

First Baptist Church of Eatonton

Messenger



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

FROM THE PASTOR

“Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return. Repent and believe the gospel,” are words that arise from God’s response to Adam in Genesis 3 and from Jesus’ words in Mark 9. They are the words used on Ash Wednesday each year to remind people as they move to spend forty days preparing to encounter the death and resurrection of Jesus during Holy Week. The forty days are also called Lent. *Christianity Today* shares a few details of the origin of the word itself. “The English word 'Lent' is not found in the Bible. It comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten* which is the origin of the words Lenten and lengthen. Lenten was a historical word for the season of spring when the days lengthen. The modern term Lent is short for Lenten. Lenten is still used as an adjective, such as if people talk about a Lenten fast, or a Lenten devotional, or a Lenten course. In popular culture it is a time for giving something up.” Historically, Christians have emphasized fasting during these forty days. Others have moved to emphasize taking something upon yourself as well as giving something up. So you give up an hour on your phone. You check the meter every week to see if you have been able to do so. But you also take upon yourself spending an hour a week doing something nice for someone. Yes, you time it and keep up with it to intentional practice kindness for a total amount of a full hour every week. Or you do something else that is meaningful to your practice of your Christian faith. You work at measuring it so you intentionally do something loving, in the Spirit of Christ.

What happens if you do something for forty days? What happens if you walk for at least thirty minutes every day for the next forty days? What happens if you swear off caffeine for the next forty days? (You might let us know if you do, so we will be patient with your crankiness the first week.) What happens if you meditate on Psalm 23 or the Lord’s prayer for fifteen minutes a day? Or what happens if you eat Reeses for breakfast for the next forty days?

Well, you can give your own answers and your own ideas of what you might practice. But it is a season to prepare. Prepare to once again encounter the death and resurrection of Jesus.

*Lent,
Craig*

THE JOY IN SACRIFICE THAT LENT PROVIDES

Have you ever thought about the joy in sacrifice that Lent provides? Most of us don't enjoy sacrifice; in fact, in our daily lives, we often do our best to avoid challenges and practices that push us outside of our comfort zones. In Christianity, there is a beautiful irony between joy and sacrifice, and we are presented with a wonderful opportunity to embrace this irony during Lent. I read this quote this week, "Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty."

While giving up sweets in favor of healthy snacks for Lent is a common and not a bad thing, the goal of Lent should not only be a spiritual excuse to lose weight! In choosing acts of self-denial, we are saying "no" to things in order to get into the practice of saying "no" when tempted towards sin, ultimately deepening our faith and our relationship with the Lord. Victory can be found when we deny ourselves and pick up our crosses and hardships in order to grow closer to Christ!

That is where the joy is found. When we grow closer to God by denying our will, we say "yes" to a life of abundance with Him. Our God is a caring God; He will not hold back His grace from those who honor Him and choose challenging things to grow and give Him glory. Christ even tells us Himself, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Without question, Lent is a time for conscious penitence and spiritual preparation for Easter. And it is important to remember that God loves us whether we make Lenten changes or not. At the same time, Lent provides us an opportunity to make God a greater part of our life, and to take our faith to new levels.

Lent is a time for every one of us to do more than simply deny ourselves; we need to welcome God into our lives in greater ways so that when we get to Holy Week and Easter, we have an even greater appreciation for the sacrifice the Lord made for us.

May we enjoy a Holy and joyous Lenten journey.

In Christ,
Dylan

PLEASING GOD WITH OUR MUSICAL WORSHIP

With 50+ years of music ministry under my belt, I definitely have an appreciation for old hymns. Not just the ones we sang when I was growing up, but the really old ones, like St. Clement of Alexandria's "*Shepherd of Tender Youth*" from the 3rd Century, or the 8th Century "*Be Thou My Vision*." I love the hymns of Luther and Calvin, Watts and the Wesleys, Fanny Crosby and Homer Rodeheaver, B.B. McKinney and Bill Gaither.

But Psalm 96 instructs us to "*Sing a new song unto the Lord*." As I've studied the history of worship music, I've noticed that each new generation tends to reject the worship music of the previous generation in favor of their own. This is not new. I first experienced it back in the 50s. While most Baptists were singing stately old hymns like "*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*" or bouncy revival hymns like "*Standing on the Promises*," children and teens were singing "*Deep and Wide*" or "*Every Day with Jesus*." We didn't know it, but those little choruses were the seeds that grew into the Jesus Songs of the 60s, like "*I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing*," and the youth musical, with songs like "*He's Everything to Me*" and "*Pass It On*."

Fast forward to the 90s and we see the rise of what we called Jesus Rock, Praise and Worship, and later CCM (Contemporary Christian Music). These guitar driven worship songs ignited "worship wars" between proponents of this type worship music and traditional hymns. It's all but died out today, though some people still want to re-fight those old battles.

So which do I personally prefer, today's CCM or traditional hymns? Answer: that's the wrong question. The right question is, "*What music best helps this church encounter God in a fresh, powerful way that moves them to deeper devotion and greater obedience, so that they're not just hearers of the music but doers of what God tells us through it?*"

The people I lead in worship include tiny children, kids in k-5, teens and singles, young parents and those whose kids are in college. We have nearly and newly retired people and folks well into their 90s. None of these are expendable. None are more important in God's kingdom than the others. Pleasing all of them is impossible, some say. I agree, except that's not my purpose. My purpose is to point each of *them* God-ward in ways that please *Him*. Not me. Not even them.

