

First Baptist Church of Eatonton Messenger

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



FROM THE PASTOR

Five necessary words for this season: Kindness – **Compassion** – Humility – Respect – **Love**

Remember, “The news we consume sometimes consumes us.” So be careful out there!

We are looking for, in need of “good news!” And maybe if we had enough good news we might be consumed by goodness. Adam Hamilton says only together do we find ways to tell deeply good news. And then we do so only by filtering our interactions through the lens of **compassion**.

Isaiah gives us what feels like an impossible vision: those who are enemies existing peacefully together. But it is said only if we can envision something, can we work towards it. Isaiah asks us to envision a time when:

The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. – Isaiah 11: 6-9

It is quite the challenge. “Can we believe in the vision that the scriptures offer us of a way of being “full of the knowledge of God” instead of our own limited imagination and knowing?” We Christians claim to believe that these things are possible because of the coming of Christ. “In Christ” we are new creations!

Because we are complex beings living in a complex world, we sometimes deal with conflict *within us* in addition to the conflict *between us*. Research tells us that because we humans are desperate for a sense of cohesion and belonging in these confusing times, we are hanging onto ideological generalities instead of treating ourselves and each other with the **compassion** required to alleviate despair. **Compassion** grows when we purposely act to know ourselves and one another on a deeper level and act out of understanding. And our faith teaches us the resurrected Christ is enabling such understanding to raise us up from not knowing ourselves and one another.

It is interesting to realize “Jesus’ own disciples were *radically* different. There was a zealot and a tax collector. That would be like Jesus calling a die-hard Republican Trump supporter wearing his or her MAGA hat, and calling a Joe Biden, never-Trump Democrat to both be among his twelve disciples.”

The point is not to make the case for inclusion. It is to make the case for **LOVE**. **Love** is not a warm feeling. **Love** is an action, a blessing, showing kindness, offering care for the other, a moral act. Love is an act that chooses to focus on the humanity we share with others. It searches for the image of God in them. It focuses on what we share in common, not what divides us.

Can we even imagine such these days? I sincerely hope so.

May it be so,
Craig

FAITHFUL LIVING

Wow! What an amazing start we have had to this Fall season. It is always wonderful and a little bit amazing at how quickly things seem to move in Church life. October is shaping up to be another wonderful ministry filled month and we hope that whether it is in Sunday School, Youth Group, Children's Ministry, and of course Sunday worship that you will be a part of it all.

There is a seasonal aspect to life that closely mirrors this season of the year. We are in the middle of a wonderful season of busyness here at the church, but just because we are busy, we do not need to be burdened. Jesus says many wonderful things, and one of my favorite Jesus sayings is: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30 NRSV) For a while as a young Christian, I had a tendency to think this meant Jesus wanted us to take it easy, or to live a life of leisure. I always wondered why that never seemed to manifest itself. Of course, that is not what Jesus is saying at all. Jesus is telling us in this moment that if we ground the work we do, whether for the church, or our families, and even our community, in God that what we will find is not necessarily a life of ease, but a life that is joyous.

We are not called to live easy lives; we are called to faithful living. That faithful living includes not only being a part of a Faith Community and being actively involved in the life of FBCE but also recognizing that we all belong first to God, that all we have and all we are is God's to begin with. Faithful living includes giving thanks to God at the end of a busy day for the places where you saw his grace shining through. Jesus reminds us in this passage from Matthew that there will be work to do, but you do not need to be overwhelmed by it because Jesus is with us every step of the way and as much as we desire to lead lives of faith for Jesus, Jesus will always be faithful to us.

I have been serving for 12 years on staff at different churches, and I still need to be reminded why student ministry is important. I need to be reminded because the truth is that student ministry can be difficult. Many times, it's just easier to let children & teens do what they want and think they don't desire or need adults in their lives. It may be easy to ignore them, but the truth is that they are desperate for adults to actually show up and invest in their life on a consistent basis.

