

# *The Outlook*

## **First Baptist Church Clayton**

Show • Tell  
Grow • Serve

March 17, 2024

Volume 47 Number 11

## **God does great things in His own time**

By Len Keever

The hopefulfulness of Lent is evident in the arriving signs of Spring. Although we entered this season together, we journey through the wilderness in solitude. No one can confess our sin for us. No one can accept a deeper relationship with Jesus as our proxy. Taking responsibility for our spiritual life is our task. It can be lonely. The silence that answers our confession can be unwelcoming. We long for God's response. Waiting is hard. We long for signs of redemption and a new life arriving. Embracing stillness is awkward. We desire movement, proof our prayers are heard.

This is where the hopefulfulness of Spring helps answer my longing for response. Buds on the trees alert me that Spring is now and not yet. Like the prelude to worship, the singing of birds returning from the Winter pilgrimage announce Easter's closeness. We are encouraged as we wait. God is doing a great thing in God's own time. Our Lenten solitude is preparing us to understand more fully God's gift of forgiveness, insight into resurrection's hope. Something is happening. God's presence is coming into focus.

It isn't just buds forming and blossoms on Cherry and Bradford Pear trees that further awaken this hope. The joy of our youth and children also stirs something deep within. Watching the excitement on their faces as they lead in worship, the way they embraced one another following Elevation weekend. The joy of children when they sing. God is doing a great thing among us. Their ministry with us and to us is as vital as any other ministry in the church. The wonder on their faces as they light the candles when worship begins softens our hearts. The reminder that the Spirit goes before us as they lead us out of the sanctuary each Sunday inspires us to boldly follow. The presence of our youth and children profess that God has not left us or forsaken us. They are highly valued. The Word that was in the beginning will be with us until the end.

I am grateful for each age group in the church. Our more mature members highlight the value of prolonged faithfulness. Their wisdom and maturity are some of our greatest treasures. They teach us and inspire us with their testimonies and examples. They have lived long enough to have learned how to get up when they've been knocked down. They've lost enough to understand even more the powerful hope of resurrection. They've seen

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## New member orientation lunch set for Sunday, March 24

The New Member/Visitor Ministry team will be the host of an orientation luncheon on Sunday, March 24 for new members (and their families) of First Baptist Church Clayton. New members, by baptism or transfer, who have joined since January 2020 have been invited.

The meal will be served immediately after Sunday School at 11:45 a.m. The church staff will speak about their areas of focus. Sarah Brooks will give a brief tutorial on using Realm, Audrey Harrell will discuss the church's financial processes, Jerry Poole will talk about Sunday School, Joe Hester will explain Deacons and ministry teams and Vicky Andrews will give

an update on the youth program.

All New Member/Visitor Ministry team members are invited to attend. Please call Terry to let her know you are coming.

## Ministry seeks volunteers

The With Love From Jesus Ministry is seeking volunteers on the fourth Sunday of each month (March 24) to help with sorting clothes, food items, donated supplies, prepare personal hygiene bags, and show the love of Jesus and tell the Good News.

If you are interested and willing to help, please call or text Rudy Oliver at 919-271-1178, or email him at reoholston@gmail.com.

## North America is a mission field in need of prayers, gifts

Your prayers and gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering fuel the work of thousands of missionaries as they make Jesus known in their communities.

These men and women are planting new churches in unreached communities and meeting needs through compassion ministries. Every day, lives



are being impacted and transformed.

You can donate using the envelopes in the church pews or online through Realm. For more information about the Annie Armstrong Easter

Offering, contact Jennifer Blackley at 919-215-7401 or Lynne Martin at 919-632-5702.

## Great things

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enough disappointment to better embrace the gift of reconciliation. They are a cloud of witnesses still with us who can help us navigate troubled waters. Just as God does with our youngest members, God blesses us with their presence.

Present too are those whose time has arrived. They are the ones God has been preparing to meet this season's challenges. They will show by their example what the youth can become and by their compassion that the aged still matter. They will do the work that children cannot yet do and take on what the older ones can no longer perform. They will demonstrate understanding and patience to children and respect and appreciation for those who went before them. The bridge between our oldest and youngest members is only as strong as our mutual respect and appreciation for one another. Everyone matters!

God has provided many signs and affirmations for First Baptist Church of Clayton. God has a purpose for all the church's members and ministries. The season before us may be unknown but one thing is certain, we are being equipped for great things. The evidence of God's many blessings are present when we open our hearts to see. There are great things in store for us.

## Senior Adult Activities

The NBC (New Beginners Club) luncheon is set for Monday, March 25 at 11:30 a.m. Please note the price to the catered lunch has changed to \$8.

Please notify the church office no later than March 20 if: 1) you are on the permanent list but cannot attend or 2) you are not on the permanent list but plan to attend.

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. Admission to the gardens is \$10.

Come enjoy the azaleas and other beautiful flora at this famous garden. The bus leaves at 8:30 a.m. and will return by 5 p.m. Space is limited so sign up now, or no later than March 26.

