

SAM

SEASONED ADULT MINISTRY
SERVING THE GREAT

I AM

FBC TRUSSVILLE

NOVEMBER 2021

WHEN YOU'RE STARING AT A MOUNTAIN

It might be 10 feet or 1,000, but it's a mountain.

You've tried and tried but there's no way around it,

And it's not moving though you've prayed and prayed.

Still He's right there with you even when nothing's changed.

His perfect love has graced the pages of your story.

For every miracle, you owe Him all the glory. It's just a glimpse of all that is to come;

All His love and mercy, it has just begun!

His throne is never empty for He is the King of Kings;

The only ONE who is worthy of our everything!

He's never been more powerful; He's never been more able.

He's never been more close than He is now, and no less faithful.

So if it moves or if it doesn't, oh you'll never have to wonder.

He's still the same God now as He has always been

When you're staring at a mountain.

Listen to this new and beautiful song sung By Brian Free & Assurance [HERE!](#)

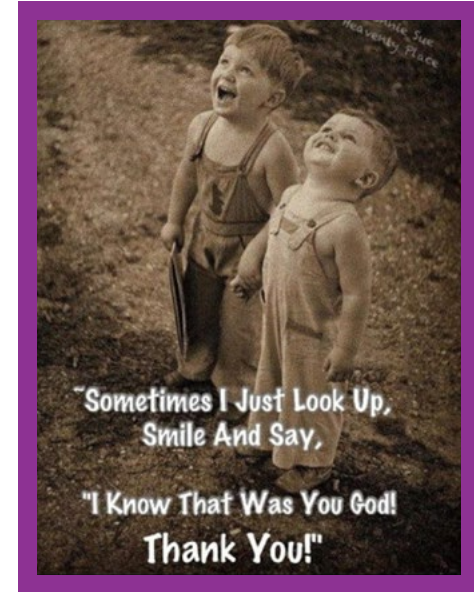
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This newsletter is prepared and emailed monthly by and for 55+ adults of First Baptist Church Trussville, Alabama. Suggested information to be included in an upcoming SAM newsletter may be emailed to sam.news@fbctrussville.org. Printed copies will be available at the church Welcome Center and Events Center.

SAM YEAR IN REVIEW: 2021 THANKS GIVING

No, that's not a typo ... thanks giving is a verb ... it's not just a holiday ... it's something we do ... Jesus did it, scripture reminds us to do the same!

This issue of our SAM newsletter is dedicated to thanks giving and is also our SAM Year in Review. As I review this past year of our SAM ministry my thoughts turn to the abundance of things for which I / we have to be thank-full. This has been a tough year. Our minds, bodies and souls have been "pounded" (as Pastor Buddy phrased it in a recent sermon), pounded like with a meat tenderizer hammer. I recently came across this "joke" and it stuck with me: "What kind of tea is hard to swallow?" "Reality." That's an understatement! As James Long emphasizes in his story below, God does "wink." Not the Hallmark movies made-up God winks, but real life experiencing God in our lives. Sometimes they are coincidences and sometimes complete surprises. God winks are times when we recognize God's presence ... when He is speaking to us ... He is preparing us, guiding us, giving us affirmations, teaching us, reminding us of His presence, His love, and His grace. God desires a personal relationship with us. I cannot express it any better than the way James has: The reality is ... "God speaks." And oh how thank-full I am for that!



Thank you all for playing along with the surprise "pounding" (as in gift giving) for Joe and Marty Estes. I do not think Joe had a clue! We sent them on their retirement journey with gift cards, a life membership in the SAM ministry of FBCT, and many other expressions of love and thanks! His last Sunday service with us was phenomenal as well, from Gayle Glenn's version of the song Sentimental Journey, Lance's poem, and the video of Joe and Marty in Truth in 1976 ... and, yes, Jesus did shine! Joe, you will be missed, but always in our hearts. Clay Campbell, you have some big shoes to fill, and we have no doubt you will do it well. Clay came to our church almost two years ago. If you would like to learn about Clay and his family, check out Faye Summers' article of introduction in our SAM Thursday Thoughts newsletter dated April 9, 2020 (fbctrussville.org/ministries/seasonedadults).

