

First Baptist Church of Eatonton Messenger

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



FROM THE PASTOR

Someone asked me recently if I write these articles or if there is some sort of ready-made resource from which I draw these writings. I demurred a bit with, "Sometimes!" Often the writing originates with my own musings. And often, the writing originates from others directly or indirectly. I try to give credit when credit is due. I figure it is not my purpose to always be original, but to also be wise enough to know good writings to quote.

This week I'm musing, as I sometimes do, about what I believe and why. Why do I follow this God I follow? Why do I believe what I believe? Preach what I preach? And does any of what I do count for anything in light of today's news reports? I know, the last question is a terrible bar by which to measure.

These are always precarious questions. I count on friends and authors to help me along. One of which is the Henri Nouwen Society's daily meditations.

A recent reading focused on the actions of Jesus that embody love.

"You, Jesus, did everything to show us your love and your Father's love. You became a small, dependent child to show us yourself in your weakness; you became a refugee in Egypt to show us your solidarity with all who are driven from their homes; you grew up in obedience to your parents to show us how close you are as we search for a true identity; you worked for many years as a simple carpenter to show us how to resist the forces of evil around us; you surrounded yourself with disciples to show us how to share our vision with others and to work together in ministry; you preached the word of God to show us your truth and how to become, ourselves, witnesses to truth; you healed the sick and raised the dead to show us that your presence gave life to the whole person, body and soul; you were transfigured to show us your divine splendor; you went the long road of suffering and death to show us that you did not want to remain an outsider even in the most painful of all human experiences. You, the eternal Word of the Father, kept making choices that brought you closer and closer to us, to reveal to us the boundless love of your heart."

It brings me back to Jesus – the actions of God in Jesus. The reason I follow this God, preach what I preach and hope what I hope is Jesus.

So, when the Hallmark February arrives I'm turned once again to love, not just romantically, but to love as Christ loved. But it does no good just to name such a desire. It has to be embodied. And that is where Kate Bowler comes in with her *28 Days of Loving More* calendar. I know, it sounds too cute some days, but it might also make it a good month of love. Check it out inside the pages of this newsletter.

Love!

Craig

THE POWER OF MUSIC

A formal announcement was made on Sunday, February 2, 2025, that my role here at FBCE is changing a bit. I am now your Associate Pastor & Director of Music. As such, I want to take a moment to reflect on the amazing gift of music and its powerful role in our worship. Music has been a part of the church's ministry since the very beginning, and it remains one of the most powerful ways we express our love, praise, and adoration to God.

Having served as a Minister of Music from 2012-2019 and serving again now, I am privileged to witness how music can lift our spirits and draw us closer to God's presence. Whether we are singing hymns of old or lifting our voices in contemporary worship songs, music has the ability to connect us to something deeper than ourselves. It moves us in ways that words alone cannot. Our choirs and musicians work hard each week to offer the best of our gifts in service to the Lord, and I am continually amazed at the dedication and passion that flows from each of them.

But worship is not only about the music—it's about the heart of the worshiper. We are all invited to participate fully in the experience of singing God's praises. Each time we gather, we are reminded of God's faithfulness, His goodness, and His unending love. It is through music that we can unite our voices as one body, glorifying God together.

Moving forward, we have some exciting opportunities to share in musical worship:

- **Children's Choir Rehearsals:** Our Children's Choir meets weekly on Tuesday, from 3:00pm until 4:30pm.
- **Hand Bell Choir:** This group meets each Wednesday from 6:15pm to 7:10pm in the FBCE Choir Room.
- **Chancel Choir:** Our Sunday Morning Chancel Choir meets every Wednesday evening from 7:15pm until 8:15pm.

There is a place for YOU in all of these ministry opportunities!

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who have supported the music ministry throughout the years. Whether through your prayers, your time, or your financial contributions, you are helping to ensure that we can continue offering high-quality, meaningful worship experiences. Your generosity allows us to maintain our music ministry, maintain beautiful equipment, and support our talented musicians.

As we look forward to the rest of this year, I ask for your continued prayers for our ministry. May we remain faithful in our calling, ever mindful that the ultimate purpose of our music is to bring glory to God and to invite others into His presence.

Thank you for your unwavering support and for your participation as we worship together. May the music of our hearts and the sound of our voices be a fragrant offering to the Lord.

