
Lucretia Moyer, Secretary

Marj Campbell, Organist
Zvezdana Vlastic, Custodian



It was a blessed day a few Sundays ago when at the end of the service a Penny Adair came forward to join the Philippi Baptist Church. Penny will be under the watchcare of the church as we prepare for her baptism! We had lunch with her that afternoon. The words of Penny were so meaningful to me. "I finally feel like I am at a place I belong!" My prayer is that we all are able to find such a place! Our privilege is to seek out a place we belong and grow in that place! We will be offering a six week class I call Beginning Connections. We use a study guide published by the American Baptist Churches USA called "The Family of God" The topics include: Welcome to the Family, Disciplines of the Family, Beliefs of the Family, Distinctives of the Family, Celebrations of the Family, Commitment of the Family and Outreach of the Family. We would invite any and all who would want to be a part of the family of God to join us Sunday nights at 5:30-7pm starting February 9th. For more information please contact our church office at 304.457.3206 or email me at orangemanfor-jesus@gmail.com

I will let guest columnist, Thom Ranier, give us an insight into this idea of church membership.

In some segments of American Christianity, there is a clearly expressed concern about the concept of church membership. It is perceived to be more of a cultural influence than a biblical expression of local congregations. "Church membership is an idea we copied from secular organizations like country clubs and civic organizations," a pastor recently insisted. "It has no place in the life of local churches."

Admittedly, one will not find the phrase "church membership" in the Bible. But is there a case to be made that the concept of church membership has biblical foundations? I think there is.

Some Points to Consider

Local churches in the first century obviously included specific persons identified with their congregations. For example, Paul wrote "to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi" (Philippians 1:1, HCSB). He undoubtedly knew many who were a part of that local church, because he identifies some of them by name: Eudodia, Syntyche, and Clement. When Paul said in 4:15, "And you Philippians . . .," we could understand that phrase to mean, "And you members of the Philippian church." While the word "members" is not explicitly used to describe those associated with a church, it does seem that the concept is implicit in the New Testament.

I understand fully why some struggle with or reject the concept of church membership. In most American churches, membership has little meaning or value. Many churches have less than one-half of their membership attend any weekly worship services. Many local congregations could not locate all the members on their rolls if they had an FBI team searching to find them. Membership means nothing because we expect nothing.

Advantages of Membership

But church membership does not have to be a meaningless concept. If our churches began to state clearly the expectations of membership, especially as new people come into the church, we could see a whole new attitude about membership.

Many of these high expectation churches stress that membership means every member is accountable to the others. All of the members have agreed on a clearly stated doctrinal position so there is no division about major and even secondary doctrinal issues. The members likewise agree to expectations of common mission and service in the community and the world. In essence, everyone who agrees to the membership standards has common beliefs, expectations, and behavior. Commitment and unity are real in high expectation member churches.



That Word “Member”

I have had more than one conversation with a church leader who would agree with the essence of this article, except for the use of the word “member.” They would argue that the word has been co-opted by secular culture and, therefore, has no place in the church.

I certainly understand that perspective. And I readily agree that there is no biblical mandate to use the phrase “church membership.” But it is not without biblical foundation.

The Bible, through the writings of the Apostle Paul, refers to the church as the body of Christ. And how does he denote those who are part of the body of Christ? He calls them “members”: “Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. And God has placed these in the church” (1 Corinthians 12:27-28, HCSB). Further, note the sense of unity that comes with each person being a part, or a member, of the body of Christ: “God has put the body together, giving great honor to the less honorable, so there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same concern for each other. So if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice in it” (1 Corinthians 12:24-26, HCSB).

Perhaps the problem is not church membership per se. Perhaps the problem is that we have lowered the standards for church membership so much that it has little or no meaning in many churches. Instead of doing away with church membership, perhaps we should be raising the bar.

Then we might truly see the body of Christ function as God intended.

