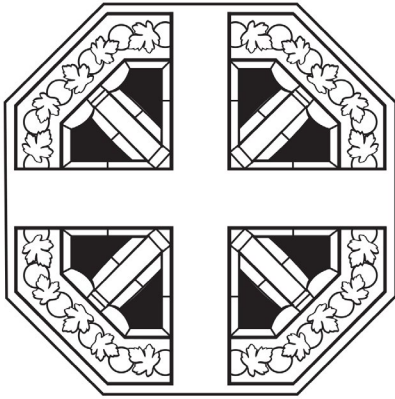




The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

September 6, 2026

Volume 49 Number 34

Pay attention to the signs

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

This morning, as Cathy and I were doing our devotions she got up and opened the back door to let in the cool morning air. It has been a while since we had the back door open in the morning. It has been so hot and muggy.

But today, the first day of September, the air was cool, it smelled fresh. We could hear the birds singing. I stopped for a moment to look out the window; there was more movement outside than on previous mornings.



The birds are migrating south. I remember reading that it's best to leave a hummingbird feeder out till the first of November as they fly to warmer climates.

Jesus' words came to me. "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times."

The people in Jesus' day put a lot into reading the signs. Indeed, God created the

heavens and earth to be full of signs to help guide us toward safety and salvation.

When the daffodil blooms, we know that spring is getting closer and that it's a good time to plant early spring root crops. When the leaves begin to turn color, we know that it is time to check the pantry, disconnect the hoses from the spigot, make sure our gas logs are working correctly or that we have plenty of wood for a fire. God provided signs so that we can be prepared, be ready for what comes next.

There are professional sign watchers, meteorologists and economists whose job is to tell us when to carry umbrellas or when to tighten our belt so we can buy groceries. Doctors examine us and look for signs that we need to cut back on sweets or eat more chicken and fish and less red meat.

These signs are God given. Paying attention to them helps us be prepared.

When I was a youth and our church went to Caswell, one of my peers brought some music along. One of the songs that he played repeatedly was the song "Signs" by the Five-Man Electrical Band. "Sign, sign everywhere a sign, blocking out the scenery breaking my mind."

Yes, some signs are restrictive, they do mar

See Pay attention, page 3

Newly ordained Deacons

Lynn Matthews, Donna Lee, Sarah Brooks, Martha McCullen and Herman Vinson were ordained as new Deacons Sunday afternoon. They will serve a three-year term and are joined by previously ordained Deacons David Earp, Joe Hester and Jack Morgan. Deacons serving a two-year term are James Chanco, Glenn Fortner, Lindsay Harrell, Jeff Tarkington, Ginger Jones, Bill Moor, Jerry Poole and Pat Zullo. Serving a one-year term are Vicky Andrews, Keith Blackley, Wayne Calton, John Gibson, Paul Greer, Elaine Johnson, Stewart McLeod and Nancy Turlington. The Deacons at First Baptist are ready and willing to serve your spiritual needs. Please call on them for support, prayer and counsel.



Help N.C. Missions Offering reach its goal

The North Carolina Missions Offering is an annual effort to raise funds to support the many functions of Baptists on Mission.

Your financial support provides Baptists on Mission to share the Gospel, relieve suffering and treat the sick, plant new churches, mobilize volunteers and respond to disasters. The statewide goal for this year is \$2.8 million.

The First Baptist Church Clayton Missions Outreach encourages our congregation to support the offering so Baptists on Mission can continue to glorify God by involving churches and individual Christians in meeting human needs in Jesus' name.

To give visit ncmissionsoffering.org or for detailed information about mission work, visit www.baptistsonmission.org.

Pay attention

Continued from page 1

the scenery. I don't like seeing a billboard on the side of the mountain blocking the view. But some signs are beneficial; God's signs are the most useful of all.

I see many of God's signs all around us. I see them not just in nature, but also in the good things happening at FBCC, the enthusiasm of our children, the fellowship of adults, and the opportunities of the church to be more involved in our community.

There were signs of how God is using us when we went on a prayer walk at Cooper and as we help in feeding our neighbors through various ministries. I see how important our work is when I see the blessing box empty one minute and filled the next.

There are signs of how God is blessing us all around, the many guests who worship with us, the children who gather down front, the music that leads us into worship and the resulting excitement that Wednesday night activities are about to begin again.

We are blessed. Pay attention to the signs. God is actively showing us God's love. I hope you see the signs – God is good! Actually, better than good!

Sign up now for church directory photo shoot

We need you to sign up for First Baptist Church church directory photos. To sign up, visit www.ucdir.com or use the QR code below. Click on the box to the right that states Photography Session Sign-up.

Our Church Code is **NC640**.

The Password is **photos640**.

Follow the prompts to schedule your family's appointment time. Dates are Thursday, Friday and Saturday, September 10-12, and Wednesday, September 15.

If you are unable to have your photo taken at the church, but want to be included in the directory, please send photo with the following information: name, address, phone and email. Please drop photo and info off in the church office.

If you have any questions or need help signing up, call Bronna Greer at 919-801-3000.



Support Cooper Academy

The Missions Outreach team would like your help collecting needed classroom items and supplies for our partner school, Cooper Academy. There is a drop-off bin outside the church office.

Items needed include tissues, Chlorox cleaning wipes and paper towels.

Missions Outreach thanks you for your faithful support of the needs around us.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
of Clayton

You are cordially invited to the
**FBC CLAYTON
HOMECOMING**

SEPT. 27, 2026 | 9:30 AM

411 N. Fayetteville Street,
Clayton

Guest Pastor, Dr. Barry Jones, Dean of
Campbell Divinity School; Special music by
Mr. Gerald Toler and the FBC Choir

LUNCH TO FOLLOW
BRING A SIDE DISH OR DESSERT TO SHARE
MEAT AND BREAD PROVIDED

Dear friends at First Baptist
Thank you for the generous
donation of school supplies to
Clayton High School.

We are grateful for your support. Because of your
generosity, we are well equipped to make this school
year the best ever!

– Staff @Clayton High



New Wednesday morning Bible study begins Sept. 9

A new Wednesday Morning Bible Study, “Promised Land,” will begin September 9 from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the SALT classroom. There will be a Zoom option.

“Why here? Why now? Just as the time and place of our birth and life shapes our journey, so the land and culture of the Hebrew people shaped their story. In this first volume of “That the World May Know,” discover how God guided his people to a specific place – the Promised Land – to impact the world both in ancient times and today.”

It will be a five session DVD-based study led by Ray Vander Laan. The dates are September 9, 16, 23, 30 and October 7. Discovery Guides are \$10 and are on order. Sign up in the church office.

Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

General Fund in Memory of

Phyllis Crane by Ayden and Betty Lee

General Fund in Honor of

Lois Weeks’ 100th birthday and Martha Bagley’s birthday by Joyce T. Lee

Organ Fund in Memory of

Dorothy Austin and Anne Hardee by Bobby and Nancy Hardee

Phyllis Crane by Joyce T. Lee

Music Fund in Honor of

Margaret Gardner’s birthday by Joe and Linda Hester

Weekly Reports

Baptisms this Year.....4 New Members.....12

Worship Attendance

Sunday, August 30.....192 Sunday, August 23.....258

Sunday School Attendance

Sunday, August 30.....127 Sunday, August 23.....170

General Fund Giving

Sunday, August 30.....\$10,080 Sunday, August 23.....\$11,533

2026 Weekly Needs.....\$17,470