

The Bellringer

945 Storrs Road, Storrs, Connecticut 06268
Rev. Ron Baker: pastor@fbcmansfieldct.com

860-429-6043 www.fbcmansfieldct.com
Secretary: office@fbcmansfieldct.com



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West Virginia Youth Mission Trip 2007

What can we say—we had a great time building up God's Kingdom in West Virginia!

The First Baptist Church of Lancaster, Pennsylvania welcomed us with a pizza supper followed by the Barnstormers baseball game on Saturday night. The team may have lost but we gained ice cream, free giveaways, and a whole lot of cheering oing on.

Alderson Broadus College put all the Servant's Heart participants in the sam dormitory so we could see our friends for a game of Frisbee, Hacky Sack or Hide and Seek after supper. The Worship Services were great. The first night Pastor Ron enlisted volun-



teers to act out ways of hanging laundry, Christmas ornaments, etc. to introduce the theme for the week. We loved singing along with the upbeat music. Every



night we had a discussion of the day's events and how it ties into our lives back home.

Our group was split in half with everyone getting a leg up in the world. One team went to the house on the hill and painted and painted. We got up on ladders to build a porch with a roof. The other team stayed at Brownton Community Center and put up staging. The staging went up 4 levels so we had to wear a harness when on top. We put up vinyl siding where the building was bare. Everyone in this team fired off a nail gun with a 22 caliber bullet. That was loud!

Our day off was spent at Valley World of Fun. They have water boats, a climbing tower, mini-golf, bowling, laser tag, and a ride that drops you 40 feet.

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West Virginia Youth Mission Trip 2007 *Continued*

(Continued from page 1)

We went to church Wednesday night at the Community Center. The people are very friendly and look forward to Servant's Heart week every July.

We are gratefully for the support of our church family.

Thank you,

Kristin, Alyssa, Beth, Sarah, Matt, Evan, David, Clare, Jenette, Kelsey, Kyra, Dellon, Warren, Laura and Pastor Ron



Can and Bottle Drive!

The Youth Group has been running the **Can and Bottle Fundraiser** for the past 3 summers. The money is used to pay for gas to drive to Philippi, West Virginia where we work on a mission project.

It takes 38 gallons of fuel to get us the 575 miles to Philippi, West Virginia. So, for every 65 cans/ bottles that we received, we can buy one gallon of gas. At \$3.25 a gallon we will need about 2,500 cans to take us from Connecticut to West

Virginia and another 2,500 to get us back. Every can counts, so we continue to ask that if you have any empty cans and bottles lying around at home, please bring them to church and



help support our summer mission trip. There is a marked container in the conference room to place your donations and a youth has signed up to be responsible for returning the cans.

Fall 2007 Schedule

October—Geissler Family

November—Flynn Family

December—Geissler Family



First Baptist Church of Mansfield

- *Established 1809 -*
- *A Word from the Pastor*

I am wrestling with a bit of a dilemma as I write this article. This newsletter is for the months of October, November and December. Is October too early to write something about Christmas? Yesterday the temperature rose to over 90 degrees. Is it too warm to write something about Christmas? How do people in Florida do it? To borrow a line from Bob Dylan, "The answer my friend, is blowing in the warm wind" and the answer is no it is never out of season to think about the God who created the universe coming to earth in human form so we might understand divinity better and know forgiveness and grace. And the things we associate with Christmas such as peace, love, hope and joy should never be packed away in the attic or basement.

Just yesterday there was an article in the Hartford Courant titled "Retailers Roll Out Christmas." It seems that Sears, Target, Home Depot, and Walmart are thinking like me. One spokesperson said, "Based on what we're seeing, the numbers indicate that our customers are purchasing their holiday décor products earlier." I wonder if that is because the items are in the stores earlier.

There are two thoughts I want to share with you. First, as we see the halls being decked, and the store aisles filling with Christmas candy and decorations, remember that the way to truly celebrate Christ's coming starts on the inside and works its way outside. It begins in our hearts, in our relationship with God through forgiveness, and gratitude and works its way out to our actions. My second thought is that sometimes when we start the Christmas celebration in October we grow "tired of Christmas" long before December 25th arrives. How can we grow tired of Christmas? By celebrating it the wrong way, by celebrating it on the outside, but not truly on the inside, in our hearts. There needs to be a balance between this inner and outer celebration and I believe that when the outer celebration becomes more important than our inner Spirit celebration then we grow tired of Christmas.

