

Good Morning!

Proverbs 24:3-4 tells us that "it takes wisdom to build a house, and understanding to set it on a firm foundation; it takes knowledge to furnish its rooms with fine furniture and beautiful draperies."

This passage, in a literal sense, seems to refer to the construction and outfitting of a house, but it clearly is a metaphor for what it takes to weave the fabric of a home, as well as the building and maintenance of our own lives and the lives of our children.

Baker Memorial is also represented by the house in Proverbs. Planned with wisdom, built with knowledge and understanding, and with a desire to exalt God, it has grown and prospered. We have riches and treasure here in broad supply, starting with the warmth and generosity of our congregation and the sense of community which we all enjoy. There are active programs for our members and Baker supports community service and missions in our town and elsewhere. We enjoy music and services in beautiful surroundings which elevate our spirits. My family is influenced by all of this directly and profoundly. Baker has become a spiritual home for my family - and it has also shaped our family's home.

One of Baker's greatest gifts to our family is that of music. Our children have grown up in this church, and have participated in its choirs since a very young age. Their patient and purposeful education within this supportive community has nurtured their musical talents, thereby improving their self-esteem and self-confidence. Along the way, they have also picked up an appreciation of sacred and classical music. I would also venture that their love of God has been strengthened by what they are singing about, and by the audience they are singing to. I also enjoy the fact that our children aren't afraid to sing - their voices brighten our home life - and that they can sing about their faith as well. I can't help but believe that these experiences will provide a valuable foundation for them as they mature into adults.

The Christian education provided at Baker has also been a positive influence. Not only have our children's participation in Sunday school helped shape the young adults they are growing up to be, but Kathy and I have been able to participate as well, both here at church and at home. We have grown stronger in our faith as a family.

Recently, my two oldest boys and I went with other church youth on a mission trip to Nashville. The week spent on this trip allowed us to live a life where the principles of self-denial and focusing on other's needs held center stage. I think it fair to say that all of us on that trip received as much or more than we gave, and that we all gained knowledge in what it means to serve God by serving our fellow man.

All of these aspects of our family's life within this church are a result of those who have built and grown Baker Memorial prior to and after our arrival. I am grateful to everyone that gives of their time, talents and treasure to make this church what it is.

Luke tells us, in chapter 12, that Jesus said, "Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot ... There is far more to your inner life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body ... It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being."

I encourage all of us to use our wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to help our treasure, our spiritual home - this church - be its best.

Amen.