We extend our deep gratitude to Dr. Johnny Fain for leading us in our 90 Days of Prayer Focus. That emphasis on prayer beginning back on Monday, February 1 and concluding on Monday, April 26 was a highlight of the year for me as I know it was for many of you. We had just about 150, either in person or on-line, for 90 days. We have missed our Monday morning prayer times together, but our prayer focus has not ended! I urge you all to continue to seek His face fervently and urgently. Our videos and SAM newsletters covered Dr. Fain's teachings; both can be viewed on our FBCT website: www.fbctrussville.org/ministries/seasonedadults. Some food for thought: Do any of you remember what Dr. Junior Hill said in his message to us in October 2018 ... well, that was three years ago, I'm not sure how I remembered it. Anyway, one of his points was for us to delight in His fellowship and remember "if you ever get your desire (flesh) before your delight (Spirit) then you'll never get delight from your desire." He suggested we begin our prayers with "Lord, I delight in you!" Dr. Fain said it this way. The first duty of man is to love God and get to know Him, before anything else! Then you will enjoy Him forever!

To our SAM Leadership Team... Steve Penuel, Diane Poole, Susan Hornsby, Bill Bowser, Debra Roberts, Anita Aaron and Judy Bryant, Debbie Arrington (my admin Assistant) as well as Suellen Edmondson, Gail Stewart and Eddie Stovall who served on the original SAM leadership team and continue to work with us and for you! What these folks have done and what they continue doing now as we plan and move forward into 2022 is beyond words. Brings to mind the hilarious song the Doors of the Heart performed for us at the September SAM Monthly Luncheon. Remember this: Ridin' down the dirt road with Aunt Jonnie; better hold on for your dear life, Honey!

Bob



BIRTHDAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY



BOB SMITH!

To our own "Elvis" a/k/a the man who never sleeps!

*Happy Birthday, Bob! Couldn't happen to a finer fella!
Steve & Rita*

*You keep winning, don't you? Another birthday—that's a win. Celebrate it and make your birthday wishes. And if there is a party and a cake, you know I'm down to celebrate you, right? Happy birthday, Bob!
Diane Poole*

*Thank you for all you do for the SAM Ministry. You go above and beyond for the seniors and we are blessed to have you at FBCT. May your birthday be the happiest one ever!
Anita Aaron*

*Bob, Praying God blesses you with a wonderful day and many more to come.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
V.O. & Debra, Num. 6:24-25*

*Happy happy birthday Bob! Thanks for being our fearless leader!
Susan Hornsby*

*Happy birthday Bob! We celebrate YOU with joy and appreciate you with much love. Thank you!
Judy Bryant*

*Happy birthday Bob! I am so grateful God brought you to FBC Trussville! I hope it is the best birthday ever!
Debbie Arrington*

Happy Birthday Bob! Thank you for your vibrant spirit which becomes so evident as you lead us (kicking and screaming at times) into the future where SAM needs to be. Love you Brother! Bill Bowser



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Sunday, November 7—Daylight savings time ends; turn your clocks back one hour on Saturday night!

Thursday, November 11—**VETERANS DAY**

Week of November 15—Install Christmas Lights

(Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM)

Wednesday, November 17—Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting; slate of officers nominated and expected to be elected include our Pastor Buddy Champion for President.

Joyful Hearts Choir will be singing in Both AM Worship Services, Sunday, November 21st

Thursday, November 25—**HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

Saturday, November 27—**ALABAMA VS. AUBURN Football Game**

Sunday, November 28—Community Caroling and Tree Lighting 5:30PM

No EDIBLE EDUCATION in November or December. Returns in January.

SAM CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 12 • 12:15 & 4:45 PM

Guest: Musician / Comedian, Tim Lovelace

Meal & Concert: \$20 per person

Tickets go on sale November 10th. Available from any SAM Leadership Team Member, at the Church office during regular business hours and at the Event Desk on Sunday Mornings.

JOYFUL HEARTS REHEARSALS

Thursday, November 4, 11 & 18

10:30AM • Fellowship Hall

GOT A MINUTE?

Watch for photo bomb sessions at future SAM events. Stop by and have your picture made for our church directory!

SAM MONTHLY LUNCHEON

Special Guest: Guy Anderson, Associate Pastor Music

Senior Adults, Elkdale Baptist Church in Selma, AL

Lunch following - \$6 per person

IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM

Word Search by Debra Roberts

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BIBLE

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SEASONEDADULTS

SERVING

SINGING

SUNDAYS

THURSDAYS

TRIPS

TRUSSVILLE

WORSHIP

Not receiving our SAM newsletters? If you haven't already responded to the letter mailed out last February by our SAM Leadership Team regarding your preference for receiving the newsletter, please contact Debbie Arrington in the SAM office at 205-228-1006 or email her at debbie@fbctrussville.org. Everyone for whom we have an email address will continue to receive the newsletters by email; however, if any of you prefer to have a paper copy mailed to you each month, let Debbie know. We will be happy to mail one to you!