In Matthew 23 we find some of Jesus' hardest words. They are directed towards the religious leaders who opposed Him at every turn. But Jesus saw through the facade of their religious actions and looked at their hearts. In verses 25-27 he tells them... "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish and the outside will also be clean. You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous, but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness."

I want to apply these words to us as we begin to think about Christmas. Let's start our Christmas celebrations on the inside, in our hearts and Spirits, and let it grow out from there. And as the Christmas Season arrives, if you find yourself growing tired of Christmas, look at your heart and examine the balance of your internal and external Christmas celebration. If we begin celebrating more or longer on the outside than we are on the inside, we will become in danger of being worn out.

May you have a blessed Christmastide. And by the way, have a blessed Thanksgiving too.



Board of Trustees

The Board will be starting the budget process at this month's meeting. We hope that all Boards and Committees have reviewed line items from last year and have submitted their new budget requests for 2008. It is very important that we have a clear and realistic idea of what each group proposes to spend to plan next year's budget.

A few reminders...As we enter the heating season, please remember that room temperatures in the sanctuary, conference room and music room are set with programmable thermostats. These thermostats should only be adjusted with the permission of or by Trustees. We also wish to remind all members and friends that donations of any items to the church must be approved by the Board of Trustees. Thank you for your cooperation.

Our next regular meeting will be on **Sunday, October 14**. The fall business meeting will be held after church on **Sunday, October 28**. It is vital that we have good attendance at our business meetings and we encourage you all to mark your calendars and bring a sandwich for lunch. The social committee will be providing soup, beverages and dessert.

After much consideration, based on the discussion of the Memorial Gifts Task Force Committee and the congregation at large, the Board will be making the following motion at the business meeting. The Board of Trustees is recommending the following policy on the acceptance of monetary memorial gifts. Sixty percent of the total gift will go into the church general fund, twenty percent will go into the undesignated memorial gifts fund and provide support for our ministry and allow us to have monies available for memorial gift purchases as deemed appropriate by the Memorial Gifts Committee as well as contribute to the long term mission of our church. Please feel free

to speak to the Trustees if you have any questions about this proposed policy. We encourage you to come to the **October 28th** Business meeting to discuss this important issue.

Lock up responsibilities are as follows:

Trustees on Lock-Up

October-Patty Geissler
November-Nancy Flynn
December-Meradith McMunn

Communications Committee

Please note that you can email Pastor Ron and the church office at:

office@fbcmansfieldct.com
pastor@fbcmansfieldct.com

The Communications Committee email address is now:

bellringer@fbcmansfieldct.com

please email your articles, information, suggestions or comments to the new address.

The Communications Committee would like to update our church web page. Please see Carol Bigl with information about your group and photos and she will put it up on the web.

Get your newsletter on the web! The Communications Committee puts the complete newsletter on the web for all to read, with color photos. If you have an email address and access to the web please consider using the web version. We will email you the link to the **BELL-RINGER** for easy access. Send an email to bellringer@fbcmansfieldct.com to let us know that you want the **BELLRINGER** delivered to your email address.

BELLRINGER Deadlines for 2007

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SOCIAL COMMITTEE

GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING REFRESHMENTS FOR FELLOWSHIP HOUR



Sign up on schedule in Conference Room

Provide:

- Beverages (punch, cider, juice, hot chocolate, coffee, tea)
- Snack foods (vegetables with dip, popcorn, fruit, cheese & crackers, cookies, cake).
Your own special recipes are always appreciated.
- Paper goods - cocktail size napkins and plates, if necessary
Flowers (not necessary, but always a nice touch!)

Coffee is provided by the Social Committee and is in the kitchen by the coffee maker. Coffeemate and various sugars (white, Equal, Splenda) are also provided and are located in the kitchen on the turnaround under the counter by the coffee maker.

