



“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Thanksgiving is behind us, but being thankful is never out of season. In fact, Scripture teaches that it is the expressed and clear will of God for every Christian person to be thankful and rejoice continually. There are two things that I believe are necessary to build a thankful spirit like this. 1 Thessalonians reveals not only a call or command, but also the process of how to do it. The first thing we need to do is rejoice. This seems to be a choice we make to praise, worship, and thank God for everything and anything we value in our lives. It's natural to rejoice when something good happens in our lives. I remember feeling so overwhelmed with joy, love and gratitude when each of our daughters were born. That's natural. It's supernatural to rejoice in ordinary, or even unpleasant circumstances.

The second thing 1 Thessalonians teaches us is to pray continually. This is what we call “walking in the Spirit”. It indicates that even though we are responsible for our choices and have some ability to choose our behavior, that our biggest need is to be transformed by the power and presence of God. In other words, a thankful, rejoicing heart is developed by spending time with God. The more

we pray, the more God's goodness, love and joy will affect us. This is not hard to understand. The people we spend the most time with have the most impact on how we think, feel and act. Scripture calls us to not only be careful who we allow to influence us in our daily lives, but to make sure above all we spend lots of time with God to allow Him to influence us the most.

This Christmas season I hope a spirit of thanksgiving will be evident throughout our church. The third teaching in 1 Thessalonians on this issue tells us that rejoicing and thanksgiving ought to be done “in all circumstances”. The holiday season is one of the most complicated times of year to talk about rejoicing. For many people it is easy. There is such a happy anticipation of everything the season offers that there is no need to even speak of rejoicing. But for many people this season is the hardest time of the year. Pain, loss, grief, and loneliness can be overwhelming. Rejoicing and thanksgiving are sometimes done in light of circumstances, and sometimes in spite of circumstances. The focus of our joy is not the circumstance, but the God who loves us in every circumstance. It is His will that we rejoice. Why? Because it is His will that we experience joy and peace in every season.

In Christ,

Pastor Luke



Giving Needed To Meet 2024 Budget YTD
\$627,874.87

Current Expense Giving YTD
\$577,755.68

Building Fund Designations YTD
\$92,155.34

Deacon Fund Designations YTD
\$8,784.30

Kids Ministry



Hey Kids! All K-5th Grade students who attend Apollo Elementary are invited to join us for a free, after-school Christmas Party celebrating Jesus' Birthday on Wednesday, December 18th from 2-4pm.

- This party is hosted by the First Baptist Church Kids Club Ministry and will be at Apollo. If your kids attended Kids Club Max in Spring '24, Kids Club at FBC, or Vacation Bible School at FBC, they'll love this!
- Kids will have a blast creating, learning, and playing! A yummy snack will be provided and kids will learn all about the true meaning of Christmas.
- Please indicate food allergies or health alerts when registering.
- Does your kiddo want to invite a new friend? Parents can pre-register kids until 7pm on Tuesday, Dec. 17th. *Crews will be organized by three grade groups: K-1/2nd-3rd/4th-5th.
- YMCA After School Kids will be signed-up by Y staff. These parents do not to register with us.

Student Check-in: *Apollo Cafeteria 2-2:15pm* (Pre-registered kids will check-in & join their crew.) YMCA participants will check-in with Y staff in the cafeteria.

Student Pick-up: *Exterior Cafeteria door from 4-4:15pm* (An older sibling or adult needs to come to the door to pick-up their student(s). Please indicate when registering if you give your child permission to check-out on their own either to walk home or walk to your vehicle.)

Have a question? Need help registering a child? Does your child need to leave early? Please text/call Mollie Dunn (First Baptist Church Kid's Pastor) at 309-371-6962. *All volunteers working with children in the program are trained & screened through Protect My Ministry or Ministry Safe and FBC.

Join our private Facebook group at "First Baptist Family Ministry" for program pics, updates, and future events. Signing up for our program gives your permission for us to post program pictures on our social media pages. Please contact Mollie Dunn if we need to exclude pictures of your children.

We can't wait to see you on December 18th!