PART OF OUR JOURNEY

Written by James Long

I find myself consistently camping out with reality no. 4 of 7 from the Experiencing God Bible study, first written in 1990, and revised in 2021 with recent real life stories.

God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church (other believers) to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His ways.

My story is really not my story, it is HIS STORY. It is how God has spoken to me and worked in me and through me throughout my life, and how He continues to do this. It really is all about HIM!

When I was a young boy growing up in Sylacauga and involved in the mission organization, Royal Ambassadors, God led my RA leader to share scripture, James 4:14 one day. God used His Word to speak to me about my salvation, and I was saved shortly thereafter. At age 15, I really thought God was calling me into full-time Christian service, but I could not understand what area. God continued to speak to me, or at least I heard God trying to speak to me occasionally about this matter throughout my high school and college years, but I never knew what He wanted me to do.

Shirley and I married in 1967 and moved to Eufaula in 1969 after graduating from Auburn. Once again God began to speak to me about full-time ministry as a vocation.

As I look back, I think I really know why God was not able to speak to me for about seven years – I was too busy for Him. I have come to understand and truly believe that “busyness is the enemy of spirituality.” If you and I are to clearly hear God speak we must “be still” before Him. The reality is “God speaks.” The questions for you and me are: “Do we hear Him speak?” “What keeps us from hearing Him?” “What are the barriers you and I need to remove so God can speak clearly to us?”

While attending Sunday School Leadership conferences at Shocco Springs in August of 1979, God spoke to me through the church, one man especially ... Ron Lewis, to help me know for the very first time, exactly what He (God) wanted me to be and do. He wanted me to be involved in a local church serving as a Minister of Education, growing a church primarily through Sunday School. A light did come on! God spoke and what He spoke was clearly understood by me, but I was afraid and faithless.

The years 1979 through 1983 were a season of life Shirley and I will never experience anything like in our lives again. God began speaking to both of us about the same time about the same thing and that was full-time Christian ministry. Shirley shared with her friends in the Young Baptist Women group



what God was speaking to us about, particularly the major adjustments this would require in our lives ... I was struggling with what to do. These ladies began to pray. I know the prayers of other believers, and especially these ladies, over a four-year period of time made a big difference. They just prayed, and God continued very clearly to do the speaking to me and Shirley, as well as Amy and Alan, who were then ages 10 and 7. I am so thankful He kept on speaking and did not give up on me.

During Spring Break, in March 1980, Shirley and I, along with our kids, made a visit to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Why New Orleans and not another place? I do not know, except that is the only place that we felt impressed by the Spirit to check out. After spending 3 or 4 days in New Orleans and talking to several people on campus we returned home. Shirley was ready to do what God was speaking to her about, but I was not. Imagine that! But that is the way it was.

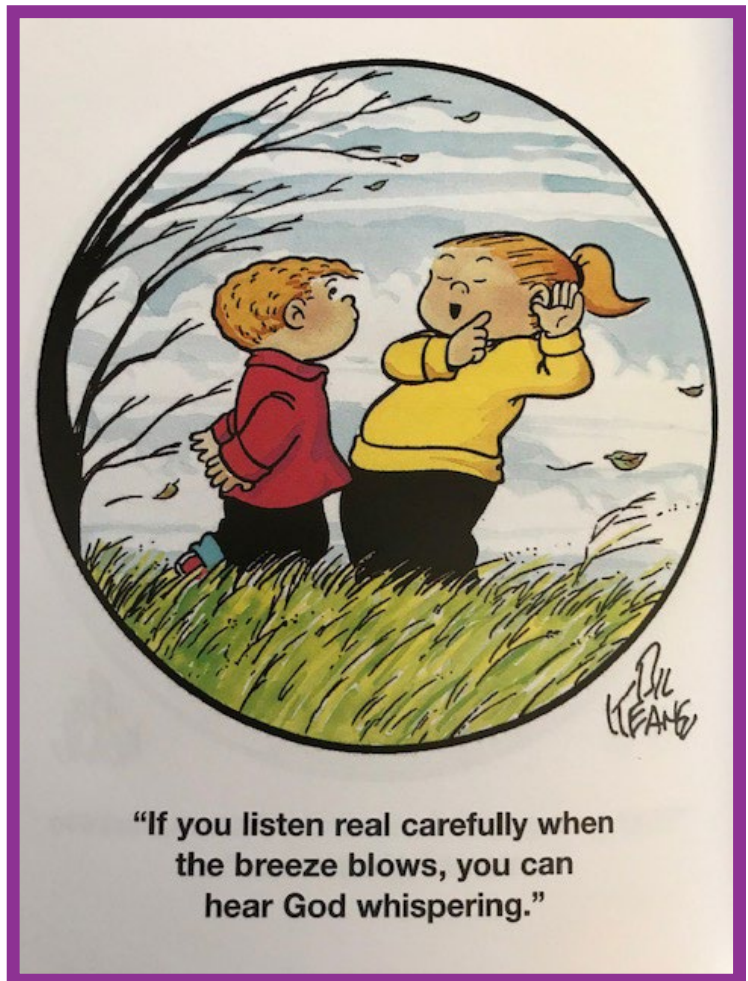
For the first time in my life, I experienced fear. “How will I provide for MY family? What about MY job? If WE do this ...” I prayed “God if you really want ME/US to do this, YOU (God) are going to have to show ME some signs.” I was not satisfied with God just speaking to me; I now wanted him to show me. “God speaks through circumstances.” This is so very true!!

