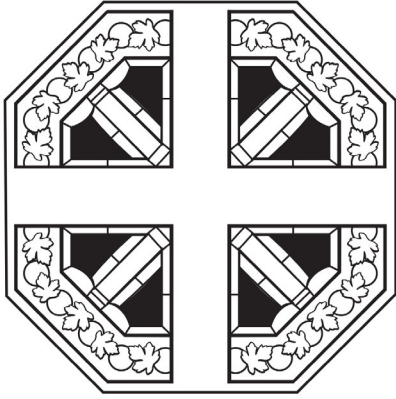




The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

July 12, 2026

Volume 49 Number 26

Share your life experiences

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

This is one of my favorite times of year. It is time for Vacation Bible School. One of the best parts of being a pastor is that I get to be a big kid and enjoy our children and youth ministries even though I am a few years past the age to participate.



As every volunteer knows, our youth and children ministries keep us young (even as the tiredness afterwards lets us know we are not as young as they are). There is a beauty in church that allows us to connect with people younger and older than we are. Here, we are exposed to energy and wisdom as we are a part of a church family.

Not long ago, I was talking with a church member who was going through an unexpected, perhaps age-related issue. Speaking with them, I mentioned that one of the things I miss about my dad is that he is not here to tell me what I should be feeling or experiencing as I move into this final third of my life.

Fortunately, however, we have people

around us who can help us traverse the landscape that may be new to us but familiar to them. And, given what we have gone through to be here, we can share what we have been through to help others. This is one of the gifts of church relationships.

When we share our life experiences with one another, we are provided with the opportunity to mentor them through many different challenges that they may be facing. I have watched this happen in so many ways during my time as a pastor. Someone who is going to have hip replacement surgery calls on someone who has had a replacement for encouragement. Someone whose child is going off to college for the first time leans on someone whose children have graduated looking for guidance.

A mom whose child is going to school for the first time draws strength from someone who's already been there. While it is true that no one knows what another person is feeling, being around people who have already been there brings peace and assurance.

The same is true when we go through the ups and downs of our spiritual life. Fol

See Life Experiences, page 4

Mission Moment†



With Love From Jesus

Volunteers from First Baptist Church Clayton serve at the With Love From Jesus House in Clayton on the fourth Sunday of each month. The With Love From Jesus ministry began serving people in 2001 from three garages and three storage units owned by the founders.

By 2003 they had a 12,000 square foot facility in Raleigh. The Clayton WLFJ house was opened in 2019 and a second Johnston County location opened in Four Oaks this year. Visit www.withlovefromjesus.org to learn more.

On a typical Sunday, about 60 honored guests will hear the Gospel message and receive prayer, food, clothing, household goods and small appliances. Many of them come regularly to be around people who care, to have a conversation or just to see a smile. More volunteers are always needed, so please join us on this mission.

You will be a blessing and you will be blessed. To participate with the FBCC group, you do not have to be a member of our church. All you have to do is show up at the WLFJ house, 209 S. Robertson St., Clayton, on the 4th Sunday of the month at 4 p.m. Some of our volunteers also serve individually on the weekdays that the WLFJ house is open (Tuesdays and Thursdays). Also, you can make donations of food, clothing, household goods, etc. on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays during the hours listed on the website.

Please pray that God will continue to bless and use this ministry to show His love for people in our community. For more information about this mission opportunity, please contact Rudy Oliver at 919-271-1178 or reoholston@gmail.com. For testimonies about blessings received, just contact any of our current volunteers. They will tell you that has truly been a privilege to have served there.

Ninety

— JOIN US TO CELEBRATE —

**MARGARET GARDNER'S
90TH BIRTHDAY**

**Saturday, August 8th
3 to 5 p.m.**

**First Baptist Church
Fellowship Hall**

No gifts please - just birthday wishes

Whether you attend or not, please send a video or message with a hello, birthday wish, memory or anything else you would like to say to Margaret. Please send to Cindy Morgan at 919-631-1307 by August 1st.

