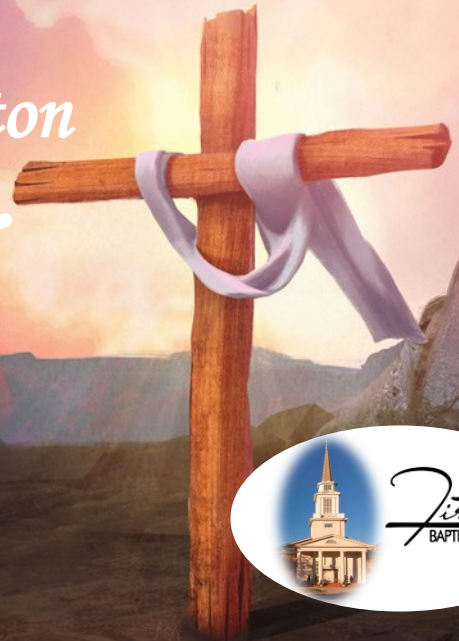


MARCH 7, 2024

First Baptist Church of Eatonton Messenger



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

FROM THE PASTOR

“All of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone,” stated Blaise Pascal. Wednesday nights in Lent we’ve been practicing sitting quietly in prayer, led by readings about Centering Prayer from J. David Muyskens’ book, *Forty Days to a Closer Walk with God*. Several have been practicing Centering Prayer, sitting quietly in the arms of God, during the week. Some have shared their experiences on Wednesday nights. It’s been interesting, encouraging and leading to practice and listen with one another.

An excerpt from Muyskens’ book reads:

“Before healing the man who cannot hear or speak plainly, Jesus looks up to heaven, sighs, and then says, “Be opened” (Mark 7:34). The text actually says, “Looking up to heaven, he sighed.” ... What happened when Jesus sighed? He looked up to heaven. So his sigh was prayer not articulated in words but in communication deeper than words with his heavenly Father. Mark tells us Jesus also sighed when the Pharisees came asking for a sign from heaven to test him. “He sighed deeply in his spirit” and then stated that no sign would be given “to this generation” (Mark 8:12). There is anguish in that sigh of Jesus, an inner anguish over the Pharisees’ attitude. Wordless expression.

Paul employs the same word, which Mark used to describe Jesus’ sigh before healing the mute man, to portray the groaning of creating and our yearning for God’s restorative love (Rom. 8:22). He says we “groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:23). In this deep prayer the Spirit helps us. “We do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words” (Rom. 8:26).

The Greek word *stenagmos*, translated as “sigh” or “groan,” expresses difficulty in the power to act. We need God’s help. We cannot reach God by our effort. In the silence of contemplation we yearn for God’s loving presence and action.

In silent times of Centering Prayer, that longing grows in me. I don’t want to miss those moments of the day. Not because I receive an emotional high, not for ecstatic experiences, but because the discipline keeps open my inner space for God. It is a time to sigh, to pause, to rest in God. It is a time to groan and express my deep yearning for God. And whether I know it or not at the time, the Spirit of Christ is at work within me.

In prayer we wait, said Howard Thurman. We wait for a “centering moment” that will reorient our lives. We surrender to the presence and love of God.”

Muyskens challenges us to make time and space for God’s presence and action within.

**Grace and 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.

YOUTH AND CHILDREN NEWS

Thank you all for your prayers and support for DNOW 2024! We will be worshipping this weekend, with over 120+ other students from around Putnam County. Come Sunday morning, we will all be exhausted, but what a blessing it will be to spend time and worship with our students over the weekend. I am looking forward to more events in the future.

As Spring is approaching and more sports are starting, I am enjoying getting out and seeing everyone play soccer, baseball, tennis, and run track! If you see me around the schools and recreation department during week days, I'm there watching and supporting our Children and Youth students. I would like to compliment your students for making it a point to come and speak when they see me out at events. I am looking forward to the coming months and the ministry that is ahead. Thank you for your continued prayers as we work and worship together.

Dylan

THE BLESSING

**“The Lord bless you, and keep you,
Make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you.
The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.”**

These powerful lyrics come from last Sunday's Choir anthem, *“The Blessing.”* Its original recording by Elevation Worship, featuring Cody Carnes and Kari Jobe, won the GMA's Dove Award as Song of the Year for 2021. Our Choir's version featured Dylan Bowden and Andrea Wolverton, both of whom did an outstanding job. Dylan even conducted in my absence as he sang!

This song carries a profound message of God's favor, presence, and peace by quoting the Priestly Blessing of Numbers 6:24-26. Another section of the song says ***“May His presence go before you, And behind you, and beside you, All around you, and within you, He is with you, He is with you.”*** That's a beautiful reminder that God's presence encompasses every aspect of our lives. Whether we are experiencing joy or sorrow, God is always by our side as our constant companion and guide.

The song's bridge reminds us that our faith and devotion will have a lasting impact on our families for generations to come. ***“May His favor be upon you, And a thousand generations, And your family, And your children, And their children, And their children!”***

This is why our church invests so strongly in training up our children and youth in the way they should go. We teach them God's Word each week in Stepping Stones, Sunday School and Worship. Dylan and Friends are leading our Tuesday afternoon Children's Choir. We have special high impact events like this weekend's D-Now for youth, Vacation Bible School, Surge Music Camp (June 17-22 at Shorter University for elementary, middle, and high school students; registration now open; see me for details), and a strong variety of outings and events that are kid, teen, and family friendly throughout the year.

We do all this and more because we love kids and teens and want them to know from an early age that God loves them so much that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but has everlasting life.