These are just a few of the signs God sent to me and my family to clearly confirm His call to me and to all of us to full-time Christian vocational ministry, and our going to New Orleans for seminary to better prepare for ministry. On March 11, 1980, Shirley and I discussed our saying “yes” to God and that this would demand our total commitment.

That same night during a Weekly Workers Meeting for adult Sunday School leaders, Peggy gave a perfect illustration of total commitment – a story comparing a chicken and a pig. A few days later, Betty sent me a pamphlet entitled “Life Commitment, Special Service.” On Friday, March 1, 1980, a picture of our house “mysteriously” appeared in the local newspaper “For Sale” by a real estate company. Shortly thereafter, someone placed a “For Sale” sign in our front yard. That was a real sign if I have ever seen one! Were these mistakes or pranks? I think not. On Sunday, April 6, 1980, Willie Matson had our devotion in Deacons meeting that afternoon and he mentioned about his trip to New Orleans. That very same afternoon when leaving the Deacons meeting, as I travelled up the Talladega highway (Alabama Highway 21), I met a Trailways bus headed for – you guessed it – New Orleans. These buses began to “plague” me and our family. Their schedules became a little after 12:00 noon and a little after 5:00 pm, each day as I came home for lunch and after work. And then all of our family would see a bus on Sunday as we came home from church a little after noon. Both Amy and Alan came home from school periodically and said something like this, “The Lord must be speaking to us. One of my teachers (or one of my friends) just got back from New Orleans, or we read and studied about New Orleans today.” On February 3, 1982, Alan’s tenth birthday, I turned on the radio in my car to listen to what I thought was the state basketball tournament. A band was blasting away, so I listened for a few minutes, then a commentator came on and said, “You have been listening to the happy sounds of Mardi Gras in New Orleans.” The very next day, on February 24, I saw my dad early that morning (We worked in the same office building on the same hallway in different departments.) and he asked me if I was going to the “seminary” that day. Wow! “The seminary?”, I asked. Then he asked me if I was going to the “the seminar” on cost accounting at the Civic Center. Such events continued throughout 1980, 1981 and 1982.

God spoke very clearly and definitely to me through the Bible and through our family Bible study and prayer time on two specific occasions in the summer of 1983. These were extremely defining moments in my life and family. First, Bro. Charles Christmas, one of my heroes of the faith, preached “a stirring message,” using Hebrews 11:1-6 for his primary text. The title of his message was “Things I Am Certain Of.” Bro. Christmas said, “Faith is looking to God when you don’t know what to do.” That is where I was! I had known for some time there was a missing ingredient in my life, and I knew what it was – faith. Bro. Christmas said something like this: “We all need “the God ingredient,” faith, in our lives.”

Second specific occasion: One night during our family Bible study and prayer time, as we were sharing about God speaking to me, really all of us about full-time ministry, Alan, age 11 at the time, shared Philippians 4:19 (CSB), “My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus.” God spoke so clearly to me! Any time a child quotes Scripture to a parent, that parent ought to listen! I am so thankful that I listened – finally!



Shirley and I, Amy and Alan, moved to New Orleans on Monday, August 15, 1983 to begin a faith journey that we have never regretted – never. The call of God on our lives is just as fresh, strong and certain today as it was in 1979 through 1983. Not almost immediately, but immediately God confirmed His speaking to us and the response we had just made. I needed to take “a small step” of faith.

