

The Carillon

First Baptist Church of Penfield



2021

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Pastor's Meditation

Bad News on the Doorstep

*But February made me shiver
With every paper I'd deliver
Bad news on the doorstep
I couldn't take one more step*

- Don McLean, *American Pie*

The song *American Pie* was a massive folk/rock hit in 1972, with over 5 million copies sold. We've all heard the chorus, "Bye-Bye, Miss American Pie / Drove my Chevy to the levee but the levee was dry..." Using obscure lyrics, singer/songwriter Don McLean described how his younger self was deeply affected by the February 3, 1959 plane crash that killed rock stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and Jiles Richardson (known as "The Big Bopper"). McLean called the day of the crash, "The day the music died." The lyrics contain thinly veiled criticisms of later rock stars such as The Byrds and Mick

Jagger. Ultimately, this song's message is that America, not just its music, is in decline. His outlook is so negative that near the end of the song, even the Father, Son and Holy Ghost catch a departing train. If I'm interpreting the lyrics to *American Pie* correctly, he is asserting that America's downfall began with that plane crash. Others pinpoint our national decline at the assassination of John F. Kennedy, or the Vietnam War, Watergate or other watershed catastrophes in our history. As a result, I grew up hearing that the United States is declining. I've heard it from a variety of people, right, left and center, a dynamic that has never stopped. For McLean, "Bad news on the doorstep" was his reference to the doorsteps where his younger paperboy self would set his newspapers and the bad news those papers contained.

Nearly 50 years later, January's assault on the U. S. Capitol building was certainly more "bad news on the doorstep," or "bad news on the TV, the computer or tablet," depending on how we get our news. Nothing like this has happened since the British attacked during the War of 1812. With the pandemic wearing on, and political strife becoming a new normal in America, chances are there will be more bad news before this meditation arrives at your doorstep. People may be wondering, "Is the end of our government?" "Is this the end of America?"

I don't know how this will play out. Throughout history, civilizations have risen and fallen. Alexander the Great conquered most of the known world, but then died prematurely. One of the "seven wonders of the world," the Babylonian Hanging Gardens, no longer exists and the empire that fostered it was conquered. It was once boasted that "All roads lead to Rome," but that is no longer true. Later it was claimed, "The sun never sets on the British Empire," but that Empire is a shell of its former self. Abraham Lincoln called our nation, "The last, best hope of Earth." Americans become defensive if anyone suggests we aren't the greatest of all nations. Much as I love my country, what with the bad news on our doorstep, maybe we need to admit to ourselves that we have lost a step.

All the while, as nations rose and fell, the Kingdom of God remained. I'm calling you to make that Kingdom your primary residence. When Jesus was arrested and questioned, he answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over... But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." (John 18:36). When we talk about Heaven, that's where His Kingdom is. Did you know the Kingdom of God is ever-expanding? Walter Rauschenbusch declared, "The Kingdom is always, but coming." Did you know that its power, which is derived from Love, is greater than that of any nation? Did you know that it won't decline? Martin Luther wrote, "His

Kingdom is forever." There are still many reasons to love our country, and we should feel free to do so, but remember, our primary allegiance must be to the Kingdom of God. Unlike all the kingdoms that rose and fell, the Kingdom of God will never decline. Join me in praying for the renewal of our nation, guided by the Kingdom of God, which is the genuine best hope, one that will last forever.

In Christ,
Pastor Steve



February Birthdays

- 7 Michael Sparnecht
- 9 Patricia Heckman
- 10 Peter Trabert
- 11 Linda Boesl
- 15 Martha Britt
- 20 Caitlin Trabert
- 20 Vickie Johnston
- 21 Jack O'Brien
- 22 Melissa Trabert
- 22 Pat Casey
- 26 Douglas Fisler



Note from the Trustees

The Trustees want to thank everyone for making our Stewardship Campaign successful. Total pledges for 2021 are \$125,904, an increase of approximately \$13,500.0 from 2020. We had 55 pledging units for 2021 and 48 units in 2020.

First Baptist has received two large sums of money:

- The Shirley and Frank Mehlenbacher estate gave \$71,657.00 to establish a Music Endowment. We received two installments, one in April of 2020 for \$43,956 and another in January of 2021 for \$27,701.00. The Trustees will follow similar rules as used with the church endowment fund, a 5% draw per year.
- A second amount of \$100,000.00 was anonymously donated to be placed in the church endowment.

