

APRIL 2, 2026

# *First Baptist Church of Eatonton* *Messenger*

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



## FROM THE PASTOR

If you make even a little space this week—if you allow yourself to pay attention and to meditate on the dramatic events of the final days in the life of Christ—you may find it to be a haunting week. Haunting, not in a fearful sense, but in the way it lingers with us, stays close, and refuses to let us look away from how God chooses to live among us in those final days of Jesus' earthly life.

For some, it may feel morbid to remember the last week of a person's life. Most of our own experiences with death are quieter, less dramatic. Thanks be to God, few are taken in the very prime of life as Jesus was. And yet, when we gather to remember those we love, we do not dwell only on their final moments. Instead, we tell stories. We laugh at their quirks and celebrate their joys. We linger over the ways they loved—sometimes imperfectly, often beautifully. In remembering, we honor the fullness of their lives. And we move to live even as they did, to finish our lives with such love.

Holy Week is something like that. It is, in a sense, a wake—but one bathed in the light of resurrection.

We are invited to walk with Jesus through each day: the confrontations, the teachings, the quiet acts of love, the betrayal, the suffering. We are invited even to sit in the stillness of that first dark Saturday, resisting the urge to rush ahead. We know how the story ends, of course. But resurrection does not shine as brightly unless we have first walked through the shadows that precede it.

What makes this week so powerful is not only what happens at the end, but how Jesus lives every moment leading up to it. In these final days, God reveals a strength that is not loud or coercive, but humble and steadfast—a strength that walks alongside us, that loves without condition, that forgives even in the face of betrayal.

Here is a God who does not turn away. A God who remains present. A God who, in Jesus, shows us how to live—with courage, with compassion, with mercy.

And then comes Easter.

The resurrection is God's final, resounding "Yes" to a world that cried out, "No—crucify him." It is God's "Yes" to Jesus, to his life, to his way. It is God's "Yes" to a love stronger than fear, to a grace deeper than sin, to a life that cannot be extinguished by darkness. It is God's "Yes" to a world God so deeply loved God would give everything for it.

So do not simply remember this week. Participate in it. Join God in lifting up the life of Jesus. Be drawn again to follow him—the one who is Savior, Redeemer, Light, Truth, Living Water.

Take time this week. Walk slowly. Pay attention. Let the story take hold of you.

For what God raises up is not only Jesus—but the very way of Jesus.

May we have the courage to follow.

*Practice Resurrection,*  
*Craig*

# SCATTER THE DARKNESS

Easter is almost here, and I can hardly wait.

As we prepare our hearts for Sunday morning's celebration, I want to invite you to sit with the hymn we will be singing together — "Scatter the Darkness." Before you hear it from the choir loft or raise your own voice in worship, let these themes wash over you in the quiet of this week.

The darkness the hymn speaks of is not merely a metaphor. We know real darkness. We carry grief, doubt, and weariness into these pews every week. Some of you are walking through seasons that feel as though the stone has not yet been rolled away. Holy Week gives us permission to be honest about that — to not rush past the weight of what Jesus endured in our hurry to get to Sunday's sunrise.

But the promise woven through every phrase of this hymn is that darkness, however deep, does not have the final word. The light that scatters it is not a gentle glow — it is the blazing, unstoppable light of resurrection. The same power that broke open the tomb breaks into our darkness, our fear, our grief, and announces: morning has come. As your Minister of Music, I am constantly in awe of what happens when this congregation sings together. There is something that takes place in communal worship — in the blending of voices across generations, across sorrows, across testimonies — that nothing else can replicate. When we sing of light scattering darkness on Easter Sunday, we are not merely performing a beautiful song. We are proclaiming something we have staked our lives on.

Come Sunday ready to sing — not politely, but with your whole heart. Sing it for yourself, if this has been a dark season. Sing it for the person beside you, who may be carrying something you cannot see. Sing it as a declaration to the darkness itself: you have no power here.

He is risen. And the darkness scatters.