I believe teens & youth need someone from the Faith Community who will invest in them, show up, support them, and listen to and love them. I know from personal experience how beneficial a supportive and encouraging Youth Pastor can be. We live in a difficult and challenging world. I think that Youth Ministry today is more different and challenging than it's ever been. Look at this:

Recent statistics from Fuller Youth Institute

- 1/3 Youth struggle with mental health.
- 61% of Youth say that the adults in their life don't know that they struggle with mental health (anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts).
- 37% of Youth say they are not acknowledged or called by name when they attend Church or Faith based groups.
- 1/5 Students don't receive any welcome when they show up to an event.

This is heartbreaking and unacceptable. Why is student ministry important? Because students need to know that they belong. They need to know that they matter and are cared for and appreciated. They need to know that we love them, and so does Christ. Would you all join me in praying for and supporting the amazing children and teens in our community and Church?

Blessings,

Dylan

MUSICAL MINISTRY

First, wasn't it wonderful to have our **Children's Choir** lead us last Sunday? Great job, kids! And thanks Dylan Bowden, Janice Turner, adult volunteers, and parents who made it possible. More, please!

Second, wasn't it good to express our love and appreciation to Ellen Trice for 30 years of behind the scenes equipping and enabling so much of our church's life and ministry. More, please!

In Jesus' Name, We Press On!

The Eatonton area was spared the worst of Hurricane Helene last week. While our prayers continue for those hit hardest, a storm like this reminds us that we should always be prepared; not just with physical things like bottled water, batteries, or a generator. We should be spiritually prepared to face whatever comes our way in this roller coaster life, filled with breathtaking crests and low points, twists and rolls where we hardly know which way is up.

One way we prepare our spirits is with a strong grasp of the scriptural truth in the songs we sing, like last Sunday's "It Is Well," or this Sunday's Choir anthem, Dan Burgess' "Press On." These are not just pretty songs we like to sing. They are our Statement of Faith about the difference Jesus Christ makes in our lives.

So whether our work at any given moment is running a chainsaw, sending recovery money or supplies, practicing music for worship, earning a living, or helping a neighbor, we should always tackle the work set before us as if it's something we're doing for the Lord: *because we are!*

"Press On"

*When the valley is deep, when the mountain is steep,
When the body is weary, when we stumble and fall;
When the choices are hard, when we're battered and scarred,
When we've spent our resources, when we've given our all,

When we long for the past, when our visions don't last,
When the future's uncertain, when the road seems so long;
When we hear a last breath, when a shadow means death,
When we're blind to the wonder, when we're deaf to the song,]*

In Jesus' name we press on.

In Jesus' name we press on!

Dear Lord, with the prize clear before our eyes,

We find the strength to press on!

(words by Dan Burgess, music by Robert Sterling)

John

STEPPING STONES

By the time you read this newsletter, the winner of the SSLC 50/50 raffle will have been chosen. Thank you to everyone that participated, and congratulations to the winner.

We appreciate all the help that we receive with these fund raisers. The children deserve the best care that we can give them, and your contributions assist us greatly in providing that care.

Another way that you can participate and come along side us is to pray. We invite your prayers for the children, the staff and the mission. Pray for these little lives to be reached with the love of Jesus, and that it comforts them the rest of their lives. Pray for the staff to be renewed by the Holy Spirit daily for the task in front of them.

We thank God for you, our partners in this mandate.

Blessings to you all,

Denise Carmichael

SSLC Director

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOMING FOR OCTOBER

Jim and Vicki Hall

USHERS FOR OCTOBER

David Stickleby, Jarred Camp, Jim Hall,
Walt Rocker, John Wojtas

DEACON FOR OCTOBER 6

Barry Chambers

DEACON FAMILIES

Dylan Bowden, Lisa Herndon,
Anne Marie Horton Family, Leslie Peebles Family,
Jean Rich, Ronnie Williams Family

DEACON FOR OCTOBER 13

Susan Davis

DEACON FAMILIES

James Cheney Family, Edge Farley Family,
Mabel Hicks, Guerry Key Family,
Jesse McMillen Family, Betty Sills,
Roger Vining Family

CHURCH CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

We will be voting on
the 2025 Deacons and
Nominating Report.

There will be a Church Conference on
Sunday, October 27 to elect Deacons and to approve
the Nominating Committee Report for 2025.

Prayerfully consider the following nominees
as you prepare for Deacon Election:

Chad Davis	Bill Sharp
Joni Dixon	Don Turney
David Giddens	Roger Vining
Mollie Harvey	Charles Winslette
Cherry Leverette	

You will vote for up to six names Oct. 27, 2024.

