



The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

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Grow • Serve

August 3, 2025

Volume 48 Number 29

New Wednesday night format, 30-30-30, begins on September 10

By Rev. Keeley Tarkington
Minister of Music

In the fall, the church will try a new format for Wednesday nights in the form of 30-30-30 Nights. The format of the night is meant to revitalize Wednesday night participation and help us be intentional about loving God through a time of collective worship (30 minutes), loving self through learning (30 minutes), and loving others through fellowship and missions activities (30 minutes).

During the first 30 minutes of the night from 6-6:30 p.m., we will have a time of collective worship in the Sanctuary with praise and worship music, prayer, and a moment of response to how God is working in our lives.

The next 30 minutes, 6:30-7 p.m., will focus on learning. Our children and youth will participate in their age-appropriate lessons planned by their leaders. Adults will have at least three options for study with one being a focus for young adults and parents. More details will come out in the coming weeks about these studies.

The final 30 minutes, 7-7:30 p.m., will be a time for activities. Ministries in the church are invited to schedule and advertise activ-

ities for this time each Wednesday night for church attendees to put into practice loving our neighbors. A few activities that are already being planned is a “Walking Club,” a group who will walk around the church and fellowship through conversation and exercise as a way to foster relationships with other believers. Another activity is a dedicated time to prayer as we seek to love through praying for our neighbors. Handbells will rehearse during this time as they love others by serving the worshipping community through music.

As we enter into this new Wednesday night format, we do so knowing that there will be some hiccups along the way. One of those hiccups being that we may not always have a perfect 30 minutes for lessons and activities. One may go over slightly, and that is ok!

The vision for these nights is to practice faithfully and intentionally Jesus’ words on the greatest commandment, ““You shall



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We need Jesus; we need one another

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

There is a tree behind our house that has been infested with wasps. They aren't normal wasps; they are those yellow striped wasps that tunnel into hollow trees to make their nests. People tell me that they are the kind of wasp that if stung, you may end up going to the hospital.

I first noticed the wasps several weeks ago and proceeded to spray their hole with an insecticide that is supposed to destroy the nest. It didn't work! Two days later, I returned to the tree dressed in a hazmat suit, my skin covered from head to toe, to get close enough to really fill the tree with spray.



I think it only made them mad. I tried stuffing their entrance with a rag; they found another place to burrow in. I bought a can of spray foam insulation and after spraying the insecticide, filled every hole I could find with it.

I have done that twice to no avail. Yesterday, I called an exterminator. It was hard to admit it, but I needed help.

Asking for help is not easy for most of us. From a very early age we learn to say, "I can do it myself!" and it only gets louder and more sophisticated the older we get. One theologian I read years ago said that he believed that the original sin appears in all of us, planting its roots deep in our hearts, the first time we say, "I can do it myself!"

He suggested that when Adam and Eve ate the fruit in the garden, their sin was that they thought they could do something without God. The older I get the more I realize how prideful it is to think we can do things on our own. The longer we live, the more we realize we need help, the more stubborn we can get in asking for it.

Surrendering to Jesus is humbling ourselves and recognizing that we cannot earn salvation on our own. Nothing we can do can earn forgiveness. No matter how hard we try, we can't un-say words we should not have said or undo something we should not have done.

Only by grace can those things be forgiven. Only through faith can we discover the help we need. I can't help but remember 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Confession must come first. Realizing we are incapable of earning forgiveness on our own and asking Jesus for help is the first step in being forgiven. Realizing and admitting we need each other is the first step in creating a healthy community.

As most of you know by now, I had hip replacement surgery on Thursday, July 31. For me to be healed, to regain my strength, I must ask for help. I can't do this by myself. Each time I ask Cathy for help I will have to humble myself – but if I don't.... Life gives us these lessons. It is one of the ways God designed us to know how much we need God and we need one another. Yes, we should take responsibility for ourselves, but never to the point we act like we don't need Jesus and we don't need each other. The Bible tells us that it is not good for humanity to be alone. We always need God. We always need one another.

The stone the builders rejected, has become the capstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. – Psalm 118:22-24





Our newest members

David and Tracy Gregory joined our church family this past Sunday. We welcome David and Tracy to First Baptist Church Clayton and look forward to sharing our faith journey with them.

Wednesday nights

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love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Our hope for our community is that as we take time to worship and love God, learn about him and ourselves, and love our neighbors through fellowship and missions, we will grow as believers and Christ followers.

We hope you will join us for 30-30-30 Nights in the fall, beginning on Wednesday, September 10 at 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Keep an eye out for more details on the adult studies that will be available and more information regarding Fellowship Suppers and how that will be scheduled in this new format. Also, let us know if you have missions and fellowship ideas for the last 30 minutes of the night. We look forward to seeing how God will work through this new Wednesday night format and to its development and flourishing with your input and participation.

Acolyte signup deadline is August 24

It's time to sign up for another year of Acolyte rotations and to train new participants. Acolytes are 3rd - 5th graders that light and extinguish the candles during the 9:30 a.m. worship service. The flame is a symbol and visual reminder that God is with us as we worship and that He goes with us when we leave. Being an Acolyte is a wonderful opportunity for children to lead in worship.

Sign up here by August 24 to be scheduled for the 2025-2026 Church Year:

<https://forms.gle/7185EoFeetQiX1we9>

Celebration Team sends cheers, love

At First Baptist Church Clayton there are eight Ministry Teams dedicated to loving and supporting our church family. These teams function under the auspices of the Deacon Ministry and are led by active Deacons. They are Prayer, Bereavement, Casserole, Celebration, Homebound, Hospital Visitation, Transportation and Visitor/New Member. This week our focus is on the Celebration Ministry Team.



These teams are not committees and members are not elected by the church. To participate, all you have to do is volunteer. And you do not have to be an official member of our church to serve on a ministry team. For more information about the Deacon Ministry, contact chairman Tim Matthews at 919-906-2225 or centrallube1@gmail.com, or vice-chair Ann Austin at 919-333-6791 or dddhd@aol.com.

Last week, Bronna Greer was not listed as a member of the Casserole Ministry Team. We apologize for the omission.

Celebration Ministry Team

The Celebration Ministry Team mails cards and notes to our church family recognizing birthdays, anniversaries, baptisms and other special occasions. Recipients are reminded that they are appreciated and loved.

Sarah Brooks is the Celebration team leader. She is assisted by Donna Brown, Jessica Collins, Paul and Bronna Greer, Kim and Lindsay Harrell, Jo Howard, Betty Zullo and Whitney Keith. If you would like to be a part of this team, please contact Sarah at 984-323-2625 or sbrooksgolfer@gmail.com.

Memorials and Honorariums

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

Lois Weeks' 99th Birthday by the Faith Sunday School Class

Senior Adult Fund in Honor of

Lois Weeks by John and Delores Bagley

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	10	New Members.....	19
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, July 27.....	162	Sunday, July 20.....	177
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, July 27.....	122	Sunday, July 20.....	116
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, July 27.....	\$11,120	Sunday, July 20.....	\$13,787
Weekly Needs.....	\$16,659		