

The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

April 27, 2025

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May the 4th be with you, and may you join us

By Rev. Stephanie Parker
Pastor of Children and Families

In recent years, May the 4th has become known in many circles as “Star Wars Day,” with the close connection of “May the *Fourth*” and “May the *Force*” be with you.



Next Sunday at First Baptist, it will be known as Children’s Sunday, the time each year when our young-

est churchgoers lead in worship and share their gifts in speaking, praying, singing and serving.

It is fitting that May 4th falls on a Sunday this year. Afterall, in the Star Wars movies there is a greater story unfolding of the struggle between the light and the dark side. There are hints of discipleship as young padawans study under the leadership of a Jedi master before they then become masters who teach the next generation.

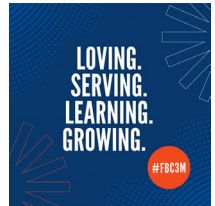
There are hints of the Holy Spirit in the presence of the force that moves and sustains a Jedi’s access to the light. There are hints of community as those seeking the light rally together to encourage one

another and spread hope to those resisting the darkness threatening them. And there are moments of redemption, as those seduced by the dark side find their way back to the light through forgiveness and love.

Our focus next Sunday is, “You are So Loved,” a theme we have been following

in our Wednesday activities. Focusing on a love of God, others, and self, our children have looked at the example of Jesus in loving, serving, learning, and growing with the invaluable support of our amazing volunteers. Next Sunday, you will see evidence of that as our children lead in worship.

Please make it part of your plans to be here next Sunday to support the children, to witness the ways God is at work in their lives, and to hear how God might speak to you through their worship leadership. Stick around for lunch and live out what it means to be in a faith community as we come around the Franklin Family to raise financial support for them. And be open to how the “force” of the Holy Spirit may be with you and move you toward hope. So, “May the Fourth” be with you, and may you come next Sunday to worship with us!



Children's musical is Wednesday, April 30

The children of First Baptist Church Clayton will present a musical on Wednesday, April 30 at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Everyone is invited to join them on their *Star Quest: Search for the Stolen Scriptures*.

In a galaxy far away, and in a future not too distant, the crew of spaceship *Star Quest J316* are on a mission: trekking through the galaxy, bringing the Word of God to people everywhere!

In the future, all written communication is now sent and stored digitally - nothing is written on paper. The Bible is stored on the Intergalactic Database, allowing all people access to God's Word. But there is a rad-



ical ploy underway by a misguided, power-hungry ruler who is steadily erasing scriptures from the database.

The crew of *J-316* has just landed on a planet whose inhabitants still employ the age-old practice of Bible memorization. With the Word of God hidden in their hearts, they offer to go back to the ship with the crew to help restore the lost scriptures.

But will they be able to

stop the plot to steal scriptures away?

Time is of the essence, and nothing in this world or beyond could be more important than making sure God's Word remains available to people throughout the galaxy.

Be sure to join us on this mission!



The Faith Sunday School Class and Bill O'Neal WMU Circle visited Jo Howard and Lois Langston on Monday, April 14 at Springbrook to celebrate their birthdays. Both were presented with flowers and cards, and birthday cake was enjoyed by all. Lois' birthday is April 14 and Jo's is April 15.



Easter morning welcomes the Resurrection and baptisms of three believers

The Easter Sunday worship service on April 20 began with three baptisms: Steve and Beverly Hall and Stephanie Chanco (center). We celebrate this moment in each of their faith journeys and welcome them into membership at First Baptist Church Clayton as we show, tell, grow, and serve together.



Let's celebrate Terry McCallum's contributions to First Baptist Church this week as part of Administrative Professionals Day 2025.

Terry, we salute you as a superhero of the workplace, and a multi-tasking mastermind who works to ensure that our church is running smoothly. May God bless you always.



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Gene Stephenson by Jo Anne Hardee
Hugh McCullen by Jeff and Jackie Tarkington
Gene Stephenson by Bucky Coats

Youth Fund in Honor of

Julia Gilbert's birthday by Chris and Diane Pearce

Music Fund in Memory of

Gene Stephenson and Sarah Jolivette by JoAnn Norris
Gene Stephenson by Candy Pope

Music Fund in Honor of

Jeff and Jackie Tarkington by JoAnn Norris

Organ Fund in Memory of

Gene Stephenson by the First Baptist Church Choir
Anne Hardee by Bobby and Nancy Hardee
Gene Stephenson by Tom, Emily and Jay Vinson
Gene Stephenson by Walter and Jill Rasor

Youth Mission Trip Fund in Memory of

Gene Stephenson by Joe and Linda Hester
Gene Stephenson by Jo Anne Hardee

Easter Sunrise Service was spiritual, inspirational



Monday is deadline for barbecue plates

Monday, April 28 is the last day to reserve a barbecue plate for the Noelle Franklin fundraiser. Please call the church office at 919-553-4161 if you would like to attend.

Lunch will be served on Sunday, May 4 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Plates will be available for eat-in in the Fellowship Hall or drive-through for to-go.

Noelle has faced a most difficult battle with osteosarcoma, an aggressive form of bone cancer, for almost a year. Your support will provide much needed funds to help the Franklin family face the days ahead. The meal, prepared by the First Baptist Men, will consist of barbecue pork, green beans, boiled potatoes, rolls and dessert. While the meal is free, donations are appreciated. We welcome cash, checks (made out to FBC Clayton with Franklin Family in the memo line) or use the QR code to make an online gift. If you cannot attend the lunch, your gifts would still be greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for supporting this family. Please pray for Noelle and her family as they continue this journey.



Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....6	New Members.....11
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, April 20.....330	Sunday, April 13.....192
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, April 20.....125	Sunday, April 13.....145
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, April 20.....\$15,085	Sunday, April 13.....\$20,867
Weekly Needs.....\$16,659	