

# THE MESSENGER

## MARCH 2023

### FROM THE TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will be well into Lent. What might we do to maximize the impact of Lent on our lives?



Many Christians choose to give up something in observance of the season: chocolate, fast food, an expensive pastime, and the like come to mind. Others decide to take up a spiritual discipline in hope of turning the discipline into a habit. Examples include daily prayer, bible reading, doing something good for others at least once a week, fasting, and practicing silence while listening for Holy Spirit's guidance. Some Christians opt to focus on developing the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Did you notice what all such options have in common? They require us to make a decision to start a given practice, followed by subsequent decisions to continue the practice. As it turns out, Lent gives us an opportunity to strengthen our ability to make and live into decisions.

We ought not be surprised. After all, decision-making is at the heart of the Christian life for Christ followers and congregations. When Jesus says, "Come, follow me," he invites us to take up a kind of life in which decision-making is part and parcel of walking faithfully with Christ.

Mike



# A PRAYER FOR LENT

By John Burton

O Lord, we bring to you our broken lives. Take them and break them until they can break no more. Take our broken lives and heal them, even though Your healing may cause us great pain. Gather the broken pieces of our lives and mold them into what You have created us to become. Form us into consecrated vessels that can hold Your love and pour it out on those around us who need it most.

Lord, may we groan with Your Holy Spirit with groanings too deep for words, because of the appalling state of our sin-plagued world, with all its strife and hate and war. May we agonize with Jesus as He agonized on the cross. Help us realize that His physical agony was merely a shadow of the agony that He bore in His soul, as the holy wrath of God's anger toward our sins was poured out upon Him.

May we grieve with the Heavenly Father because lost sinners turn away from Your love, while we do little to bring them to Your grace. May we weep until we can weep no more.

Lord, we also rejoice with the Holy Spirit because You have won the victory over all the world's troubles. May we laugh and dance with Jesus because His blood has cleansed away our sins and our guilt. May we celebrate victory with the Heavenly Father over every sinner who comes to You for salvation.

We pray these prayers O Lord, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray "not my will, but Your will be done in us and on earth even as it is done in heaven." Amen.



*Sermon Series: Cross Words*

March 5:	<i>Today You Will Be with Me in Paradise,</i> Luke 23:39-43
March 12:	<i>Behold Your Son; Behold Your Mother,</i> John 19:26-27
March 19:	<i>Why Have You Forsaken Me?,</i> Mark 15:33-34
March 26:	<i>It Is Finished,</i> John 19:30
April 2:	<i>Palm Sunday, Lord's Supper Service</i>
April 9:	<i>Easter Sunday, We Are Easter People,</i> Luke 24:1-12

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

By Bethany Davenport, Children & Youth Committee Chair

The children's ministry at FBC had a wonderful 2022. Our kids sang beautifully at Easter and at Blessing of the Backpacks. We had fun at our joint VBS with First United Methodist and First Presbyterian. We welcomed the return of ETC and enjoyed a very well attended Trunk-or-Treat. We ended the year with a festive Family Gingerbread Day, and we had a very successful blanket, glove, and hat collection for AMOS and Isaiah 117 House. Thank you to everyone who made it such a wonderful year! Stay tuned for news about all of the upcoming events in 2023!

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

By Josh Gibson, Administrative Coordinator

## Summary of Operational Budget Income / Expenses through January 2023

	October	November	December	January
<b>Income</b>	\$25,667.61	\$39,351.33	\$53,094.94	\$23,962.06
<b>Expenses</b>	\$26,097.44	\$23,891.41	\$31,355.45	\$31,041.04
<b>Net Income</b>	(\$429.83)	\$15,459.92	\$21,739.49	(\$7,078.98)
<b>YTD</b>	(\$17,494.54)	(\$2,034.62)	\$19,704.87	(\$7,078.98)

### 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 02/22/2023) = \$0.00
- **Forward in Faith Capital Campaign:** Updated through February 22 (*Pledge period is September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2023*):
  - Total campaign pledges = \$318,250.00
  - Total pledge gifts received = **\$277,553.50**
  - Total pledges outstanding = \$40,696.50
  - Fund balance = \$13,581.19
- **Our Forward in Faith Capital Campaign** comes to a close 6 months from now.