With two growing teenagers in our family, I was on a fast track to graduate from seminary in two years on May 18, 1985. Our first contact with First Baptist Church Trussville was a phone call from Sam Booker on the last Sunday night in January 1985. He, Sherman Forehand, and W. B. Burke, served on the Personnel Committee. They, along with the pastor, Dr. Richard Frances, and the church family extended the call to me in March to come on staff as Minister of Education. We began our ministry here on June 1, when Shirley and I were only age 38! I have been extremely privileged and very blessed and grateful to serve under the leadership of Richard Frances, Dewey Corder, and Gary Hollingsworth, and alongside the wonderful people of First Baptist, whom we dearly love!

“How and why” have Shirley and I, and our entire family been so blessed? There is only one answer, “Only God.” Only God could have done this! It is all about Him! It is HIS STORY! To Him be all the glory!



• HOW TO BE • **SAM** with **SATIONAL!** **KEN LASS**

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15

November is the month of Thanksgiving. I've always thought of Thanksgiving as the holiday that doesn't get enough respect. Everyone seems to get engaged in Halloween. The costumes and lawn decorations and trick or treating and church festivals get folks excited and active. Then, when Halloween is over, people want to rush on to the Christmas season. They start putting up their trees, making their gift lists, and planning family get togethers. Any minute now one of the local radio stations will start playing full time Christmas music.

Thanksgiving gets run over and lost in the shuffle. Oh, we're happy to take a few days off, enjoy a turkey dinner with dressing (or is it stuffing?), watch a lot of football on TV, and wait breathlessly for the stores to open on Black Friday. Maybe it's just hard to relate to the historical event on which the occasion is based. What was it again? A bunch of Pilgrims buddied up with the Indians and stuffed their faces with a big feast? Something about John Alden and Pocahontas and a love triangle? It's all a bit fuzzy. I just remember the relationship between the Pilgrims and the Indians didn't end well.

If, like me, you're having trouble uncovering the real meaning of Thanksgiving, Colossians 3:15 sums it up beautifully. It's a time to give thanks for the protective presence of God in your life. No matter what troubles you, Jesus Christ gives us victory over it. Whether you have family discord, financial concerns, failing health, or ungrateful Pilgrims who want to take your land and build a McDonald's on it, you can always have the peace of Christ in your life. You win in the end because Jesus won in the end. And THAT is something to be truly thankful for.

So this Thanksgiving, when you pray the blessing over the food, make sure it comes from the heart. There's so much more to be thankful for than the cranberry sauce.

HIS UNFAILING WORD ... ISAIAH 40:8

By Denise Dockery

Intrusive thoughts:

How could Peter when asked "Who do people say that the Son of Man is"? Peter gets the answer so right "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God". Jesus words to Peter "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is heaven. I say to you that you are Peter (Petros – a piece of a rock or a stone) and upon this rock (Petra- a large stone) I will build My Church; and the gates of hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and yet a few days later when Jesus is telling His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised up on the third day. Peter takes Jesus aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it Lord! This shall never happen to You". But Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests but man's".

Obviously, at this time Peter did not fully understand God's interest, even after his great confession. So what a blow to Peter, talking about being humbled, but what was Jesus saying to Peter, did you notice the word "mind"? How did Satan get into Peter's thoughts whereas before God had revealed truth to Peter? Satan knew that the cross would be a death blow to him, it was prophesied in Genesis 3:15. Peter, was Satan's tool, for we see Jesus, rebuking Satan not Peter. Peter would fail many times but in Jesus, mercy as a Shepherd He kept Peter close to His side. The promise of the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" would be given to Peter. "Upon this rock" was Peter's confession which was the foundation of the Church. Jesus you are the Christ! Truth - Satan wanted to destroy the Church.

The next time you have intrusive thoughts entering your mind, remember we are doing kingdom work and Satan can't take your salvation, but he will cast the dice against you to destroy the work of the gospel. "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses (strongholds), we are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ". 2 Corinthians 10:5.

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up His cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it". Matthew 16:24-25. Keep your focus.

FBCT TRUSSVILLE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Although the “youngsters” took first place prize, our Seasoned Adults gave them a run for their money at the FBCT Golf Tournament held at Grayson Valley Country Club on September 24. We had 18 teams (72 golfers). The weather was amazing and a great time was had by all. We had 1st, 2nd, 10th and last place prizes, as well as, closest to pin, straightest drive and longest drive prizes.