When we all get to heaven, we'll likely worship with more instruments than just piano, organ, drums, guitars, and synthesizers. No one will ever utter, "I don't know that song," or "That song's too old and boring!" Our focus will be so strongly fixed on the One we worship that such comments disappear like the mist of dawn evaporating before the morning sun.

So that's my goal in leading musical worship today: not to please one group at the expense of another, but to please God with our musical worship at the expense of our own self-centered likes and dislikes.

(Yes, this topic hits close to home. I could write a book on this one subject. Wait. I think I just did!)

John

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR FEBRUARY

Mike and Sherry Lyons

WELCOMING FOR MARCH

Mike and Kathy Faulk

USHERS FOR FEBRUARY

Mike Lyons, Head Usher
Brandon Cardwell, Howell Cardwell,
Mike Faulk, Frank Thompson

USHERS FOR MARCH

Marvin Franklin, Head Usher
Gene Adams, Edge Farley,
Clayton Lancaster

CHILDREN'S CHURCH LEADERS

February 18 - Brooke McMillen
February 25 - Kim Camp
March 3 - Tracy Stickley

DEACON FOR FEBRUARY 18

Mike Faulk

DEACON FAMILIES

Russell Davis family, Julia Davis,
Clyde Harper family, Julie Harper,
Gaye Lankford, Bill Sharp family, Jill Vaughan

DEACON FOR FEBRUARY 25

Jim Hall

DEACON FAMILIES

John Bankston Jr., Barry Chambers family,
Jeff Davis family, Chad Davis family,
David Stickley family, Jimmy Williams

DEACON FOR MARCH 3

Clayton Lancaster

DEACON FAMILIES

Terry Blanton family, Maxine Godin,
Walt Rocker family, Lois Schell,
Ellen Trice, Nell Wright

BIRTHDAYS

02/17 - Baker Stickley
02/19 - Jessica Davis, Madison Davis, Savannah Davis
02/20 - Jerry Williams, Ben Leverette
02/21 - Charlotte Green
02/22 - Dakota Davis, Rita Masson
02/23 - Russell Davis, Rayna Harper
02/24 - William Davis
02/24 - Sherri Farmer
02/27 - Cherry Leverette
02/28 - David Peebles
03/02 - Hollis Harrison, Donald Baker
03/05 - Helen Benshoof, Charlee Anne Brown,
Ryan Carmichael
03/06 - Don Masson, Paula Rossee

ANNIVERSARIES

02/15 - Cary and Beth Walton
02/24 - Luke and Mollie Harvey

WELCOME

We welcome Hunter Giddens to the membership
of First Baptist Church by transfer of letter.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for the kindness and love you have
shown to our family after Mother's passing. She truly
loved this church and we appreciate you all loving us.

Love,
Lois Schell

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, February 04	110
Sunday, February 11	108

FINANCIAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 4, 2024

Budget Needs	\$10,200.56
Budget Receipts	\$25,071.00
Budget Needs YTD	\$51,002.80
Budget Receipts YTD	\$66,263.25

FEBRUARY 11, 2024

Budget Needs	\$10,200.56
Budget Receipts	\$9,154.00
Budget Needs YTD	\$61,203.36
Budget Receipts YTD	\$75,417.25

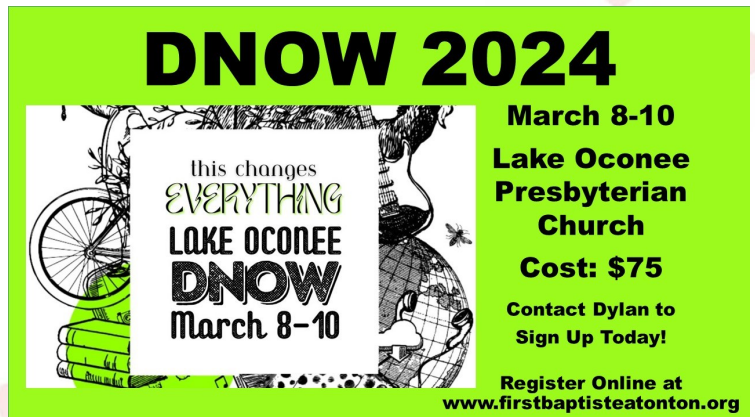
First Baptist Church
P.O. Box 3400
Eatonton, GA 31024
Return Service Requested

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Ladies Bible Study

Monday, February 19th
at 6:00 pm
at host home of Kim Camp.
Contact Kim Camp to Sign Up!



DNOW 2024

March 8-10
**Lake Oconee
Presbyterian
Church**
Cost: \$75
Contact Dylan to
Sign Up Today!
Register Online at
www.firstbaptisteatonton.org

this changes
EVERYTHING
LAKE OCONEE
DNOW
March 8-10



PGH AUXILIARY INVITES YOU TO JOIN US

VOLUNTEER HOURS ARE FLEXIBLE

REQUIREMENTS: YOUR ENERGY, KINDNESS, AND A SMILE

- Join a new and exciting clinical program
- Join with a friend and make new friends
- Join in making a difference in people's lives
- Join us for a tour and lunch on us

For More Information, Contact Rita Ryland, Auxiliary Volunteer
at 415-686-1500 or rita.ryland@comcast.net



Putnam Christian OUTREACH

PCO helps to provide much-needed Food, Backpacks (for kids), Housing, Medical and other assistance programs to the poor and needy, residents of the Putnam County Region.

DONATIONS NEEDED!

We are in need of clothing, toys, appliances (small and large), furniture and other household goods.
Please visit our website at pcoicares.com to learn more.

To become a volunteer with Putnam Christian Outreach go to
www.pcoicares.com/get-involved