<b>ATTENDANCE</b>		
SUNDAY	BIBLE STUDY*	IN-PERSON WORSHIP
January 29	56	93
February 5	61	68
February 12	59	80
February 19	62	70
February 26	41	84
<i>*Bible Study number includes online participants</i>		

## DEACONS & MINISTER OF THE WEEK

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>March 5:</b>  | Ken Morton and Bruce Davenport / Chad Hartsock |
| <b>March 12:</b> | Ray Dalton and Betty Watkins / Nenette Measels |
| <b>March 19:</b> | Leon Shoemaker and Heidi Thomas / Josh Gibson  |
| <b>March 26:</b> | Carolyn Blevins and Jim Wilson / Chad Hartsock |

# **CALLED BUSINESS MEETING 3/5/23**

By Church Advisory Council

Church Family,

We have spent much time in recent months dealing with our hopes and dreams, our fears and failures, and our identity and vision as we transition into a healthier season of church life. Transition has allowed us to see the past more clearly in order to better understand our present and to dare to look into the future. In light of this process, which has included listening sessions, congregational meetings, surveys, and presentations on topics of common interest, the Church Advisory Council (CAC) senses the need for us to claim our identity as a people of faith.

On behalf of the CAC, the trustees have requested a called business meeting be held on Sunday March 5, 2023 immediately after worship to consider the resolution concerning church membership printed below. While discussion will be welcomed according to the rules of order, the CAC sincerely hopes that the resolution will be adopted as written. The CAC believes the adoption of this resolution will do at least three things: (1) Cast a vision for us as a community of faith to pursue, (2) affirm our longstanding commitment to the Kingdom of God and God's people, and (3) better inform future members, leaders, and ministers of our shared values and aspirations. The resolution will read as follows:

**Be it resolved that First Baptist Church, Jefferson City, TN declares that its membership is open to all persons regardless of race, social status, gender, and sexual identity and reaffirms its previously adopted motto "Breaking down barriers to proclaim the love of Christ".**

Please plan to attend and consider this resolution as we continually discern God's voice in the life of this community of faith.

--Church Advisory Council



# **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BRUNCH 3/11/23**

By Karen Milligan, The Upper Room Sunday School Class

The Upper Room Sunday School Class would like to invite all women of the church to a fellowship brunch on Saturday, March 11 at 10:00. Come and bring your favorite breakfast treat – casseroles, sweet rolls, Krispy Kreme doughnuts, fruit, bagels, or anything else you enjoy. As we share food around the table, we will also share our stories. Please bring something that is special to you; maybe a special Bible verse, a poem, a picture of your family, something you have made - anything that helps tell your story.

## **CHILDREN'S DAY OUT UPDATE**

By Jessica Lawson, CDO Director

We are already halfway through the school year. We currently have 5 full classes, 12 staff members, and 24 families on the waiting list.

Trunks-for-Treats was a very successful event with lots of candy and family interaction. Our field trip to the Pumpkin Patch was also a wonderful family experience. Community Helper Week was exciting for students, as well as the staff. The Jefferson City Police Department, a local librarian, Dandridge Pediatric Dentistry, and a local dairy farmer visited with the students to talk about the importance of community helpers. Our annual fall luncheon was a huge success with over 150 people in attendance. We were of course extremely busy during the Christmas season celebrating the birth of our Lord!

We have several activities planned for the upcoming months including Dr. Seuss, healthy food and nutrition, and pet week. These themes pair with our weekly Bible verses which encourage students to learn and grown in the Lord.

We would love for the church family to become more involved with our preschool! If you would like to volunteer to be a guest reader, please contact the preschool office at 865-475-3826.





# Join us for

**C-N WOMEN'S CHORUS AND MEN'S CHORUS**

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023 | 12:00pm  
FBC Jefferson City, Fellowship Hall**

*Light lunch and snacks will be provided!*

## **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](http://www.fbcjeff.org) or follow us online on *Facebook* and *YouTube*

## **STAFF**

Sierra Bevins ([sbevins@fbcjeff.org](mailto:sbevins@fbcjeff.org))  
Angie France  
Josh Gibson ([jgibson@fbcjeff.org](mailto:jgibson@fbcjeff.org))  
Chad Hartsock  
Jessica Lawson ([cdo@fbcjeff.org](mailto:cdo@fbcjeff.org))  
Steven Lloyd ([slloyd@fbcjeff.org](mailto:slloyd@fbcjeff.org))  
Nenette Measels  
Cameron Rowlett  
Gage Rustin  
Melanie Simpson  
Mike Smith

Ministry Assistant  
Organist  
Administrative Coordinator  
Interim Minister of Youth & College Students  
Children's Day Out Director  
Facility Caretaker  
Interim Minister of Music  
Video Editor  
Youth Ministry Intern  
Pianist  
Transitional Pastor

*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.

