



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

November 17, 2024

Volume 47 Number 45

See the beauty of the spirit

By Dr. Len Keever
Interim Pastor

Last Friday morning, I was sitting in the chair where I do my devotions when I noticed something strange. It has long been my habit to take an hour or so each day to listen to scripture, ponder the writings of ancient and contemporary spiritual masters, journal and pray. In stillness, I imagine the Holy Spirit in conversation with my heart, deep to deep, in that place where the Spirit dwells.

There, God makes deposits, my spirit petitions, all with words I cannot hear. This is that place Paul spoke of when he said in Romans 8:26, “The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words.” Having a time and place for God and God alone is entering into sacred space. My routine was going as planned until something new caught my attention.

As you may recall, I had cataract surgery on my right eye the day before. I was having a little problem focusing. I looked across the room. That’s when I first noticed it. Looking at our sofa I suddenly saw a new shade of blue. I covered my left eye and noticed how bright and colorful it is. I covered my right eye and it went back to a bluish gray. I was perplexed.

Fortunately for me, I had a follow up visit with the doctor later in the day. I mentioned the difference to him and he smiled. “That,” he said, “is one of the benefits of having had your cataract removed.” He went on to explain that as a cataract grows, slowly and over time, the film begins to affect your vision not only adding cloudiness, but also distorting color. This is so gradual you don’t notice it. When the cataract is removed and the new lens is implanted, you begin to see hues more clearly.

Today, sitting in my chair with my Bible and devotional material in my lap, I looked across the room and wondered, are there things in my life that are distorting the vision of my heart? Are there habits and opinions that alter what God is wanting to show me? I sat for awhile trying to identify hidden prejudices, perhaps experiences I have not dealt with, or people I have not fully forgiven. Have these things slowly clouded my insight? Do these things keep me from more fully experiencing the presence of God in my life?

It was at this point I remembered our sermon from a few weeks ago when Jesus healed

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Join us Sunday, November 24 at With Love From Jesus

On Sunday, November 24, First Baptist Church Clayton has one more opportunity to serve at With Love From Jesus this year. God is blessing this ministry as evidenced by their growth this year and the testimonies from the guests that come there for help.

If you would like to volunteer, please be there by 4 p.m. for sign-in and instruction. We will be distributing food, clothing and sharing the Gospel until around 7 p.m. You can also bring any items you would like to donate to the ministry.

They are currently in need of nonperishable items. Just recently, WLFJ had over



80 guests come for food and clothing items. The WLFJ house is located at the southeast corner of W. 2nd S. Robertson streets in downtown Clayton.

If you are willing to help, see Rudy Oliver at church or call 919-271-1178, or email him at reoholston@gmail.com.

Visit www.withlovefromjesus.org for the latest praise report from Linda Williams, CEO of WLFJ. Also, the Edward Jones office at 200 Butternut Lane Suite 102 in Clayton will serve as a collection point for non-perishable food items through November 15.



Pray for a miraculous sense of love and unity among all members of the church.
Lord, empower us to love one another with a patient, forbearing love.

Need to contact a member of the pastoral staff? Here's how:

Rev. Dr. Len Keever

919.820.0792

lkeever@fbcclaytonnc.org

Dr. Keever will be in the church office, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and welcomes your calls, requests and visits

Rev. Stephen Nance

717.262.8400

snance@fbcclaytonnc.org

Rev. Stephanie Parker

919.815.0946

sparker@fbcclaytonnc.org

Rev. Keeley Tarkington

919.649.3155

ktarkington@fbcclaytonc.org

Beauty of the Spirit

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Bartimaeus outside of Jericho. Do you remember what Jesus asked? He asked, "What do you want me to do for you?" Bartimaeus said, "I want to see!"

Isn't this what our time with God does for us? Just as over time our vision blurs, so also over time God enlightens our understanding and clears our vision. Each time we pray, every moment we spend in scripture, in every worship, God gives us greater insight. With each confession, every admission of guilt, things get clearer.

Are there things in your life that are keeping you from seeing what God is doing? Ask God to remove the cataracts of your heart so you can see the beauty of the Spirit's work all around us.

Serve the Need to feed the community on Thanksgiving

A free Thanksgiving Community Meal provided by Serve the Need will be served on Wednesday, November 27 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the main hall of Clayton Civitan Club and from 5 to 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at First Baptist Church Clayton. Volunteers are needed to help serve at First Baptist. If you're willing to help, please call Ronald Mooneyham at 919-422-0097 or the church office at 919-553-4161. Volunteers are asked to be at the Church by 4:30 pm. Thank you in advance for sharing your time and love to others.



“Tie” a concern to the Prayer Net



If you were unable to attend the WMU Prayer Service on November 6 and would like to “tie” a prayer concern or a praise of thanksgiving on the Prayer Net in the Fellowship Hall, please feel free.

There are fabric strips and pens located on the table below the net. It will remain in place for a few weeks.

Volunteers sought for Live Nativity on Dec. 5

First Baptist Church Clayton is excited to once again provide a Live Nativity for the Downtown Clayton Christmas Tree Lighting on Thursday, December 5 from 5-7:30 p.m. The Live Nativity will set up across from the Yellow House on Main Street.

There are multiple opportunities for families to volunteer with their children, as well as for individuals and couples to portray characters. We also need volunteers to help with costumes, set-up, hot chocolate, clean-up and discipleship. If you are interested in being a part of this celebration, please contact Terry McCallum in the church office at 919-553-4161 or Gwen Canady at 919-818-1285.



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE GENERAL FUND

In Memory of

Kevin McKenzie by Bucky Coats
 Denny Sutton by Jerry and Diane Johnson
 James Edward Pearce and John Zullo by Ayden and Betty Lee
 James Edward Pearce by Jiles and Kim Harrell
 Kevin McKenzie by Tom and Paula Medlin
 Kevin McKenzie by Rudy and Edwina Oliver
 Kevin McKenzie and Denny Sutton by Lexene Lee
 Donald Eason by Billy Parrish

In Honor of

Noelle Franklin and Family by Ayden and Betty Lee
 Ken and Diane Dillo's 60th Anniversary by Lexene Lee

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE BUILDING FUND

In Honor of

Ken and Diane Dillo's 60th Anniversary by Joe and Linda Hester

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE SENIOR ADULT FUND

In Memory of

Kevin McKenzie by John and Dolores Bagley

In Honor of

Ken and Diane Dillo's 60th Anniversary by John and Dolores Bagley

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE ORGAN FUND

In Memory of

Belle Allen by Belle Parker
 James Edward Pearce and Sid Collins by Jim and Judy Nappier

In Honor of

Jim Elmore by Belle Parker
 Anne Abene and the Homebound Ministry Team by Randolph and Pat Tart

2024 Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	14	New Members.....	26
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, November 10.....	165	Sunday, November 3.....	215
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, November 10.....	127	Sunday, November 3.....	127
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, November 10.....	\$27,269	Sunday, November 3.....	\$17,604
Weekly Needs.....	\$14,860		