Dear First Baptist Church family,

There are not enough words to fully express our heartfelt thanks for the phone calls, texts, cards, food, and your love and support you provided to our family during Jerry's death.

Thank You, Dianne Carroll and family



Dear FBCC,

The past month has been one of the hardest seasons our family has ever walked through. Between Austin's accident and then the car wreck just a day later involving Jay and Holland, there were moments when we felt overwhelmed and didn't know what the next day would bring. Through it all, you have loved well.

Your prayers, meals, texts, phone calls, visits, gifts, and countless acts of kindness have carried us more than you'll ever know. Every encouraging word and every offer to help reminded us that we weren't facing any of this alone. We have truly felt God's love through each one of you.

Austin is continuing to recover, and we're so thankful for the progress he's making. We know there is still a road ahead, but we're grateful to walk it surrounded by a church family that has been there for us every step of the way.

Thank you for showing up, praying without ceasing, and loving our family so generously. We will never forget the way you wrapped your arms around us during such a difficult time.

With grateful hearts, the Harrell Family

To our wonderful church family,

Thank you for all the get well cards, phone calls, visits, food and prayers during our months of sickness. Your love, encouragement and prayers have been a blessing to our hearts.

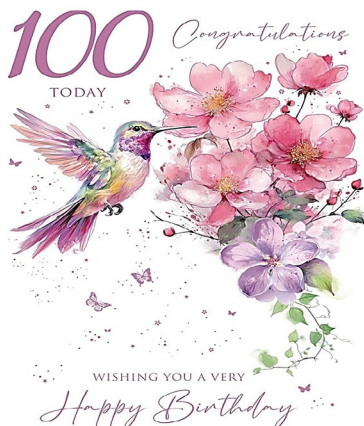
Please continue to keep us in your prayers and we will soon be able to attend church.

With love, Pat and Randolph Tart

August 2, 2026
Let's Celebrate
100 Years
with Ms. Lois Weeks

Birthday Greetings may be mailed to:

Lois Weeks
The Phoenix at Braselton
Apt. 3205 - 1929 Friendship Road,
Hoschton, GA 30548
or call 678-960-4039



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Nancy Frazier by Emily LaJoye

Doris Grissom by Jo Ann Hardee

Doris Grissom by Ricky and Elizabeth Waddell

Doris Grissom by Ayden and Betty Lee

Nancy Frazier by Joe and Linda Hester

Jerry Carroll by Kari Murray

Organ Fund in Memory of

Doris Grissom, David Hall and Nancy Frazier by Chris and Diane Pearce

Doris Grissom by Joe and Linda Hester

Nancy Frazier by Carol Gilbert

Organ Fund in Honor of

Curtis and Elaine Moore by Chris and Diane Pearce

Heck Jones Fund in Memory of

Doris Grissom by Rudy and Edwina Oliver

Life experiences

Continued from page 1

Following Jesus is not always easy. Questions arise. There are dark moments where we feel dull and drained.

These times are normal. Psalm 23 speaks of them when David writes about going through a dark valley. Being around others who have been there helps us to navigate those harsh, wilderness times.

In this we need the mentorship of fellow believers. In church we find those who can help us navigate unsettled waters. In worship, we turn our hearts to God, collectively praising and honoring our Lord.

God calls us to worship. Adoring God in the sanctuary is an important part of being a Christian. And equally important is our being there for each other, getting to know one another in Sunday school and the other organizations and opportunities of the church.

It is a part of our identity to gather in worship. It is also a part of our spiritual DNA to be in small groups where we can be a guide to help others even as we are helped.

If you are not already a member of a small group, consider joining one. And if you see someone beside you and you are unsure if they are a part of one, ask them to join yours.

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....	4	New Members.....	10
Worship Attendance			
Sunday, July 5.....	145	Sunday, June 28.....	184
Sunday School Attendance			
Sunday, July 5.....	No classes held	Sunday, June 28.....	125
General Fund Giving			
Sunday, July 5.....	\$18,553	Sunday, June 28.....	\$14,753
2026 Weekly Needs.....	\$17,470		