

THE MESSENGER

JULY 2023

FROM THE TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

Revitalized congregations develop new and meaningful relationships in their surrounding communities. Such congregations often find support groups enable them to minister to a wide range of needs, expand their friendship circles, and share the gospel in appropriate ways.



Here's a list of some of the support groups found in thriving congregations. Where necessary, I provide a brief description. Most of the support group names are self-explanatory.

- ◆ Celebrate Recovery: A Bible and relationship-based approach to help individuals recover from life's hurts, mend broken relationships, and develop life-sustaining habits
- ◆ Widows Supporting Widows Group
- ◆ Divorced or Separated Group
- ◆ Incarcerated Loved Ones Group
- ◆ Single Moms Group
- ◆ Single Dads Group
- ◆ Veterans of War Group
- ◆ Grieving Parents Group
- ◆ Adoption or Fostering Group
- ◆ English as a Second Language Group
- ◆ Autism Support Group
- ◆ Theology on Tap: A United Methodist approach to outreach in which a small group meets periodically in a pub for conversation centered around the Bible and individual needs
- ◆ Makers Group: Artists, writers, and other creators gather for conversation, collaboration, sharing their work, etc.

Well, I suspect you get the idea. Small group ministries tailored to the needs of one's community take the church into the community, which is where Christ calls us to go.

Mike

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Chad Hartsock, Interim Minister of Youth and College Students

How many times in recent months or years have you had conversations that go like the one I had last week:

Friend: "You go to which church again?"

Me: "First Baptist in Jefferson City."

Friend: "Baptist?!"

Me: "Yeah, but we aren't *that* kind of Baptist."

In recent years, carrying the name "Baptist" seems like more and more of a liability. For those of us that grew up Baptist, were educated in Baptist institutions, or worked with Baptist missionaries near and far, it has often been hard to accept that the denomination that raised us is no longer hospitable to us. There is grief in that for many of us.

Last month, the Southern Baptist Convention met. One of the many things they decided was that any church that had a woman on staff with the title of "minister" in any form would be removed from the SBC. This applied not only to senior pastors, but also to children's ministers, worship pastors, and ministers of missions. Of course, our church's primary affiliation is with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, but church denominational differences are hard enough for insiders to keep up with; our friends and neighbors are often quite confused!

I lament that I must so often explain why I am a not *that* kind of Baptist. There is much in the Baptist identity that means so much to me. The centrality of Scripture, the autonomy of the local church, the historic commitment to the separation of church and state, our commitment to religious freedom . . . these ideas are core to who I am, and they are ideas gifted to me by our Baptist tradition. I find myself fighting to cling to these core principles while also rejecting what "Baptist" has come to mean in our modern culture.

On July 9, I will be preaching on our Baptist identity and principles. I invite you to reflect on what is valuable to you about your own Baptist identity, and I would love to hear your thoughts. Share them with your friends, your small groups, and your Bible study classes too, and let us reflect together on what is valuable about our Baptist identity.

DEACONS & MINISTER OF THE WEEK

July 2:	Ann Porter and Karen Smith / Josh Gibson
July 9:	Heidi Thomas and Susan Garber / Chad Hartsock
July 16:	Betty Watkins and Jim Wilson / Nenette Measels
July 23:	Carolyn Blevins and Carey Herring / Josh Gibson
July 30:	Bruce Davenport and Ken Morton / Chad Hartsock

FINANCIAL UPDATE

By Josh Gibson, Administrative Coordinator

Summary of Operational Budget Income / Expenses through May 2023

Items of Interest

- **Online Giving** is simple and convenient, and you do not have to set up a Realm account to give online. Visit: <https://onrealm.org/fbcjeff/give/now> to initiate an online gift today!
- **Designated Benevolence Fund total** (as of 06/26/2023) = \$0.00
- **Forward in Faith Capital Campaign:** Updated through June 26 (*Pledge period is September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2023*):
 - Total campaign pledges = \$318,250.00
 - Total pledge gifts received = **\$283,663.50**
 - Total pledges outstanding = \$34,586.50
 - Fund balance = \$19,975.69
- **Our Forward in Faith Capital Campaign comes to a close 2 months from now.**

	February	March	April	May
Income	\$47,889.41	\$20,637.44	\$29,851.65	\$30,957.87
Expenses	\$27,581.18	\$31,581.28	\$28,870.98	\$25,616.71
Net Income	\$20,308.23	(\$10,943.84)	\$980.67	\$5,341.16
YTD	\$13,713.38	\$2,769.84	\$3,750.51	\$9,091.67

