



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

February 11, 2024

Volume 47 Number 6

Why is Discipleship so Difficult?

By John Paschal

In the December 10 Outlook article “In A Nutshell,” we revisited Matthew 28:19-20. Jesus Himself said that making disciples is the purpose and work of the church.

Last year, some members of the FBC transition team read the book “Move” by Hawkins & Parkinson. That book described the experience of a large American evangelical church that many Christians would have considered to be highly successful in terms of membership numbers and the scope of its mission. However, when the authors looked more closely at the members (through surveys and interviews), they found that true spiritual growth, as seen in committed disciples living out a Jesus lifestyle, was sadly missing.

If a high-growth church such as the one cited in “Move” can find itself falling short in following the Lord’s command to make disciples, should this not spur us on to examine ourselves here at First Baptist and ask the same question, “How obedient are we in making disciples?”

In an article from several years ago, Dan Juster points out that most modern churches fall into one of two camps: either the church is a “religious event manufacturing corporation” or the church is a discipleship covenant community. As Juster points out: These are very different visions!

So, why is discipleship so difficult?

Mr. Juster suggests that the first difficulty is culture. In America we hold our personal autonomy in such high esteem that most of us live by the motto “No one can tell me what to do.” However, Christians have no life but Christ (Galatians 2:20).

The second difficulty seems to derive from the first, in that church leadership is expected to produce disciples without a strong emphasis on mentoring. As Juster says, “The pulpit does not disciple. Pulpit ministry only opens hearts to discipleship, something more is required.”

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Discipleship

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Mentoring, as a discipline, must be practiced in three dimensions (e.g. the Paul-Barnabas-Timothy analogy from Acts). If we look at the Gospels, we see this is exactly what Jesus did with His disciples.

How might we become counter-culture enough to truly follow Jesus and make disciples who (in turn) make more disciples? Perhaps we can look at a path in my next article coming in the near future.



Eason Pope

Baptism celebration

On Sunday, February 4, we gathered around Eason Pope to bear witness to his baptism. We celebrate this step in Eason's faith formation and pray for his spiritual journey. Eason is the son of Cameron and Jamie Pope. He has an older sister, Reynolds, and younger brother, Turner.

Support CAM this Sunday

Join us in the Fellowship Hall for the Annual Souper Bowl Luncheon sponsored by Youth Acteens and Challengers on Sunday, February 11 beginning at 11 a.m. and continuing after Sunday School.

The youth will serve delicious hot soup, savory sandwiches and delectable desserts. All donations will go to support Clayton Area Ministries (CAM) and its efforts to serve local needy families.



SBC Relationship Discussion Dinner

On Sunday, February 18 there will be a dinner in the fellowship hall at 5 p.m. (Thank you to the BASIC Sunday School class for providing the meal!) Please email or call the church office if you plan to attend. Following dinner, there will be an informational presentation regarding a proposed change to the Southern Baptist Convention constitution regarding churches with female staff members serving in pastoral positions. All members are encouraged to attend as we begin to discuss how this change could impact our relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention. Childcare will be provided.

Senior Adult Activities

In the Footsteps of the Savior

Rev. Stephen Nance will begin a new Bible Study series on Wednesday, Feb. 21 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the SALT classroom or via Zoom. The series, "In the Footsteps of the Savior: Following Jesus through the Holy Land," will continue each week through March 27. Join us as we follow Max Lucado on an inspirational journey through the hills, the dust, and the homes of the Holy Land! Discover, with new eyes, God's heart for his people and his deep love for you. Study Guides are \$10 and will be available soon. Sign up today in the church office.

The NBC Luncheon will be held Monday, February 26 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. A catered lunch is \$8. The program will be First Baptist Clayton's very own the Hope4U band. Please notify the church office no later than February 21 if: 1) you are on the permanent list but cannot attend or 2) you are not on the permanent list but plan to attend.

Sharing Hope
ROMANS 15:13 (NIV)

2024
HECK-JONES
Offering

WEEK OF PRAYER
FOR WMU NC
GOAL: \$325,000
www.wmunc.org

Heck-Jones focus week is February 12-18

The Heck-Jones offering is named for Fannie E.S. Heck and Sallie Bailey Jones, two beloved leaders and founders of WMU (Women's Missionary Union) of North Carolina.

Heck and Jones spent most of their lives serving God through the missions and ministries of WMU.

Today the missions and ministries of WMU of North Carolina are supported entirely by your gifts to the Heck-Jones offering. Please consider a gift this Lenten season.

There are envelopes in the pews or you may give through Realm.

Thank You, FBCC Youth!

The Senior Adult Banquet was wonderful. On behalf of all the senior adults, I want to say a hearty “Thank You” to all our youth, parents, volunteers, and everyone who worked so hard to provide us with a delightful evening. The food was great, the table service was excellent, and the show was outstanding. Our sincere thanks to all. Well done! – Rev. Stephen Nance, Pastor of Senior Adults

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE GENERAL FUND

In Memory of

Carolyn Allen by Andy and Gloria Pleasant
 Carolyn Allen by Durwood Hatcher and Peggy Morgan
 Carolyn Allen by Rudy and Edwina Oliver
 Carolyn Allen by Emory and Jo Howard
 Marie Monsees by Jerry and Dianne Carroll
 Frank Price, Harry Ketner, Percy Lee, Kenny Phillips, Sallie Purvis
 and Stephen Cauley by Earl and Hope Johnson
 Marie Monsees by Tom and Paula Medlin
 Marie Monsees by Donna Kabot
 Carolyn Allen by Joe and Linda Hester

In Honor of

Charles and Suzanne Royal by Andy and Gloria Pleasant

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS FUND

In Memory of Carolyn Allen by John and Delores Bagley

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE YOUTH FUND

In Memory of

Carolyn Allen by Paula Medlin
 Carolyn Allen by Fred and Texie Lee

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE SENIOR ADULT FUND

In Memory of Tillie Bradley and Carolyn Allen by David and Nancy Turlington

2024 Weekly Reports

Baptisms this year.....3	New Members.....2
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, Feb. 4.....235	Sunday, Jan. 28.....205
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, Feb. 4.....165	Sunday, Jan. 28.....171
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, Feb. 4.....\$22,777	Sunday, Jan. 28.....\$10,057
Weekly Needs.....\$14,860	