



February 2024

Volume LXXVI, No. 02



Sunday, February 11

**Diaconate Instillation and Ordination
Super Bowl Fundraiser and Auction**
(See inside for details.)



Ash Wednesday Worship
and the Imposition of Ashes

Ash Wednesday, February 14
6:30 pm

**Youth and Adults in the Sanctuary
Children in the Chapel
and God's Backyard**



Ash Wednesday



Community Lenten Pilgrimage

First Lunch Seating 12:00 pm
Service 12:30 pm
Second Lunch Seating 1:00 pm
Cost of Lunch \$2.00

Date	Church	Message by
February 21	Immanuel Lutheran	Chris Christopher
February 28	South Main Baptist	Toby Frost
March 6	ARP	Todd McCoy
March 13	First Baptist	Mary Balfour Dunlap
March 20	Main Street UMC	Steve Keck
March 27	First Presbyterian	Kyle Hite

(Offering given to Greater Greenwood United Ministry)



The Advent and Christmas seasons are now history. I hope and pray that you found the worship and events as meaningful, worthwhile, and rich as I did. A huge "thank you" to the pastors, staff, and members who worked diligently to make it all happen.

First Baptist ended the year in a strong way. Some took my words seriously that the good news is that the church has the financial wherewithal needed to live out her mission, "Seeking His Heart . . . Being His Hands: Living, Loving, and Serving in the Name of Christ." The problem is that some of those resources were (and are) still in our purses, wallets, and bank accounts. The challenge to be faithful in our stewardship does not end with the calendar year. We are in a new year that affords us new challenges and blessings. I believe that FBC will rise to the challenge and experience God's blessings through strong stewardship of time, talents, and resources. Potential Senior Pastor candidates will look at your financial stewardship (and many other aspects of FBC's life) as one means of evaluating their interest in coming to serve alongside you. Additionally, Sunday School and worship attendance averages rose in 2023 over 2022. The increases were small but certainly good news. You did this during a whole year of transition. 2024 can be even stronger if you continue your good work.

First Baptist welcomed Lauren Coker as Interim Youth Leader. The Youth Committee and I have and will continue to work with Lauren enabling her to be successful in relating to and mentoring FBC's youth in the ways of the Lord.

The Pastor Search Committee is reviewing resumes. The committee is moving forward expeditiously. My experience with churches in the interim is that members want a new Senior Pastor yesterday. However, it takes time to listen to the Lord, to each other, and potential candidates. This is a holy discernment process. The committee wants and values your prayers and support. Please be patient with them. This diverse group is doing great work!

My role in the search for your next Senior Pastor. Once again, I want to reemphasize my limited role in the search process. I am available to provide help, suggestions, guidance, etc. to the Pastor Search Committee regarding process. I do not recommend or evaluate potential candidates. The church has called the twelve members of the search team to evaluate candidates and recommend the one to you that they believe God is calling to be your next Senior Pastor.

-Layne Smith

**Report from the Pastor Search Committee Given
by Nan Smith in Worship on January 21, 2024**

Thank you for entrusting the Pastor Search Committee with the holy and important task of recommending the next Senior Pastor of FBC. The committee met this past Monday evening. The goal of the meeting was to narrow the search to a handful (or perhaps say "a few") potential candidates for the committee to engage in conversation. What the committee has done this week is to listen to sermons of these remaining potential candidates. The committee met following worship on Sunday, January 21, to determine if the committee can narrow the search even more. Once the committee does this work, then the committee will begin to plan for and engage in actual conversation with the remaining candidates. The committee ask that you continue to pray for the committee and for the person who will be the next Senior Pastor.



Worship in February

Sunday—February 4 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Scripture: Isaiah 40:25-31; **Mark 1:29-39**

Sermon: "An Elusive Jesus"
Layne Smith

Special Music
"Praise God in His Holiness"
Chancel Choir

The Sanctuary flowers today are given in memory of Jimmy, Self, Elizabeth Self, Wheeler, and Linda Self by their family.

Sunday—February 11 Transfiguration Sunday Deacon Installation and Ordination

Scripture: Matthew 27:21-25, John 13:3-5

Homily: "Choosing Your Basin"
Layne Smith

Special Music
"Praise to the Lord, God's Glories Show"
with Noah Skinner, congas
"Triumphal Entry"
Jean O. Wood Handbell Ensemble

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Craig Holbrook Parham by his family.