BIRTHDAYS

10/03 - Heather Wojtas

10/05 - Esther Farley

10/07 - Ford Rocker

10/08 - Walt Rocker, John Wojtas

10/12 - Isabella Stickleby, Jack Stickleby

10/13 - Scott Joris, Rose Carmichael, Craig Williamson

10/14 - Karlie Horton

ANNIVERSARIES

10/04 - Ralph and Joan Barclay

10/06 - Chris and Danielle Brown

10/12 - Jarred and Alexie Camp

10/14 - Ryan and Denise Carmichael

THANK YOU

My heart is full of humbling appreciation for the beautiful reminder on Sunday that 30 years have passed since I walked into the church office to begin this journey on your staff. I certainly felt the showering of love and the warmth of being in your midst, an act I have witnessed this church displaying so many times and in so many ways to others through the years. It is an honor to know each of you, serve with each of you, and to love each of you.

Many thanks to you from a grateful heart.

Ellen

WORSHIP REPORT

Sunday, September 22 126

Sunday, September 29 178

FINANCIAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 22, 2024

<u>Budget Needs</u>	\$10,200.56
<u>Budget Receipts</u>	\$9,705.00
<u>Budget Needs YTD</u>	\$384,621.28
<u>Budget Receipts YTD</u>	\$386,838.45

SEPTEMBER 29, 2024

<u>Budget Needs</u>	\$10,200.56
<u>Budget Receipts</u>	\$6,963.75
<u>Budget Needs YTD</u>	\$397,321.84
<u>Budget Receipts YTD</u>	\$393,802.20

ANNOUNCEMENTS



**COMMUNION
SUNDAY**

OCTOBER 6

KATHY WIDENHOUSE

*just
take a step*

A devotional Bible study
for the busy and overwhelmed



**Ladies
BIBLE STUDY**

MONDAYS

6:00 PM

Contact Kim Camp for more information.



**Zandla Wright
Memorial Scholarship
Outreach Project**

Each year, in honor of Zandla, particularly around her birthday on October 23rd, we strive to give back to our community. This year, we plan to donate supplies and inspirational artwork to the women and children at our local domestic violence shelter. We would greatly appreciate your support in contributing to this meaningful cause, which reflects Zandla's generous spirit and commitment to our community.

Donations that are appreciated:

- Clothes of all sizes
- Children Toys
- Children & Adult
- Toiletries
- Undergarments & Socks
- Makeup
- Feminine Products
- Stuffed Animals

Donations will be accepted from September 30th-October 22nd

We will have a donation bin located in the front hallway of our center to drop off your donations :)

Thank you in advance for your continued love and support in helping to spread her message of love!

Putnam County Day of Health




**Steeple Chase
5K &
FUN RUN**

11.2.24

Eatonton First Methodist Church
103 W. Magnolia St., Eatonton, GA

Fun Run at 8 a.m. | Steeple Chase 5K at 8:30 a.m.

EARLY REGISTRATION: \$30
LATE REGISTRATION: \$35
STUDENT REGISTRATION: \$20

As part of **Putnam County's Day of Health**, Eatonton will host its 9th annual **Steeple Chase 5K and Fun Run**. This year's proceeds will be donated to the Putnam Christian Outreach's Weekend Backpack Ministry.

REGISTER TODAY
garuralhealth.link/steeple-chase



Black Bay Race Series **MERCER Medicine** Putnam County **AAA Race Services**

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES



**FIRST CALL
PREGNANCY CENTER
SHOE DRIVE**

Clean out your closets for a shoe drive to raise funds for First Call Pregnancy Center. Donations of gently worn, used and new shoes will be accepted through Sunday, October 27. The amount of money raised is determined by the total weight of shoes collected.

**PACK A
SHOEBOX!**

SHOEBOXES ARE DUE:
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10



samaritanpurse.org/occ

NEW COLLECTION INCLUDES INFORMATION FOR SAMARITAN'S PURSE ONLINE AT SAMARITANPURSE.ORG/OCCLINK

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

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

FALL

Festival

OCTOBER 26

DETAILS COMING SOON

