

MARCH 6, 2025

# First Baptist Church of Eatonton Messenger

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



## FROM THE PASTOR

As I prepare and look forward to Easter, April 20, I do so with an array of thoughts and feelings. As a preacher, I cannot escape the foolish, ministerial expectations that come with that day. My imagination runs wild as I feel it's up to me to resurrect the masses that attend worship that day! The music, the worship, the preaching has to be outstanding! Right?!

Thus, I relish the ancient practice of Lent to best prepare myself with a steady dose of humility and reality, and what I call earthiness. Karen Marsh helped me along the way as I began my Lent, reading her Ash Wednesday devotion for March 5.

Karen leads *Theological Horizons*, a ministry to students and the community of the University of Virginia. Her book, *Wake Up to Wonder* led her to offer the following reflection as we approach Lent to prepare ourselves for Easter:

*God formed Man out of dirt from the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life. The Man came alive—a living soul!” (Genesis 2:7, The Message)*

Scientists tell us that 97% of our bodies - primarily oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium and phosphorus - are the very same elements that compose *dirt*. This fact should not shock, for each Ash Wednesday (in 2025 it was March 5) we are called to remember the words of the Bible: “*You are dust, and to dust you shall return (Genesis 3:19).*” ... Our physical beings are, quite literally, that of *humus*. How *humbling*.

True humility brings a kind of relief to those of us who labor to be more, do more, prove more. But humility is no weakness. Out of the 16th century, Teresa of Avila reassures us that “humility is the truth. To be humble is to walk in truth, to recognize what we are in the sight of God, and to know that our worth depends on God’s mercy.”

Mother Teresa puts it plainly. “If you are humble, nothing will touch you, neither praise nor disgrace, because you know what you are.” Dust.

As we step into Lent may we wake up to the wonder of this truth: we are made from the earth. And we are, in God's hands, created to bear abundant fruit.

Wendell Berry says, “The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all. It is the healer and restorer and resurrector.”

Take a few minutes to go outside. Leave behind your phone but take along a spade, a shovel or even a spoon. Bring a magnifying glass if you have one.

Find a patch of soil and dig up a healthy clump. Now settle in and look very closely at the dirt, as if seeing dirt for the very first time. Touch it. Smell it. Examine the soil for the presence of minerals, organic matter, water, even living organisms.

As you hold the dirt in your hands, taking abundant time, prayerfully meditate upon the words of St. Augustine “You are dust, and to dust you shall return. Be humble, for you are made of earth. Be noble, for you are made for God.”

*Thanks to Karen,  
Craig*



# I'D RATHER HAVE JESUS: A SONG OF DEVOTION AND SURRENDER

Throughout the history of the Church, music has been a powerful tool in drawing hearts closer to God. Certain hymns have stood the test of time, continuing to inspire believers with their profound lyrics and deep spiritual truths. One such hymn is *I'd Rather Have Jesus*—a song that echoes the cry of a heart fully devoted to Christ.

The words to *I'd Rather Have Jesus* were originally a poem written by Rhea F. Miller in 1922. However, it was the gifted musician George Beverly Shea who set the poem to music, turning it into the beloved hymn we know today. The story goes that Shea's mother left the poem on the family piano, and as he read the words, he was moved to compose a melody that would bring them to life. This hymn would later become a staple in Shea's ministry, especially through his work with the Billy Graham Crusades.

The lyrics of *I'd Rather Have Jesus* speak of choosing Christ over worldly wealth, fame, and success. The opening lines declare:

*I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold,  
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;  
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or lands,  
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand.*

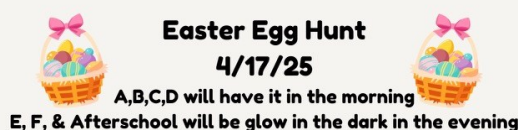
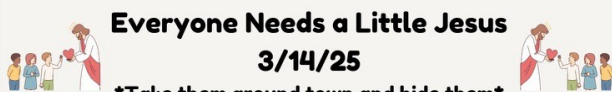
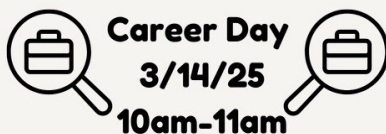
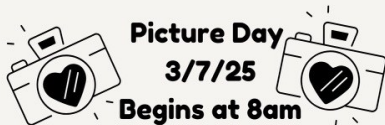
These words reflect the biblical thought found in Matthew 16:26, where Jesus asks, "*For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?*" The hymn serves as a reminder that nothing in this world—no amount of wealth, power, or influence—can compare to the surpassing value of knowing Christ. This hymn challenges us to examine our own hearts. Do we truly value Jesus above all else? In a culture that constantly tempts us with material gain and personal success, the words of this song serve as an invitation to realign our priorities. Just as the apostle Paul counted all things as loss for the sake of Christ (Philippians 3:8), we, too, are called to make Christ our greatest treasure.

Singing *I'd Rather Have Jesus* is more than just singing a beautiful melody—it is a declaration of faith. It is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to Christ and to surrender all that we are and have to Him. May we daily choose Jesus over the fleeting pleasures of this world. May our hearts echo the words of this hymn, not just in song, but in the way we live our lives. And may we always remember that in choosing Christ, we gain far more than we could ever lose.