Thom S. Rainer is the president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. Prior to LifeWay, he served at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for twelve years where he was the founding dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism. He is a 1977 graduate of the University of Alabama and earned his Master of Divinity and Ph.D. degrees from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Shalom – Pastor Jon





AB University, President Creehan faculty, staff and students

Josiah Baits
Dennis Bolyard
Jean Bowles
Franklin Brown
Ronnie Campbell
Jane Cobb
Sarah Cobb
Code Blue
Wayne Drain
Brett Frey
Sherry Jones
Eddy McCoy
Charles McQuade
Christina Maddy
Ruth Mahaffey
Willadean Marsh
Donna Moore
Ms. Pearl
Oak Glenn Community
Adam Ogle
Duane Poling
Gregory Riley
Jack Rosier
Margaret Salimi
Becky Shaffer's daughter, Sonya
Artie Shaw
Ken Yount

Unspoken requests for family members, unsaved people, community concerns, job and home loss, financial difficulties. Also, in need of prayer: Our nation, state, and country leaders and officials. Please pray for victims of crime, war and violence throughout our country.



Blair & Pearl Marks, Dr. Shearer, Mary Tamulitis
Vangie Shaffer: (Mansfield Place), Germaine & Austin
Whitman

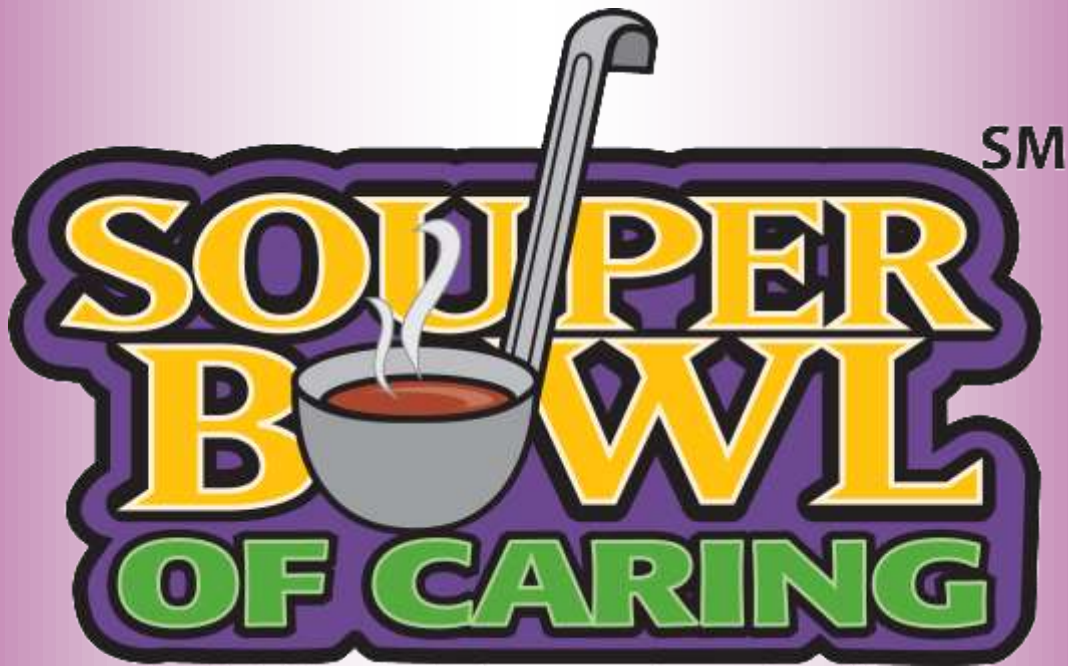


Pray for protection for military personnel and their families throughout the world and those serving our country:

Captain Aaron Cross
Tim Jenkins,
Brian Lundell
Chris Mossburg,
Corporal Anthony Perry, Sr.
Major Kris Wood



1- Jovan Vlastic
2- Tom Dadisman
5- Evalene Bartram
5- Margaret Salimi
15- Rosa Lea Kines
17- Jan Sweet



Souper Bowl Sunday, and the Soup's On!

What a story, missions at its very best and truly blessed!

Souper Bowl Sunday began with a prayer, that of Dr. Brad Smith, minister of the Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina. Concerned for the hungry and homeless in his community, he offered these words: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat." During that very year, 1990, the idea took hold, and twenty-two churches raised \$5,700 for the cause.