Wednesday—February 14 Ash Wednesday

Scripture: **Joel 2:1-2; 12-17**

Homily: "A Spiritual Warning System"
Layne Smith

Special Music
"Rend Your Heart" - Bell Tower Trio
(Anthem composed by Keith Jameson)

Worship—February 18 First Sunday in Lent

Scripture: Psalm 15:1-10; **Mark 1:4-13**

Sermon: "Tempted and Tried"
Layne Smith

Special Music
"I Shall See" - Chancel Choir

Worship— February 25 Second Sunday in Lent

Scripture: Psalm 22:23-31, **Mark 8:31-38**

Sermon: "Choose Your Pain"
Layne Smith

Special Music
"Bless the Lord, O My Soul" and "Lord, for Thy Tender Mercies Sake"
Chancel Choir



Opportunities to Honor or Remember for Easter



On Easter Sunday, First Baptist will publish a list of donors and those honored or remembered through a special offering during Lent. Honoring and memorial donations may be designated for the purchase of lilies, for the Beverly Greer Offering for State Missions, or for the Ministry Plan. After worship on Easter, lilies may be picked up by the donor or recipient. Flowers not picked up will be given to shut-ins. The cost of lilies is \$22.00 and orders must be received no later than Sunday, March 17. **Checks for lilies should be payable to The Floral Case.** All other checks should be made payable to First Baptist Church. A form is in the church office for donors to indicate where the donation is to go and who is being honored or remembered. Since cards will be available in the church office for donors to send to recipients, no acknowledgements of these gifts will be sent by the church office.



New Block Offerings in February

In addition to the continued block taught by Andy Westbrook on Howard Thurman's book, *The Creative Encounter*, Mary Frances Tompson will lead a study on The Characteristics of a Jesus Follower, based on the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, on February 7. The Ash Wednesday service is on February 14. On February 21 and February 28 Gamble Roquemore will lead a study on significant facts and promises of the Bible and God.



Music Notes

The Pilgrimage Begins Again: "Rend Your Heart"

In choosing music for the Lenten season, there are relatively few anthems specifically for Ash Wednesday. I was struck by reading a recent poem by Jan Richardson, titled "Rend Your Heart," that was written for Ash Wednesday, and I set about composing a new anthem. The piece is written for the Bell Tower Trio (David Corbitt, Lewis Walker, and myself, with Betty Walker on piano). It talks about the chambers of the heart, filled with your entire life - all the people you have met, paths you have taken or not taken, all the words you have spoken or not spoken, in love, in rage. As she writes: "It could take you days to wander these rooms. Forty, at least."

I set most of the work in C-minor, with the ending switching to C-major, making it "hopeful and uplifting" at the end - much like our journey through Lent to Easter. There are dissonances along the way, between the voices, and with the piano. There are some moments that sound like chimes, and polytonal chords (chords from different keys 'played together')... only to lead to 'The One' that we return to: God; and the C-Major key... hopeful, uplifting. The final lines of the poem are:

*And so let this be
a season for wandering
For trusting the breaking*

*For tracing the tear that will return
you to the One who waits, who
watches,*

*Who works within the rending to
make your heart whole.*

Keith Jameson

Lenten Devotion Booklets

The Lenten devotion booklet, *Our Lenten Road to Holiness* is available in the Narthex. Please take one per family.

Library Corner

Hello, Friends,



Remember me? I am Libby, your church library spokesperson, wishing you Happy Reading during the coming year. My resolution is to increase circulation of library media in the adult/youth section. I enjoy the children, especially the Cheerful Cherubs, who visit weekly, but I would also appreciate some adult company.

With this challenge, one of my strategies is to relate ministries, programs, sermons, current events, and church calendar to materials available in the library. For example, Layne Smith recently included the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in one of his sermons. The chancel choir recently sang a beautiful anthem, "The Work of Christmas," based on a poem written by Howard Thurman, a well-known theologian, educator, Christian mystic, and mentor to Martin Luther King, Jr. There are just two examples of how books and other media can enhance one's spiritual formation.

If you need assistance in locating media, the computer catalog is available and is user friendly, with instructions at the console. Should you need assistance, please contact Ms. June at 864-538-9109.

Please visit the library soon and help me smile again.