Plan to set up the Conference Room before the Worship Service begins. Use one or two large tables. Various plastic liners and lace tablecloths are available in the Conference Room closet next to the piano.

When the Fellowship Hour is over, remove all food items from the tables. Wash, dry and put away any dishes and/or utensils that were used. Wash out coffee maker and **throw away coffee grounds.** Please wipe off plastic liners with a clean, wet cloth and let them dry before folding them to put back in the closet. If the plastic liner is torn or cannot be thoroughly cleaned, **throw it away!** If you use the lace tablecloths, please take them home to wash on a **Gentle Cycle and return to the church the next week.** Also take home and wash any dishtowels that you used and return to the church the next week. **Please take all unused food items home with you.**

Thank you for providing this ministry to our church family!

Your Social Committee:

Bonnie Buscaglia, Stacey Fulton, Michele Gagne, Jill Myette and
Lee Salina



Emma Gardiner Missionary Society— ABW Ministries

The Emma Gardiner Missionary Society is affiliated with the American Baptist Women Ministries of Connecticut. This group of mission minded, Mission-outreach ladies has for their theme title 2007-2008 "Come to the Edge". We will search many questions:

Where is this edge?

What is this edge?

Who is at the edge?

We will relate our search and study to Joshua who had been chosen by God to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land upon the death of Moses: God charged Joshua: "I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go..." Joshua 1:9 (NRSV) Deuteronomy 31:6; Matthew 14:26-27; 1 Corinthians 16:13-14; Philippians 4:13

This "edge" may be an edge of risk, chance, and trepidation but also one of excitement, energy, and all sorts of possibilities in the future. Hopefully, we will experience as we investigate the "edge" those challenges have for us in our life with Jesus. We can be assured that God will be with us all the way just as he was with Joshua.

Monthly study-programs are only part of the activity in the EGMS-ABWM. On-going mission leadership and response to missionary needs is another aspect of our group. White Cross is the name given to missionary requested needs both here in the U.S. and internationally. The Providence, R.I. neighborhood ministries have expressed a long list of needs to be met in their ministry. Lena Barry is the White Cross coordinator for our church. She will present a listing of White Cross requests to our church family. Everyone in our church family can contribute a specific item requested or give money for "cash" items to be purchased in quantity by the AB Mission Board and sent to various

Mission hospitals, schools and churches.

Our EGMS Group often sews or makes items for White Cross. Recent crafts and Christmas Stockings decorated have been requested and created by a group of our ladies. All church ladies are cordially invited to join EGMS.

EGMS-ABW Ministries WHITE CROSS

Each year we are given a WHITE CROSS request. This involves seeking a wide variety of donations which are sent or delivered to community centers within the United States! Over seas requests are usually a sum of money used to help hospitals, schools or clinics and yard goods, quiet blocks, thread, requested for the Philippines!

If you feel the time is right to show a helping hand this year, please contact Dottie Rose Gilliam, Betty Geissler or Lena Barry. White Cross is for everyone!! All

Baptist Women's Day of Prayer

Sunday, November 4, 2007

at 2:00 p.m.

We will be meeting in the Chapel at Pierce Memorial Baptist Home in Brooklyn, CT to celebrate this special service.

The material this year is written by Ladies in Africa. Their title is "God's compassion!" The scripture is taken from Lamentations Chapter 3:21-25. Plan to join in fellowship with your sisters throughout the Northeast Association. Refreshments will follow!

We will car pool! Phone Lena Barry 429-4431.

Youth Retreat for Grades 6 – 12



A Youth Retreat for Grades 6 – 12 was held October 5-7, 2007 at the Erickson's House on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire.

The Youth along with Pastor Ron, Joy Erickson and Susan Figueroa ventured up to New Hampshire this past weekend. As we headed into the White Mountains on the Tram at Cannon Mountain we pondered the questions "Where do I feel closer to God?" & "What is my relationship to God?" While taking in the majestic brightly colored mountains and sparkling lakes God was in our midst. We then ventured for a brisk swim in Lake Win-

nepesaukee due to the warm temperatures. We wondered "Why does good want a relationship with me?" & "How am I unique and special to God?" Then we went back to the house for dinner and games and asked the question "How can I communicate with God?" We shared ideas, solved riddles and played games. Everyone was pretty tired from the day's events. On the way home the student's asked me "When's the Lock-in coming and we are going to do this next type of event and right now I am a bit tired out from the event but I feel it was time well spent and I look forward to doing it again...after a good rest."



