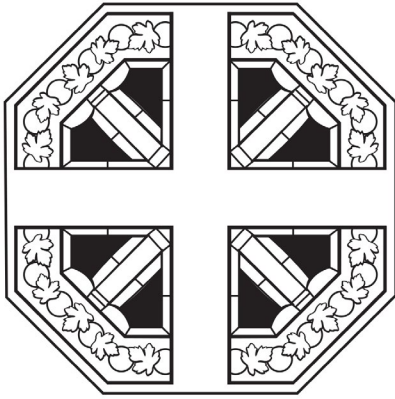




The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

October 12, 2025

Volume 48 Number 39

Always explore new ways to grow deeper in your faith

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

As I prepare for my pilgrimage to Iona, Scotland, I am reminded of the importance of looking for God's activity in our lives. The week I will spend there is designed to



help those of us who pilgrim together to focus on God's daily presence.

The mornings will begin with worship and the days will end with worship. Worship will book-end the day; everything

in-between is to be influenced by a good beginning and ending.

In fact, I have read that those who once occupied the monastery did not say "Amen!" at the end of their morning prayers as they believed that the entire day's activities were to be approached as if one was still in prayer. Only at the end of the day would they voice their "Amen!" in thanksgiving for God's continued presence.

We are instructed to travel light, not to bring anything that may take our attention away from God. We'll leave modern conveniences behind. Our diet will be vegetarian

with meat served only for dinner on Tuesday night. There are no napkins at Iona, we are asked to bring our own.

There is Wi-Fi but only in limited places. Our focus is supposed to be on God and not on distractions and conveniences. The hope is that the routine of practicing the presence of God in a cloistered environment will help me be more aware of the Holy Spirit's activity in my daily routine.

Years ago, I had an experience on a retreat where no one spoke for 24 hours. In silence we became aware of sounds all around us that we too often miss or take for granted. With no one speaking the birds sounded louder, their songs more beautiful.

When the dinner bell rang, one could hear the note hanging longer in the air. At times we could hear our own heart beating; our breathing sounded louder. When we prayed, we strained to hear the wind of the Spirit blowing in our deep, hidden place where faith dwells.

After just 24 hours, the discipline of silence became a mainstay of my prayer life. It is my hope that what I experience at Iona will enhance my relationship with God.

See Explore new ways, page 2

FBCC to Serve as Prayer Team at OC Fest 2025

First Baptist Church Clayton is thrilled to be partnering with OneCompassion and other local churches to participate in OC Fest 2025, a contemporary Christian music concert and celebration event at the Town Square in downtown Clayton on Sunday, October 12. Volunteers from our congregation will staff a dedicated prayer area, offering listening ears and heartfelt prayers to any concertgoers who wish to pause and pray.

Gates open at 1:30 p.m. and the concert kicks off at 2 p.m. at the Town Square. Free parking is available nearby. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own chairs, picnic blankets and coolers.

Outside food and drinks are welcome, and while the event remains free to all, any donations made during OC Fest will directly support the OneCompassion Holiday Ministry, aiding local families in need this Christmas season.

OC Fest 2025 promises an unforgettable day of faith, fellowship and music, headlined by Cochren and Co. with special guest Riley Clemmons, and featuring local openers NorthBound Worship and HopeFront Music. Beyond the main stage, food trucks, vendors and family-friendly activities will create a fun atmosphere for all ages.

FBC Clayton prayer volunteers are looking forward to serving alongside the community and praying with those who visit the prayer area. Bring your friends, family and a spirit of celebration.

All are welcome to come enjoy great music and fellowship at the Clayton Town Square near the Clayton Center.

OneCompassion is a local faith-based charity that provides life-changing support to individuals and families during times of significant need. Learn more about OneCompassion and OC Fest here: www.onecompassion.com.



Explore new ways

Continued from page 1

I share this because I want everyone to know that we are never so experienced in our spiritual exercises/habits that we no longer need to explore new ways to grow deeper in faith. I read once that if the well of one's spiritual life seems dry, we need to dig deeper.