Since then, the movement has swept the country. Headquartered now in Houston, Texas, the home of an NFL team, the organization has brought in over \$98 million in cash and food, all of which has been distributed to soup kitchens and food banks across the USA.

Activities extend beyond collecting money, however. In numerous locations, teenagers are involved in "Service Blitz," through which they volunteer to spend the Saturday before the Super Bowl helping out in charities of their choice. Other distinctive spin-offs include a "Souper Soup Challenge" in Frederick, Maryland. There, potters contribute handmade bowls, and some ten restaurants provide the soup. Customers pay \$25 to choose a bowl to keep, and they eat and judge the various gourmet soups. All proceeds benefit the local rescue mission. Plans are underway for a "Souper Soup Challenge" to be held next year at the Barbour County Garden Market.

Here at Philippi Baptist, Souper Bowl Sunday is being recognized through an effort to line the sanctuary with nonperishable foods to be given to the Heart & Hand food pantry.

Those who prefer to donate cash, and those who would like to do both, are invited to do so. In spite of the obvious success of his original idea, Brad Smith has not stopped dreaming. In a statement published on the Souper Bowl of Caring website, Dr. Smith says, "Might it be that the vision of 100 million people giving a dollar each to help neighbors in need on that weekend [Souper Bowl Sunday—February 2] will come to pass? With God's help, and with yours, it can happen." Give GENEROUSLY—the Deacon's Offering and all of the nonperishable food in the sanctuary will all go to Heart & Hand.

Speaking of Souper Bowl Sunday and hunger, when was the last time you fought world hunger through The Hunger Site? It's free, and it's easy-- www.thehungersite.com. (On the same site you can contribute--free--to seven additional great causes. The whole operation takes only seconds. Try it--you'll like it!

Weekly Events

Sundays	Sunday School AM Worship PBC Mosaic Small groups	9:15am 10:30am 5:30pm 6:00pm
Tuesdays	Women's Bible Study (@ Sarah Cobb's house) BCM at Wilcox Chapel	1pm 8:38pm
Wednesdays	Midweek Service Chancel Choir	6pm 7:15pm
Fridays	Code Blue (ages 13-17)	6pm-9pm

Children's Volunteer Watch and Teach Calendar for August

	February 2	February 9	February 16	February 23
Nursery	Wanda & Jim Steele	Christie Allen	Rebekah Hicks	Cheryl Wolfe & Allison Villers
Wee Church	Abby & Cheryl Blankenship	Rebekah Hicks & Ashley Willingham	Koereen & Thomas Villers	Hayden & Heather Cottrill
Junior Church	Pete & Sarah Ferguson	Kelly & Lindsey Bracey	Sara & Eddy Poling	Pete & Sarah Ferguson



What: February meeting of Philippi's American Baptist Women (ABW)
When: 9:30 AM, February 4, 2013
Who: All women of the church are invited to attend and participate.
Program: Myanmar (Burma) "Embrace the Cause" – DVD
Hostess: Barbara Springer & Jody Sperry
Bible Book of the Month: Joel



--Heart & Hand Thrift Store--
VOLUNTEER NIGHT--
 Monday, February
 3rd--6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
COME JOIN THE FUN!

Philippi Baptist Church

March 7th & 8th

The National Institute of Marriage

Branson, Missouri. 1(866) 875-2915.

Our Mission

Saving marriages and inspiring couples towards greatness.

Our Vision

Pursuing excellence in the integration of Christian faith and professional discipline, the National Institute of Marriage will find innovative and effective ways to influence our world toward God-inspired lives and marriages.

Ministry, Products and Services

Through the Intensives, our team members accomplish three very important goals: restoring couples, remaining connected to God's desire and ability to transform marriages, and, to continue learning, applying, and teaching the life-changing concepts that result in successful marriages.