SAVE THE DATES!

Christian Ed. Events coming up include:

Middler Event! Grades 3-5 will meet **Saturday, November 10** from 3pm to 10pm for games and/or crafts, make your own pizza, and a parent approved movie to be determined! Come join the fun! Please see Joy Erickson or Susan Figueroa for more information.

Advent Event! November 25 after Church Service: Bring a sandwich and stay for Christmas crafts, cookies, and fellowship! Crafting for every age! We will have items to make decorations for the church and to use at home or as gifts! Please see Karen Hocking, Joy Erickson or Susan Figueroa for details.

Bible Verse Memory Games! Our Sunday School has been learning verses from God's Word. Join us on **December 9** after coffee hour for some fun Bible games and see how good your memory is! More details later - Donations of small items for prizes would be much appreciated. Please see Susan Figueroa for more information.

Christian Ed

WAIM

The Steeplechase was a major success again this year, about \$67,000 due to the riders, the organizers and those who did the work on the day of the event. Ed Austin was the driving force behind the event and largely responsible for its success. The riders did their share of grunt work covering all those miles and securing sponsors. Station operators such as David Stevens and Ally Austin provided services to tired riders. Faith Austin baked several hundred "power bars" (300-400) that were gobbled down along with watermelon slices and PB&J sandwiches. David's cows provided entertainment.

WAIM is currently gearing up for **"WALK FOR WARMTH"** and the holiday programs—**ADOPT-A-FAMILY, GIFTS FOR TEENS AND FOR KIDS ONLY.** The **"WALK FOR WARMTH"** is Sunday, November 18th. It will begin immediately after the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, 1:30 p.m. at the rear of St. Mary's Church, 35 Valley Street, Willimantic. Walkers can organize teams or walk as individuals. Participants must raise \$20 per walker, collected in advance, which is required for registration. It is an easy walk for most of about 2 miles.

Registration and/or information for all events are available.

Ladies Aid Society

What a tremendous Fellowship Supper we had in September. It was delicious and fun and informative. About 75 of us gathered for a scrumptious meal that had been prepared by Tricia, Jill, Patty, Alyssa, Lee, Nancy and Ginny. Thanks to Lena and Ron for set up help and to so many of you for donations of needed ingredients. After the meal we all enjoyed the PowerPoint presentations and talks given by Pastor Ron and the youth who went to West Virginia. It was good to see how our Pastor and youth spent some of their summer. The evening ended with an amazing clean up crew getting right to work and putting the kitchen and conference room back into ship shape. The offering basket that night provided over a hundred dollars which will be used for future projects for the church. We had such fun that we hope to have another Fellowship Supper soon.

Despite the balmy weather, the fall season is upon us and that means that the Holiday Butter Braid sale is just around the corner. We will be selling six flavors of Butter Braid pastries, five flavors of Omar coffee and two types of Aspen

Valley Hot Cocoa. The sale will begin on **October 14th** and orders must be turned in with payment to Patty by **November 4th.** You may purchase products by signing up on the church order form or take a form and sell them to your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers. There will be a church order form posted on the bulletin board in the conference room. The products make great gifts. If you have any questions, you may call Patty Geissler at 684-9126.

We hope that you are all gathering up your best recipes for the cookbook that we are starting. You may give them to Nancy Flynn or Jill Stedman-Myette. Together we can put together the most delicious cook book! Everyone will want a copy.



Church Family News

THANK YOU!

Thank you for sending up to camp!

Pioneer Camp was Awesome! ~ Jessica Figueroa
I saw two camp friends I had not seen for a long time! ~ Rebecca Figueroa
I had Fun! ~ Amanda Figueroa

Sharon's Ride.RUN.Walk

Lindsey Kloss Senior Project

My name is Lindsey Kloss. I am a senior at EO Smith High School. As some of you know, I have epilepsy. Epilepsy affects more than 3 million people in the U.S.

