



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

February 9, 2025

Volume 48 Number 5

What does membership mean? Part 2

By Dr. Len Keever
Senior Pastor

Last week we began a short series on what it means to be a member of the Church. We talked about how when someone gives their life to Jesus as their Lord and Savior several things occur simultaneously. Our sins are forgiven, the Holy Spirit comes to reside in our heart helping us to discern and grow as believers, and we become a part of Jesus' body – Church.



We cannot be Christian apart from Jesus and the Church is Jesus' Body on earth. Today I want to explore why it is important to be a member of a local congregation.

First, it is important because we all need a place to grow and be nurtured in faith. We need a place where we are loved and accepted and where we can practice loving and accepting others. In short, we need a place to be fed, a place where we commit to belonging so that we can help others as we are helped by them (See Romans 1:12, it is a favorite

verse of mine).

As believers we cannot grow into deeper faith in a vacuum. Being a part of a church (notice the lower case "c") is identifying with other believers you want to grow deeper in faith with.

Here is a story I once heard about Dwight Moody, a famous preacher from the last century. It seems that one night a man from his church visited Dr. Moody and said he didn't believe it was necessary to belong to a local church, he'd rather just visit different places and not get involved in one place.

As the man talked, Dr. Moody quietly reached for the iron to stir the fire they were sitting next to. He took the iron and slowly pulled one ember away from the flame letting it rest on the hearth where it went from bright red and smoking to black as it lost its heat and cooled being away from the roaring flames. Wisely, Dr. Moody didn't say anything but let the conversation drift from one subject to another letting his visitor conclude that he had won the argument.

See Church membership, page 2

Church membership

Continued from page 1

Then, a bit later as the man was about to leave, Dr. Moody returned to the subject. “You see this coal? When it was a part of the fire it was hot and gave warmth. But now, having been separated from the fire, it has lost its heat. It has grown cold no longer being in the fireplace.”

With that Dr. Moody stooped down and took the coal in his hand and offered it to his visitor. “That is what happens to the Christian who separates themselves from the church. We must remain in the fire if we want to be a part of the work of Christ.”

Identifying with a local congregation is committing to remain in the fire where the Holy Spirit warms us so that we can participate in helping to warm others. We need each other to grow as believers, and others need to know we are going to be there with them so that they can grow too. The more we are together, the more we experience the warmth of relationships. The more we are together, the more we experience the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Next week we will talk about how being a member of a church is practicing spiritual discipline. My prayer is that everyone will know how important we are to one another, and that if anyone feels their faith is cooling, they will risk getting closer to the flames.

A Message from the Budget and Finance Committee

Did you know?

You can set up a recurring gift online. Go to www.fbcclaytonnc.org and click on the “Resources” tab then select “Giving.” You can choose the frequency of your gift as well as the start and end dates.



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
(other times by appointment) 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@fbcclaytonnc.org



Welcome Todd Hay

First Baptist Church Clayton is happy that Todd is joining our church family by statement of faith. We look forward to fellowshiping with Todd as we show God's love, share the Gospel, grow spiritually and serve others.

RA Derby set for February 21

The 2025 RA Derby will be on Friday, February 21 in the Fellowship Hall. Our 1st-5th grade boys in RA's have been working hard on their derby cars for the past few weeks. On race day, they will engage in friendly competition to see whose car is the fastest. Come cheer on our racers and see the creativity behind each car. Racing will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Note of Thanks

Dear First Baptist Church family,

There aren't sufficient words to thank you for all the love and support shown in the last two years of Mom's decline and recent passing. We felt His peace and strength from every prayer; kind word or deed. Your cards, calls and texts encouraged us, and once again, I can't imagine life without the love and support of a church family. Thank you.



With grateful hearts,

Diane and Chris,

Laney, Michael, Lane and Pearce

? ? 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."

– Matthew 25:39-40

The Gladys Creech Long Termer Social Ministry has renewed its commitment to serve the women of the North Carolina Correctional Institute. We encourage women of the church to help keep the ministry going for another 45 years. We visit the prison on the 3rd Monday of the month from 6:30 to 8 p.m. for a time of devotion, prayer, fellowship with food and some fun (games, art, puzzles, crafts, music and more).

Our primary mission is to shine the light and love of Jesus.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Susan Parker at
sjp318@nc.rr.com or call 919-333-8394.

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Kevin McKenzie and Denny Sutton by JoAnne Norris
 Kevin McKenzie, James Pearce, Vernon Norris, Sarah Jolivette,
 Ella Jean Flowers and Mickey Nixon by Joyce Nixon
 Katie Price by Walter and Jill Rasor
 Katie Price by Judy Wood
 Katie Price by Jiles and Kim Harrell
 Katie Price by Gerald and Glenda Toler
 Katie Price by Cecil and Donna Lee
 Katie Price by Bucky Coats

General Fund in Honor of

Lois Weeks and Dr. and Mrs. Len Keever by Joyce Nixon
 Noelle Franklin by Tom and Paula Medlin

Heck Jones Fund in Memory of

Katie Price by Carol Gilbert

Organ Fund in Honor of

Blondell Johnson on her 90th birthday by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Senior Adult Fund in Memory of

Katie Price by Donna Brown

Building Fund in Memory of

Katie Price by Joe and Linda Hester

Youth Mission Trip Fund in Honor of

the Youth and Leaders by Joe and Linda Hester

Youth Ministry Fund in Memory of

Chuck Turlington and Ella Jean Flowers by Curtis and Elaine Moore

Youth Ministry Fund in Honor of

Brandon and Vicky Andrews by Doug and Rebecca Mudd
 Youth, Youth Leaders, Volunteers and Parents by Bucky Coats

World Hunger Fund in Memory of

Katie Price by Curtis and Elaine Moore

International Missions - to Marcos and Mayra in Honor of

Blondell Johnson's 90th birthday by Curtis and Elaine Moore

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....0	New Members.....3
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, February 2.....160	Sunday, January 26.....208
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, February 2.....128	Sunday, January 26.....166
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, February 2.....\$18,023	Sunday, January 26.....\$11,427
Weekly Needs.....\$16,659	