Kids and teens have tons of options for activities and interests. Very few have such an eternal impact on their lives and the lives of generations to come as our church's ministries do. As you have opportunity, encourage, equip, and inspire our kids and teens to participate in these Best Things, those that will have the most lasting influence on their lives, both now and for generations to come.

John Cotten

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Forward Sunday, March 10

Don't Forget to Change Your Clock



Easter Lilies

Easter Lilies will be placed in the sanctuary for Easter. If you would like to place a lily in memory or honor of a loved one, please place your check and information in the offering plate or mail it to the church office.

Cost is \$8 each
Deadline is March 21



SURGE MUSIC CAMP
June 17-22, 2024



Shorter University
Elementary, Middle, and High School Students
Registration Now Open - Contact John Cotten for details.

**EASTER
EGG HUNT**
Sunday, March 31
at 9:45AM
First Baptist Church
Bring Your Basket!



PUTNAM CHRISTIAN OUTREACH FOOD DRIVE

FOOD DRIVE



PLEASE BRING
NON-PERISHABLE FOOD
FOR PUTNAM CHRISTIAN
OUTREACH TO THE
SANCTUARY BY
SUNDAY, MARCH 24

FOOD NEEDS

HORIZON ORGANIC LOWFAT MILK
MC TRADER MILK
A2 WHOLE MILK
FROSTED FLAKES CEREAL
CHEF BOYARDEE
MACARONI AND CHEESE CUPS



MARCH 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	4 6pm Ladies Bible Study	5 3pm Children's Choir	6 5:30pm Supper 6pm Youth Group 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir	7 8am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary	8 DNO	9 DNO
10 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS DNO 8:30am Deacons Meeting 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	11	12 3pm Children's Choir	13 5:30pm Supper 6pm Youth Group 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir	14 8am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary	15	16
17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	18	19 1st DAY OF SPRING 3pm Children's Choir	20 5:30pm Supper 6pm Youth Group 6:15pm Bible Study 7:15pm Choir	21 8am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary 6pm Finance Meeting	22	23
24 PALM SUNDAY 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship 1:30pm Handbells	25 12pm Holy Week Service and Lunch	26 12pm Holy Week Service and Lunch 3pm Children's Choir	27 12pm Holy Week Service and Lunch No Wednesday Night Services or Activities	28 MAUNDY THURSDAY 8am Men's Prayer Group in the Sanctuary 12pm Holy Week Service and Lunch 6pm Evening Service and Communion	29 GOOD FRIDAY 12pm Holy Week Service and Lunch	30
31 EASTER SUNDAY 9:45am Sunday School 10:50am Worship						

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR MARCH

Mike and Kathy Faulk

USHERS FOR MARCH

Marvin Franklin, Head Usher

Gene Adams

Edge Farley

Clayton Lancaster

CHILDREN'S CHURCH LEADERS

March 10 - Marie Rainey

March 17 - Mollie Harvey

DEACON FOR MARCH 10

Pam Lancaster

DEACON FAMILIES

Jack Ferrell

Marvin Franklin family

Sheryl Hall

Chris Hewette family

Scott Joris family

Steve Marshall

Pat McDade

DEACON FOR MARCH 17

Harris McCollum

DEACON FAMILIES

Ralph Barclay family

Sharon Haney

Tommy McElhenney family

Paula Rossee family

Grady Strube

Lynda Walker family

Cary Walton family

Sug Walton

BIRTHDAYS

03/09 - Karen McGinnis

03/10 - Edward Ricketson

03/12 - Mary Culberson

03/13 - Annie McMillen

03/14 - Ronnie Williams

03/16 - Marie Rainey

03/17 - Miranda Rossee, Tammy Baker

03/20 - Leslie Peebles, Julie Harper, Jim Kauffmann

03/21 - Jesse Covington

ANNIVERSARIES

03/08 - Carl and Elaine Haizlip

03/10 - Tim and Kim Camp

03/14 - Ronnie and Cheryl Williams

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, February 18 98

Sunday, February 25 116

Sunday, March 03 130

FINANCIAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 18, 2024

Budget Needs \$10,200.56

Budget Receipts \$6,445.00

Budget Needs YTD \$71,403.92

Budget Receipts YTD \$81,862.25

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Budget Needs \$10,200.56

Budget Receipts \$9,548.94

Budget Needs YTD \$81,604.48

Budget Receipts YTD \$91,411.19

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

JOIN US AS WE EXPERIENCE EASTER

MARCH 24 - MARCH 31, 2024

Holy Week Services

March 24 - March 31, 2024

Palm Sunday	10:50 AM
Holy Monday	12:00 NOON
Holy Tuesday	12:00 NOON
Holy Wednesday	12:00 NOON
Maundy Thursday	12:00 NOON & 6:00 PM
Good Friday	12:00 NOON
Easter Sunrise	7:00 AM AT THE PLAZA
Easter	10:50 AM

Lunch Provided During
Our Noon Services
Monday - Friday

Speakers include:
Dr. Craig Williamson, Rev. Dylan Bowden,
Rev. John Cotten, Rev. Bill Kitchen,
Rev. David Wofford, Rev. Karen Mitcham,
Rev. Brandon Walton, and Rev. Katherine Ware

Join Us As We
Experience Easter
At First Baptist Church



115 N. Madison Ave, Eatonton, GA 31024
706-485-3331
www.firstbaptisteatonton.org

PALM SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday, March 24 at 10:50am

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Monday, March 25 – Friday, March 29
at 12:00noon (Lunch Provided)

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Sunday, March 31 at 7:00am at the Plaza

CHILDREN'S EASTER EGG HUNT

at 9:45am (Bring your Easter Baskets)

EASTER SERVICE

Sunday, March 31 at 10:50am