As part of my senior project I am organizing a team to participate in a fundraiser for the Epilepsy Foundation of Connecticut.

You can ride, run, or walk with us on Sunday, October 21st at 1:00 p.m. along with all the other participants for Sharon's ride, run, walk. This is a state-wide fundraiser.

The location is the Charter Oak Greenway which is in Manchester, CT. You can ask me for more details after church.

If you can not ride, run or walk with us you can still support me by making a donation to the Connecticut Epilepsy Foundation.

SEE you there!



Advent Event! November 25

"O Come O Come Emmanuel"

It seems a longtime away, but it's time to start thinking about Advent.

This year our Advent Event will be held Sunday, November 25th after the morning church service. We start the celebration with lunch. Soup and beverage will be provided. Remember to bring a sandwich. We will again have "decorate your own cookies" for desert, with tasty sugar cookies and frosting available for your creativity.

Then we will have carol singing, tree decorating and crafts for all. There will be crafts of varying difficulty so everyone young and old alike can participate. Nursery care will be provided. We will begin after church and be finished by 2:00 p.m. Come start your Advent season with an afternoon to make new Christmas memories.

Dear Friends and Members of the First Baptist Church of Mansfield,

We want to thank you all for the many get well wishes, visits and all the expressions of kindness we received leading up to and during the recuperation from "total hip replacement surgery". In addition to all you have done to help make this event successful, we stand in awe and thankfulness of the technology and considerable talent available to us in our hospitals and with our surgeons in today's world. We still have a couple of months left for total healing to take place and with that some restrictions, however, we are out and about and enjoying life.

We Love you all,
Ed and Faith Austin

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

World Community Day

"Embracing Justice Under God's Tent"

World Community Day (WCD) is celebrated on or near the first Friday in November, and focuses on justice and peace in the global society. The theme chosen by the Ecumenical Celebrations Committee for 2007 is "Embracing Justice Under God's Tent". The logo depicts lady justice embracing the globe, providing a touch of comfort and solace to the earth's inhabitants. As women of faith, we are called to look at the issues facing women today and determine where we can be instruments of comfort and solace as well. Rev. Kristina Peterson and Rev. Kathleen Clark have shared their talents in creating this worship, inviting the participants to continue to relate the World Day of Prayer theme, "United Under God's Tent" to issues of peace and justice in the United States.

The world today has more refugees than ever before. The causes are war, violence, boundary disputes, economics, technological disasters, and global climate change. Throughout history people have been displaced by similar incidents. This worship service and study will focus on Biblical examples of displacement, homelessness and refugees all helping to inform our faith and actions today. Join us to celebrate **WORLD COMMUNITY DAY** on **Saturday, November 3, 2007** at **St. Paul's Episcopal Church** in **Windham Center**.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Oct. 2 Amanda Figueroa
 Oct. 2 Samantha Figueroa
 Oct. 4 Daniel Parker
 Oct. 14 Walter Palmer, Jr.
 Oct. 15 Richard Sherman
 Oct. 19 Richard Burnham
 Oct. 19 Mary Ann Sheehan
 Oct. 22 Laura Austin
 Oct. 22 Jessica Figueroa



October 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Budget Request to Trustees	2 EGMS	3	4	5 Youth Retreat	6 CWU Annual Meeting
7 Newsletter Deadline for Oct/Nov	8	9	10	11 Adult Choir Rehearsal	12	13 Discipleship Fair
14 Trustees Meeting Butter Braids Sale	15	16	17	18 Adult Choir Rehearsal	19	20 ABCCONN 9am-3pm "Tools for Vitality" at FBCM
21	22	23	24 Deacons Meeting 7:30 pm	25 Adult Choir Rehearsal	26	27 Sanctuary Decoration Committee Mtg—Deacon's Mtg
28 Fall Business Meeting	29	30	31 Halloween 	Deacon: David Stevens Trustee: Patty Geissler		