Lovingly,
Libby



Newsletter Schedule

The First Baptist Church newsletter, *Connections*, is printed once a month. Office staff have the goal of families receiving the newsletter approximately a week before the end of the previous month. Holidays, weekends, and the number of days in a month affect when the newsletter is mailed. To help everyone remember when **articles are needed for the newsletter, the deadline for articles the fifteenth of each month.** Thank you for helping First Baptist include relevant information in the newsletter.



January Diaconate Meeting Update

The Diaconate met in person on Sunday, January 21. In addition to receiving reports from the staff, the Diaconate approved the following items of business.

- Brittany Dunlap to serve a three year term on the Outreach and Membership Committee.
- Stephen Baggett to serve a one year term on the Missions Committee.
- Terry Gilchrist to serve a three year term on the Youth Committee.
- Kelly McWhorter to serve a three year term on the Nominations and Lay Leadership Committee.



Diaconate Class of 2026

During a called business meeting on Sunday, January 21, the following individuals were selected to serve in the sacred call of a deacon at First Baptist. Their term of service is from January 2024 to December 2026:

David Corbitt
 Lewis Dorrity
 Tom Gordon
 Russell Martin
 Jason Reed
 Kathleen Snead

Approximately 193 votes were cast with 198 votes affirmative. Therefore, the slate of deacons passed by a 98% margin.

Lewis Dorrity and Tom Gordon, who have served as deacons previously, will be installed and David Corbitt, Russell Martin, Jason Reed, and Kathleen Snead will be ordained on February 11. Please be in prayer for all our deacons as they carry out their sacred duties.

Church Family News

Christian Sympathy is extended to the families of Eddie Dalton and Joann Gray

Self: Linton Mann

In Spain (out of hospital): Alison Moore, wife of Travis Moore

Home: Gay Byars, Linda Johnson, Ruth Martin, Nancy Young, Linda Owens, Nancy Weaver, Carol Richard, Nina Swillie

New Members

James and Lynn Brooks
731 Calhoun Rd.

Thank you for your GENEROSITY!



As Layne Smith stated in his Interim Pastor's Report, First Baptist ended the year strong financially. In fact, twenty one percent of the annual Ministry Plan was received in December. Furthermore, FBC received thirty four percent of the Ministry Plan during the fourth quarter. Therefore, THANK YOU for the generosity by which you have blessed First Baptist last year. While the year was difficult, especially without a senior pastor, you have continued to give to support the ministry and mission of First Baptist. In looking forward to this year, the financial need each week to support the Ministry Plan is \$19,007.87. Thank you in advance for your financial support this year.

End of the Year 2023 Ministry Plan Report

Required in 2023	\$1,007,819.42
Received in 2023	929,134.81
Deficit	(78,684.61)
State Missions	1,900.00
Munchin' for Missions	1,881.00
Global Missions	3,928.00

January 7 to January 21, 2024

Monthly Need	\$ 57,023.61
Monthly Gifts	30,460.71
Ministry Plan Req'd YTD	57,023.61
Ministry Plan Rcv'd YTD	30,460.71
Ministry Plan YTD Deficit (Under)	(26,562.90)
Sunday School Att. (Avg)	156
Worship Attendance (Avg)	195



Spring Semester Dates

- February 1:** RSVP for Movie Night
- February 2:** Children's Movie Night, 5:30 pm-8:30 pm
- February 14:** Ash Wednesday
- February 22:** Children's Family Activity Night - RSVP due
- February 25:** Children's Family Activity Night, 5:00 pm-7:00 pm
- March 24:** Children's Egg Hunt at the Weavers, 3:30 pm-5:00 pm
- March 24:** Palm Sunday, children wave palms in worship
- March 27:** No Wednesday Activities
- March 28:** Maundy Thursday Service
- March 31:** Easter, children shake alleluia bells in worship
- April 3:** Children's Family Picnic and Playground Night, 6:00 pm-7:30 pm
No childrens choirs
- April 25:** RSVP due for Children's Playground Night
- April 26:** Children's Playground Night, 5:30 pm-8:00 pm
- May 15:** Music & Missions Night
- May 22:** CIA Fun Night
No childrens choirs
- May 23:** RSVP due for Family Bowling Night
- May 29:** Family Bowling Night, 6:30 pm-7:30; pm
No childrens choirs



Children's Movie Night

The next Movie Night is Friday, February 2 from 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm for 3K to 5th grade. Supper will be provided and this is a drop-off event. **Please RSVP by Thursday, February 1 to Anna Burch (aeburchfbc@gmail.com) .**

Ash Wednesday



Ash Wednesday is February 14. The oldest CIA group (4th and 5th graders) will plan and lead an Ash Wednesday service for the younger children. That night, younger groups will start in their rooms. The oldest group will start in the chapel. All children will end in the Backyard.

