



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

March 16, 2025

Volume 48 Number 10

Meditation on the Lord's Prayer

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

“Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.” We repeat these words often, some of us daily, but how often do we reflect on the meaning when we pray? For the next few weeks, we will explore these words in hopes that it enriches our experience repeating The Lord's Prayer.

Both Matthew and Luke provide versions of the model prayer. In Matthew, we find the version we most often pray included in the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus instructs the disciples about prayer and fasting. In Luke, the prayer comes in response to the disciples asking Jesus to teach them to pray.

This prayer, one of many in the Bible, has become the model for all prayer. It both teaches us how to pray and it gives us words to pray when we just can't find the words to express what our hearts want to say.

To begin, “Our Father” causes us to pause. The word “Our” is plural. It alerts us to the inclusive love and watch care of God. “Our” tells us that God is not ours to possess as in saying “my father.” We, all of creation, belong to God. When we address God as “Our Father,” we acknowledge that we fall under God's lordship and that we are completely dependent upon God for our existence.

To say “Our Father” is to remind us of our helplessness and need for God's care. It is a statement of humility and trust. It also alerts us that we are not alone. We never say this prayer in isolation.

Even when we utter it to ourselves silently, we are joined with the praying community all around the world. It is safe to say that when we say the Lord's Prayer, be it in worship or at any other time during the week, there is someone somewhere else saying the same prayer. To pray The Lord's Prayer is to join a larger Christian community in loving and honoring God.

The prayer begins with the confession that God is more than we can conceive. God is



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Children's Sunday School

Sunday School is a ministry where we commit to pour into the spiritual formation of our children from birth through 5th grade through studying the Bible and encouraging a time of engaging with questions and learning at age-appropriate levels. Led by Lindsay Harrell and Cathy Paschal, pictured is a recent Sunday School hour with our Kindergarten-2nd grade class where they learned that Jesus knows our needs, looking at the example of the birds and the lilies. The class made birds to remind them of the lesson with some great youth helpers!

Volunteers sought for hurricane recovery trip

First Baptist Clayton will team up with N.C. Baptist Men Disaster Relief to help Hurricane Helene victims in the Swannanoa area. Men and women, age 18 and older, are encouraged to volunteer. The mission trip is Sunday, March 30 through Friday, April 4.

The construction and repair work will consist of installing insulation, hanging sheetrock, and plumbing and electrical jobs. You do not have to be skilled at any of this work to help. Just come and do whatever you can. The homeowners will most likely be on site and you will have the opportunity to witness to them.

The team from Clayton will sleep in the Swannanoa Baptist Church. Bring a cot or blowup mattress, and sheets, blankets or sleeping bag. There will be a shower trailer at the church. All volunteers will be pro-



vided three meals per day.

We will gather in the First Baptist parking lot at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 30. Rev. Keeley Tarkington will commission the group and pray for safe travels. We will pull out at 9 a.m. After five days of work, discipleship and fellowship, the First Baptist

team will depart for home at 9 a.m. on Friday, April 4.

If you commit to this effort please make sure it is a firm commitment. Sign-up sheets are located in the side vestibules. An information packet will be available Sunday, March 9. We may take one of the church buses. Prayerfully consider joining us on this relief effort to assist our neighbors in the mountains. If you are interested or have questions please contact Richie Johnson at 919-669-1687 or send email to JRJ02201959@gmail.com.



Welcome Judy

First Baptist Church Clayton is happy that Judy Thrasher came forward on Sunday, March 9 to join our church family. We look forward to fellowshiping with Judy as we show God's love, share the Gospel, grow spiritually and serve others.

Join us next Sunday afternoon at WLFJ

On Sunday afternoon, March 23, First Baptist Clayton will take it's once-monthly turn to serve at the With Love From Jesus house in Clayton. 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. WLFJ often has over 80 guests come for food and clothing items. The WLFJ house is located at the southeast corner of W. 2nd S. Robertson streets.

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

The Lord's Prayer

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beyond. God is infinite and yet personal. God is creator, the source of life. We would not even exist if it were not for the work of God and God's love that sustains us. When we pray the prayer, we are approaching the throne of God.

The first words of the Lord's Prayer call us to intense reverence. We shouldn't repeat these words in a careless, casual manner. I am reminded of a quote in Eugene Peterson's book Working the Angles, "Prayer enters the lion's den, brings us before the Holy where it is uncertain whether we will come back alive or sane, for 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.'" These first two words are powerful reminders of the intimate care of a loving God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation. 1:8).

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

Rev. Dr. Len Keever

Pastor

919.820.0792

lkeever@fbcclaytonnc.org

Dr. Keever works remotely on Mondays and will be in the church office Tuesdays,

Wednesdays and Thursdays

(other times by appointment) and

welcomes your calls, requests and visits.

Rev. Stephen Nance

Pastor of Senior Adults

717.262.8400

snance@fbcclaytonnc.org

Rev. Stephanie Parker

Pastor of Children and Families

919.815.0946

sparker@fbcclaytonnc.org

Rev. Keeley Tarkington

Music Minister

919.649.3155

ktarkington@fbcclaytonnc.org

Young adults invited to Weekly Echo Gatherings

What is *Echo*? It is a gathering of younger adults (and those who think young) sharing what they've heard in the worship service. It is an opportunity to share what continues to reverberate after the benediction. Younger adults face different challenges when it comes to building relationships in church. We are offering time to drink coffee, get to know one another, and discuss issues that are unique to their lives. If you want to come and check it out, we meet in the Fellowship Hall after the service. We look forward to seeing you!

– Dr. Len Keever

Volunteer clean-up day set for Saturday, March 22

First Baptist Church will have a volunteer-led clean-up day Saturday, March 22 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. The team will focus on the Child Development Center wing. The Building and Grounds Committee will have all the needed cleaning supplies and accessories. Please consider giving your time to make our church building spic and span for the CDC. We will meet in the Sanctuary. Sign-up sheets will be in the church foyers and Sunday School classrooms. Thank you for your love and support of our CDC!



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Charles Stewart, Leyburn Ferrell, Bruce Carroll and Clifton Creech by Joyce T. Lee

Annie Armstrong Easter Fund in Memory of

Linda Atkinson by Joyce T. Lee

Youth Ministry Fund in Honor of

Vicky Andrews and Youth Leaders by Curtis and Elaine Moore

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	3	New Members.....	9
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, March 9.....	205	Sunday, March 2.....	281
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, March 9.....	126	Sunday, March 2.....	162
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, March 9.....	\$14,122	Sunday, March 2.....	\$14,080
Weekly Needs.....	\$16,659		