Our “staff” team & Heath Argo’s team wins first place prize

WOULD YOU RATHER ... FLY THE PLANE ... OR JUST JUMP OUT OF IT!

What in the world enticed these two crazy seasoned adult women to go jump out of a plane you’re asking?

Jan Monski walked into Sunday School one morning and mentioned that she would love to have her friends come and watch. Lois Duran was in that class and she said before she knew it she was writing a check to pay her deposit! This was not on Lois’s bucket list! A few days later, Lois’s older brother was signed up too! The day, September 10, came a few weeks after they had been to Skydive Alabama at the NE Regional Airport, Cullman to visit and watch.



The guest flyer is first tethered to a parachute jumper ... you do not jump and fly by yourself. Lois was lucky; she was connected to “Spidy” as he was nicknamed for wearing a Spiderman costume (it’s that time of year)! Guest flyer receives some safety instructions, boards the plane which proceeds up 14,000 feet, moves to the open door, and she and her parachute jumper JUMP! First is the free fall, then the chute is pulled, you fly around in the sky for a couple of minutes, and then you land. Lois guessed that the total time for all that might have been about 15 minutes! Both agreed that the landing was quite easy on them.

Lois said the count was 1, 2, 3 then jump out. She heard 1, 2 but never heard 3, and they were out the door. When asked what her first thought was as she jumped, Jan said “where is my videographer?” Really!?! Each guest flyer is assigned his/her own videographer so the flight can be memorialized for all to see. Just as her jump began, Jan’s videographer disappeared! (No worries ... something didn’t go quite right ... he veered off too far to film Jan’s flight.) She didn’t get a video, but the flight company gave her this shirt! (Just to clarify, they also refunded her money since things got a bit messed up.)

These ladies had a remarkable experience for sure, and Jan and Lois were truly touched by the crowd of friends who gathered to cheer them on. BUT when asked if they would do it again, both ladies said “NO!” Lois’s brother, on the other hand, is ready to go again.



THE ARK ENCOUNTER 2021

By Robin Foshee

I've certainly never met Noah and I'm guessing you haven't either but an incredible, faithful and gutsy man he must have been. Those thoughts swirled in my head as I stared upon the massive wooden Ark structure this Summer. My wife, Edna, and I traveled to Williamstown, Kentucky, with some Sunday School friends on our first trip with the SAM ministry to see this marvelous specimen for ourselves at the Ark Encounter. Wow, was it a sight to behold (500 ft long, 85 ft wide and 52 feet high) live and in person. If you haven't seen it and gazed at this colossal assembly of timber, please consider taking your family. It just might put some things into perspective for you as it did me. While the size was impressive, the considerations for crating, feeding and caring for the animals plus caring for all of his own family's needs was brought to life when we entered the boat. It was mind boggling to say the least. If you go, it may even bring some things to mind that you may have never pondered. Like, have you ever thought to yourself how in the world Noah and his family dealt with all the...well...let's say, animal muck? With so many animals on board it certainly had to be a chore to reckon with! While visiting the Ark replica, you get a pretty good idea of how it might have been accomplished. But I digress. Yes, God helped Noah to leave no detail unattended, of that I'm certain. But, while I easily appreciated all the incredible discipline, dedication, faithfulness, hard work and planning of Noah that went into this giant boat another thought occurred to me. What an incredible way to save mankind! That's right, it was a massive flood of judgement in an order of world magnitude. But God is in the business of saving us. So, it was in His plan to build a massive boat and use a God-fearing faithful man and his family to save humanity. He gave the dimensions, resources, know-how, plan and everything needed to bring it about which no one else could have imagined. And amazingly, He even commandeered all the animals to come to Noah. So, the next time you find yourself dealing with difficult life situations remember that your God can do the indescribable and has all the wisdom and resources at His disposal to deliver you in even the most unimaginable way. Yes, take captive the very thought that I was struck with as I took it all in; never put my God in a box! He just might blow away your limited thoughts of Him if you will allow it. Remember, Noah didn't have a map or a steering wheel only a deep abiding trust in a mighty God. Happy sailing!