Direct ministry to couples – We have developed a continuum of care that meets couples wherever they may be in their relationship. Regardless of the health of their marriage we have a service that can help them improve their marital satisfaction.

www.nationalmarriage.com

The Couples Experience

A two-day Marriage Enrichment program designed for a small group of couples to learn the tools and principles of healthy marriage. These insights come from over 10 years of assisting distressed couples reach health and recovery in our highly successful intensive marital therapy programs. One facilitator will walk couples through discussions and exercises that will reveal the hidden barriers that keep their marriage from thriving. Couples will learn how to apply valuable relationship skills aimed at strengthening their marriage. **\$50 per couple**

Thursday, December 3, 2009. I was at work and received a message from my husband. He had picked up the boys from school and taken them to a friend's house for the afternoon. He wanted me to come straight home. I thought it strange but sweet to have planned a quiet afternoon, just the two of us. I arrived home and he said we needed to talk. He confessed to infidelity. I was in shock, totally blindsided. The rest of the evening was a blur. A few years prior we went through a rocky patch, but I truly thought our marriage was on the mend.

At the time of our conversation, I didn't know he had spent the previous four days in counseling with our pastor. He already had an appointment set up for a joint session if I was willing to stay and work things out. When we met with pastor, we laid everything out on the table. Divorce was not an option for me but I had no earthly idea how we were going to safely get past this. At the end of the session, pastor told us about the National Institute of Marriage. It had been started by Gary Smalley and was located in the town we were living. They had counseling, conferences, retreats and something called Marriage Intensives. An intensive is a two or four day counseling boot camp. Morning to night, 8-10 hours of straight counseling.

I told my husband I was willing to work on our marriage but he had to do all the organizing and arranging of getting us help. He had to prove to me he was all in as well. God's timing is always perfect, and we were able to secure a spot in their upcoming intensive. We attended a four day session three weeks later.

We only had three weeks from the time of his confession until the intensive. In that time frame I spent a week in shock, a week in anger, and a week just feeling hurt. The short time frame did not give us an opportunity to cause more pain by doing and saying things that would make our marriage irreparable. The intensive gave us tools and skills to use when communicating during our healing. The counselors at NIM helped us see that we BOTH brought a lot of baggage into our relationship. This baggage, combined with our lack of healthy communication led us to this point.

We have continued to use these tools to keep up healthy communication. Had we learned these tools prior to marriage, we might have been able to prevent the damage. The intensive we attended had three other couples. One had been married over 20 years, one was around 10 years, and the other almost identical to ours. Not all of us were dealing with infidelity. Two were just struggling with severe miscommunication, hurt, and disrespect. It does not matter where you are in your relationship, it can be healed and strengthened. NIM is an amazing tool used by God to heal not only marriages, but people in general.

Through God's divine plan and timing, we are still together and going strong.

Eddy + Sara Poling

To make reservations contact the church office.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 1st– 7:30AM– Men’s prayer Breakfast

Sunday, February 2nd– 10:30AM– Communion & Deacon Relief Fund

6:00PM– Super Bowl Party

7:00PM– Diaconate meeting

Monday, February 3rd– 6:30PM– Heart & Hand Volunteer Night

Saturday, February 8th– 9:00PM– Church Officer Training at Parchment Valley

Sunday, February 9th– 11:45AM– Board of Worship meeting

4:30PM– Board of Christian Education meeting

6:00PM– New Membership class, “Beginning Connections” starts

7:30PM– Church Council meeting

Sunday, February 16th– 6:00PM– Board of Missions & Outreach meeting

6:00PM– “Beginning Connections” class

Sunday, February 23rd– 6:00PM– “Beginning Connections” class

Monday, February 24th– Newsletter Deadline

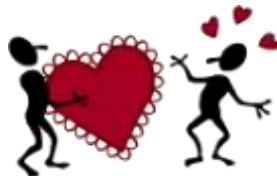


The church will be having a Super Bowl party at the church on February 2nd at 6:00PM. Please bring snacks and appetizers to share.



Men’s Prayer Breakfast

Saturday, February 1st @ 7:30am
At the Medallion



We will be collecting donations for packages that we will put together for Valentine's day for our college students. Please bring in items such as pencils, gum, candy & individually wrapped snacks. There are 16 college students. Thank you for your help.



February’s newsletter deadline will be February 24th.



Philippi Baptist Church
107 Church Street
Philippi, WV 26416



A new membership class, “Beginning Connections,” will be on Sunday nights at 6:00PM beginning February 9th.