### 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](http://triangleeast.org).

Application deadline is March 25. Contact Tonya Grace with questions. [tonya@triangleeast.com](mailto:tonya@triangleeast.com)

## ?? 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](mailto:sjp318@nc.rr.com) or 919-333-8394

## WMU Ignite Conference set for April 19-20

The WMU Ignite Conference and 2024 Missions Extravaganza is set for Friday and Saturday, April 19-20. This year's conference is being held at Parkwood Baptist Church in Concord. The Keynote speaker is Holly Myers and the worship leader is Cindy Morgan.

It is \$85 for the weekend. You may register for Friday or Saturday only at a discounted rate. If anyone is interested in attending, please let Lynne Martin or Jennifer Blackley know and they will be glad to send the registration for all as a group.

Participants are also holding a Friday afternoon food packing party that starts at 3 p.m. and is a separate registration. Visit the site below for more information.

<https://www.wmunc.org/missions-conference>.

## *Memorials and Honorariums*

### **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE GENERAL FUND**

#### **In Memory of**

Tony Bell by Bill and Sarah Brooks

Tony Bell by Jo Ann Hardee

Tony Bell by Andy and Gloria Pleasant

Tony Bell by Joe and Linda Hester

Tony Bell by Walter and Jill Rasor

Carolyn Allen by Ava Spence

Frances Reams by Tony and Ginger Bufkin

#### **In Honor of**

Dorothy Harris' birthday by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Curtis Moore by Joe and Linda Hester

### **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE ANNIE ARMSTRONG FUND**

#### **In Honor of**

Bill O'Neal WMU Group by Jerry and Diane Johnson

### **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE ORGAN FUND**

#### **In Memory of**

Geoffrey Oliver by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Tillie Bradley by Ava Spence

Tony Bell by Ayden and Betty Lee

### **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE HOMEBOUND FUND**

#### **In Memory of**

Carolyn Allen and Frances Reams by Lois Weeks

### **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE YOUTH FUND**

#### **In Honor of**

Brandon and Vicky Andrews, and all the youth leaders  
by Jerry and Diane Johnson



# Children's musical presents story of Joseph

Last Sunday, our children served up some diner eats, surfer beats, and a real treat as they presented their spring musical, "Not Your Average Joe." Through songs and scenes they presented the Old Testament story of Joseph retold with a 50s twist, but the truth remains the same whether at Papa Jake's Fries and Shakes or Pharaoh's Point. "Joe" trusted God, and God



**FBC3M Choir**

worked in all things for good. Thank you to our musical participants for the time, gifts, and dedication given to bring this message to life. Thank you to the families and friends who practiced with them at home, got them to practice each week,

and showed up to support them Sunday night. Last, but certainly not least, thank you to our incredible volunteers – including our youth volunteers – who devoted time and love to help our kids prepare.

## To my Church Family

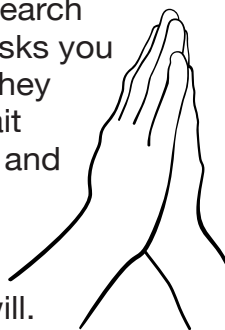
Thank you to everyone who offered up prayers, gave food, sent cards, made donations, phoned and gave hugs when you learned of the death of my son-in-law, Frank Capuano.

Your comfort was such a blessing.

With much love, Shirley Shires



The Pastor Search Committee asks you to pray that they patiently await God's timing and settle for nothing less than His perfect will.



## 2024 Weekly Reports

Baptisms this year.....	3	New Members.....	4
<b>Worship Attendance</b>			
Sunday, March 10.....	162	Sunday, March 3.....	195
<b>Sunday School Attendance</b>			
Sunday, March 10.....	119	Sunday, March 3.....	160
<b>General Fund Giving</b>			
Sunday, March 10.....	\$17,997	Sunday, March 3.....	\$12,200
Weekly Needs.....	\$14,860		



Bradley and Maryanna Barnes, Rev. Stephanie Parker and Whit Barnes enjoy the moment during the Parent/Child Dedication ceremony at the end of the morning worship on March 11.

## First Baptist Church congregation meets newest member of Barnes family

On Sunday, March 10, Bradley and Maryanna Barnes dedicated their son, Whit, to the task and purpose of growing in faith in the community of believers at First Baptist Church Clayton.

Whit was born on October 12, 2023. The congregation joined in a response to come alongside of the Barnes family in teaching, serving, and loving Whit as he grows.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

# Easter Services

AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH CLAYTON  
411 N. Fayetteville St. Clayton, NC  
(919) 553-4161 | [www.fbcclayton.org](http://www.fbcclayton.org)

**PALM SUNDAY 3.24**  
featuring a Palm processional by the children and  
music by the Mix-It-Up Handbell Choir

**MAUNDY THURSDAY 3.28**  
7pm Communion will be served

**EASTER SUNDAY 3.31**  
Sunrise Service | 6:30 am  
Regular Service | 9:30 am