Mollie Dunn
Children's Pastor



All kids (Sunday School & Kids Worship participants on Sundays) are singing two Christmas songs at the beginning of the 10:15am service on Sunday, Dec. 8th. If kids attend Sunday School, teachers will take them to the sanctuary. All other kids need to check-in between 10-10:10am downstairs and join the kids in the Fellowship Hall.

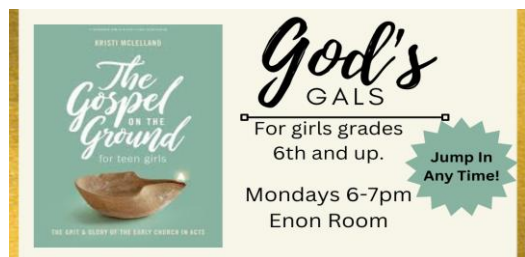
*Please place name tags on their backs. Kids are encouraged to wear Christmas attire (optional). *Late arrivals need to check-in downstairs then meet the rest of the kiddos in front of the sanctuary. Service starts at 10:15am. After kids sing, they will be dismissed downstairs for Kids Worship. *Pick-up is immediately following the service downstairs through the Fellowship Hall where check-in is located.



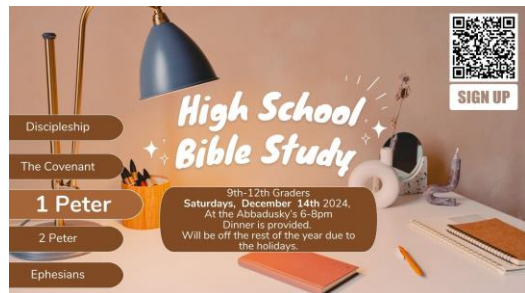
Refuge Student Ministry



Refuge at the Y!- All 6th-12th grade students join us at the YMCA in Aledo for Refuge youth group! Games, small groups, snacks and more will be provided from 6:00pm (check-in) to 8:00pm (pick up). Please grab "Refuge Winter Schedule" at the welcome desk for Refuge dates this winter.



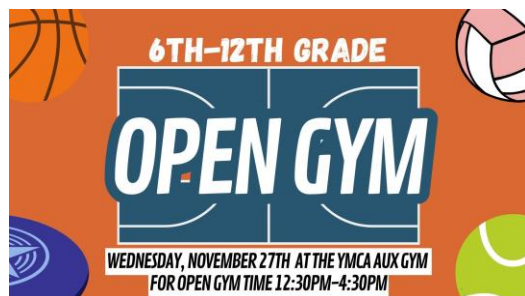
God's Gals-Girls in 6th-12th grades are invited to join us Mondays from 6-7pm in the Enon Room. We just began "The Gospel on the Ground Study- The Grit & Glory of the Early Church in Acts." This study is open to all girls Middle School through High School. Sign up at firstbaptistaledo.com.



High School Bible Study-Attention high schoolers, our next study date is December 14th at 6pm. Join us as we study 1st Peter and learn what it looks like to walk as a Christian in our current world. We are continuing to grow in GOD's love and be rooted in His word. Please be sure to bring your Bible. Dinner is provided and free to attend. This study meets at Nick & Justina Abbadusky's home-408 NE 12th St. Aledo. Will not be meeting the rest of the year due to the Holidays.



FCA-Calling all students to join us for Fellowship of Christian Athletes huddles at Mercer county high school and Jr. High! High school will meet every Wednesday morning at 7:15am in room 210, Jr. High will meet every Friday at 7:30am in room 23. All students are free to join; breakfast will be provided!



FCA Meal Train-FCA is looking for families to help out with breakfast at the Jr. High and High School. If you can cook and want to serve these students, please sign up online using the QR code on the slide or go to the Refuge Facebook page. If you have any questions, contact Andrew Hofer or Austin Shields.

