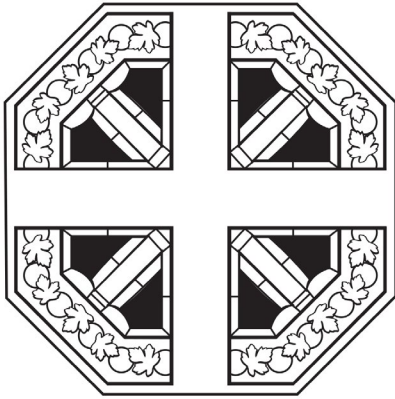




The Outlook

First Baptist Church Clayton

Show • Tell
Grow • Serve

September 13, 2026

Volume 49 Number 35

Seniors are wise, inspiring

By Dr. Len Keever
Pastor

Years ago, in my mid-40's my eyebrows began to turn gray. Letting vanity have a foothold I went to the pharmacy and bought one of those products for men that is supposed to gently blend in the gray.

I went home, read the directions, sequestered myself in the upstairs bathroom and combed in less than it called for – I immediately regretted my lapse in judgement.

I looked like I had two bushy caterpillars crawling across my forehead.

Unfortunately, unlike a bad haircut that can be hidden with a cap, I could not hide the evidence of my mistake;

preaching with sunglasses on wasn't an option.

Why do we resist growing older when those who are older are the ones who represent wisdom and experience to us? Thinking about those who have had the greatest impact on my life, I realize that the ones I value most are the ones who were older, the ones who were there to encourage and gently lead.

That is one of the reasons why I like days like these when we honor those very important members of our church who bless us with their experience, who guide us with their examples of faithfulness.

A favorite verse is Hebrews 12:1, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." Often, we think of those who have gone before us leaving us a legacy of faithfulness, yet it means so much more.

It is recognizing the wisdom in the room, acknowledging the ones who have grown comfortable with gray eyebrows and aching knees because they have come to understand the comfort of God leading them. They are the ones who remind us that holding on to youth is not the best use of our energies but that holding onto Jesus is.

Thanks to our Senior Adults for what you continue to teach us. You are an inspiration to us. Today is a day to say thank you for all that you have done and will continue to do.

We are a better church because you show us the way to grow closer to God gracefully.



Worship aids available for children

At First Baptist Church Clayton, we value having children participate in worship. To help make their experience more meaningful, each Sunday we have several ways for them to participate.

- **Worship Bags** - Grab a worship bag in one of the vestibules with activities to explore during the service. Please return at the end of worship.

- **Children's Worship Bulletins** - Ask an usher for one of our special children's bulletins. We have two options (3+ and 7+) with activities that correspond with the scripture focus.

- **Rocking Room** - Check out our rocking room off the sanctuary with chairs to help make the service more comfortable for you and your little ones.

- **Children's Message** - Following the first hymn, all children through 5th grade are invited to come down front for a special message tailored for them.

- **Nursery** - If you would like for your child to have extra love from one of our amazing volunteers, we have nursery available for infants through 2-year-olds during the service. See an usher for directions to our nursery hallway.



Many thanks to our Piecemakers sewing ministry for creating our new bags with a variety of fun patterns. And thank you to Audrey Harrell for carefully packing each one with special activities for our children.

Church directory photography appointments still available

The online appointment calendar for church directory photographs is full. However, if you have not scheduled yours yet, call Bronna Greer at 919-801-3300. She will add an appointment for you.

Photo shoot 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.

Young adults invited to Echo

What is Echo? It is a gathering of younger adults (and those who think young) sharing what they've heard in the worship service.

It is an opportunity to share what continues to reverberate after the benediction.

Younger adults face different challenges when it comes to building relationships in church.

We are offering time to drink coffee, get to know one another, and discuss issues that are unique to their lives. If you want to come and check it out, we meet in Room 210 after the Sunday morning worship service. We look forward to seeing you!

— Dr. Len Keever

First Priority at Cooper seeks volunteers

We are grateful to have many opportunities to plug in as partners with Cooper Academy. One avenue for multiple opportunities is through Cooper Academy's First Priority Club. First Priority is a national network of student-led, adult-coached Christian clubs that meet on elementary, middle and high school campuses to fulfill the Great Commission.

The club operates with the belief that students are our best way to reach students with the Good News of Jesus. Therefore, the First Priority club is designed to empower students to lead their peers. At Cooper Academy, First Priority meets on Thursdays after school from 4:15 to 5 p.m.

The first meeting is Thursday, October 1. Rudy Oliver shared with the prayer team information about how to be a prayer partner with the student missionary groups.

One other way we can partner is by being a campus volunteer with First Priority. The full description is below, but in summary, a campus volunteer would come to club meetings to build relationships with and support students as they lead. If you would like more information, please contact Rev. Stephanie Parker at sparker@fbcclaytonnc.org or 919-553-4161. She will be glad to facilitate a connection with Cooper Academy's First Priority campus representative.

A campus volunteer is an adult who believes the local school campus is a mission field for students who love and follow Jesus. They are committed to encouraging student leaders and supporting their mission to see the hope of Christ in every student. Campus volunteers serve alongside the campus coach by building relationships with students, providing encouragement, and helping create a positive environment where student leaders can thrive.



Campus Volunteer Responsibilities

- Encourage Student Leaders
- Build relationships with student leaders and club attendees.

Pray for student leaders and the club regularly, and support and provide resources for the Cooper Academy club.

• Support Club Success

Attend club meetings regularly throughout the school year. Assist with club activities when asked by students or a campus coach. Help create a welcoming environment for all students and provide wisdom, support and prayer when challenges arise.

• Communication

Maintain communication with the campus coach. Stay informed about club activities and events. Attend at least one First Priority training event per school year. Lastly, you will need to complete a background check within the Johnston County school system.

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

**We loved the song,
but keep your day job**

Several church members asked Dr. Keever for the lyrics to the song he wrote to the tune of Dolly Parton's "9 to 5." He sang it on September 6 prior to his sermon. If you missed it, you really need to go back and listen. Visit our church website, www.fbcclaytonnc.org and click on Sermons. Let's hope that Nashville does not come calling.



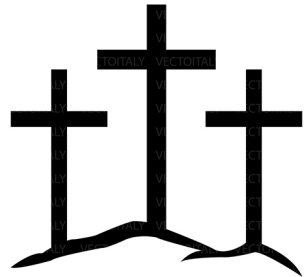
Jesus is Alive

Jesus is alive, he'll save you if you let him
Give him a try, he'll take you into heaven
He was sent to wash your sins away---

Walk the aisle and ask him in
He'll forgive you of your sins
We're the church cause Jesus is alive

He's alive, he's been resurrected
With him inside, your spirit is directed---
Gonna change your life, begin the transformation
He'll cleanse your heart; it's a wonderful sensation.

He's alive, and you can be forgiven
Give Christ a try, begin eternal livin'
Put your pride aside, give Jesus all the credit
God's grace can save your soul if you let it.



Memorials and Honorariums

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE

**General Fund in Memory of
Phyllis Crane by Bucky Coats**

Weekly Reports

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

Worship Attendance

Sunday, September 6.....126 Sunday, August 30.....192

Sunday School Attendance

Sunday, September 6.....No classes Sunday, August 30.....127

General Fund Giving

Sunday, September 6.....\$15,503 Sunday, August 30.....\$10,080

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