



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

March 23, 2025

Volume 48 Number 11

Meditation on the Lord's Prayer #2

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor



“Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.”

In the movie *Field of Dreams*, Kevin Costner's character Ray is asked, “Is this heaven?” to which he replies, “No, this is Iowa.” Truthfully, we don't know where heaven is located. Heaven is beyond us, and at the same time so close that God can hear our thoughts and

knows our needs. What we know is that heaven is the place where God dwells in fullness

Heaven is the place we envision when we read John 14:1-3, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.” Heaven is the ground of

our future hope.

Heaven is where God's perfection resides in all God's glory. It is the place depicted in Revelation where God is forever worshipped and adored. It is the place where those who belong to God will dwell in peace for all eternity. It is the place prepared for us where we will be with Christ Jesus.

When we pray to “Our Father in heaven,” we are addressing the Most Holy who created heaven and earth. It is the place where all things purposefully came into existence by God's creative will.

Our prayers pierce time and space. Our prayers are heard by God who at the very same time is there and here, transcendent and omnipresent.

What a privilege that we can pray. What a gift that God created prayer so that we may commune with God personally and corporately, in voice and silence; that our words would be joyfully received, that our hearts would hear the Creator's response.

It is a mystery to me that my prayers go beyond all known reality into the place where God in all God's infinite glory takes time to listen to my meager offering of words; treating them as a treasure the way a grandparent displays a grandchild's artwork on their refrigerator.

As the writer penned, “What a privilege it is to carry, everything to God in prayer.”

Deadline to sign up for the Hurricane Helene mission trip to the mountains is this Sunday

This Sunday, March 23, is the last day you can sign up to go with the First Baptist team on a mission trip to Swannanoa to assist Hurricane Helene victims.

Volunteers from our church will join with the Baptists on Missions Disaster Response team. 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 provided three meals per day.

We will gather in the church 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.

?? 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 2nd Monday of the month from 4:45 to 6:15 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.



You can now help the Franklin family through gifts to First Baptist

The Franklin family is grateful for the generosity their church family has provided not only in prayer, but also in giving. Many have given money directly to the Franklin family through Rev. Stephanie Parker. They have been most grateful for each delivery.

Going forward, to facilitate giving to the Franklin Family, you now can give through the church online or by check/cash. Please direct your contributions to "Noelle Franklin" in the memo line and/or the drop down menu online. If giving by cash, please put in an envelope with "Franklin Family" or "Noelle Franklin" on the label.

The family's financial burden is significant on top of the daily burden of walking this unimaginable path with their daughter. Thank you for your support.

Save the Date. There will be a barbecue fundraiser lunch in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, May 4 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. where 100 percent of the proceeds will benefit Noelle Franklin and her family. Donations are welcome – cash or check or use the QR code to the left.

The meal, prepared by the Baptist Men, will consist of BBQ pork, boiled potatoes, green beans, roll and dessert. Eat in or take out. Drive through the parking lot at the corner of East Hinton and North Church streets to pick up your plates to go.

Join us this Sunday afternoon at WLFJ

On Sunday afternoon, March 23, First Baptist Clayton will take its 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 West. 2nd and South Robertson streets.

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



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

*Memorials and
Honorariums*

**WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR
GIFTS TO THE**

General Fund in Memory of
Geoffrey Oliver by

Billy and Lou Woodard

**Annie Armstrong Easter Fund
in Honor of**

Jean Allen by the Jean Allen WMU



**Support Able to Serve
with purchase of a
barbecue chicken lunch**

Able to Serve, First Baptist Church Clayton and Angie's Restaurant in Garner have joined forces on a fundraiser to help support adults with disabilities.

On Sunday, March 30, join us for a barbecue chicken lunch (1/4 chicken, white or dark meat, potatoes, green beans, roll and dessert) in the Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$12 each and must be purchased in advance by this Sunday, March 23. The lunches will be delivered to the Fellowship Hall.

You may purchase tickets by calling Jackie Tarkington at 919-264-8404 or Cathy Paschal at 919-369-6025. Please make checks payable to Able to Serve.

Able to Serve is a faith-based non-profit organization that provides day programs for adults with disabilities.

Their mission is to equip adults with disabilities the means to be independent, and to connect them with opportunities to serve others in their community.

First Baptist Clayton is host to an annual Able to Serve dance and many church members have served as volunteers.

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	3	New Members.....	9
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, March 16.....	161	Sunday, March 9.....	205
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, March 16.....	127	Sunday, March 9.....	126
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, March 16.....	\$10,019	Sunday, March 9.....	\$14,122
Weekly Needs.....	\$16,659		