

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

An American Baptist Church  
134 North Main Street, Geneva, NY 14456  
(315) 789-3220

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Web Site: [genevafirstbaptistchurch.org](http://genevafirstbaptistchurch.org)

### OUR STAFF

The Rev. Phyllis Granger, Pastor  
Bill Robbins, Assistant Pastor  
Nancy Robbins, Secretary  
Don Will, Organist

### OUR CHURCH OFFICERS

Beverly Simons - Moderator  
Bill Robbins – Visitation/  
Christian Education/Evangelism  
Geoff Marshall - Personnel Manager  
Gary Hartman- Property Manager  
Verne Marshall - Financial Advisor  
Judy Hartman - Fellowship Coordinator  
Bill and Nancy Robbins - Worship  
Susan Belding - Missions  
Peter Achilles - Treasurer  
David Belding - Financial Secretary  
Nancy Robbins - Church Clerk

### OUR SCHEDULE

Neighborhood Saturday Lunch Ministry - 11:45am – 12:15pm  
Worship - Sunday, 10:00 a.m.  
Fellowship - Sunday, 11:00 – 11:30 am  
Sunday School - Sunday, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm  
Prayer Time – Wednesday, 5:00 pm

Newsletter of FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
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# 2019

# January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Miriam Cieslak Birthday	2 Prayer Time 5pm Jennifer Robbins Birthday	3	4	5 Lunch Ministry 11:45 am
6 Worship 10am Rev. Granger	7 ANNUAL REPORTS DEADLINE	8	9 Prayer Time 5pm	10	11	12 Lunch Ministry 11:45 am Morgan Achilles Birthday
13 Worship 10am Rev. Granger	14 Dusty Myers Birthday	15 Beth Dinkel Birthday	16 Prayer Time 5pm	17 John/Jan Frederick Anniversary Dennis Doyle Birthday	18 Rod Foster Birthday	19 Lunch Ministry 11:45 am
20 Worship 10am Pastor Bill Annual Mtg 11am	21	22	23 Prayer Time 5pm Sheila Griffin Birthday	24	25 Mary Achilles Birthday Stacy Freier Birthday	26 Lunch Ministry 11:45 am
27 Worship 10am Pastor Bill	28	29	30 Prayer Time 5pm	31 Tena Milne Birthday Marion Buck Birthday Jinny Safford Birthday		

## Pastor's Page:

My husband makes beautiful scroll sawed ornaments, crosses and plaques, and he often uses the famous “praying hands” in these pieces. Albrecht Durer, born in 1471, is the artist for the praying hands drawn in 1508. Isn't it amazing that something drawn in 1508 is still so famous today?

In Psalm 90:17 we pray, “May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands.” In a strange and beautiful way, God gave success to the work of Albrecht's hands, far beyond what he could possibly have imagined at the time. Most of us probably cannot fully comprehend all the ways through which God graces us and gives success to the work of our hands because so much of the work we do is so ordinary. So often, we are just planting seeds — seeds of faith, community, hope and charity, and seeds of the Kingdom. Sometimes we are deliberate and diligent in our work of sowing those seeds, and sometimes it seems to happen by chance, almost in spite of our best plans and ourselves.

Maintaining a healthy perspective on our work is critical. Consider the story of the little boy who walks past a construction site where a couple of masons are hard at work. Fascinated by the rhythmic action, the boy calls out to the first mason: “So what are you doing up there anyway, mister?” “Isn't it obvious,” the man replied, “I'm laying up bricks.” The little boy watched the second mason for a while, then put the same question to him: “What are you doing?” That mason replied, “I'm building a cathedral!” So much depends on our point of view!

When we pray, “Give success to the work of our hands, O Lord,” we are praying for so many things — even more than we can imagine. We are certainly praying that God's kingdom will come and God's will be done. But beyond that, what is the work of our hands? We are parents, spouses, teachers, nurses, professors, doctors, bakers, mechanics, writers, farmers, firefighters, store clerks, woodworkers, and etc. The work of our hands is as diverse as we are! But there is a commonality to all of this work: It is, or at least can be, a means to union with God and the building up of the family of God.