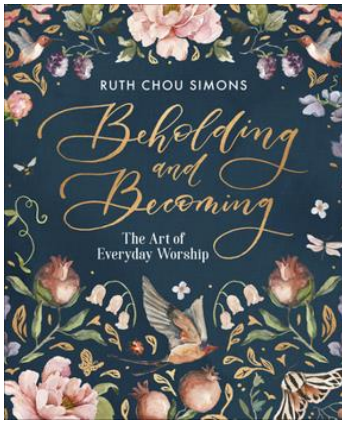
Open Gym- December 4th, all students are invited to join us at YMCA in Aledo 12:30pm-4:30pm for games and hanging out! We will not be having refuge this evening.



Refuge Christmas Party- December 18th, 6th-12th grade students are invited to join us at the YMCA for our annual Christmas Party! Bring a gift for our gift exchange game not exceeding \$10! Games, food and gift exchange games!

Flourish Women's Ministry

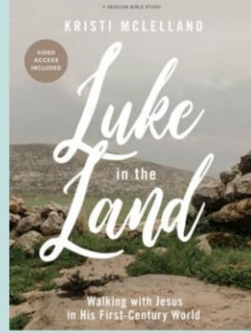
2025 Women's Flourish Small Groups New Study for 2025



Are you ready to deepen your relationship with Christ, while also growing in community with others? **Registration is open through December 8th** for the 2025 Women's Small Groups. Small Groups will be going through “Beholding and Becoming: The Art of Everyday Worship” by Ruth Chou Simons starting in January. This study focuses on setting our minds and hearts on Christ here in the daily details of our lives. All ladies need to register, even if you have been in the program before at firstbaptistaledo.com. Small groups will decide when, where and how often they meet, though our recommendation is at least once a month. **Please register online at firstbaptistaledo.com by Dec. 8th**, and your group leader will be in contact with you in January. For questions, please see program coordinators Peggy Johnson and Crystal Clark.



Thanks to the ladies who came to the Fall 2024 Flourish Event on Nov. 9th! It was wonderful to be in Fellowship with you all!



Women's Tuesdays with Jesus Study

LUKE IN THE LAND

Jump In Any Time
Tuesdays at 2pm
Led by Rhonda McKinley
Enon Room
Sign up online at firstbaptistaledo.com

Women's Tuesdays With Jesus Study – We are currently going through Kristi McLelland's “Luke In The Land” study. This class is led by Rhonda McKinley and meets on Tuesdays at 2pm in the Enon Room. Sign up online or jump in any time!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE FALL WOMEN'S CLASSES

The Winter/Spring Session of WNL runs from Feb. 5th-April 9th. Details and sign up coming soon!

LADIES, YOU ARE INVITED TO J.O.Y. CIRCLE

Christmas Party

DECEMBER 3RD @6PM
FBC IN THE ENON ROOM
BRING A \$5-\$10 GRAB BAG GIFT



Ladies, plan on joining us at FBC on Tuesday, Dec. 3rd at 6pm in the Enon Room for our J.O.Y. Circle Christmas Party. Please bring a \$5 - \$10 grab bag gift.



Baby Dedication Sunday!

SUNDAY, DEC. 8TH AT 8AM & 10:15AM
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DEDICATE YOUR CHILD TO THE LORD, CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE.

FBC Men's Ministry & More

What's Coming Up?

The Men's Ministry has concluded their event calendar for 2024. Keep a look out for opportunities to further your Christian growth and relationships in 2025. Remember that we host a Men's Breakfast every Sunday morning beginning at 7am. We have breakfast then follow up with questions on the previous week's sermon. We do dismiss in time for 8am services. It's a great time for fellowship and accountability. Men 13 years and older are welcome.



Photo of some of the men from FBC who attended Men's Momentum in Buchanan, MI in November.



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Boomsisters would like to thank our church family for the overwhelming support of Bushels of Love to benefit the Aledo Food Pantry. You have blessed so many with your generosity. We appreciate you!

On Dec. 1st, 2024, Boomsisters, Bushels of Love will be on mission collecting the following items for the Mercer County Food Pantry. This pantry offers temporary/emergency food assistance to residents of Mercer County. We will place our Bushels of Love baskets near the welcome desk for your convenience.