ATTENDANCE

SUNDAY	BIBLE STUDY*	IN-PERSON WORSHIP
June 4	51	73
June 11	50	73
June 18	47	71
June 25	51	75

*Bible Study number includes online participants

AMOS

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

JULY 27, 2023
9AM-3PM

ITEMS NEEDED:

- PENCILS/PENS/ERASERS
- CRAYONS/COLORED PENCILS
- MARKERS/HIGHLIGHTERS
- PAPER/COMPOSITION BOOKS
- BACKPACKS
- BINDERS
- 3 PRONG FOLDERS W/ POCKETS
- RULERS
- GLUE
- SCISSORS
- KLEENEX

*A \$25.00 donation to AMOS will purchase and fill a backpack

HYMN HIGHLIGHT

By Nenette Measels, Interim Minister of Music

***He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.
He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.
Psalm 40:2-3***

I usually select a favorite or at least a known hymn to highlight each month. This month's selection is most likely one that isn't known, but is included in our hymnal, *Celebrating Grace*, #592, *How Can I Keep from Singing*. We are a singing people because the gospel of the Lord Jesus *compels* us to sing. It's what we do. Bob Kauflin writes in his book *Worship Matters* that, "worship isn't primarily about music, techniques, songs, or methodologies. It's about our hearts. It's about what and who we love more than anything."* God's love for us inspires our response of love for Him and calls forth songs of joy from our lips.

Even though Rev. Robert Lowry, Baptist pastor, poet and song writer, often said, "I would rather preach a gospel sermon than write a hymn," he lives on in his hymns rather than in his sermons. He wrote 184 hymn texts (e.g., *I Need Thee Every Hour*, *Shall We Gather at the River*), composed 471 hymn tunes (e.g., *Amazing Grace*, *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*), and edited 21 hymnals (many collections for use in Sunday School).** He wrote the words and music for *How Can I Keep from Singing* in 1869 and named the tune ENDLESS SONG. It is his personal testimony of being compelled to sing out of his love for Christ.

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING

My life flows on in endless song,
above earth's lamentation.
I catch the sweet, though far-off
hymn
that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear that music ringing.
It finds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing?

What though my joys and comforts
die,
My Savior still is living.
What though the shadows gather
round?
A new song Christ is giving.
No storm can shake my inmost calm
while to that Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and
earth,
how can I keep from singing?

I lift my eyes; the cloud grows thin;
I see the blue above it;
And day by day this pathway
smooths,
Since first I learned to love it.
The peace of Christ makes fresh my
heart,
a fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his!
How can I keep from singing?***

**Sing! How Worship Transforms Your Life, Family, and Church*, Keith and Kristyn Getty, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, 2017

***Living Stories of Famous Hymns*, Ernest K. Emurian, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1981

****Celebrating Grace*, Celebrating Grace, Inc., Macon, GA, 2010

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

By Bethany Davenport, Chair of the Children and Youth Committee



Summer Fun -with- First Jeff Kids

Join us for some June and July fun!

JUNE 25TH, RIGHT AFTER CHURCH

Where: Panther Creek State Park

What: Nature Scavenger Hunt (*Bible Focus: Genesis 1*)

JULY 12TH, 5:30 PM

Where: Pink Pig Pottery Studio

What: Pottery Painting (*Bible Focus: Jeremiah 18:1-6*)

JULY 28TH, 5:30 PM

Where: Home of Joe and Donna Dobyns

What: Pool Party (*Bible Focus: Matthew 14:22-32*)



Are you on Instagram?

For the latest on children's ministry
events at FBC Jefferson City, follow us

@firstjeffkids



SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

9:30am Sunday Bible Studies
 10:45am Worship Service

CONTACT INFO

(865) 475-3826; (865) 262-9026 (Fax)
Church Office Hours:
 Monday-Thursday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Find us at www.fbcjeff.org or follow us online on *Facebook* and *YouTube*

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The Messenger (ISSN 766010) is published monthly by First Baptist Church, 1610 Russell Ave., Jefferson City, TN 37760-2299. Periodicals Postage Paid at Jefferson City, TN POSTMASTER. Send address change to *The Messenger*, 1610 Russell Ave., Jefferson City, TN 37760-2299.