*In Christ's Love and Harmony,
Dylan*

28 DAYS OF LOVING MORE

28 DAYS OF LOVING MORE

DAY 01 Smile at a stranger.	DAY 02 Pick up three pieces of trash in your neighborhood.	DAY 03 Leave food out for the animals.	DAY 04 Dress up for no reason.	DAY 05 Dance break - one song, full volume	DAY 06 Give a weird compliment. "You're so good at parallel parking!"	DAY 07 Recreate an old photo you love.
DAY 08 Drop off dinner for someone you love.	DAY 09 Have a whole conversation in gifs.	DAY 10 Buy fresh flowers at the grocery store.	DAY 11 Send a random "I love you" text to someone who needs to hear it.	DAY 12 Leave a sweet note in a book at a free little library.	DAY 13 Run errands with a buddy. Get coffee while you're at it.	DAY 14 Buy a coffee for the person behind you in line.
DAY 15 Host a dinner for your people.	DAY 16 FaceTime a friend or family member, just because.	DAY 17 Go for an "awe walk" - leave the AirPods at home.	DAY 18 Leave a note for someone you love where they'll find it - pocket, car, etc.	DAY 19 If you know someone is having a hard time, show up (with snacks).	DAY 20 Send someone a meme that makes you think of them.	DAY 21 Leave your favorite local business a thoughtful Google review.
DAY 22 Make a fort in the living room and put on a movie marathon.	DAY 23 Say "no" to something that doesn't fill your cup.	DAY 24 Not sexy - but schedule your doctor appts for the year.	DAY 25 Cook that recipe you've had pinned for months.	DAY 26 Choose a book from your TBR list and read before bed.	DAY 27 Invite a friend to join you on a walk.	DAY 28 Send someone surprise cookies! (they don't need to be from scratch)

*From Kate Bowler
@katebowler.com*

We're calling it 28 Days of Loving More. For each day, we'll share one small, doable way to make the world a little more loving—for yourself, for someone else, or for the place you call home. It's not about grand gestures or long-term commitments, but the kind of work that stretches us and saves us from our worst selves and our loneliness. The kind of work that begins with one small act at a time.

Kate

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR FEBRUARY

Mike and Sherry Lyons

USHERS FOR FEBRUARY

Mike Lyons, Brandon Cardwell, Howell Cardwell,
Mike Faulk, Ed Self, Frank Thompson

DEACON FOR FEBRUARY 9

Joni Dixon

DEACON FAMILIES

Jene Etheridge Family, Don Masson Family,
Karen McGinnis, Steven Prance Family,
Cooper Rainey Family, Mac Rainey Family,
Faith Thomas, Andrea Welch

DEACON FOR FEBRUARY 16

Mike Faulk

DEACON FAMILIES

Ryan Carmichael Family, Julia Davis,
David Dixon Family, Clyde Harper Family,
Gaye Lankford, Jill Vaughan

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, January 26 152

Sunday, February 02 125

FINANCIAL REPORT

JANUARY 31, 2025

Budget Needs YTD \$46,614.50

Total Receipts YTD \$43,555.62

Budget Expenditures YTD \$65,337.86

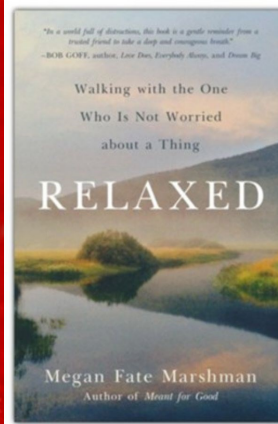
BIRTHDAYS

- 02/10 - Julia Davis
- 02/11 - Charles Winslette
- 02/12 - Will Rainey
- 02/13 - Cindy Duffey, Penney Cardwell
- 02/17 - Baker Stickley
- 02/19 - Jessica Davis, Madison Davis,
Savannah Davis
- 02/20 - Ben Leverette, Jerry Williams

ANNIVERSARY

02/15 - Cary and Beth Walton

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Ladies Bible Study

Ladies I'm excited to introduce you to our next study. This is a 7 week study that comes with a book, video and study guide. Feel free to order the book and/or the study guide. You will have access to all 7 video sessions.

**BEGINS FEBRUARY 24 AT 6PM
AT THE HOME OF KIM CAMP
361 LOWER HARMONY ROAD
FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED.**

Looking forward to learning how to Relax
in our Lord's care daily.



NEW OR GENTLY USED

CHILDREN'S

CHRISTIAN

BOOK DONATIONS

We kindly ask you to consider donating new or gently used books that feature Christian curriculum for infants, toddlers, and school-aged children. The children at SSLC would be thrilled to enjoy some fresh reading materials!



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

ALL ARE WELCOME TO OUR

Valentine's Banquet

FEBRUARY 12 AT 6:30PM

RSVP TO THE CHURCH OFFICE

MENU: LASAGNA FROM RICARDO'S,
SALAD, AND ROLLS

COST IS \$9