Items needed include canned corn, green beans, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, chili beans, peas, pork-n-beans, peaches, fruit cocktail, tuna, soups, as well as spaghetti, spaghetti sauce, peanut butter, jelly, mac & cheese, cake mix, brownie mix. Bars of bath soap, toilet paper, shampoo, and toothpaste are welcome. We thank you for your support! Any questions see Rhonda McKinley or Britni Ewing.

Thank You!

Dear Church Family,

Words cannot express how grateful I am for all of you. The last two months have been a roller coaster ride. By the grace of God, and many, many prayers, and my family that didn't give up, this Miracle Grandma is still kicking.

I'm prime example that prayer works!

Thanks to all for your prayers and concerns,
Janice Duncan

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Thank you to all who helped us remember Sharon.
The service was perfect and fitting.
All your prayers, concerns and gifts are very appreciated.
Love and prayers to you all.

Ron Moffitt & Family

Christmas Advent(ure) At FBC



Come along on a Christmas adventure with us! Join us on Sundays at 8am or 10:15am in the month of December as we explore the coming and the presence of Christ and his return.

Celebrate Christmas at FBC on Tuesday, Dec. 24th at 7pm for our special Christmas Eve Candlelight service. This is always a beautiful and moving service and a great time of year to invite a friend, neighbor or family member to join you at church.

Please note the Church Office will be closed on Tuesday, Dec. 24th & Wed., Dec. 25th! Merry Christmas!



Each year the local churches collect gifts for the local nursing home residents. Your unwrapped gifts may be placed in the boxes marked NURSING HOME GIFTS in our lobby from Nov. 24th through Dec. 17th at 10am. The residents love small fleece blankets, small stuffed animals, adult coloring books with markers, chocolate candy, sugar free candy, metal tins of cookies, and slipper socks with grips. Please feel free to take a list of gift ideas from the front of the tote..

Cathy and Linus Griswold are coordinating this effort and would love for you to donate gifts. Your help would also be appreciated for sorting and packing the gifts on **December 17th at 10:00 a.m.** If you have any questions, please feel free to call Cathy at (309)737-5444 or Linus at (309)737-5746 or the church office at (309)582-7812. Thank you so much for your help with this project!



Salvation Army Bell Ringers Needed

On Saturday, Dec. 21st from 9am-7pm the First Baptist Church family has the opportunity to provide bell ringers for the Salvation Army Kettle at the Aledo Walmart. There are several slots that need to be filled. Sign up at the Welcome Desk in the Lobby or by calling the church office at 309-582-7812.



**Visit MerCo invites the community to a
Denim & Diamonds event in honor of
Dana Murphy's life.**

Event details

Dec. 14th @ Mercer County VFW
Time - 4pm-9:30pm

**Tickets are available by calling 309-507-2687
by Dec. 4th, 2024.**

Proceeds benefit the Mercer County Ministerial
Association's Emergency Fund

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
800 NE 6TH AVE.
ALEDO, IL 61231

PHONE: 309.582.7812
E-MAIL: FBCALED02@FRONTIERNET.NET
WWW.FIRSTBAPTISTALEDO.COM

PRE-SORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 102
ALEDO, IL 61231

Stay Connected!

- We offer worship at 8am & 10:15am. Sunday School for all ages is at 9am along with a nursery for 0-2 years old. We have Kids Worship at the 10:15am service as well as a nursery for babies 0-2 years.
- For all the details about our upcoming events and live streaming Visit FirstBaptistAledo.com.
- Listen to WRMJ 102.3 at 10:30am each Sunday.
- Download the "Church Center App" from the App Store or Google Play and choose "First Baptist Church, Aledo, IL" to easily sign up for church events, check our church calendar, give online, watch sermons and receive important church notifications.
- Find Us On Facebook.
- Call the Church Office at 309.582.7812.



***Love Christ.
Love Others.
Think Biblically.***

New Church Office Hours In 2025!



Beginning Jan. 2nd, 2025 the Church Office will have new permanent office hours which are as follows:

Tuesdays-Fridays 9am-4:30pm
Mondays Pastor Seth is available
by appointment by calling 309-582-7812.