

The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

March 15, 2026

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A lesson from the Fig Tree

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

I am enjoying the unseasonably warm weather. Saturday, I worked in the yard all day, got a little sunburned and even enjoyed a pollen induced sneeze or two. I loved the warmth of the sun, the brilliance of the blue sky and the brightness of those new leaves beginning to unfold.

Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 24:32, "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near." This too is one of those sayings with double meaning. Jesus used what they already knew about reading the signs to teach them how to pay attention to what God is doing all around them.

It's not just about figs forming, it is also about God's work being done right under our noses that we may be unaware of.

This season heightens my awareness. The blooming of the forsythia, the bright yellows of the daffodils, the return of the cardinals and the bluejays, Easter is nearby. The seed that God planted in that borrowed

tomb is about to break from the ground and produce God's fruit all around the world for yet another glorious season.

With these thoughts, who doesn't feel the chill of winter dissipating? Who doesn't sense that something wonderful is about to unfold?

As Cathy and I look forward to planting tomatoes and basil, flowers that attract butterflies, watching for the dogwood to bloom, I can't help but think how happy the farmer must be at this time of year getting back into the field and planting their rows of soybeans, corn, tobacco and cotton.

I can't help but get excited about Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, Easter Sunrise and Easter Sunday morning worship. I think about mission trips and Vacation Bible School. God has so many opportunities for us just waiting to be seen, waiting to be harvested.

Let us pay attention to the Bartlett Pear, the bloom of the Cherry Tree, the buds on the Azalea.

God is doing a wonderful thing around us. Even with all the discouraging news and uncertainty, there is a constant: God is with us! Spring's beauty is unfolding to assure us that God loves us and will never leave us alone.



God's Kingdom is growing

First Baptist welcomed seven new members to our church family over the past two weeks. Pictured are (clockwise) Ashley Eason; Patricia Davis and Tommy Bagley; Ben and Sara Lynn Skillman with their children, Cooper and Madelynn; and Nick and Christy Dollar with their son, Grant. Ashley, Nick and Christy are awaiting Baptism; Patricia and Tommy join by statement of faith; and Ben and Sara Lynn join by transfer of letter.



First Baptist Church of Clayton Child Development Center

If you love working with children and want to make a meaningful difference every day, we'd love to meet you. Join our team and help little learners grow and thrive.



WE ARE HIRING!

- LEAD TEACHERS
- ASSISTANT TEACHERS
- SUBSTITUTE POOL

Please email your resume to fbcc.edc.jobs@gmail.com to apply!

We welcome Dr. Tobias Hocutt to the neighborhood

We are happy to have Dr. Tobias Hocutt and his family worshipping with us this Sunday. Dr. Hocutt will assume the principal position at Cooper Academy in mid-April.

First Baptist Church Clayton has an informal partnership with Cooper, through which we participate in the Backpack Buddies program, contribute special food boxes for families in need during school holidays, provide students with school supplies, snacks, extra meals, as well as coats and shoes when the need arises.

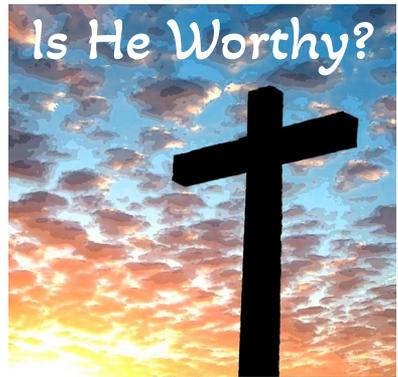
We support students at Christmas through the Cooper Christmas Tree program. We also provide the staff with Valentine treat bags. We look forward to continuing our support of Cooper Academy in the future and welcome Dr. Hocutt to his new position.



Easter Cantata set for March 22

Join us for a special service of music and worship on Sunday, March 22 at 9:30 a.m.

The choir will share the cantata, "Is He Worthy?" We will have the string ensemble back with us as well as trumpets, bass guitar, acoustic guitar and drum set.



Young adults invited to Echo

What is Echo? It is a gathering of younger adults (and those who think young) sharing what they've heard in the worship service. It is an opportunity to share what continues to reverberate after the benediction. Younger adults face different challenges when it comes to building relationships in church. We are offering time to drink coffee, get to know one another, and discuss issues that are unique to their lives. If you want to come and check it out, we meet in the Fellowship Hall after the Sunday morning worship service. We look forward to seeing you!

– Dr. Len Keever

*On Wednesdays at 12 noon during Lent,
and each day during Holy Week
(March 30-April 3), Dr. Keever will be
live-streaming a short midday devotion.
These devotions will be streamed the same
as our Sunday Morning services.
Please make plans to join us as we
journey toward Easter together.*



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Betty Matthews by Robert and Vinnie Mills
 Betty Matthews and Ricky Dean Barbour by Ayden and Betty Lee
 Dr. James and Helen Ellerbe, Rudolph and Belle Allen, James and Ramona Cash
 and Dr. Minter and Frances Payne by Joyce Lee
 Betty Matthews by Jay and Kathy Woodard
 Betty Matthews, Jean Lee, George Lovering, Jackie Fussell, Gardner Temple,
 Ricky Dean Barbour and Bobbie Sue Batts by John and Lynn Gibson

General Fund in Honor of

Granny Lee's 93rd birthday by John Brooks and Lauren Razor

Capital Reserve Fund (formerly Building Fund) in Honor of

Joyce Nixon's 94th birthday and Chloe Nixon's 21st birthday by Julie Nixon

Organ Fund in Memory of

Helen Ellerbe and Mickey Nixon by Julie Nixon
 Bobbie Sue Batts by Joe and Linda Hester

Organ Fund in Honor of

Jim and Sarah Ellerbe by Julie Nixon

Bill O'Neal Circle in Honor of

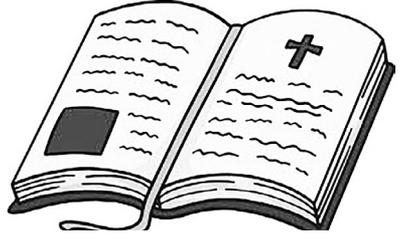
Bill O'Neal Circle by Joyce Lee

Youth Ministry Fund in Honor of

Blondell Johnson and Lexene Lee by Curtis and Elaine Moore
 The youth, youth leaders and volunteers by Ricky and Elizabeth Waddell

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice now in the hope of the glory of God.

– Romans 5:1-2



Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....0	New Members.....7
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, March 8.....174	Sunday, March 1.....226
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, March 8.....129	Sunday, March 1.....152
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, March 8.....\$22,163	Sunday, March 1.....\$12,821
2026 Weekly Needs.....\$17,470	