

# The Outlook

## First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell  
Grow • Serve

May 31, 2026

Volume 49 Number 21

## Growing in faith is an exercise

By Dr. Len Kever  
Pastor

A book I recently finished suggested that when beginning a new prayer discipline, one must continue it for six months before abandoning it. This resonated with me. I have been following the same routine with my daily devotions for over 20 years.



To keep it exciting, each year I try to add something new as I attempt to go deeper with God. Most years, I add a different devotional

reading. Some years it is reading scripture from a different version of the Bible.

One thing I have learned is that it often takes a couple of months for the addition to become comfortable, a part of my daily regimen.

I wonder how often we have given up on something right before we would have made a discovery? How often do we abandon a project not realizing how close we were to a breakthrough? Growing in faith is an exercise in persistence.

Every day that we practice spiritual disciplines we grow stronger. Every prayer we pray opens us up to know the heart of God

at a deeper level. The more we read the Bible the more we understand it. The more we practice trusting God the stronger our trust becomes.

A year or so ago there was a commercial on television where a man did one pushup, got up and acted like that is all there is to getting in shape. Getting in shape requires consistent discipline, building oneself up to do many repetitions so that the body gets stronger, more fit.

Eating one piece of broccoli does not suddenly change our eating habits. Putting one dollar in a savings account and never adding to it won't provide much for retirement. The point is, growing deeper in our relationship with Jesus takes time, commitment, persistence and discipline.

Not long ago, I heard a coach say that the secret behind a certain player's success was all the work he put into behind-the-scenes preparation. He said the player didn't just practice with the team, he studied film, memorized the playbook and put in extra hours in the weight room.

It was the extra work that enabled him to excel. The same can be said about those who grow in their faith. Not only do they attend worship, but they also put in the extra

See Growing in faith, page 4

# Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Jerry Carroll by Mike and Lynda Carroll

Organ Fund in Memory of

Iredell and Kathleen Batten by Jo Ann Hardee



**American  
Red Cross**

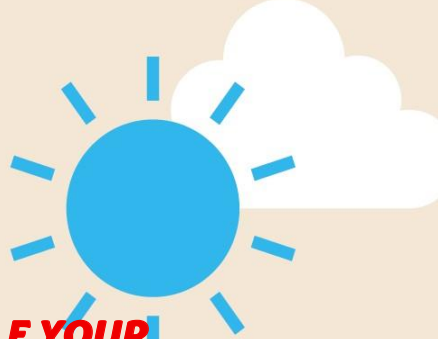
**BLOOD DRIVE**

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

411 N. Fayetteville Street  
Clayton, NC 27520

**Friday, June 19, 2026**

**12:00 pm to 5:00 pm**



**SCHEDULE YOUR  
APPOINTMENT TODAY!!!  
SEE BELOW**

# SUMMER

# LIFESAVERS NEEDED

Please visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter: [FirstBaptistClayton](https://www.redcrossblood.org) to schedule an appointment or CLICK on the following LINK:



<https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=FirstBaptistClayton>



## Delá Turner is new CDC director

We are excited to share that Delá (pronounced “delay”) Turner will be joining our team on Monday, June 8 as the new First Baptist Church Clayton CDC Director. Delá brings 20 plus years of experience in early childhood education through both teaching and leadership roles.

She is passionate about building strong relationships and creating a safe, loving, Christ-centered environment where children, families and staff can grow and thrive.

We are so very grateful for our Assistant Director Misty, for Dee and for Keeley as our staff partner in all they have done and are doing as the leadership team during this transition time. We look forward to the outstanding team Delá and Misty will make working alongside of our awesome teachers and staff!

– CDC Oversight Committee

### Dedicate the flowers in the sanctuary to a loved one

Did you know that the flowers in the sanctuary each Sunday can be dedicated in memory or in honor of a loved one? A \$50 contribution to the General Fund is all it takes and a message in the bulletin indicates the contribution. To reserve a Sunday, please call Terry in the church office at 919-553-4161.

Please know, however, that your \$50 does not purchase the flowers. It is a donation to the church.

For many years, church member Jody McLeod of Annie V’s Florist has provided the flowers every Sunday



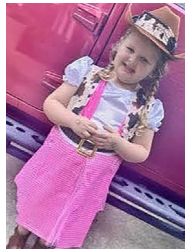
as a loan. He or someone on his staff prepares two arrangements and places the flowers in the sanctuary prior to the Sunday morning worship service. Afterwards, the flowers are picked up and taken back to the floral shop.

Jody does not charge for this service. We are

thankful for this most generous ongoing gift to First Baptist that brings God’s beauty and warmth into His house every Sunday. If you would like to purchase the flowers to take home, please contact Annie V’s or Jody. His contact information is listed in Realm.

# Fishing tournament to benefit Emma Rose

Friends of Emma Rose Arrington and her family are sponsoring a benefit fishing tournament on Saturday, June 27 at Lake Tillery. All proceeds from the event will help the family pay for medical expenses and travel to and from the hospital.



Emma Rose, six-years old, is battling Anaplastic Large Cell Lymphoma. She recently completed six months of chemotherapy and is recovering at home. She will return to the hospital on June 11 for scans and to determine the next steps.

Emma Rose is the niece of Terry McCallum, Administrative Assistant at First Baptist. Her parents are Josh and Jesse Arrington of Laurinburg. She has a younger sister, Olivia.

Local fishermen are invited to participate

in the Hope for Emma Fishing Tournament. The entry fee is \$60 per person or \$100 for a two-man team. The launch and weigh-in will be held at the Lilly’s Bridge Access Area on Lake Tillery, 1097 Lilly’s Bridge Road, Mt. Gilead, NC 27606. Blast off is at 8 a.m. Weigh-in is at 2 p.m. To

register for the tournament, call Brandon at Knight’s Bait Company, 910-434-6888 or show up early the day of the tournament. Officials will be on hand to help fishermen register..

Donations are accepted. You may make on-line gifts at fbcclaytonnc.org or make checks payable to First Baptist Church. Please put Emma Rose in the memo line.

Also, please keep Emma Rose and her family in your prayers.

## Growing in faith

Continued from page 1

work outside of the sanctuary because they want to know Jesus, they want to grow in their faith. They want their relationship with Jesus to mean something.

I have a confession to make. I like to work out. It is a part of my self-care. I feel better physically, emotionally and spiritually when I keep up my discipline of exercising.

Recently, however, there have been so many distractions that I haven’t been able to be very disciplined with my workouts. A workout here and there has not been very helpful in keeping me in the shape I want to be. My inconsistency has put me behind where I want to be. Thinking about this, I realize it is a warning about not being consistent in building my relationship with Christ – giving up too soon, not being disciplined, skipping time with God because I don’t feel like it – won’t help me arrive where I want to be.

I ran across this saying this week: *The afternoon knows what the morning never expected.*

### Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	4	New Members.....	10
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, May 24.....	139	Sunday, May 17.....	148
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, May 24.....	88	Sunday, May 17.....	101
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, May 24.....	\$14,706	Sunday, May 17.....	\$15,930
2026 Weekly Needs.....	\$17,470		