Our Lord is not distant from us. Rather, he awaits us in our everyday activity and the work to be done, carrying each activity through to the end for which it is destined. When we have done a task according to the will of God and as an expression of the love of God, the immense power of God's grace and goodness comes to bear upon our meager objectives and frail efforts.

As we enter a new year, what will your hands offer up to the Lord? Remember “Little is much when God is in it.” Never underestimate what God can do with our common everyday tasks. Never underestimate what one small gesture on your part can mean to someone on the receiving end of that gesture. May our hands do mighty work for the Lord in 2019. God bless and Happy New Year.

*Pastor Phyllis*

Paul, Sherry, and I would like to thank you for the many cards, gifts, baked goods, coffee, and love we received this Christmas season. It warms our hearts to be a part of such a loving and caring congregation. May we be as much of a blessing to you as you are to us. May the birth of our Savior warm our hearts this coming year as we realize God came to live among us and die for us so we could make the choice to be with Him eternally showered with His love.

*Pastor Phyllis, Paul and Sherry*

**Preaching Schedule:**

January 6 Rev. Granger  
January 13 Rev. Granger  
January 20 Pastor Bill  
January 27 Pastor Bill

**Stamps, Stamps**

Don't forget to bring in all those Christmas card stamps. Each stamp helps supply Sunday School material to someone. Won't you join us in bringing the Good News of Jesus and the Love of God to some small child? In the Annual Report and the next newsletter, I will be reporting on the number of stamps contributed in 2018.

Sherry Kelsey

**SAVE THE DATE:**

Our Annual Meeting will be held January 20 in the fellowship hall following worship.

## **Report from the Financial Secretary**

One of my favorite Christmas hymns is “*Away in a Manger*”. Perhaps because of young grandchildren I find it especially meaningful. For me it is the third verse that pierces most deeply:

*Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me I pray  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care  
And take us to Heaven to live with Thee there*

At Christmas we celebrate God’s indescribable gift of the Christ child who came into the world to shoulder the burden of *our* sins and redeem *our very life*. It is a gift that so overwhelms all the rough times, all the injuries, mistakes and setbacks that life sets in our path that we overflow with joy. Appreciating and sharing this gift is the central purpose of our life. For all our many experiences and accomplishments, we are yet still children under God’s tender care.

### **Attendance**

December 2	December 9	December 16	December 23	Christmas eve
44	29	36	42	39

### **Pledging**

It has been a wonderful year of extraordinary giving. As of December 23<sup>rd</sup> anticipated collections were \$59,167 compared to actual pledge-giving of \$70,523 which is \$11,356 more than expected. And plate collections totaled \$7,292 which was \$1,500 more than last year!

Christmas is traditionally the season of giving. But for our congregation this spirit of generosity and caring is not limited to the Christmas season or to financial ledgers. It has been manifest throughout the entire year in the multitude of ways each of us reaches out, sharing and offering help and prayers for others both inside and outside our congregation. I believe this is exactly the kind of life God wants for our church and I find it most inspiring. I want to thank each one of you for your special generosity and the gift of your unique spirit!

### **Pledges so far for 2019**

So far we have received 21 pledges for 2019 totaling \$50,530. Although many increased their pledge, some very faithful and generous members have left for “God’s tender care”, and at this point a few others have not yet renewed a pledge. Thus currently we have received 5 fewer pledges representing about \$10,000 less than last year’s final total of \$60,327 from 26 pledges.

Thank you to all who have made commitments toward next year. If you have not yet pledged, please consider making or renewing a commitment. No matter the amount, the act of pledging is one way to remind us of God’s place in our lives.

Dave Belding, Financial Secretary

Nancy and I would like to thank you all for your generous gifts, cards, and prayers during this wonderful Christmas season. What a joy it has been for us to be part of this church family that serves our Lord in so many ways and we look forward to serving you all in the coming year.

May God bless you all with peace and joy as we travel together through this new year serving all God's people wherever we find them.

With love,  
Pastor Bill and Nancy

