



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

June 1, 2025

Volume 48 Number 21

God always makes all things new

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

It was a beautiful Sunday morning. Like many Memorial Day weekends I remember, the weather had changed and the temperatures that day were lower than the days before.



My grandmother used to say that every year when the snowball bush bloomed in her backyard it would turn colder. She called it “snowball winter.”

If she had blackberry bushes perhaps, she would have taught me about “blackberry winter.” That would be a lesson for another day.

God’s creation is an amazing mystery, predictable and at the same time filled with wonders.

I love paying attention to nature, especially in the spring and early summer. The return of leaves on the trees, flowers blooming in the yard, watching the birds building nests, I am drawn to crave my own revival – a new season where my faith increases.

I know there is beauty in winter where roots grow deeper in the ground and na-

ture prepares for new arrivals. But my favorite time is now where nature’s new season reminds me of Christ’s resurrection, where hope is pronounced and signs of emerging fruit become more and more visible. I am reminded of the words in Revelation 21, “See, I am making all things new.”

Saturday, I saw a small turtle struggling to crawl over the newly mowed grass. The week before I had seen a much larger turtle near the wood’s edge. It was nearly as big as my foot.

The smaller one, bearing the same orange markings, would fit easily in the palm of my hand with room to spare. One whose life is beginning and the other whose life has seen many springs. One with much to learn and the other with much to share. One nearer the beginning, neither yet knowing the end.

At church I noticed the petunias outside the office were dry. Their pink blooms were faded and the leaves parched. I went inside, found a jug, filled it with water, and gave them both an ample bath.

When the worship service was over and it was time to go home, I noticed the leaves were looking better. Today, when I returned to work, they looked much healthier. I thought to myself how good we all feel when we have received living water on a weekly/

See Making things new, page 4

CDC graduation



The First Baptist Child Development Center held its four-year old graduation ceremony last Thursday night in the sanctuary. A reception followed in the Fellowship Hall. Pictured clockwise are Kinsley Prouty, Penny Epps with CDC director Tara Senarian, Lily Tarkington and Emmalyn Finch.



Sunday School Class Spotlight

This Sunday marks the beginning of the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders' summer program – "Path to Peace with God." The study focuses on three peace paths: "God Welcomes All," "God's Spirit Moves," and "God is Amazing."

We will learn new things about who God is and how He relates to us. We will discuss how we can grow in our relationship with God as individuals and as a group.



Each Sunday, we begin by gathering around the table to break bread with one another. The children spend this time refueling, reconnecting and sharing what's on their minds or anything they've recently heard, studied or read. The topics are interesting, clever and wide-ranging!

Next, we transition to our Bible study and engage in thoughtful questions and discussions. We end our time together by reinforcing our Bible lesson through creativity with crafts or games.

The 3rd, 4th and 5th graders are a wonderful group of caring, friendly and inviting children. Please join us in Room 207. Tammy and Caroline McLeod are leading the class this summer.

Happy 50th Anniversary to Stephen and Linda

Your Pastor of Senior Adults and his bride of 50 years will be on vacation June 5-17. Stephen and Linda's anniversary is June 7 – Congratulations! Senior Adult Movie Night will not be held in June. It will resume July 11.

The First Baptist Church Clayton senior adults will visit Yoder's Dutch Pantry and Yoder's Farm and Garden Supply in Grifton on Thursday, June 19. Yoder's Dutch pantry is a small town bakery, restaurant and bulk food store famous for its French toast and butter syrup.

They serve breakfast, daily lunch specials, salads, burgers, sandwiches, wraps, and a variety of pies, breads, sweet rolls, cookies and muffins. The adjacent Yoder's Farm and Garden Supply features an extensive hardware section, canning and kitchen supplies, pet supplies, furniture, gifts, and a large selection of spices and artisan flours.

The church bus will leave the church parking lot at 9 a.m. and return by 4 p.m. There will be ample time to eat and shop. Sign up in the church office no later than Tuesday, June 17.

The NBC (New Beginner's Club) Luncheon is set for Monday, June 30 at 11:30 a.m. It will be catered by Parkside Cafe. Plates are \$8. For our program, some of the children and chaperones who attended the PASSPORTkids camp June 11-14 will share of their experiences and what they learned.

A financial contribution from the Senior Adult Ministry Fund helped defray the costs of the camp for the children and the chaperones. Come and be blessed as the children share what God has done and is doing in their lives.

Please notify the church office no later than June 26 if: 1) you are on the permanent list but cannot attend or 2) you are not on the permanent list but plan to attend.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

– Ecclesiastes 3:1 ESV

Making things new

Continued from page 1

daily basis to sustain us.

There are lessons all around to remind us of the rhythm of nature and faith God has built into us. The reassurance of God's care and provision abounds if we take time to look for it in familiar and unfamiliar ways. Renewal and revival are occurring all around us calling us to take part in this new season. God is calling us to participate as God makes all things new.

When I returned to the office after our morning worship to hang up my robe, I glanced at my phone to see if there was any word on someone for whom I'd been praying. When I did, I saw that over 200 people

had viewed our service on Facebook (as I write this the number exceeds 500).

Once more the majesty of God's creation spoke to me. What a wonderful world God has created that includes so many ways, old and new, for us to be together. God makes all things new, and God makes new things to keep us refreshed and together.

It is indeed going to be a great summer. How do I know this? Because God is always present making all things new, making new things fruitful, loving us through every season of life. I wonder what fruit we will harvest in the Fall as a result of our attention and faithfulness.

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE General Fund in Memory of

Lin Shehdan by the MRT Mission Group

Noelle Franklin by Jasmyrn Sowah

Lin Shehdan by Lexene Lee

Noelle Franklin, Alice Benson and Lin Shehdan by Jo Ann Hardee

Heck Jones Fund in Memory of

Noelle Franklin and Gene Stephenson by David and Nancy Turlington

Organ Fund in Honor of

Jackie Smith's birthday by Ricky and Sherry Smith



Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....6	New Members.....14
--------------------------	--------------------

Worship Attendance

Sunday, May 25.....126	Sunday, May 18.....182
------------------------	------------------------

Sunday School Attendance

Sunday, May 25.....104	Sunday, May 18.....135
------------------------	------------------------

General Fund Giving

Sunday, May 25.....\$8,860	Sunday, May 18.....\$13,787
----------------------------	-----------------------------

Weekly Needs.....\$16,659	
---------------------------	--