

The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

June 2, 2024

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In Joy, Strength

By Rev. Stephen Nance

*“Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength”
(Nehemiah 8:10b ESV)*

Sometimes joy seems hard to come by. Joy is something we all desire – even crave – yet the cares, burdens and troubles of life oftentimes shut us off from it. Is consistent joy possible? If so, what’s the secret?

In Nehemiah 8, Jews recently returned from exile have gathered in Jerusalem and spent the day listening to the reading of the Law – God’s Word – and being instructed in its meaning. Conviction over their past failure to obey the Lord has stirred them to grief and sadness. But their leaders, including Nehemiah and Ezra, remind them that it is a festival, a day to celebrate God’s goodness to them, so they should not be sad, but should rejoice. Why? Because “the joy of the LORD is your strength.”

We can look at “the joy of the LORD” in a couple of ways. First, we can think of it as *our* joy *in* the Lord – the joy he gives us – that strengthens us as we live and walk with him daily. This is probably the most common way of understanding the phrase.

But there is a second way to look at “the joy of the LORD” that, to me, adds another dimension to this joy. The Hebrew word for “strength” in Nehemiah 8:10 literally means “fortress” or “stronghold.” The joy of the LORD is our *stronghold*. Is it *our* joy in him that constructs that stronghold? In part, perhaps, but more so, I think, it is the *LORD’s* joy *over* us – the joy he feels for his people – that is our stronghold and that sustains us. He is our never-failing fortress.

Proverbs 18:10 says, “The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are protected” (CSB). The LORD and his name are *one*. He fills us with joy but he also strengthens us and sustains us because he takes great joy in us!

So, let us be *joyful* and stand strong, because the LORD’s joy is our strength, enabling us to weather the storms of life.



First Baptist Church welcomes Robin and Braelynn Wyzykowski

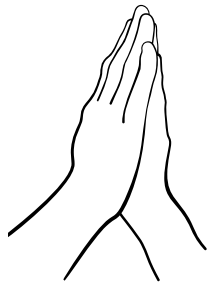
Robin and Braelynn Wyzykowski joined the the First Baptist Church family on Sunday, May 26 by transfer of letter.

Braelynn has been involved with the youth for some time. We are happy to welcome them to our fellowship and look forward to serving Christ alongside them by showing God’s love, telling others the Good News, growing spiritually and serving others.

Senior Adults to dine at Lane’s Seafood and Steak

The Senior Adults will have a dinner outing on Thursday, June 6 at Lane’s Seafood and Steak House in Angier. The bus will leave the church at 4:30 p.m. and return by 8 p.m. To get an accurate head count, please sign up in the church office no later than Monday, June 3. Also please let us know whether you plan to ride the bus or drive separately. Dr. Charles and Suzanne Royal, and Dr. Len and Kathy Keever have been invited. Plan now to come out and enjoy an evening of great food and fellowship.

The Pastor Search Committee asks you to pray that they will have God’s wisdom in all the questions and information they share with the prospective pastor.



2024 Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....3	New Members.....13
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, May 26.....110	Sunday, May 19.....150
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, May 26.....78*	Sunday, May 19.....90
*Not all Sunday School classes reported attendance	
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, May 26.....\$6,574	Sunday, May 19.....\$18,475
Weekly Needs.....\$14,860	



Thank you for your support

Thank you to the Hospitality Committee, deacons, staff and church family for your words of encouragement, cards, gifts and breakfast to celebrate our graduation from Campbell University Divinity School.

Sincerely, Keeley and Stephanie

Volunteers needed at July 4th celebration

Volunteers are sought to help pass out water at the Town of Clayton's Square to Square event on Thursday, July 4. The celebration is from 5:30 to 9 p.m. with fireworks at the conclusion. Our church will set up a tent at the corner of Main and Fayetteville Streets and pass out water to those browsing the tents and activities lining Main Street from Horne Square to Town Square.

This service opportunity is for all ages and is a great way to provide water and a loving presence on a hot summer day to the Clayton community. To volunteer, call the church office at 919-553-4161 or email Rev. Stephanie Parker at sparker@fbcclaytonnc.org with your preferred times.

Expressions of thankfulness and love

We want to express our sincere gratitude for your many acts of kindness during my hip surgery and recovery. We feel so blessed to have such a wonderful loving church family. Thank you to everyone who sent flowers, brought delicious food, sent inspirational cards and especially the uplifting prayers.

In Christ's Love, Joe & Linda Hester



Thank you for the many expressions of sympathy shown to me during my brother Glenn's recent passing and funeral. I appreciated each prayer, phone call, text and in person comments that I received. Your many expressions of kindness helped me through a difficult time. I am blessed to be part of such a supportive and caring church family.

Thank you and God bless you, Tom Mayes

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE GENERAL FUND

In Memory of

Gerald Brantley by Tom and Ida Mayes

Glenn Mayes by Jean Bryant

Glenn Mayes and Gerald Brantley by John and Lynn Gibson

Glenn Mayes by Cecil and Donna Lee

In Honor of

Keeley Tarkington by Emily Lajoie

Stephanie Parker and Keeley Tarkington by Rudy and Edwina Oliver

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE ORGAN FUND

In Honor of

Keeley Tarkington by Chris and Diane Pearce

It's time to register for VBS!

Vacation Bible School 2024

First Baptist Church Clayton's Camp Firelight is set for Sunday, July 7 through Wednesday, July 10 from 5:30-8 p.m. Sunday-Tuesday and 6 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday. We will learn about trusting God in every situation through scripture, song, games, crafts, science and fellowship!

VBS will begin with a fellowship meal the first three nights at 5:30 p.m. Parents are invited to eat. After the meal, parents will take their child to sign in at his/her "Campsite" or home base. Pick up will be at your child's Campsite at 8 p.m. sharp. On Wednesday, we will gather at 6 p.m. for a closing ceremony and Food Truck Dinner.



FBCC VBS is open to preschool children ages 3 (as of 7/10/24) through 5, and grade schoolers from completed Kindergartener through completed 5th Grade. If you sign up a child who is 3, you are required to volunteer.



Use the QR code below to register your child or call the church office at 919-553-4161 for registration information.

Be sure the click on the final "Register" button to complete registration. If you do not get a confirmation email, your registration did not complete. Registration closes June 14. After registration closes, we cannot guarantee a tee-shirt, so don't wait to sign up.