

APRIL 16, 2026

First Baptist Church of Eatonton Messenger

FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST SHARING GOD'S LOVE AND GRACE WITH ALL



FROM THE PASTOR

A famous radio broadcaster had a program "*The Rest of the Story*," which aired for over thirty years until his death in 2009. The show featured intriguing backstories about well-known events and figures, often revealing surprising details that were not widely known, concluding with the phrase, "*And now you know the rest of the story.*"

A minister leader of mine over the recent years wrote an occasional entry for working preachers titled "... *in the meantime.*" He recognized a lot of life, perhaps too much, is about waiting. Waiting until you're old enough to drive, or go off to college, or marry the love of your life, or get your ideal job, or get the children out of the house, or retire, You get the picture. I don't think any of that is particularly healthy, or redemptive, though it is some of our reality. The danger is it too often leads to the idea we don't have significant things to do *in the meantime*. The truth is life is found *in the meantime* – the time when we can care for those around us, have courage, share hope, love those around us, strive for what is best, and a whole host of other things. But my friend quoted the poet who once wrote, the time being can be "the hardest time of all." What a sad take on things! So my minister source wrote ... *in the meantime* articles.

The thing that brought these ideas across my radar is this time after Easter. As a minister there is perhaps no higher high, holy day! I committed myself several months ago to read from the book of Acts after Easter. And thus to study from it on Wednesday nights when a few of us gather for prayer and Bible study.

Acts reminds me there is a "*rest of the story.*" There is an "*in the meantime*" that continues. If I were to name this time, I would borrow a phrase I met years ago from Wendell Berry and Eugene Person – *Practice Resurrection!* The phrase suggests a myriad of things. It is so challenging and so hopeful.

A very recent line I read from Kate Bowler is a direct result of practicing resurrection. She humbly says there are griefs which you will never get over, but you will be "*joyful anyway.*" You can read the details in her books or her substack. And hear them on her podcasts.

There are so many voices leading us to practice resurrection. The poets are some of the best! Gospel leaders who encourage us in the way of love toward ourselves, one another and the world, practice resurrection. The book of Acts reveals how the followers of Christ went forward after Easter practicing resurrection – the focus of Acts is the new community they formed. They lived together with one another in light of Jesus' teachings. But is all we get from Acts just a church history lesson and a charge to evangelism? Hardly! It is also the greater truths of how people lived in an ever-growing joy because they practiced resurrection. They formed communities to encourage such practices. They sabotaged their own hope too often, but they raised one another again and again. Resurrected, they kept living into a "joy of the Lord." They were forever turning toward such love and joy.

Practicing such resurrection is a grand vision of life. It can seem so grand it feels impossible. But just your taking time to read this article, and meditate upon such thoughts, is a practice of resurrection. Getting up today was practicing resurrection. Speaking to yourself. Caring for that beautiful face of yours by splashing warm water upon it to wake it up is practicing resurrection. It is so simple on the one hand.

It is living "*in the meantime*" and creating "*the rest of the story.*" It is finding a way to be "*joyful anyway.*" We can go on and on with words of explanation. To bless ourselves and others is to practice resurrection. May God help us to creatively be conscious of such practices and raise up life all around us!

Practice Resurrection,
Craig

P.O. Box 3400

115 N. Madison Ave

706-485-3331

firstbaptisteatonton.org

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Friday: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

A SONG WORTH COMING BACK TO

There are certain songs in the life of a congregation that seem to never grow old. "Thy Word," the beloved hymn written by Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith, is one of those songs for me. Based on Psalm 119:105 — *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path"* — it is simple, tender, and profoundly true. Every time we sing it together, I am reminded of why I love leading worship.

Music has a remarkable way of planting Scripture deep in our hearts. Long after a sermon fades from memory, a melody lingers. I have heard from many of you over the years that "Thy Word" is one of those songs you find yourself humming on a hard day, or reaching for when the road ahead feels uncertain. That is not an accident — that is the grace of God working through song.

The message at the heart of this piece is one our congregation needs to hear again and again: God's Word is enough. Not just enough for Sunday morning, but enough for the doctor's office, the sleepless night, the difficult conversation, and the moment when faith feels thin. His Word lights the very next step, even when we cannot see the whole path.

I also want to encourage you to think about the generations coming up behind us. The songs we sing together on Sunday morning become the soundtrack of a child's faith. When we lift our voices to declare that God's Word is our lamp and our light, we are not only speaking to ourselves — we are passing something sacred on to the young ones sitting beside us in the pew. What a privilege and a responsibility that is.

It is worth remembering, too, that this song was not written in a moment of triumph. Like so many of the great hymns of the faith, it was born out of a genuine need for God's guidance. That authenticity is part of what makes it endure. When we sing it, we are not performing confidence we do not feel — we are declaring our dependence on a God who is faithful even when we are not. There is something deeply honest and deeply freeing about that.

