

The First Baptist Church of Sharon 2014 Reflection

by Rev. Cindy Swogger Associate Pastor and Director of West Hill Ministries

I am blessed to serve the Lord in my “home church.” I have spent my whole life here: was dedicated as a baby, was baptized April 14, 1968, active in Sunday School and Youth as a child and youth, began to serve as the Volunteer Youth Director in 1986, served as the Director of West Hill Ministries since its inception in 1991, came on full-time staff July 1, 1996, was licensed as a pastor in 1998, graduated from seminary and was ordained October 12, 2003. It has been a great journey of faith.

I am thrilled to serve the Lord here at home. I am proud to serve a Church that takes seriously the Great Commission, “ **Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**” And the Great Commandment of Jesus:

“**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’**” Children and Youth Ministries, after school programs, Clothing Closet, Bible Study, Sunday School, Morning Worship, Sr. Citizen Luncheons, Women’s and Men’s groups, ecumenical neighborhood ministry with our neighborhood churches under the banner of West Hill Ministries are some of the ways we seek to follow the commands of Jesus.

What has made a two hundred ten year history possible is that faith has been passed from one generation to the next. We continue to make disciples. That task remains the same for the Church today. Today’s celebration is an example of the church’s history repeating itself. We celebrate 210 years of the church’s historic ministry in Sharon. We celebrate the faithful 25 year pastorate of Pastor John and Marilyn Trojak that continues today and into tomorrow. We celebrate again the church regenerating itself as we ordain Josh Trojak. A young man of faith, born and raised in our *Hall of Faith*, seminary trained and now embarking on a new chapter as Rev. Josh Trojak.

The Church seeks to remain faithful to “pass it on” to the next generation. We remain committed to teaching discipleship to the next generation of believers.

As we look back at our history, I stand in awe of the many saints of First Baptist Church whose shoulders we stand upon today. I tried to get a handle on how many are those saints. It is hard to fathom, but we know there are many. Their faithfulness ensured our present; our faithfulness today and in the days to come will launch us into a bright future. I have spent my whole life here and am honored to take my place in the First Baptist Church Hall of Faith. I pray that those who come behind us will find **us** faithful.