



# *The Outlook*

## **First Baptist Church Clayton**

Show • Tell  
Grow • Serve

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## **#5 - Forgive those who trespass**

By Dr. Len Keever  
Pastor

In the 10 Commandments, the first commandment with a promise is, “Honor your father and mother so that your days may be long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” This commandment teaches responsibility and promotes accountability.

God wants the Children of Israel to understand that they have a part to play in assuring their relationship with God continues. When we practice honoring our parents, we are naturally learning how to honor God.

Likewise, the line in the Lord’s Prayer to “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” has a reciprocal element to it. Following the prayer in Matthew 5:14, Jesus teaches, “For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Do you remember the parable of the man who owed his king ten thousand talents (see Matthew 18:23-35)? The king called the man into his presence and demanded

that he repay the money he owed or everything in his possession, including his wife and children, would be sold to repay the debt. The man fell on his face and begged for mercy and having compassion on the fellow, the king forgave the debt.

But leaving the palace, he saw another person who owed him one hundred denarii and instead of being merciful as the king had been to him, he had the man bound and thrown into prison until the debt was repaid. Hearing about this the king was furious and reversed his order. He said, “I had mercy on you, shouldn’t you then have mercy on your fellow slave?”

Our being forgiven, being offered God’s grace, is directly related to how willing we are to do for others as Christ has done for us. In Romans 12:14, Paul addresses this when he pens, “Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them.” In verse 21 he concludes, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

As believers, we are to be examples of grace and mercy. In this, we are modeling what Jesus did for us when he “emptied himself, taking on the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death

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The First Baptist mission team to Swannanoa did demolition work, installed insulation, and hung and mudded sheetrock at several homes devastated by Hurricane Helene's floodwaters. They also helped paint an old nursing home that is being converted to a volunteer center. Pictured above are (from left) Robert Little, Steve Hall, Richie Johnson, Jiles Harrell, Phil Sorrentino, John Brooks Rasor, Pat Zullo, Elaine Johnson, Bill Moor and Ricky Blackmon. Below, Steve is shown in a kitchen he demo-ed, and Pat places insulation before sheetrock is installed.



## Forgive those who trespass

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on a cross" (Philemon 2:7-8).

It is appropriate that as we begin Holy Week, meditating on the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, we take a moment to realize that if we expect Jesus to forgive us, we must be willing to forgive others. I know this is hard, but the scriptures could not be clearer. Philippians 2:12-13 encourages us, "Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work on your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

# New Bible study series begins April 16

Rev. Stephen Nance will begin a new Wednesday morning Bible Study on April 16 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the Salt classroom and on Zoom. The six-week study, *With All Your Heart: Being God's Presence to Our World* by Ray Vander Laan, explores where your blessings come from.

In the book of Exodus, God warned Israel to remember Him when they left the dry desert and reached the fertile plains of the Promised Land. In this study, we will discover how quickly the Israelites forgot God and began to rely on themselves.

Sessions are April 16, 23, 30, May 7, 14 and 21. Sign up in the church office. Study guides are \$10 and will be available soon.

## ***Spiritual retreat focuses on families***

This past fall, our children's ministry applied to participate in the Empowering Families Grant at Campbell University. Made possible with a grant from the Lilly Foundation, the aim of the initiative is to help parents and caregivers share their faith and values with their children.



To meet this aim, the project works to equip and encourage families to experience regular, substantive, family-centered spiritual formation, something that can be especially challenging in a modern context with competing schedules and the influence of technology.

We completed phase one with a listening session in October at our church, and two weekends ago, we participated in a retreat with other churches at Camp Caraway. This retreat put the feedback from the listening sessions into practice and was a wonderful weekend of faith formation and family connection for all of us! We look forward to sharing new ideas and practices with other families at FBCC.

## *Memorials and Honorariums*

### **WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE**

#### **General Fund in Memory of**

James Pollard by Joe and Linda Hester

#### **Annie Armstrong Easter Fund in Honor of**

GA and Acteen leaders and girls by Ricky and Elizabeth Waddell

# Barbecue fundraiser to benefit Franklin family

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



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. We’re trying to get an accurate head count so please call the church office if you’re planning to come.

## Dedicate the flowers in the sanctuary to a loved one

Did you know that the flowers in the sanctuary each Sunday can be dedicated in memory or in honor of a loved one? A \$50 contribution to the General Fund is all it takes and a message in the bulletin indicates the contribution. To reserve a Sunday, please call Terry in the church office at 919-553-4161.

Please know, however, that your \$50 does not purchase the flowers. It is a donation to the church.

For many years, church member Jody McLeod of Annie V’s Florist has provided the flowers every Sunday as a loan.



He or someone on his staff prepares two arrangements and places the flowers in the sanctuary prior to the Sunday morning worship service. Afterwards, the flowers are picked up and taken back to the floral shop.

Jody does not charge for this service. We are thankful for this most generous ongoing gift to First Baptist that brings God’s beauty

and warmth into His house every Sunday. If you would like to purchase the flowers to take home, please contact Annie V’s or Jody. His contact information is listed in Realm.

## Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....3      New Members.....9

### Worship Attendance

Sunday, April 6.....182      Sunday, March 30.....170

### Sunday School Attendance

Sunday, April 6.....114\*      Sunday, March 30.....107

\*Not all classes reported attendance

### General Fund Giving

Sunday, April 6.....\$15,426      Sunday, March 30.....\$8,559  
Weekly Needs.....\$16,659