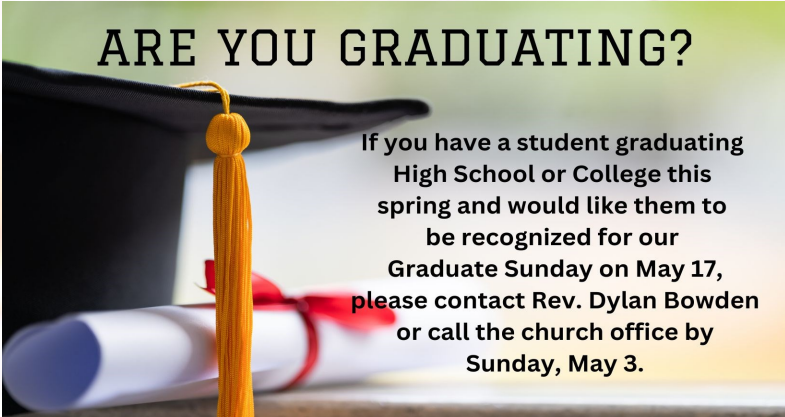
As your minister of music, my greatest joy is choosing songs that do more than fill the sanctuary with sound — songs that follow you home. I hope "Thy Word" is doing exactly that in your life. If it isn't already, I invite you to open Psalm 119 this week, read it slowly, and let the truth of it wash over you.

God's Word has not lost its power. It never will.

Dylan

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ARE YOU GRADUATING?



If you have a student graduating High School or College this spring and would like them to be recognized for our Graduate Sunday on May 17, please contact Rev. Dylan Bowden or call the church office by Sunday, May 3.



VBS MEETING

Sunday, April 26

Following Morning Worship

Contact Dylan for more information.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR APRIL

Kay Stevens

WELCOMING FOR MAY

Pat McDade

USHERS FOR APRIL

David Stickley, Head Usher

Jarred Camp, Jim Hall, Walt Rocker, John Wojtas

USHERS FOR MAY

Steven Benton, Head Usher

Randall McCook, Cooper Rainey, Charles Winslette

DEACON FOR APRIL 19

Cheryl Williams

DEACON FAMILIES

Howell Cardwell Family, Sherri Farmer Family,
David Giddens Family, Harris McCollum Family,
Kelli Phillips Family, Karen Ricketson Family,
John Wojtas Family

DEACON FOR APRIL 26

Charles Winslette

DEACON FAMILIES

Ralph Barclay Family, Sharon Haney,
Paula Rossee Family, Bill Sharp Family,
Grady Strube, Lynda Walker Family,
Cary Walton Family, Sug Walton

DEACON FOR MAY 3

John Wojtas

DEACON FAMILIES

Jarred Camp Family, Tim Camp, Family,
Jo Ann Clay, Christian Keiser Family,
Andrea Paugh, Stew Rich Family,
Roger Vining Family, Lauren Wooten Family

BIRTHDAYS

04/16 - Libby Rainey

04/17 - Winn Self

04/18 - Joe Rossee

04/21 - Mary Jo Balas

04/23 - Sherry Lyons, Pat Turney

04/24 - Catherine Williamson

04/25 - Amy McElhenney, Joseph Rainey

04/27 - Amy Joris

04/30 - Cooper Rainey

05/02 - Jene Etheridge, Bill Sharp

05/04 - Betty Pinholster

05/06 - Tommy Copelan, Edgar Williamson

ANNIVERSARY

04/19 - Mike and Kathy Faulk

04/22 - Tommy and Linda Copelan

04/23 - Hollis and Karen Harrison

04/25 - Buck and Lauren Wooten

04/27 - David and Marsha Lutz

04/28 - Edward and Karen Ricketson

05/06 - Barry and Nancy Chambers

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, April 05 175

Sunday, April 12 90

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget Needs YTD \$138,082.50

Total Receipts YTD \$126,367.25

Transfers In \$34,390.44

Budget Expenditures YTD \$199,604.47

CHURCH COUNCIL

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Sunday, May 3
4:30 PM

First Baptist Church
P.O. Box 3400
Eatonton, GA 31024
Return Service Requested

**MISSION OPPORTUNITY
BABY BOTTLE FUNDRAISER FOR
FIRST CALL PREGNANCY CENTER**

CHANGE SOMEONE'S LIFE

FIRST CALL PREGNANCY CENTER

BABY BOTTLE FUNDRAISER



It is baby bottle time again! Baby bottles will be handed out and available for pick up to fill with your loose change (or a check) to donate to First Call Pregnancy Center. This is one of our mission projects. First Call Pregnancy supports people in several counties, including Putnam and Greene counties. **These bottles will be available for the following 3 Sundays with the final day to turn them in being Sunday, May 3rd.** You can turn in the bottles any of these Sundays in the Narthex.



FIRST CALL
Pregnancy Center