

The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

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God provides and prepares

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Pastor

It is hard to believe that the season of Lent is almost over. Today, we begin the last stretch toward Easter as we enter Holy Week, the time we celebrate and honor Jesus' Passion.

The season has moved so quickly. Looking back, we see the wonders God has provided to help us to prepare for the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord.

Like so much in life, sometimes we don't see the blessings around us until they have passed. This is certainly true in church. Think about what God has provided these last 33 or so days as we have tried to raise our attention to the Spirit's work among us.

Immediately after a moving service on Ash Wednesday, our youth celebrated Elevation Weekend culminating in a wonderful youth led worship. Two Sunday's ago, they cooked, served and entertained for the Senior Adult Banquet.

At the time we look for God's activity among us, their contagious joy for Christ alerts us to the presence of the Spirit actively working to raise up a new generation of leaders for the church. We can be thankful not only for the youth, but for their leaders who give so much out of their love for Je-

sus. Our team of youth parents are a blessing.

Last week, the choir too shared the gifts God has placed in them by leading in worship. Accompanied by gifted musicians, many of them members of our church, they presented the cantata *Is He Worthy*. The service touched our hearts by inviting us to remember what God did for us in sending Jesus to offer us salvation.



The message was inspiring. The dedication of the choir in their practice and behind the scenes work was humbling. We are blessed with wonderful music at First Baptist Church.

Also, during Lent, we have seen many examples of missions being celebrated in our church. Our partnership with Cooper Academy was recognized as we welcomed Dr. Tobias Hocutt as the new principal. Our RAs and Challengers have volunteered with projects that have helped our members. GAs and Acteens are actively reaching out.

Our Senior Adults are meeting and supporting one another. Bible studies and prayer gatherings continue to feed our

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Join us during Holy Week

On Monday through Friday 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.

Maundy Thursday - April 2

First Baptist Church Clayton will hold its Maundy Thursday service at 7 p.m. on April 2. Everyone is invited to attend. Bring a friend or neighbor.

This solemn worship service observes the Pass-over meal when Jesus gathered with his disciples in the Upper Room to break bread and drink from the cup. Maundy is Latin for mandate or command.

It was at this meal that Jesus gave his disciples a new commandment, "A new command I give you; Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." – John 13:34-35.

This moment marked when followers of Christ broke away from the traditional Jewish Passover meal and began observing what we know as the Last Supper. On Maundy Thursday, we will also break away from tradition. Instead of the usual communion service when bread and juice are served in the pews, the congregation will come forward to the altar and take communion by intinction.

Intinction is the practice where the pastors hand out the bread and parishioners dip it into the cup then eat it.

Additionally, Jesus's seven last statements he spoke while on the cross – taken from the gospels of Luke, Matthew and John – will be read aloud. A candle is extinguished after each reading signifying that Jesus' earthly life is nearing its end.



Easter Sunrise Service

Join us for a Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. on the lawn across the street from the church office. Following the service everyone is invited into the Fellowship Hall for breakfast. *He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay.*

– Matthew 28:6

Easter Sunday Worship Service

The Easter worship service will be a special one this year. In addition to celebrating Jesus Christ's victory over death, three new church members will be baptized. They are Nick and Christy Dollar, and Ashley Eason.

Communion will also be served during the Easter morning worship. We hope to see you at all our Holy Week Services. Bring your family, and invite your friends and neighbors as we observe the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

Hexin Qaio joins FBCC Music Ministry

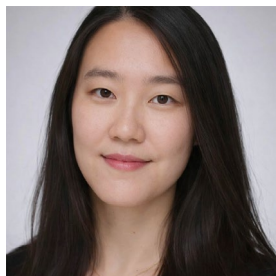
First Baptist Church Clayton is pleased to announce that Dr. Hexin Qaio (first name pronounced Haitian) will be joining our Music Ministry Team on Sunday, April 12.

Dr. Qaio is a gifted professional pianist who is a full-time piano professor at Campbell University. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance, Master of Music in Piano Performance, Master of Music in Collaborative Piano and a Doctor of Music in Piano Performance.

She was an organist for a year at another church and is willing and ready to step in to play organ at FBCC upon request.

We are excited about all the numerous opportunities ahead with her on our team.

First Baptist also expresses our great love and gratitude to Lisa Bass, who has been our faithful and wonderful interim for the past six months. We are excited that Lisa will remain with us through Easter Sunday, April 5.



Thanks to each of you who purchased a plate or donated to the "Able to Serve" BBQ Chicken Luncheon this past Sunday. It was an incredible day with First Baptist Church Clayton helping by purchasing 108 plates! Because of your support, adults with disabilities can continue to grow in independence, serve others and live full and meaningful lives.

Swannanoa Mission Trip

Missionaries from FBCC joined Baptists on Mission to help Hurricane Helene victims rebuild their lives and homes in Swannanoa this past week. At right, team leaders Elaine and Richie Johnson take a much deserved break. Below from left, Jack Morgan, David Wellington, Richie Johnson, Bob Hinton, Steve Hall, David Gregory, Pat Zullo and Bill Moor. The team worked repairing houses Monday through Thursday.





Rev. Keeley Tarkington represented First Baptist Church Clayton at the Southside Christian School Pastor’s Breakfast on Friday, March 20. FBC Clayton has five children and youth who attend Southside with the oldest students being Pearce and Lane Ford. They are the children of Michael and Laney Ford and the grandsons of Chris and Diane Pearce.

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members. Our Baptists on Mission/Baptist Men’s group has gone to Western North Carolina to help with disaster relief.

I’m sure I am leaving out many other examples of how during this time of Lent, as we have tried to pay more attention to God’s presence among us, God has been actively working to assure us of Christ’s love for us while affirming our call to participate in reconciling the world to God as we do our best to be the hands and feet of Jesus. I am excited about what God is doing in us; it is going to only get better.

The evidence of God’s work is present. We are blessed people. As we enter Holy Week, let us be thankful for all that God is doing. Let us be grateful that we are the People of God.

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....0	New Members.....7
Worship Attendance	
Sunday, March 22.....247	Sunday, March 15.....193
Sunday School Attendance	
Sunday, March 22.....131	Sunday, March 15.....135
General Fund Giving	
Sunday, March 22.....\$9,953	Sunday, March 15.....\$28,114
2026 Weekly Needs.....\$17,470	