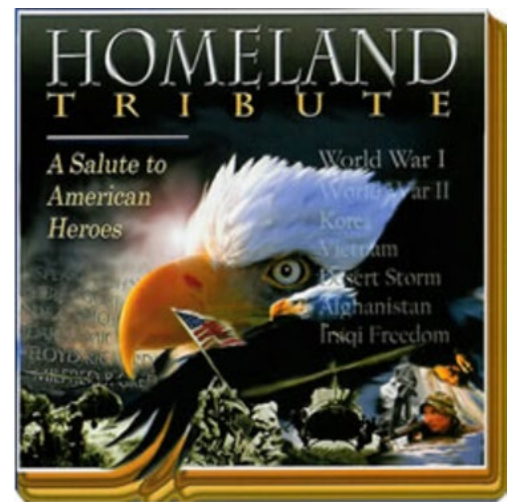




THANK YOU, VETERANS, AND GOD BLESS THE U.S.A.

By Judy Bryant

November 11 is Veterans Day! We are reminded of the June SAM monthly luncheon, with special guests, HOMELAND. We were excited to be outside worshipping with our fellow Seasoned Adults. Since January to this day in June, God had been doing great things among us ... particularly, 80 young people committing their lives to Him in our student ministries. As Suellen finished her devotion, Homeland stepped up to the stage. They were fun with their oldies songs and good ole hymns. I remember looking a few seats over and watching Mike Carter singing and rocking out to an old gospel song. We heard "Elvis" sing a couple of tunes and then Homeland began a patriotic message from their friend, U.S. Army Ranger Gary Horton, who has dedicated his life to telling young people about Jesus and about the sacrifices made by so many for so many years to secure the freedoms we enjoy today here in the U.S. That was a powerful message which they followed with singing "God Bless the USA." As they were singing, I remember looking up from my seat and my heart leapt at our American and Christian flags flying so beautifully in front of an awesome sky. I felt God's presence like I hadn't in a long time. I punched Anita (she was sitting next to me) and she took this picture. Thank you, Lord, for the beauty you provide and the freedom you give us by your grace. What a wonderful day.



We bought one of Homeland's CD's which includes a tribute to God, our country and our veterans by Gary Horton. Several of Ranger Horton's videos can be found on YouTube, and some of the material is the same, but I believe this particular tribute was written for this CD. Order one, you will not be disappointed!



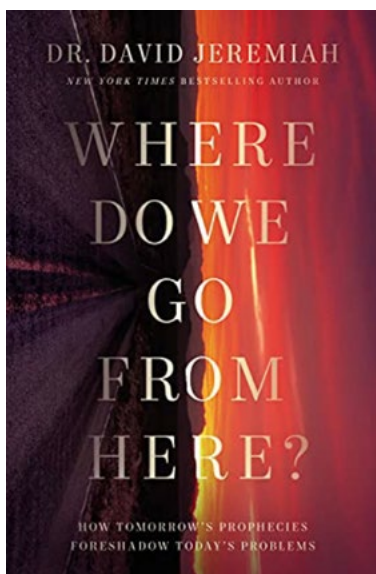
I had the privilege, along with several others here at FBCT, to help decorate our church sanctuary for Sunday morning services on September 12 remembering and thanking the 2,977 people who lost their lives in the 9/11 attack and the 13 people who recently lost their lives in Afghanistan. That's 3,090 stars covering the walls throughout the sanctuary! We also thank our military who protect our country each day. Betty Stovall

CELEBRATORS CONFERENCE

2021

By Gail Stewart

What a great 4 days about 70 of us had at the Celebrators Conference in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Dr. David Jeremiah was the featured speaker, and he did an outstanding job. He pointed out that 40% of Americans today favor Socialism (Anti-God) and the majority of those in favor are in the 18-24 age group (we need to educate and encourage them). He discussed the pandemic and how it has shown we are vulnerable, and that life is uncertain – our world is in chaos BUT remember that Jesus overcame the world! We were urged to prioritize our prayer life, know our Bible in order to do the right things, sacrificially serve others, count our blessings and “stay calm and carry on.”



Dr. Jeremiah said there seems to be a “falling away” (apostasy) in America today. In 1937 73% of Americans claimed they were Christians and in 2020 only 47% made that claim. People are being deceived, disillusioned, or choked up with the pleasures of life. We cannot be “weak kneed Christians”! We must stand up for what we believe in. We should examine ourselves (good works alone will not get you into heaven), encourage ourselves and others, keep growing in our faith and not be content with where we are in our faith today. We should work toward growing our small groups, which is key in our churches. Assert ourselves and keep running – never give up! God is with us!

There was a great patriotic service on Wednesday evening honoring veterans and current military personnel. Phil Waldrop interviewed Former VP Mike Pence and wife Karen who gave encouraging words about the positives we have in America today.

Make your plans to attend in 2022. You know Bob and his “goals” – “let’s have 122 attendees in 2022!”