*Blessings,  
Dylan*

## STEPPING STONES ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SSLC Upcoming Events



STEPPING STONES LEARNING CENTER



As part of a mission project, our children will be placing Little Jesus's around the town for everyone to discover and take home. We believe that an inspirational quote and the presence of Jesus can add a positive light in your day. We invite you to find a little Jesus, snap a picture with it, and tag us! We are excited to share His love and witness the joy it brings to our community!

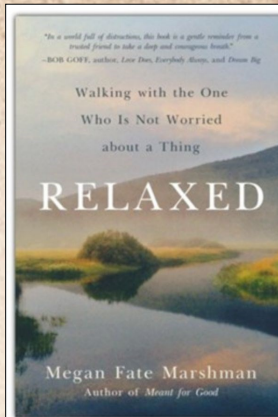
Little Jesus's will be placed around town on March 14th!



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## FOOD DRIVE March 2-25

PLEASE BRING  
NON-PERISHABLE FOOD  
FOR PUTNAM CHRISTIAN  
OUTREACH TO THE  
SANCTUARY BY  
TUESDAY, MARCH 25



## Ladies Bible Study

**MONDAYS**  
**6:00 PM**  
**AT A HOST HOME**  
Contact Kim Camp for  
more information.

Daylight Saving  
Time Begins  
Sunday, March 9



## Vacation Bible School Volunteer Meeting

**Tuesday, March 11**  
**5:00 PM**  
**Fellowship Hall**  
Contact the church office  
for more information.

## CHURCH CONFERENCE



**SUNDAY, MARCH 16**  
**10:50AM DURING**  
**MORNING WORSHIP**

## Deacon Ordination Service

**Sunday, March 30**  
**During Morning Worship**  
**at 10:50AM**

## COMMUNION SERVICE SUNDAY, MARCH 30



## JOIN US FOR 5th Sunday Lunch March 30

Following Morning Worship

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

Please bring casseroles,  
vegetables, salads,  
and dessert.



# EXPERIENCE EASTER

## 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 24



## PALM SUNDAY SERVICE

April 13 AT 10:50 AM

First Baptist Church Eatonton



## Experience EASTER

At First Baptist Church Eatonton

### PALM SUNDAY

April 13 at 10:50AM

### HOLY WEEK SERVICES

April 14 – 18 at 12:00pm

Lunch to follow

### MAUNDY THURSDAY EVENING SERVICE & COMMUNION

April 17 at 6:00PM

### COMMUNITY EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

April 20 at 7:00AM

THE PLAZA ARTS CENTER

### CHILDREN'S EASTER EGG HUNT

April 20 at 9:45AM

### EASTER SERVICE

April 20 at 10:50AM



## Easter Egg Hunt

APRIL 20 AT 9:45AM

BRING YOUR BASKET!



NO WEDNESDAY  
NIGHT SERVICES OR  
ACTIVITIES  
ON APRIL 16, 2025



## Living Cross

We will be decorating  
a living cross  
on Easter Sunday.

Please bring flowers  
to place on the cross,  
Sunday April 20.

CLOSED  
EASTER MONDAY  
APRIL 21, 2025



The church office is closed for  
Easter Monday. We will resume  
normal hours on Tuesday, April 22.



# SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

## WELCOMING FOR MARCH

Mike and Kathy Faulk

## USHERS FOR MARCH

Marvin Franklin, Chad Davis, Edge Farley,  
Luke Harvey, Clayton Lancaster

## DEACON FOR MARCH 9

Clayton Lancaster

## DEACON FAMILIES

Terry Blanton Family, Maxine Godin,  
Walt Rocker Family, Lois Schell,  
David Stickley Family, Ellen Trice,  
Nell Wright

## DEACON FOR MARCH 16

Jesse McMillen

## DEACON FAMILIES

Helen Benshoof, Kent Duffey Family,  
Mike Faulk Family, Hollis Harrison Family,  
David Heath Family, Scott Sharp,  
Patrice Underkofler

# BIRTHDAYS

03/06 - Don Masson, Paula Rossee  
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 - Tammy Baker, Miranda Rossee  
03/20 - Leslie Peebles, Julie Harper, Jim Kauffmann

# ANNIVERSARY

03/08 - Carl and Elaine Haizlip  
03/10 - Tim and Kim Camp  
03/14 - Ronnie and Cheryl Williams

# WORSHIP REPORT

<u>Sunday, February 23</u>	<u>125</u>
<u>Sunday, March 02</u>	<u>118</u>

# FINANCIAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 28, 2025

<u>Budget Needs YTD</u>	<u>\$93,229.00</u>
<u>Total Receipts YTD</u>	<u>\$93,863.20</u>
<u>Budget Expenditures YTD</u>	<u>\$164,543.46</u>







TOCCOA FALLS  
COLLEGE

## 2025 CHOIR TOUR



**First Baptist Eatonton**  
March 20 | 7PM

The Christian College of Georgia //