Respectfully,

Bruce Blackman, Don Fox, Fritz May,
Jack O'Brien, Sarah Phillips, David Trump



Pledges and Donations

Just a reminder that all pledges and donations can be mailed into the church office and will be deposited, or you can also use the Donate button on the church website (for a small fee).

Thank you!

Jeff Bertrand



Garden Space is Available!

SPACE IS AVAILABLE for you to have a garden plot at the church!

The ground has already been well prepared this fall. Join the fun and the bounty of gardening.

Please call Ginny Wilterdink at 585-385-3531 **before April 1st** for more information.



The Missions Committee

To Our Church Family:

The Missions Team is energized for the New Year! We are beginning 2021 with a \$500 donation to the Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf. Even though our church cannot hold our monthly Flapjack breakfasts, we still want to support a local organization in that same spirit.

Additionally, we are making plans to have another drive-thru food collection in the church parking lot on Saturday, March 20th, the first day of Spring! We know that the Penfield Ecumenical Food Shelf will need extra supplies so that they can provide local families with Easter dinners; and Easter this year is early--April 4th. Please mark your calendars and watch for more details to come.

Sue, Ellen, Janette

"Where flowers bloom, so does hope."
(Lady Bird Johnson)



From the Pastoral Relations Team

This month marks the 3rd year that Steve has been our pastor! As an original member of the search committee that called Steve, I am reflecting on his time with us and what a blessing he has been.

We would like to invite everyone to share your own reflections by email, photo, video or phone call.

You can call or email me directly or mail to the church office, to my attention.

Libby Bertrand, libbybertrand31@gmail.com
585-755-3143

Be thoughtful, loving, creative and fun with your message! We will be collecting these messages and sharing them with Pastor Steve.

Blessings,

Alexandra Collison - Chair

Judy McNeil

Pat Casey

Penny Goodman

Libby Bertrand



THE 28 DAY PRAYER JOURNEY

2 Sessions - Wednesdays

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

STUDY SCHEDULE

Week One (January 18 - 24) — Introduction:
The Practice of Prayer

Week Two (January 25 - 31) — Offering
Thanksgiving & Praise

Week Three (February 1 - 7) — Turning to
God in Repentance

Week Four (February 8 - 14) — Requesting
with Confidence

Week Five (February 15 - 21) — Yielding to
God

CATCH UP WEEK (FEBRUARY 22 - 28)

All videos will be available for final viewing
during this week.

IMPORTANT LINKS:

Customer Service:

<http://www.harpercollinschristian.com/p/customer-care>

Video Homepage:

<https://studygateway.com/online-bible->

[studies/the-28-day-prayer-journey-study-home](https://studygateway.com/online-bible-studies/the-28-day-prayer-journey-study-home)

Discounted Study Materials:

<https://store.faithgateway.com/collections/the-28-day-prayer-journey>

Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/faithgateway.28dayprayerjourney>



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First Baptist Church of Penfield
1862 Penfield Road
Penfield, NY 14526



We have 2 methods of receiving the monthly newsletter.

Method 1—Open the link on our web page at www.fbpenfield.org

Method 2—Receive a printed copy via US Postal Mail

Please help us to obtain a cost savings! Open the link or pick up!

If you wish to change your method, please e-mail us at

fbpenfield.@toast.net or call the Church Office at (585) 586-2876.

Our Church Staff

Rev. Steven D. Brotzman ~ Pastor

Dr. Naomi Gregory ~ Organist, Music Director

Saundra Augustus ~ Office Assistant

Laura Swail ~ Nursery Care

Meho & Hava Kapidzic ~ Church Custodians

Contact Information

(585) 586-2876

E-mail ~ fbpenfield@toast.net

Website ~ www.fbpenfield.org

Find us on Facebook

Church Office Hours

Monday thru Friday, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Wednesdays may vary

OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

We welcome to our worship all who desire to know God through Jesus Christ.

We encourage each other to develop a relationship with God and to live as Christ taught us.

We covenant together to seek out and minister to those in spiritual, emotional or physical need.