The 4th and 5th graders will plan and practice during our worship unit before Ash Wednesday. The dates are January 24, January 31, and February 7.



Family Activity Night

On Sunday, February 25, we will have a Family Activity Night in the Fellowship Hall from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm. The evening will start with a pizza supper. Evening activities will include cookie decorating, bracelet making for our older kids and fruit loop necklaces for our younger kids, and a shamrock craft to give our homebound and nursing home members.

Please RSVP Anna Burch (aeburchfbc@gmail.com) by Thursday, February 22 with the number of cheese, pepperoni, and gluten free slices your family will need!



What Does Your Child Like to Eat?

As part of the Wednesday Night Meal a "KID'S FRIENDLY" meal is offered. Examples of some of the offerings include chicken nuggets, corn dogs, hot dogs, hamburgers, tater tots, and mac & cheese. Parents are asked to make additional suggestions by contacting the church office.





Cheerful Cherub Registration



Registration is now open for children ages 1-4 and for 5 year old kindergarten students for the 2024-2025 school year. Forms are available in the church office or from Claudia Burch. The registration fee of \$150.00 is due when the form is returned. If you have any questions, please call Claudia at 229-2787.



**Sunday Night Live
February 4, 2024
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm**

**At the home of
Kenny and Nancy Poston**



**Save the Date:
Youth "Souper" Bowl
Fundraiser
Sunday, February 11**

The Youth would like to invited everyone to the Youth "Souper" Bowl Fundraiser immediately following worship on Sunday, February 11. Youth will be serving tomato bisque soup, chicken noodle soup, and chili. No reservations are needed. *To Go* orders will be available. The cost of the meal will be whatever a person cares to donate. Proceeds will be used to offset the cost of Passport Camp, July 15-19.

Calling All Bakers



The Youth Committee is planning a "baked goods" auction as part of the Youth Souper Bowl Fundraiser following the worship service on February 11. Baked goods (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, whole cakes or pies, etc.) are asked to be brought to the church in disposable containers prior to worship. The youth appreciates your support and generosity toward their trip to Passport.



NGO's New Year Begins February 6

The Never Grow Old Club (NGO) begins its new year on February 6. Membership dues of \$5.00 cover all of 2024. Where else can you get such god entertainment and fellowship for such a small investment? In addition, someone will call you each month to make your meal reservations, instead of you having to remember to call the church.

The February 6 Never NGO program will feature loves songs from the 1960s and one from the 1970s sung by the *Bell Tower Trio* (David Corbitt, Keith Jameson, and Lewis Walker). The February menu is chicken fingers, macaroni and cheese, green beans, and dessert. The cost of the meal is \$10.00. Non-NGO members are asked to **call the church (229-5557) by Wednesday, January 31, to make meal reservations.**

The March 5 NGO program will feature the Emerald Bells, a community handbell group comprised of twelve members under the direction of Heather Killingsworth. The March lunch menu is to be announced. **Reservations for lunch are needed by Thursday, February 29.**



Flower Calendar Openings

The flowers on the communion table each Sunday add to the beauty of the Chancel. The following dates are available for someone to provide flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one. Please contact March Frances Thompson (229-5557) to reserve a date. Please remember, the persons who contribute flowers are responsible for make arrangements with the florist of their choice to prepare and deliver the arrangements to the church.

April 28	June 9	July 21	Nov. 17
May 19	June 23	Sept. 22	Nov. 24
May 26	June 30	Sept. 29	



722 Grace Street
Greenwood, SC 29649
(864) 229-5557
Website: fbcgwd.org

Cheerful Cherubs
(864) 229-2787 www.cheerfulcherubsfbc.com

Ministers and Staff

Layne Smith
Anna Burch
David Jennings
Keith Jameson
Lauren Coker
Robert Wilson
Claudia Burch
Mary Frances Thompson
Linda Miller

Interim Senior Pastor
Minister to Children
Minister of Administration
Church Music Director
Part-Time Interim Youth Leader
Interim Organist
Director of Cheerful Cherubs
Ministry Assistant
Financial Assistant

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Helping Hands Ministry Information Line(864) 229-8051

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED