

MAY 21, 2026

First Baptist Church of Eatonton *Messenger*

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



FROM THE PASTOR

What would you have said if you had been deserted by your closest friends, left vulnerable to a mob bent on beating and killing you? And what if, within seventy-two hours of your death, you had the chance to return and meet with those same friends again? Would you even want to see them?

By now you know I am speaking of Jesus at the end of his earthly life and after the resurrection. It is revealing to wonder how we ourselves might have responded had we lived through what Jesus lived through. I like to imagine I would eventually have risen to the occasion with grace and mercy, but only three days after such betrayal and brutality, I cannot imagine greeting those friends with the word, "Peace."

Yet that is exactly the story the Gospel gives us. Jesus comes among them and says, "Peace." Then he breathes upon them the breath of life, just as God breathed life into the first human being in creation. The Gospel of John tells us, "He breathed on them" (John 20:22). The breath of God brought them to life again. Behind locked doors, trapped by fear and shame, the disciples received from Jesus not condemnation, but peace and Spirit-filled life.

And because of that breath, they changed. They moved beyond their fear of suffering as Jesus had suffered. They became courageous, forgiving women and men who carried the spirit of Christ into neighborhoods, villages, and cities. They led others into the peaceful and forgiving pathways of Jesus.

The more familiar Pentecost story in Acts 2:1-12 is filled with rushing wind, fire, and many voices. John's story is quieter, calmer, and deeply tender. Both stories belong together in telling the good news. But there is something especially beautiful in John's telling of Pentecost. The risen Christ stands before fearful, guilt-ridden, disappointing disciples and simply says, "Peace." There are so many other responses we might expect. Yet Jesus responds with peace, and then further blesses them with the breath of heaven itself — the Holy Spirit.

And lest we think the story ends simply with everyone living happily ever after, Jesus renews his call for them to continue the work they had begun together before his death. Now they are entrusted with the power of forgiveness. Jesus had held the future of their lives in his hands and spoken the word, "Peace." Now the disciples would hold the futures of others in their hands, carrying the power to bless, forgive, and extend grace with that same word: "Peace."

Frederick Buechner writes, "...Apparently, betrayal by the first disciples, or all the many failures, disappointments, and mess-ups of us latter-day disciples, isn't the last word..." The last word — and the new beginning word — is "Peace."

This Pentecost Sunday, may we be among those who receive the Gospel word, "Peace." May we be people upon whom Christ breathes the Holy Spirit even now. And may we become people who forgive, bless, and help bring peace to the lives of others.

*Peace,
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.

"THIS IS MY FATHER'S WORLD": A PENTECOST REFLECTION

This Sunday, as we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, our choir will lift their voices in one of the most beloved hymns in the Christian tradition — *"This Is My Father's World."* Written in 1901 by Maltbie Davenport Babcock, this hymn has inspired generations of believers with its sweeping vision of God's presence woven through all of creation. On Pentecost, those words take on a meaning richer and deeper than perhaps even Babcock imagined.

Pentecost, recounted in Acts 2, is the moment the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples like a rushing wind and tongues of flame. In an instant, a frightened group of followers gathered in a locked upper room became the bold, Spirit-filled Church. But Pentecost is not only about what happened *to* the disciples — it is about what the Spirit was declaring to all the world: *God has not abandoned His creation.* He is not a distant Father watching from afar. He is present, active, and alive in the world He made and in the people He loves.

Babcock's hymn opens with a simple, profound declaration: the rustling grass, the morning light, the singing birds — all of it proclaims the glory of the Father. "He shines in all that's fair," the hymn tells us, and "in the rustling grass I hear Him pass; He speaks to me everywhere."

This is the Pentecost message in verse form. The Spirit that hovered over the waters at creation (Genesis 1:2) is the same Spirit poured out at Pentecost — and the same Spirit at work in our world today. God's fingerprints are on every leaf, every sunrise, every human heart that has ever yearned for something greater than itself. The Holy Spirit did not arrive on Pentecost as a stranger; He came as the very breath of the Creator, returning in fullness to dwell among His people.

Perhaps the most poignant verse of the hymn acknowledges what we all know to be true: the world, for all its beauty, is broken. "Though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the Ruler yet." These words, so honest and unafraid, echo the earliest disciples' own confusion and grief before the Spirit came. They had seen the crucifixion. They knew darkness.

Pentecost is God's answer to that darkness. The Spirit comes not as a denial of the world's pain, but as the assurance that the Father who made this world has not abandoned it. The story is not over. The Ruler has not left His throne.