Life has taught me that one need not wait for a drought to pick up the shovel. God wants more for us. God wants us to be closer to God.

In the closet in my office at church there is a shovel from a groundbreaking ceremony years ago. I often look at it and see a different meaning. It urges me not to be complacent. It reminds me to keep digging.

1 Peter 2:2 reminds us, "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." We are not meant to live our lives as newborns.

God wants us to come to know many spiritual things that help us grow toward the fullness of salvation. I am looking forward to growing deeper. Is there something you can do to enhance your walk with Christ?

More photos from the Swannonoa Mission Trip

Members of the First Baptist disaster relief team were the hands and feet of God as they worked to help residents of western North Carolina get back into their homes. Pictured clockwise are Robert Little (with floor sweeper) and Phil Sorrentino; Sandy Stephenson, John Brooks Rasor and Elaine Johnson with Mel (back turned) from Baptists on Mission; the highlight of the trip was this new found friend that paid the team a visit. The juvenile bear wondered up to a home under repair.



?? Prison Ministry, Anyone ??

“When did we see you sick, or in prison, and visit you?
The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of
the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

– Matthew 25:39-40

The Gladys Creech Long Turner Social Ministry has served the women of the North Carolina Correctional Institute in Raleigh for over 45 years. We are always on the lookout for new volunteers. The group visits the womens’ prison on the 2nd Monday of the month from 4:15 to 5:45 p.m. for a time of devotion, prayer, fellowship with fun (games, art, puzzles, crafts, music and more).

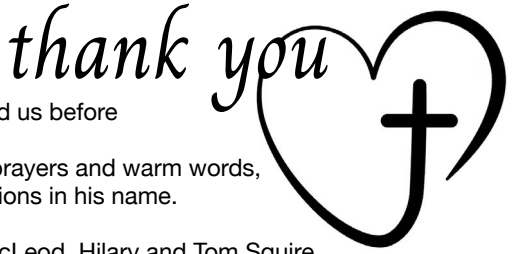
Our primary mission is to shine the light and love of Jesus.

If you are interested in joining this mission group, please contact Susan Parker at sjp318@nc.rr.com or call 919-333-8394.

To our First Baptist Church Family,
The McLeod family would like to
express our heartfelt appreciation
for the love and support you showed us before
and after my father's passing.

Thank you for your presence, the prayers and warm words,
cards, texts and memorial contributions in his name.
May God bless you all.

– Stewart, Tammy and Caroline McLeod, Hilary and Tom Squire



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Joyce Blackley by Al and Valerie Carpenter
Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by David and Pam Outlaw
Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by Bucky Coats
Frances Mooneyham by the Basic Sunday School Class
Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by Andy and Gloria Pleasant
Frances Mooneyham by Jeff and Jackie Tarkington
Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by Tom and Ida Mayes

General Fund in Honor of

Ken Edge by the Hope Sunday School Class

Heck Jones Fund in Memory of

Ernest and Joyce Blackley by Lowell and Dorothy Harris
Ava Spence by Rudy and Edwina Oliver

Organ Fund in Memory of

Frances Mooneyham by Walter and Jill Rasor
Shirley Coggins and Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by Candy Pope
Ava Spence by Gerald and Glenda Toler
Ava Spence by Anne Abene
Ava Spence by Jo Ann Hardee
Ava Spence by Tom, Emily and Jay Vinson
Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by Bill and Sarah Brooks
Bernard F. McLeod, Jr. by Curtis and Elaine Moore
Frances Mooneyham by Curtis and Elaine Moore

WMU Fund in Honor of

Barbara Calton by the Hope Sunday School Class

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	10	New Members.....	22
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, October 5.....	158	Sunday, September 28.....	148
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, October 5.....	152	Sunday, September 28.....	81
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, October 5.....	\$17,918	Sunday, September 28.....	\$9,970
Weekly Needs.....	\$16,659		