



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

February 25, 2024

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Lent is a time for recommitment

By Dr. Len Keever

The season of Lent has begun for me. It is not so much about giving up as it is about taking on. I want to go deeper with Jesus. I want to walk the dusty roads between villages, feel the hunger pangs in my stomach with the disciples, to taste my portion of the fish and the loaves with the 5,000 on the hillside. I want to be there – so I will be closer to him here.

In Philippians 3 Paul writes what to me are some of the most powerful longings from his pen. He says, “I want to know Christ.” This expresses Lenten hunger. This expresses the longing deep inside all of us – if we would only take time to listen for the heartbeat of God.

Have you ever been with someone at lunch or perhaps supper time and been asked, “What do you want to eat?” and you reply, “I don’t know. What do you want to eat?” and the cycle repeats itself until you settle on something that may fill your stomach, but not really satisfy your craving? Such is this season. Do we really know what we want? Have we really explored the desires of our hearts to find the source of our longing?

Many want to be a Christian because they want to go to heaven when they die, but there is more, so much more. Jesus promises us abundant life now if we will take up our cross and follow him. That does not mean we won’t have bitterness and sorrow, disappointments, and setbacks. It means that God will transform them into blessings, wellsprings where wisdom flows, where Jesus meets us, and he shares a drink of living water with us. It means our purpose in life will be to join Jesus in the work of God in redemption and care of creation. Our work will be a work that joins Jesus’ kingdom work.

When I was growing up our church had revivals in the Spring. They added meaning to Easter. They made the death and resurrection of Jesus so much more personal. It

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was a time to recommit ourselves to Christ. As an adult the season of Lent has come to mean this to me. It becomes a 40-days of purpose, a time of remembering Jesus' 40-days in the wilderness, a time to reflect on the Children of Israel roaming the desert for 40-years as God made them a nation.

We can be passive about our faith or aggressive. We can go through the motions, or we can be intentional. This is a season to choose. Most of us would not let Christmas creep up on us without preparation. What will we do to prepare for Easter? It is not too late to start.

The Pastor Search Committee asks you to pray for the applicants and their families as they seek God's will to where He is calling them.



The TEBA-WMU Mitchiner Scholarship

will be awarded to an outstanding senior in the churches of TEBA (Triangle East Baptist Association). Complete the application online at triangleeast.org. Application deadline is March 25. Contact Tonya Grace with questions. tonya@triangleeast.com

Deacon nominations are sought

It's time to nominate Deacons for the 2024-2025 church year. The deadline is March 10. Nomination forms are available in the sanctuary vestibules and outside the church office. Completed forms should be returned to Terry McCallum, Administrative Assistant.

The selection of deacons is a vitally important process in the church. The role of deacon, as Biblically expressed, is that of spiritual leadership through service to God, the church body, and to the lost. Deacons should never consider themselves exalted above other church members because of their position, but rather should regard themselves foremost as servants to the fellowship.

Candidates for deacon are to be chosen based on their spiritual character, their Christian example, and their proven willingness to serve the church fellowship. A candidate should have exemplified such character as a member of this church for a minimum of one year prior to consideration. Deacons should be involved in the total program of the church and attend regularly. He or she should be a faithful financial supporter of the church.

While deacons are "sinners saved by grace" and are subject to sin, they should nevertheless strive to live lives that are above moral reproach. They should be persons of prayer, Bible study, and be grounded in the faith. They should be known as compassionate people, and be willing to visit the sick, the bereaved, those members in need, and visitors to the church.

Senior Adult Activities

The Wednesday Morning Bible Study, "In the Footsteps of the Savior," has begun and continues through March 27. It is not too late to join this study. 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. The Bible Study is from 9:30 to 11 a.m. each Wednesday and meets in the SALT classroom or via Zoom. Study Guides are \$10. Sign up now in the church office.

Easter Jubilee

On Tuesday, March 19, the senior adults will be traveling to the Rudy Theatre in Selma to watch "Easter Jubilee". Tickets are \$28. We will go out to dinner at a local restaurant following the show. The bus leaves the church at 11:30 a.m. and the show begins at 12:45 p.m. Inspirational, entertaining, and Christ-centered, this is one of the Rudy's four signature annual shows. Tickets are limited, so sign up today.

Mark your calendars for Tuesday, April 2 for a trip to beautiful Airlie Gardens in Wrightsville Beach. Following the tour, we will eat dinner at the Oceanic Restaurant.

Prison Ministry, Anyone

"When did we see you sick, or in prison, and visit you?
The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Mt. 25:39-40

The Gladys Creech Long Termer Social Ministry will be returning soon to NCCIW on State Street and we need some new faces to keep this group going for another 45 years.

We typically visit the prison on the 3rd Monday of the month from 6:30 to 8:00 pm for a time of devotion, prayer, fellowship with food, and some fun (game, art, puzzle, craft, music, etc.)

Mainly we try to shine the light and love of Jesus.

If interested contact Susan Parker at: sjp318@nc.rr.com or 919-333-8394

2024 Weekly Reports

Baptisms this year.....	3	New Members.....	2
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, Feb. 18.....	155	Sunday, Feb. 11.....	160
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, Feb. 18.....	155	Sunday, Feb. 11.....	171
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, Feb. 18.....	\$10,408	Sunday, Feb. 11.....	\$9,891
Weekly Needs.....	\$14,860		

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE GENERAL FUND

In Memory of

Carolyn Allen and Tillie Bradley by John and Lynn Gibson

Frances Reams and Carolyn Allen by Ricky and Elizabeth Waddell

Carolyn Allen by David and Pam Outlaw

Carolyn Allen by the Basic Sunday School Class

Our son, Michael B. Tart, whose birthday is Feb. 28 by Randolph and Pat Tart

Tony Bell by Candy Pope

Carolyn Allen and Frances Reams by Walter and Jill Rasor

Carolyn Allen and Frances Reams by Earl and Hope Johnson

Carolyn Allen and Frances Reams by Paul and Bronna Greer

Carolyn Allen and Frances Reams by JoAnn Hardee

Maxine Smith, whose birthday is Feb. 14, by Ricky and Sherry Smith

Tony Bell by Rudy and Edwina Oliver

Carolyn Allen by David and Joe Earp

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS FUND

In Memory of

Frances Reams and Carolyn Allen by Ronald Crowder and Debbie Ragland

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE ORGAN FUND

In Memory of

Tony Bell by Tom and Emily Vinson

Tony Bell by Jim and Judy Nappier

Dear First Baptist Church family,

What a blessing you have been and are to the Allen family. Your presence and prayers have meant so much to all of us. The food you provided after the funeral was eagerly consumed. My appreciation to Anne Abene and Cathy Paschal for bringing it to the house and setting it up. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. – John Allen

Thank you for all your love and support during the illness and passing of my brother, Kenny Phillips, and for the memorials given to the church. Words cannot express how much your support meant to our family during this difficult time. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful and loving church family.

– Love, Doug and Sandra Phillips and family



Our family cannot begin to thank you enough for all of the cards, phone calls, prayers, messages, food, memorials, love and support that was extended to us during our mother, Sallie Purvis', sickness and passing. Your words of understanding and encouragement are what helped us get through the most difficult days. I cannot imagine how a family deals with the loss of a parent or family member without the love and support of their church. You are truly very special people who are loved deeply by our family. Your kindness will never be forgotten. What a blessing to call each of you my brothers and sisters.

– Love, Sandra and Doug Phillips and family