

MARCH 19, 2026

†  
*First Baptist Church of Eatonton*  
*Messenger*



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

## **FROM THE PASTOR**

Lent soon comes to a close, but it is the closing of Lent that is so significant to our life together and to our life with God. How the story ends often makes the story itself so powerful.

One ending that stays in my mind was the ending in the movie *Gran Torino*. Walt Kowalski lies sprawled out in the shape of a cross on the lawn. He was shot and killed by a local intimidating, unruly gang who has been allowed to rule the neighborhood until Walt began to confront them and lead others to do the same. It is clear that because of the way Walt has lived and died the people rise up to face the injustices perpetrated by the gang to reclaim their neighborhood. Walt's final actions were an exclamation point on his life of transformation wherein he and others were transformed by a spirit of kindness, strength and righteousness.

Likewise, the end of the Lent is met with what we call Holy Week, because of the holy adventures of the last week of the life of Christ. Jesus has lived a unique life of kindness, strength and righteousness. His dying the way he did is a completion of a life he lived faithful to his calling to love and love supremely. How the story ends, makes the story itself so powerful.

Jesus lay sprawled out on a cross – a form that will forever be an image of great love for people, even people who caused his death – a form that will forever lead people to love so deeply and give our lives in love for the righteous way of God's love. And we are invited to trust such an ending as the way of life!

Easter celebrates God's affirmation of such a love for all people as is seen in Jesus. And again, we are invited to follow such a love, trusting such a love as the saving graces of life.

May God help us to do so.

Speaking of trusting I read once again Thomas Smith's poem that so well depicts the trust that will yet resurrect.

It's like so many other things in life  
to which you must say no or yes.  
So you take your car to the new mechanic.  
Sometimes the best thing to do is trust.

The package left with the disreputable-looking  
clerk, the check gulped by the night deposit,  
the envelope passed by dozens of strangers –  
all show up at their intended destinations.

The theft that could have happened doesn't.  
Wind finally gets where it was going  
through the snowy trees, and the river, even  
when frozen, arrives at the right place.

And sometimes you sense how faithfully your life  
is delivered, even though you can't read the address.

*Grace, Peace, Trusting,*  
*Craig*

# THE 5TH SUNDAY IN LENT

Can you believe we are already at the Fifth Sunday in Lent? Holy Week is just around the corner, and I find myself — as I do every year at this time — both humbled and moved by the journey we are walking together.

Lent has always been a season that speaks to me through music in a way that few other times of the church year can match. There is something about these weeks of preparation and reflection that strips away the noise and invites us to listen more deeply — to Scripture, to silence, and to the quiet voice of the Spirit. The hymns and anthems we sing during this season are not merely beautiful; they are a form of prayer, a way of surrendering ourselves to the story we are living inside of.

As we move through these final days before Holy Week, I want to encourage you to pay attention to the music in a new way. Let the words wash over you. Notice what stirs in your heart when the choir lifts a phrase, or when the congregation joins together in a familiar Lenten hymn. That stirring is not accidental — it is worship doing its work in you.

Scripture reminds us in this fifth week of Lent that we are a people being drawn toward something. In John 12, Jesus says, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” That drawing — that holy pull toward the cross — is exactly what these days are about. The music we offer in worship is meant to echo that pull, to orient our hearts toward what is coming.

Holy Week is nearly here, and I hope you will make space in your schedule to be present for as much of it as you can. Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday each carry their own weight, their own beauty, their own necessary darkness before the dawn of Easter. You will not want to miss what God does in this congregation during those sacred hours. The music planned for these services has been chosen with great care and prayer, and I believe it will carry you.

As we prepare our hearts for what is ahead, know that every note sung, every chord played, every voice lifted in this place is an act of devotion. It is my joy to lead you in that offering each week. I am grateful beyond words to serve alongside you in this season.

*Dylan*

## EASTER ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Holy Week Schedule Update

First Baptist Church will not have 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Lunch, Children's Choir, Wednesday Night Services or a Good Friday service during Holy Week, March 30–April 2, 2026.

Regular services and activities will resume the following week.



# SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

## WELCOMING FOR MARCH

Mike and Kathy Faulk

## USHERS FOR MARCH

Chad Davis, Edge Farley, Marvin Franklin,  
Luke Harvey, Clayton Lancaster

## DEACON FOR MARCH 22

Mollie Harvey

## DEACON FAMILIES

Sara Beck, Tara Bushmiaer, Russell Davis Family,  
Marvin Franklin Family, Scott Joris Family,  
Steve Marshall, Pat McDade

## DEACON FOR MARCH 29

Ed Self

## DEACON FAMILIES

Jim Howell Family, Mike Lyons Family,  
Charles Patten Family, Glenda Ridley,  
Ed Self Family, Charlotte Williamson Family

## WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, March 08 101  
Sunday, March 15 104

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget Needs YTD \$92,055.00  
Total Receipts YTD \$73,473.00  
Budget Expenditures YTD \$126,249.59

## BIRTHDAYS

03/20 - Julie Harper, Jim Kauffmann,  
Leslie Peebles  
03/21 - Jesse Covington  
03/25 - David Stickley  
03/26 - Felice Dissmeyer  
03/27 - Marvin Franklin  
03/28 - Janice Knowles

## ANNIVERSARIES

03/24 - Steve and Robin Benton  
03/26 - Chad and Jessica Davis  
03/31 - Walt and Tara Rocker

# THANK YOU

Dear FBC,

Thank you for all your support after my mother's passing. The funeral was perfect. She would have loved it! Your kind and thoughtful expression of sympathy is deeply appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

Sincerely,  
Beth Bridges

Dear FBCE Members,

Thank you for the love and support you have shown me over the past 21 years through Stepping Stones Ministry. It has been a true blessing to serve the families and children in our community through this Christian preschool.

While it is sad to see Stepping Stones close after 27 wonderful years, changes in local free and reduced childcare options, along with increasing financial and insurance costs, led the board to make the difficult decision to end the ministry.

I am deeply grateful for the many volunteers, prayers, and encouragement that helped make this ministry so special.

Thank you also for surrounding my children and family with such love through the years.

The memories and the lives touched through Stepping Stones will always remain close to my heart.

*With sincere thanks,*  
Denise Carmichael

## MISSION OPPORTUNITY

### ANNUAL FBC FOOD DRIVE

Please bring non-perishable food items to the Narthex by Sunday, March 29.



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

## JOIN US FOR HOLY WEEK SERVICES

### *Love Divine*

A Palm Sunday Celebration

SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 2026

6:00PM IN THE SANCTUARY

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

115 N. MADISON AVENUE, EATONTON, GA 31024

Combined Chancel and Bell Choirs

Eatonton First Methodist Church and First Baptist Church of Eatonton

### *Holy Week Services*

AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

MONDAY, MARCH 30 - THURSDAY, APRIL 2

12:00 NOON (Lunch will be provided after the services)



**PALM SUNDAY**  
March 29  
WORSHIP AT 10:50 AM  
CANTATA AT 6:00 PM



**MAUNDY THURSDAY  
COMMUNION**  
April 2 AT 6:00 PM



**EASTER SUNDAY**  
April 5  
Sunrise at 7:00 AM  
Worship AT 10:50 AM



**MAUNDY THURSDAY  
EVENING SERVICE**

**APRIL 2, 2026  
6:00 PM**



**Easter Sunrise  
Service**

**April 5 at 7:00am  
at the Plaza**