Pentecost is often called the birthday of the Church, and what better birthday song than one that declares the whole earth — every rock, tree, and human soul — belongs to our Father? As our choir sings these words this Sunday, let them be more than a hymn. Let them be a creed, a prayer, and a shout of Pentecost joy: *the Spirit is here, the Father reigns, and this is still — and always — His world.*

Come, Holy Spirit, come.

Dylan

"CHILDREN ARE A HERITAGE FROM THE LORD"

Parenting is one of life's greatest challenges, but it is also one of its greatest blessings. There are days filled with laughter, joy, and moments that make your heart swell with gratitude. There are also days that test your patience and leave you wondering if you're getting anything right. Through it all, Scripture reminds us of a wonderful truth: children are a gift from God.

Psalm 127 tells us, "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from Him." What a powerful reminder that our sons and daughters are not burdens to endure, but precious gifts entrusted to our care.

Christian author Max Lucado once wrote, "The highest privilege and purpose of parenthood is to lead your child in the way of Christ." As parents, grandparents, and church family members, we have the opportunity to model faith in everyday life. Our children are watching how we pray, how we treat others, and how we trust God through both good times and hard seasons.

No parent does this perfectly, and thankfully, God does not ask us to. He simply calls us to be faithful. With His help, we can point the next generation toward Jesus and trust Him to guide their hearts. What a blessing and responsibility that is.

Kyle

CHILDREN'S CHOIR END OF THE YEAR CELEBRATION



ANNUAL FISH FRY



ANNOUNCEMENTS



MEMORIAL DAY
REMEMBERED AND HONORED
THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, MAY 25.



COMMUNION SERVICE

SUNDAY, MAY 31
AT 10:50 AM



JOIN US FOR
5th Sunday Lunch
May 31

Following Morning Worship

The church will provide the meat, tea, and bread.

Please bring casseroles, vegetables, salads, and dessert.

JOIN US FOR A...

PEW SISTERS GATHERING

SUNDAY, MAY 31 AT 6:00PM
AT THE HOME OF PAM LANCASTER
449 NEW PHOENIX ROAD

ALL women of the church are invited to join us for a time of fellowship and study. Call or text 706-318-9500 for more information.

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.

WAYS TO GIVE

AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

- 1 GIVE BY MAIL**
MAIL TO P.O. BOX 3400, EATONTON, GA 31024
- 2 GIVE ONLINE**
VISIT 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



SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR MAY

Pat McDade

USHERS FOR MAY

Steve Benton, Head Usher

Randall McCook, Cooper Rainey, Charles Winslette

DEACON FOR MAY 24

Robin Benton

DEACON FAMILIES

Hunter Giddens, Carl Haizlip Family,
Clayton Lancaster Family, Ennis Lankford Family,
Gwen Ralston, Kyle Ralston,
Joann Smith Family, Tom Thompson Family

DEACON FOR MAY 31

Steve Benton

DEACON FAMILIES

Chad Davis Family, Gail Harley, Janice Knowles,
Randall McCook, Betty Pinholster,
Don Turney Family, Jerry Williams Family,
Craig Williamson Family

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, May 10 185

Sunday, May 17 108

FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget Needs YTD \$184,110.00

Total Receipts YTD \$169,242.01

Budget Expenditures YTD \$241,672.33

BIRTHDAYS

05/21 - Patrice Underkofler

05/25 - Jim Ryan

05/26 - Linda Reagin, Tristan Williams

05/27 - Tara Rocker

05/28 - Edge Farley

05/29 - David Dixon, Jeff Russell

05/30 - James Cheney

05/31 - Joni Dixon

06/01 - Lily Kate McElhenney

06/02 - Blake McDaniel

06/04 - George Dissmeyer, Bill Etheridge

ANNIVERSARY

05/25 - Ennis and Caroline Lankford

06/01 - Christian and Taylor Keiser

06/02 - Mark and Joann Smith

WELCOME

Welcome Kyle Wetzel as our Minister of Children
and Families to First Baptist Church.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Buck and Lauren Wooten
upon the birth of their daughter

Hallie James Wooten on May 7, 2026.

The proud grandparents are Tim and Kim Camp
and the proud great-grandmother is Jo Ann Clay.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

OUR MEMBERS:

Gene Adams, Robin Benton, Terry Blanton,
Daryl Covington, Felice Dissmeyer, 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, & HOME- BOUND:

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

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
EATONTON
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**JUNE 7-10, 2026
5:30PM – 8:00PM
K3 - 5th Grade**

REGISTER ONLINE AT
WWW.FIRSTBAPTISTEATONTON.ORG/VBS

