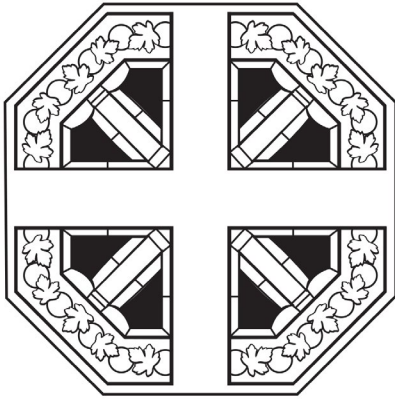




# *The Outlook*

## **First Baptist Church Clayton**

Show • Tell  
Grow • Serve

October 4, 2026

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## **What are you looking for?**

By Dr. Len Keever  
Pastor

In John 1:29-39 we find two of John the Baptist's disciples standing with him when Jesus walks by. Already we know something about these two. They are spiritually hungry, unsettled by the world around them, hoping for more, longing for something they've discovered the world cannot provide.



In John the Baptist they'd found a message that intrigued them. His message to get ready for what God was about to do awakened something deep inside. Their standing there was no accident. They were searching and God was providing.

"Look," John said, "there goes the Lamb of God, the one sent to take away the sins of the world." His proclamation must have startled them. "I came to baptize so that people would be ready to meet him. When I saw him, I witnessed the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove and it remained on him. He is the Son of God."

Hearing these words from their teacher, the one who had brought them closer to

God, they wanted to know more. They'd only caught a glimpse. I wonder if they silently asked themselves, "Who is John talking about? Which one is he?" It only served to increase their hunger.

The next day, Jesus walked by again and John said, "Look, here is the Lamb of God." This time they saw which one John was talking about, there was no question as to which one he was. What they did next is a model for all of us – they followed Jesus.

They didn't wait until he came back again. They didn't passively watch him round the corner and go out of sight. They left John and hurriedly approached Jesus. And that's when it happened.

That's when Jesus turned and asked the question that reverberates down through the ages for every restless soul to answer – "What are you looking for?"

What are we looking for? That question is as relevant for us as it was for the two disciples who followed Jesus. The thing is the disciples didn't have a long thought-out answer. What they had was a desire to be with Jesus and to learn from him.

They knew they wanted more than what John had given them. The page was blank.

See What are you looking for?, page 3



First Baptist “Friends” from left to right are: Brayden Wilkins, Jay Harrell, Kirby Phillips, Rev. Stephanie Parker, Carter Garrison, Evelyn Lee, Jessi Smith and Holland Harrell.

## Putting the “Friend” in Friends Retreat

From September 18-20, five of our 3rd-5th graders, along with two awesome chaperones and myself, headed to Camp Kanata for the annual Friends Retreat.

To plan this retreat, I partnered with children’s ministers from the seven participating churches to plan a special time of learning and growing together in fellowship with friends.

This year’s theme was “Friends are Good.” We began by gathering Friday in an opening celebration and worship, considering what it means to be a friend. The focal verse for the weekend was Proverbs 17:17a, “A friend loves at all times.”

On Saturday morning, through rotations

of Bible study, missions, and recreation, we studied the story of Jesus calming the storm, where Jesus helps his friends, the disciples.

In this lesson, each of our participants considered how they might help friends in need. To close out on Sunday morning, we looked at the story Zacchaeus and discussed how to include a friend.

As always, retreats are such a fertile place for spiritual growth, and we were grateful for the opportunity and the experience, as well as the memories made!

– Rev. Stephanie Parker  
Pastor of Children and Families

## Toothbrushes sought for Red Box Ministries

The First Baptist Church Clayton WMU Groups are collecting adult- sized, individually packaged toothbrushes (no multipacks) for the “Red Box Ministry” this year.

Red Box is a Christmas ministry that provides gift-filled boxes to incarcerated women in North Carolina prisons.

A donation box is located in the hallway of the church office. The deadline is Sunday, November 1.

