



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

June 15, 2025

Volume 48 Number 23

Depend on God, then your faith will grow

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

Have you ever noticed how much we grow in adversity? Some of my more intimate moments with God have been when I was going through something difficult.

Yes, my faith has grown during those times where blessings are evident, like mission trips and retreats. I also realize that I have had fruitful seasons when I have traversed through rough patches and times of uncertainty as God has led me through them.

In Romans 5:3-5, the Apostle Paul recognizes this. He writes, “we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

This is very similar to the 23rd Psalm where the Psalmist writes, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”



I have a friend who once shared about one of the most challenging times of her life. She said, “I never want to go through that again, and I hope, I never forget what I’ve learned about God’s love for me I gained during that time.” My friend told me that amid her suf-

fering she discovered she was not alone – that God was present, that faith made all the difference in helping her live through what she couldn’t understand.

It was the growth in her faith that she wouldn’t want to lose. As for the pain and loss, she would never want to go through it again.

The fact that our faith grows and God’s presence gets us through the tough times is never meant to justify our loss or to cheapen our pain. Loss and pain are real. Grief is real. Loss is felt. The hole in our heart never truly heals. Trauma leaves behind something we never get over.

I for one don’t want to go back and live through tough times. They have been painful; I wish they’d never occurred. I wish I

See Depend on God, page 2

New Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Terry McCallum is available by phone and email until noon on Friday.

Sunday School Class Spotlight

Each Sunday, the sweet and loving children of the K-2 Sunday School Class bring a lot of energy and excitement to the classroom. We begin with snack time where we share special things from our week or things happening in their lives.

We are currently learning how "God welcomes all" through Bible stories such as Zacchaeus. We will finish the summer series learning why "God is Amazing" through different stories such as Daniel, Lazarus and feeding the hungry crowd.

The children are always good listeners for our Bible stories. We also have fun with a craft each week to reemphasize the story. Several times we have visited with our Sunday School neighbors (the adult classes) to deliver special gifts to them.

The class is taught by Lindsay Harrell, Cathy Paschal and Kim Harrell. They always love when our youth friends come in to help. Come visit us in room 205 to receive some sweet smiles and maybe a hug.



Depend on God

Continued from page 1

could change the past, but I can't.

I often think that God consoles us in these times to remind us that we are not alone, that no matter how bad things are, God's love will ultimately prevail. The proof of God's presence for me is evident that I can look back and see where my faith has grown when I have depended on God in uncertainty.

I can see where my endurance has increased, and my character has been enhanced. These things offer me hope. They remind me that the Holy Spirit is present, just as Jesus promised, to comfort me and to show me things I wouldn't see without faith.

In John 14:26, Jesus promises to send us

an Advocate or Comforter, the Holy Spirit to remind us of all that Jesus has taught us. God does not want us to ever feel alone, unloved, or forgotten, especially when life does something cruel and we lose our balance. God wants us to know His presence always.

Note of Thanks

Thank you so much for the many expressions of kindness and love that have been shown to us during Gene's sickness and following his passing. Prayers and cards from the Bereavement Team, the Dr. Jean Allen WMU Group and numerous individuals have meant a great deal to us.



Food and visits to our home, as well as your presence at Gene's Celebration of Life were blessings. You have truly been a vessel pouring out God's love. May God continue to use each of you.

– The Family of Gene Stephenson

Parking lots to be resurfaced June 18-20

Both First Baptist Church parking lots (Fayetteville and Church street) will be closed Wednesday-Friday, June 18-20 for re-surfacing and re-striping. Please park on the grass lot at the corner of Fayetteville and Hinton streets these days.

Seniors to visit Yoder's Dutch Pantry

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 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 8:30 a.m. (this is earlier than a previous report) 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.

PASSPORTkids to present NBC program on June 30

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 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.

Join us Sunday, June 22 at WLFJ

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." – Matthew 25:40

On Sunday afternoon, June 22, 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, let Rudy Oliver know you're coming by Thursday, June 19. Please be at WLFJ at 4 p.m. on Sunday 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.

Rudy can be reached at 919-271-1178, or email him at reholston@gmail.com.

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Tom Medlin by Doug and Sandra Phillips
Gene Stephenson and Tom Medlin by John and Lynn Gibson
Tom Medlin by David and Pam Outlaw
Tom Medlin by David and Alison Perry
Tom Medlin by C.T. and Barbara Williford
Tom Medlin, Evelyn Belda, Lin Shehan and Noelle Franklin by Jiles and Kim Harrell
Tom Medlin by Lynne Martin
Tom Medlin by Jeff and Jackie Tarkington
Lin Shedan and Tom Medlin by Tom and Ida Mayes
Tom Medlin by Paul and Bronna Greer

General Fund in Honor of

Blondell Johnson by the Bill O’Neal Circle
Blondell Johnson by the Faith Sunday School Class
Steve and Linda Nance’s 50th Anniversary by Lexen Lee

Senior Adult Fund in Memory of

Tom Medlin by the SALT Sunday School Class
Tom Medlin by Shirley Shires

Senior Adult Fun in Honor of

John and Dolores Bagley by Joyce Kidd

Youth Mission Trip Fund in Memory of

Chuck Turlington by John and Cathy Paschal
Chuck Turlington by Jiles and Kim Harrell

Youth Ministry Fund in Memory of

Chuck Turlington by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Organ Fund in Memory of

Evelyn Belda, Lin Shedan and Tom Medlin by Gerald and Glenda Toler
Lin Shehan and Tom Medlin by Tom, Emily and Jay Vinson

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....6	New Members.....13
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, June 8.....160	Sunday, June 1.....187
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, June 8.....131	Sunday, June 1.....130
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, June 8.....\$17,961	Sunday, June 1.....\$14,634
Weekly Needs.....\$16,659	