*With joy and anticipation,  
Dylan*

## EASTER ANNOUNCEMENTS



**MAUNDY THURSDAY  
EVENING SERVICE**

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



**Easter Sunrise  
Service**

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



**Coffee & Donuts**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 5  
DURING SUNDAY SCHOOL  
IN THE NARTHEX**



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

**EASTER  
EGG HUNT**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 5 AT 9:45 AM**

**BRING YOUR EASTER BASKET!**



**Living  
Cross**

**We will be decorating  
a living cross  
on Easter Sunday.  
Please bring flowers  
to place on the cross,  
Sunday April 5.**

# 2026 EASTER LILIES

## In Memory

Our Parents  
Don's Parents  
Pat's Parents  
Bradley Barclay  
Kathy Slaney  
George's Parents  
Family Members of Felice Dissmeyer  
Jim Thomas  
Harry and Dottie Stickley  
Dan Benshoof  
Jack Ferrell  
Lewis and Shirley Smith  
Roy and Sally Smith  
Roy and Sally Smith and Family  
Willard Moore  
Imogene Vincent  
Amy Mitchum  
Shelba Key  
Doyal and Eula Chambers  
Guy and Dean Duren  
George and Lois Harvill  
Randy Harvill  
Ed and Lavonia Ricketson  
Hammond and Pat Adams  
Sallie Key  
Sara Key  
Bill Nolen  
Hughlon and Lillian McElhenney  
Gary McElhenney  
Debbie McElhenney  
Pam McElhenney Lacey

## By

Johnny and Kelli Phillips  
Don and Pat Turney  
Don and Pat Turney  
Ralph and Joan Barclay  
Ralph and Joan Barclay  
George and Felice Dissmeyer  
George and Felice Dissmeyer  
Sharon Thomas  
David and Tracy Stickley  
Edge and Esther Farley  
Edge and Esther Farley  
Edge and Esther Farley  
Edge and Esther Farley  
David Boardman and Patrice Underkofler  
Cheryl Williams and Jill Vaughan  
Cheryl Williams and Jill Vaughan  
Cheryl Williams and Jill Vaughan  
Frank and Laura Thompson  
Barry and Nancy Chambers  
Barry and Nancy Chambers  
Edward and Karen Ricketson  
Edward and Karen Ricketson  
Edward and Karen Ricketson  
Gene and Lesa Adams  
Guerry Key  
Guerry Key  
Joan Nolen Key  
Tommy and Amy McElhenney  
Tommy and Amy McElhenney  
Tommy and Amy McElhenney  
Tommy and Amy McElhenney



# SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

## WELCOMING FOR APRIL

Kay Stevens

## USHERS FOR APRIL

David Stickley, Head Usher

Jarred Camp, Jim Hall, Walt Rocker, John Wojtas

## DEACON FOR APRIL 5

Bill Sharp

## DEACON FAMILIES

Tammy Baker Family, Mary Jo Balas,  
Linda Copelan Family, Jim Hall Family,  
Luke Harvey Family, Jim Kauffmann Family,  
Ben Leverette Family

## DEACON FOR APRIL 12

Roger Vining

## DEACON FAMILIES

Tasha Cannon Family, George Dissmeyer Family,  
David Lutz Family, Beth Willis, Karen Willis Family,  
Charles Winslette Family, Warren Yates

## BIRTHDAYS

- 04/03 - Emma Willis
- 04/07 - Sharon Haney
- 04/08 - Sylvia Cheney
- 04/11 - Hunter Giddens, Sonny Turner
- 04/12 - Aidan Rainey, Parker Rainey
- 04/15 - Tanner Peebles, Tucker Peebles, Jennie Sharp
- 04/16 - Libby Rainey

## ANNIVERSARY

04/08 - Harris and Janette McCollum

## WORSHIP REPORT

<u>Sunday, March 22</u>	<u>98</u>
<u>Sunday, March 29</u>	<u>174</u>

# FOOD DRIVE THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Putnam Christian Outreach Food Drive. What a blessing to serve our community!



# HOLY WEEK WORSHIP THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Holy Week Worship and lunch. Your time, service and generosity made our time of worship and fellowship meaningful.



## EASTER MONDAY

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON EASTER MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026.



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

# *Experience Easter*

At First Baptist Church  
of Eatonton

**Easter Worship**  
**Sunday, April 5 at 10:50am**  
**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