## CAM seeks donations for Thanksgiving meals

Clayton Area Ministries (CAM) is gearing up for the Thanksgiving holiday as they plan to give away 300 turkeys to needy families in the Clayton community.

CAM is asking the First Baptist Church family to help provide side dishes and fixings. To follow is a list of items requested: instant mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, jar of gravy or packet of gravy mix, box of stuffing, cans of cream soup, yams, cornbread, pumpkin mix, cake mixes and frosting.

Items may be dropped off at the church office or CAM, 780 Durham Street, Clayton. CAM dropoff hours are 1 to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. All donated Thanksgiving food items need to be delivered by November 13.

## Able to Serve Dance set for October 9

The Able to Serve Dance will be held Friday, October 9 in the Fellowship Hall from 6 to 8 p.m. It is a night of food, fellowship, smiles, dancing, seeing old friends and meeting new ones.

This fun-filled event for adults with disabilities is sponsored by Missions Outreach along with our WMU Groups and Baptist Men.



We hope you will join in the fun – both men and women. If you would like to participate, please reach out to Terry in the church office to register or, you can contact Gwen Canady, Robin Little or Jackie Tarkington no later than Monday, October 5. We hope to see you there.

## What are you looking for?

Continued from page 1

Somehow, they knew that Jesus was the only one who could help them discover what it was they really wanted.

They said, simply, “Where are you staying?” to which Jesus answered them as he answers us, “Come and see.” It was an answer that would lead to discovery; an answer that would lead to many more questions with life-changing invitations.

When we follow Jesus, we often find his answers have many layers. He did not answer the disciples with the address of his hosts. He answered them with an invitation to discover for themselves what God was providing. For Andrew and the other disciple, the journey would help them to know what they were really looking for.

For each of us, following Jesus gives us the opportunity to discover clarity as to what will make our lives whole and full of meaning. As the saying goes, “the journey is the destination.” So, when we go to Jesus with our questions and desires, don’t be discouraged if his answer is “Come and see,” for he is inviting you to join him in a wonderful adventure filled with the mystery of God’s love.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. – John 1:6-8 and 14



# Memorials and Honorariums

**WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR GIFTS TO THE**

**General Fund in Memory of**

Phyllis Crane by Chris and Diane Pearce  
Doris Grissom by Barbara Jo Batchelor  
Phil Crane by Bucky Coats

**General Fund in Honor of**

Margaret Gardner's 90th birthday and Lois Weeks' 100th birthday  
by Chris and Diane Pearce

**Organ Fund in Memory of**

Leon and Maxine Smith by Jackie Smith  
Phil and Phyllis Crane by Anne Abene

**Organ Fund in Honor of**

Steve and Gwen Canady by Shirley Ussey  
Gerald Toler by Joyce T. Lee  
Jody McLeod for the beautiful flower arrangements he provides  
for our weekly worship service by Dianne Carroll

**Senior Adult Ministry Fund in Memory of**

Phil and Phyllis Crane by Curtis and Elaine Moore  
Phil and Phyllis Crane by the Salt Sunday School Class

**Baptist Men in Memory of**

Phil and Phyllis Crane by David and Nancy Turlington

**Baptist State Missions in Memory of**

Belle Allen by Joyce T. Lee

**Children's Ministry Fund in Memory of**

Phil and Phyllis Crane by Rudy and Edwina Oliver

**North Carolina Children's Home in Memory of**

Phil and Phyllis Crane by Joyce Kidd

## Weekly Reports

|                           |            |                           |          |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Baptisms this Year.....   | 4          | New Members.....          | 12       |
| Worship Attendance        |            |                           |          |
| Sunday, September 27..... | 181        | Sunday, September 20..... | 227      |
| Sunday School Attendance  |            |                           |          |
| Sunday, September 27..... | No classes | Sunday, September 20..... | 153      |
| General Fund Giving       |            |                           |          |
| Sunday, September 27..... | \$5,540    | Sunday, September 20..... | \$23,167 |
| 2026 Weekly Needs.....    | \$17,470   |                           |          |