

JUNE 4, 2026

# *First Baptist Church of Eatonton* *Messenger*

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



## FROM THE PASTOR

There are many things worthy of discussion these days, and it may seem unusual to write about the upcoming meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. However, because we are a Baptist church in the South, many people naturally assume that First Baptist Church of Eatonton is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and that we share the positions and perspectives expressed at the SBC's annual meeting in Orlando, Florida, June 7–10.

It is important to know that this assumption would not be accurate.

According to the historical records of First Baptist Church, "In 2000, the Southern Baptist Convention changed some aspects of its philosophy. After careful prayer and consideration of these changes, the First Baptist Church membership voted to change alliance from the Southern Baptist Convention to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in 2001."

That decision was made twenty-five years ago and continues to shape who we are as a congregation today.

Therefore, when you hear reports from Orlando about what Baptists believe or how Baptists practice their faith, please remember that those reports do not necessarily represent First Baptist Church of Eatonton. This is especially true regarding the role of women in ministry and church leadership.

At First Baptist, we believe God calls both women and men to serve, lead, teach, and proclaim the gospel. Women are welcomed and encouraged to serve in every area of ministry to which God calls them. They may teach, preach, lead, disciple, and minister through the church, whether from the pulpit, in a Sunday School classroom, through community service, or in any other setting where Christ's love and truth are shared.

Just as we celebrate the faith and witness of Abraham, Moses, David, Peter, Paul, and John, we also celebrate Sarah, Miriam, Esther, Mary, Mary Magdalene, Phoebe, and the many women whose leadership has strengthened God's people throughout the generations. Our conviction regarding women in ministry was one of the reasons First Baptist chose to align with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in 2001.

We are proudly Baptist. We cherish the historic Baptist commitments to freedom of conscience, local church autonomy, the priesthood of all believers, and the responsibility of every believer to follow Christ faithfully under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

For us, being Baptist means striving to be a gracious, thoughtful, and loving community of faith. It means worshipping God, studying Scripture, following Jesus, loving all and extending Christ's welcome.

Our prayer is that everyone who encounters the ministry of First Baptist Church experiences the love of God, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

That is the kind of Baptist we seek to be.

*Peace,  
Craig*

# A NEW SONG IN A THIRSTY LAND

There is a moment in worship that I live for — that quiet, suspended breath just before the congregation finds its voice together. Voices of different ages, different struggles, different weeks begin to unite around a single melody, and something holy happens in the space between us. That moment is what Psalm 33 is pointing us toward, and it is what the beloved hymn *Rain Down* by Jaime Cortez invites us to enter.

Psalm 33 opens with an urgent, joyful command: sing. Not a polite suggestion — a command, brimming with energy. The psalmist calls for the harp, the lyre, the ten-stringed instrument. He calls for shouts of joy and skillful playing. He is painting a picture of worship that is fully alive — engaged body, engaged mind, and an engaged heart. This is not passive observation. This is participatory praise offered by a people who know their God. And what is the foundation of that praise? The psalmist tells us plainly: "For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love" (vv. 4–5). We sing because we have something to sing about. We do not gather to perform beautiful music for its own sake. We gather to declare, with everything in us, the faithfulness of the One who made us and sustains us.

This is where *Rain Down* meets us so tenderly. Jaime Cortez drew from the ancient imagery of God's mercy falling like rain upon parched ground — a picture as timeless as the psalms themselves. When we sing "Rain down, rain down, rain down your love on your people," we are not simply singing a pleasant refrain. We are confessing our thirst. We acknowledge that we cannot sustain ourselves, that we are, like the earth in a dry season, entirely dependent upon what comes from above.

Psalm 33 reminds us that this dependence is not weakness — it is wisdom. "We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield" (v. 20). The people described in this psalm are not defeated people. They are trusting people. Their song rises not because everything is easy, but because they have anchored themselves in a God whose love endures. When we sing *Rain Down* on a Sunday morning, I pray you hear it as more than music. I pray you hear it as our honest prayer — our collective acknowledgment that we need what only God can give. And I pray you will open your own voice and join in. You do not need to be a trained singer. Psalm 33 was written for all the upright in heart (v. 1). That is the only qualification required.

This month, I want to challenge each of us — choir members, instrumentalists, and congregation alike — to bring intentionality to our worship. Before the first note is played this Sunday, take a moment to still yourself. Remember what the psalmist remembered: that God spoke and the world came into being (v. 9), that He sees all people and knows every human heart (vv. 13–15), and that His mercy is over those who trust in Him (v. 18). Then sing — not to be heard, but because He is worthy.

The song He has placed in us is a gift. Let us not hold it back.

*Dylan*

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## SUMMER OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Summer is a season many of us look forward to all year long. The pace of life changes, families spend more time together, and children enjoy a break from school. While summer often brings opportunities for fun and relaxation, it also presents a unique opportunity for spiritual growth.

In Deuteronomy 6:6-7, God instructs His people to keep His commands on their hearts and to teach them diligently to their children—when sitting at home, walking along the road, lying down, and getting up. In other words, faith is not meant to be confined to Sunday mornings. Some of the most meaningful spiritual lessons happen in the ordinary moments of everyday life.

This summer, consider how you can intentionally make faith a part of your family's routine. A simple prayer before a trip, a conversation about God's creation while outdoors, or reading a short Bible passage together can leave a lasting impact. Children often learn more from what they see us do than from what they hear us say.

As a church, we are grateful for the opportunity to partner with families in helping children grow in their relationship with Christ. My prayer is that this summer will be filled with rest, joy, and opportunities to draw closer to God. May we make the most of the moments He gives us and point the next generation toward Him in all that we do.

