

The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

May 3, 2026

Volume 49 Number 17

We are bound together by Jesus

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

As I write this, I am at St. Francis Springs Prayer Center in Stoneville, N.C. I have been coming here for several years now for CBF-NC's rest and renewal retreats for pastors.



We are only here for two nights, just long enough to be reminded of the importance of walking slowly, breathing deeply and listening for, as Phillip Newell writes, the heartbeat of God.

Over the years, things here have changed. There is a longer walking path for prayer walks and reflection. More places to reflect. On this trip I notice something new to the room, it is a prayer journal meant to be left on the desk where those who have been here before write their thoughts in the privacy of the room.

They are meant to be read by others; an exercise of sharing vulnerability, knowing that those who read them will hold them close to their heart.

A few prayers don't have a name beside them, some just an initial. Some handwriting is legible while others are hard to read.

One especially caught my attention; the letters are shaky as if written by a grandmother whose hands are not as steady as they once were. My great-aunt wrote like that; I remember her hands trembling as she held her pen.

It impresses me that the author went to such great lengths to share her thoughts. Reading her prayer, I feel joined to her, invited into a special place to observe her trust in God.

In the journal there are prayers written in another language. One obviously written by a child whose spelling is not so good, but whose heart is already being attuned to believing Jesus hears her thoughts and enjoys listening to her. She already knows Jesus loves her, I hope she never strays from that belief.

Every week when we gather in worship, we may not be journaling our prayers, but we are saying them together. Like this little red book with pages filled with petitions to God, when we gather in the sanctuary, we too are sharing the intimacy of trusting God together.

Our lives, like each individual page, are a testimony of love for God and a desire to be there for each other.

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Wall family pledges to raise Jayde in Christian faith

On Sunday, April 26 Matt and Kristin Wall dedicated to raise their daughter, Jayde Everleigh, in a faith-filled home and church community.

First Baptist Church Clayton, in turn, pledged their commitment to come alongside of Jayde and her family to grow in faith as we come to know Christ through loving, serving, learning and growing together.



Matt and Kristin Wall, Jayde and big sister Emma

Church to honor young mission groups

Everyone is invited to the Missions Recognition Service on Sunday, May 3 at 5 p.m. in the church sanctuary. The children and youth in Mission Friends, Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors, Acteens and Challengers will be honored.

Participants meet weekly to learn about mission fields and missionaries. They also conduct various mission projects throughout the year. At First Baptist Church Clayton, the mission groups begin at age three with Mission Friends and continue through the 12th grade with Acteens and Challengers.

This year, three of the Acteens have reached the Queen Level and will receive crowns. The Mission Friends choir will also sing, so please join them Sunday to celebrate their Christian service to others and spiritual growth.

First Baptist Church family,

Thank you for the cards, calls, food and prayers during my recovery from my surgery. I am so blessed to have a wonderful church family.

– Ricky Waddell



Dear First Baptist members,

Thank you so much for the beautiful Calla Lilies given to me for Secretary's Day!!! They're not only my favorite flower, they're my favorite color, yellow. The lilies truly brightened my day and look lovely in the office.

I'm going to enjoy them here for a few days before taking them home to plant, and enjoy them for a few years to come.

Thanks again for thinking of me and showing your appreciation!!

– Love, Terry

thank you

Drew Langdon named new youth minister at First Baptist

First Baptist Church Clayton welcomes Drew Langdon to its pastoral team. This past Sunday, Jenna Payton, chairman of the Personnel Committee, announced that Drew will be our new Youth Minister. He begins work on Wednesday, May 6.

“We are honored to have Drew take this role and we are actively planning his onboarding and integration into our church family,” Jenna said. “Drew feels called to First Baptist.”

She said the Personnel Committee is thankful that God was at work during the selection process and greatly appreciates the prayerful support of the church family.

Drew earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Studies and a minor in Psychology from UNC Charlotte. He will graduate from Campbell University with a Master of Divinity degree on May 8.

Drew has served in several student ministry roles over the past four years at Trinity Baptist Church in Raleigh.

“I am super excited about this opportunity at First Baptist,” Drew said. “For a while



now, I’ve had the privilege of working with a large group of youth at Trinity. My passion grew and now I will be able to continue that ministry at First Baptist. The church already has a strong youth group with faithful leaders and consistent participation. I look forward to getting to know the students and families and growing the ministry.”

Drew also has some personal ties to First Baptist. His grandparents, Earl and Fay Langdon, were baptized here, and he has some other family members that live in the Clayton area.

He said he was drawn to ministry because he values the connections built within the church, and he hopes to encourage the next generation of youth to form those same bonds.

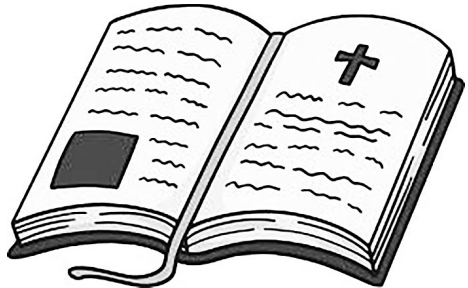
“I’m really excited to have him on our team,” said Dr. Len Keever. “He comes from a good church and the pastors at Trinity speak highly of him. His presence at First Baptist will add a lot of spiritual excitement to our church.”

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

– Proverbs 22:6

Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

– 1st Timothy 4:12



Bound together by Jesus

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As we think about it, it is not as important that we know what each other is going though as it is that we are bound together in Jesus' name to seek his presence to carry us through the things we face. This is another way God makes us into community.

In the journal folks pray for answers and healing, and for friends and family members who need Christ's presence. They thank God for blessings, the chance to sit and reflect, for the awakening that brought them to trust in Jesus. They pray for grandchildren, neighbors and the strength to make it through the loss of a spouse.

Thinking of our congregation, I know we pray these same things each week. Our prayers unite us with one another; they unite us with people we have yet to meet. Sometimes we may feel alone in our prayers, but we are never alone.

Somewhere someone is praying just as we are and God hears us both. We are never alone when we pray. We are never alone.

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Helen Ellerbe by Randy and Lou Ann Parker

Jerry Carroll by Angela Williams

Roger Michaelson by Chris and Diane Pearce

Roger Michaelson by Gerald and Glenda Toler

Roger Michaelson by Bill and Lou Woodard

Roger Michaelson by Jiles and Kim Harrell

General Fund in Honor of

Walter and Jill Rasor's 50th Wedding Anniversary by John Brooks and Lauren Rasor

Organ Fund in Memory of

Jerry Carroll by Jeff and Jackie Tarkington

Child Development Center in Memory of

Roger Michaelson by Rudy and Edwina Oliver



Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	4	New Members.....	10
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, April 26.....	263	Sunday, April 19.....	173
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, April 26.....	154	Sunday, April 19.....	126
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, April 26.....	\$12,730	Sunday, April 19.....	\$14,286
2026 Weekly Needs.....	\$17,470		