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Nov. 2 Peg Barlow
 Nov. 4 Karleen Donato
 Nov. 8 Brian Nilson
 Nov. 9 Ashley Hooper
 Nov. 10 Kyle Whitehead
 Nov. 11 Hazel Rubins
 Nov. 12 Kyra Whitehead
 Nov. 13 Clare Flynn
 Nov. 15 Dottie Rose Gilliam
 Nov. 15 Allyson Austin
 Nov. 18 Prescott Spencer
 Nov. 20 Jordan Gardiner
 Nov. 20 Matthew Hocking
 Nov. 20 Sarah Hocking
 Nov. 26 Becky Austin



November 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	Deacon: Lisa Reas Trustee: Nancy Flynn			1 Adult Choir	2	3 Church Work Day
4 Wedding 2:00 p.m. Butter Braids Sale	5	6 EGMS	7	8	9	10 CWU Middler Lock-in (grades 3-5) Youth Lock-in
11 Trustees Meeting	12	13	14 Adult Choir	15	16	17 Pick-up for Butter Braids
18 Kevin Reas' Dedication Thanksgiving Sunday WAIM Walk for Warmth	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving 	23	24
25 Advent Event after Worship	26	27	28	29 Adult Choir	30	

December 2007

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dec 2—Will Bigl
 Dec 2—Chris Salina
 Dec 5—Jack Gilman
 Dec 5—Oliver Gilman
 Dec 5—Laurie Whitehead
 Dec 6—Betty Geissler
 Dec 7—Sara Flower
 Dec 8—Judy Bigl
 Dec 8—Janice Kopec
 Dec 12—Jack Fulton
 Dec 14—Linda Smith
 Dec 15—Jeff Bigl
 Dec 16—Hannah Gilman
 Dec 18—Jodi Donato
 Dec 20—Rose Nilson
 Dec 21—Ava Lee Baker
 Dec 26—Kenyon Davis

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 Decorate
2 Newsletter Deadline Dec/Jan/Feb	3	4 EGMS	5	6 Adult Choir Rehearsal	7	8 Choir Dress Rehearsal
9 Trustees Meeting S.S. Memory Verses Celebration Special Christmas Music & Coffee Hour	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Caroling in afternoon Youth Choir—Lunch & Christmas Party	17	18	19	20 Adult Choir Rehearsal	21	22
23	24 Christmas Eve	25  Christmas	26	27	28	29
30	31			Deacon: Frances Nichols Trustee: Meradith McMunn		



Dates to Remember

Oct. 14	Trustees Meeting	Nov. 10	Youth Lock-in
Oct. 14	Butter Braids Sale	Nov. 11	Trustees Meeting
Oct. 18	Adult Choir Rehearsal	Nov. 14	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Oct. 20	ABCONN 9 a.m.—3:00 p.m. at FBCM	Nov. 17	Pick-up Butter Braids
Oct. 24	Deacon's Meeting	Nov. 18	Kevin Reas' Dedication
Oct. 25	Adult Choir Rehearsal	Nov. 18	Thanksgiving Sunday
Oct. 27	Sanctuary Decoration Committee Mtg	Nov. 18	WAIM Walk for Warmth
Oct. 27	Deacon's Meeting	Nov. 22	Thanksgiving
Oct. 28	Fall Business Meeting	Nov. 25	Advent Event after Worship
Nov. 1	Adult Choir Rehearsal	Nov. 29	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Nov. 3	Church Work Day	Dec. 1	Decorate Sanctuary
Nov. 4	Butter Braids Sale	Dec. 2	Newsletter Deadline Dec/Jan/Feb
Nov. 4	Wedding at 2:00 p.m. at FBCM	Dec. 4	EGMS
Nov. 10	CWU	Dec. 6	Adult Choir Rehearsal
Nov. 10	Middler Lock-in (grades 3-5)	Dec. 8	Choir Dress Rehearsal 10:00 a.m.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MANSFIELD

945 Storrs Road, Storrs, CT 06268

Worship Service – 10:45 a.m.

Church School—9:30 a.m.

Youth Choir Rehearsal, Sun. 9:00 a.m.

Adult Choir Rehearsal, Thur. 7:30 p.m.



An American Baptist Church