We ran into old friends, Tom and Karen Hudgins, John Davis, Sandy Oberg, and Jan Davis with Dennis Swanberg, VP Pence and wife, Karen, with American Eagle

DISCOVERING THE WORLD

JESUS KNEW

A virtual tour Bible Conference

"Place and story are always connected."

How fortunate we have been to have Dr. Andy Cook return to FBCT for a second incredible virtual tour of the lands of Jesus's time and a study of how they were then vs. how we find them today. How true when we hear "walk in someone else's shoes ... you will get to know them." I am not a bible scholar, nor an historian, but when we study the Bible seeking some understanding of the connection between "place and story" as Andy Cook taught us, not only do the words jump off the page, but so does the how, what, when, where, why and how of what God wants us to know through His Word. I truly have a new appreciation for the archaeological finds being made in recent years and what they mean to the validity of scripture and all that we believe about God and His plan for the world.

Dr. Cook is an excellent speaker and teacher. He speaks as if we are in conversation and teaches with passion all that he has learned and continues to learn about the world that is our God's. My few words here can in no way begin to cover all that Dr. Cook taught on his virtual tour with Google Earth through the Judean Wilderness. Please explore www.experieceisraelnow.com/trussville and peruse the several books he has written; find the videos from our sessions here at FBCT on the church website at www.fbctrussville.org; and purchase (\$5) a copy of the Bible Conference Study Guide from our SAM office 205-228-1006. The Guide is excellent!

"Make an investment in the next generation. Love your Bible!"

Dr. Cook began our sessions with a look at the life of David. I did not realize that as David proceeded to meet Goliath in battle, he picked up five smooth stones to take with him. There is a significance connected to the number 5 in the Jewish culture. When we read David's life stories, particularly in I and II Samuel, we learn of David's struggle with anxiety. He dealt with anxiety? Yes. What did he do to reboot? Dr. Cook's study of this place, along with scripture, connects us to how David faced this giant. David went into seclusion to the caves of Adullam. He went back to basics, and he wrote Psalm 34.

Throughout the next sessions Dr. Cook asked us to follow the timeline. Archaeology begins in the lands of Israel in the 1800's; in 1947 the dead sea scrolls were found; by 1975 some 250,000 artifacts had been discovered; since 1990, just the last 30 years, artifacts uncovered to date number in the millions. Dr. Cook stated that not one single thing uncovered to date has refuted our bible, the word of God. It is eye opening to realize that from the beginning of time until now in God's plan we are in the years of all the best tools ... travel opportunity, maps, technologies, years of what others have learned and discovered, etc. We have the opportunity to know more than those who were actually living in Jesus' day! Turns out our Bible is, in fact, an accurate record of history! Yet, there are so many today who do not believe the Word, much less take time to read and study it. Dr. Cook pointed out that scripture tells us of the passion believers had for the Word, the first five books of the Bible then. They had scrolls and yearned to just get a sight of them! They memorized all of it! Dr. Cook also described the living conditions of the people of Capernaum where Jesus lived and ministered before the cross and his resurrection. Dr. Cook mentioned The Chosen. This series is available on YouTube or The Chosen App. If you have been watching it, you can imagine what it was like when Jesus told the disciples, follow me. He meant leave everything behind, security, belongings, everything and follow me. Back in those days, only 10% of the population were Roman leaders, pharisees, zealots, people with power and money; 90% were just hardworking citizens trying to make a living. As they began to leave their homes, security, to follow Jesus, and thousands did, life was hard. But they trusted God; they believed Jesus was who He said He was; and they wanted to know Him more and hear His teachings. That begs a question Dr. Cook asked us on Wednesday morning: If you had the opportunity to hear Jesus teach, in person, today, would you be willing to leave, under those conditions ... no health care, money, hard work, starvation, no possessions to speak of ... and follow Him??



2021... ALL THIS AND SO MUCH MORE

There was lots of laughing at our Monthly Luncheons!

Joyful Hearts returned to their bi-monthly practices.

May included a Sunday Dinner Stroll to Stonebridge Farms!

The next day included a group to REVIVE—Senior Adult Evangelism Conference

June 29, OASIS 2021, presented by Frank Jones, comes to FBCT

In May, seasoned adults adopted FBCT high school seniors to minister to with prayer, cards/letters, email, as they move on. In September, FBCT began the MIGHTY OAKS PRAYER MINISTRY. Many of us SAM-ers picked up an acorn with a child's name on it and began praying for the next year for this child.