*Blessings,  
Kyle Wetzel*

# SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

## WELCOMING FOR JUNE

Randall McCook

## USHERS FOR JUNE

Mike Reagin, Head Usher

Don Baker, Tim Camp, Hollis Harrison, Jim Ryan

## DEACON FOR JUNE 7

Susan Davis

## DEACON FAMILIES

Gene Adams Family, James Cheney Family,  
Edge Farley Family, Mabel Hicks,  
Guerry Key Family, Jan Long,  
Jesse McMillen Family, Peggy McMillen

## DEACON FOR JUNE 14

Joni Dixon

## DEACON FAMILIES

William Etheridge Family, Don Masson Family,  
Karen McGinnis, Cooper Rainey Family,  
Mac Rainey Family, Jeff Russell Family,  
Andrea Welch

## DEACON FOR JUNE 21

Pam Douglas

## DEACON FAMILIES

Barry Chambers Family, Jeff Davis Family,  
Lee Dupree Family, Bill Kitchen Family,  
Tommy McElhenney Family,  
Joseph Rainey Family, Kay Stevens Family

## DEACON FOR JUNE 28

Mike Faulk

## DEACON FAMILIES

Julia Davis, David Dixon Family,  
Kent Duffey Family, Clyde Harper Family,  
Jill Vaughan

## WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, May 24 87

Sunday, May 31 93

### 1 GIVE BY MAIL

MAIL TO P.O. BOX 3400, EATONTON, GA 31024

### 2 GIVE ONLINE

VISIT [FIRSTBAPTISTEATONTON.ORG](http://FIRSTBAPTISTEATONTON.ORG) AND  
CLICK ON THE DONATE BUTTON

### 3 GIVE IN PERSON

PLACE IN THE OFFERING PLATE OR BRING  
BY THE CHURCH OFFICE

### 4 GIVE BY PHONE

SCAN THE QR CODE



# WAYS TO GIVE

AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



# BIRTHDAYS

06/04 - George Dissmeyer, Bill Etheridge

06/07 - Barry Chambers

06/08 - Barbara Giddens

06/10 - Harrison Harper

06/14 - Peggy McMillen

06/16 - Pam Thompson, Tom Thompson

06/18 - Laura Thompson

06/20 - Steve Marshall

06/21 - Anne Marie Horton

06/23 - Phyllis Blanton, Whitley Cannon,  
Wyatt Hewette, Randall McCook

06/27 - Sara Beck

06/28 - Wresse Cannon

06/29 - Linda Copelan, Cindy Williams

06/30 - Kyle Ralston, Tracy Stickley

07/01 - Daryl Covington

# ANNIVERSARIES

06/07 - David and Leslie Peebles

06/09 - Don and Pat Turney

06/15 - Terry and Phyllis Blanton

06/15 - Victor and Kay Stevens

06/16 - Cooper and Marie Rainey

06/16 - Edgar and Charlotte Williamson

06/17 - Marvin and Annette Franklin

06/20 - Stew and Ashley Rich

06/22 - William and Jene Etheridge

06/22 - Sammy and Lynda Walker

06/23 - Lee and Tina Dupree

06/26 - Jim and Vicki Hall

06/29 - Donald and Tammy Baker

# INTERCESSORY PRAYER

## OUR MEMBERS:

Gene Adams, Terry Blanton, Daryl Covington,  
George Dissmeyer, Tina Dupree, Gwen Ralston,  
Kyle Ralston, Scott Sharp, Frank Thompson,  
Jimmy Williams, Nell Wright, Unspoken

## FRIENDS AND FAMILY:

Tyrone Alford, Dennis and Gale Brown, Lynn Butterworth,  
Neile Chambers, Gloria Covington, Lynn Hudson,  
Bill and Nancy Joiner, Dale Joiner, Jo Ellen LaRue,  
Mike Liles, Zellie Marbury, Christie Nichols, Walt Rocker Jr.,  
Earnest Rogers

## ASSISTED LIVING, NURSING HOME, & HOMEBOUND:

Mary Jo Balas, Jo Ann Clay, Mary Ann Heath,  
Steve Marshall, Jean Rich, Sug Walton

## MISSIONARY FRIENDS:

Trey and Kaitlyn Lancaster in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe and  
Matt and Michelle Norman in Catalunya, Spain

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
EATONTON  
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

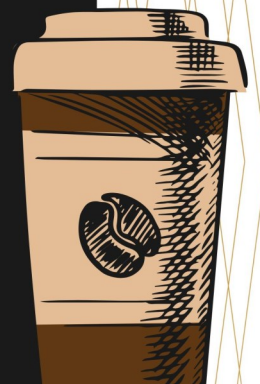
JUNE 7-10, 2026  
5:30PM – 8:00PM  
K3 - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

REGISTER ONLINE AT  
[WWW.FIRSTBAPTISTEATONTON.ORG/VBS](http://WWW.FIRSTBAPTISTEATONTON.ORG/VBS)



# Coffee with Pastor Craig

WEDNESDAYS IN JUNE  
AT 10:00AM  
IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL



# CHURCH CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, JUNE 14  
AT 10:50 AM  
DURING THE WORSHIP SERVICE



# MAPPIN FUND

REQUESTS ARE BEING ACCEPTED  
FOR THE MAPPIN FUND  
SCHOLARSHIP.  
CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE  
FOR MORE INFORMATION.



THE DEADLINE TO APPLY IS JULY 1.