



125 Sedgefield Street
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201

THE FIRST WORD

July 2022

First Baptist Family,

It's hard to believe that the year is half over! Just like summer, 2022 is flying by. So far, it's been a great year for the church. We've hosted missionaries, Mission Madness, and youth choirs. We've had successful children and youth events. In fact, just last month we had a fantastic Vacation Bible School. By the time this is printed, our Youth will have returned from what we hope and pray was a fun and formative camp experience, and they'll be getting ready to go on their mission trip later this month. Worship services have been meaningful and moving. People have been faithful in their attendance and in their giving. Teams and committees have been hard at work. Overall, the spirit of the church is strong. We're in a really good place right now, but to stay there, we have to keep moving forward. Consequently, people are currently hard at work so that the successes we've experienced thus far can continue as we move throughout the rest of the year. And while I can't share everything quite yet, I do think it's important for you to know at least a little bit about what we have planned in the coming weeks and months. My hope is that you'll not only be informed, but that you'll be excited about the things God is doing in our midst. It's my hope that you'll not only want to take part in these things yourself, but that you'll want to bring others with you so that they can be as blessed by them as I believe you will be.

August and September are when we're really going to ramp up our Fall schedule, but I want to share a few July dates with first. **On Sunday, July 3, former pastor Dave Stancil will be preaching and leading us in worship. And then on Sunday, July 10, we'll be joined by Rick and Jill Thompson, missionaries in Brazil.** As some of you will remember, Rick and Jill have a special connection to First Baptist Bristol since Jill is the granddaughter of one of our members who's gone on to glory, Lydia Collins. **Then at the end of the month, Sunday, July 31, we'll have Youth Sunday.** This will be the service where we hear more about the camp and mission trip experiences of our youth. All three services will be special.

Then once we get into August and school starts back, we'll really kick things into high gear. We'll resume our Wednesday Night activities with children, youth, and adults in August. **We'll have our Fall Kickoff on Wednesday, August 10. And later that week, Friday, August 12 through Sunday, August 14, we're going to be joined by our friend Terry Maples, Coordinator for CBF of Virginia. Terry is going to be leading an asset mapping exercise and a small group facilitator training for us that weekend.** If you are passionate about missions, whether you're on the Mission Team, heavily involved in one of our mission projects, or would like to become more heavily involved in one of our mission projects, this asset mapping exercise might be for you. The idea behind asset mapping is to reflect on all the assets God has given you and then do ministry out of God's abundance. The goal

is that this exercise will inspire people to look for new ways to strengthen relationships with our current mission partners and to dream up new mission possibilities God might be calling us to as a church. The small group facilitator training is for current small group facilitators and Sunday School teachers, but also for anyone who might be interested in leading or facilitating a small group. If you're looking to learn more or if you've been doing this for a long time and are interested in a fresh perspective, this is a great event for you.

After these training events, we're going to have some new small group offerings; and I hope that you will not only find one to participate in yourself, but that you'll invite someone to join you. The books all these groups are going to be learning from discuss the importance of generosity. Generosity is about far more than money, though. Rather, generosity is a way of life.

Back in January, I mentioned that our theme for this year was Forging the Future. The idea is that we are working on becoming the church God is calling us to be and that we are active participants in that process. One of the characteristics I believe God is calling us to exhibit is generosity, not just with money, but with time and talents as well. Every church is rebuilding after the disruptive nature of COVID, and like others, we are discovering that we need more volunteers if our missions and ministries are going to be as healthy and vibrant as we want them to be, if they're going to be as healthy and vibrant as we believe God is calling them to be. So far this year, people have been very generous with their tithes. I want to commend you for that and encourage you to keep up the good work, however, I also want to encourage you to look for ways you can be more generous with your time. We always need more volunteers for our children and youth ministries. If you are interested in serving there, please talk with me or Ben. We also need more volunteers for our tech team. While they often go unnoticed when things are going well, they are vital! We would be in a world of hurt on Sunday mornings without the good work of Mark Fuller, Joey Ondrak, Nevaeh Ondrak, etc., etc. We wouldn't be able to livestream our services without them. If you're interested in learning more, please see me or Ben about that, too.

We are in a great place as a congregation. We have exciting things planned for the rest of the summer and the fall, things that I believe will bless those in attendance. But for us to continue with the positive momentum we have, for us to continue becoming the church God is calling us to be in the future, we're going to continue to need people to be generous with their time. It's often said that many hands make light work. So, I hope that many of you will give us the opportunity to prove that adage true.

As always, it's a joy to be your pastor.

Grace and Peace,

Kris

DISCIPLESHIP

Beginning in September, we are excited to introduce an opportunity for you to sign up for a small group where you can make friends, build relationships, and apply Jesus' teachings. Below are some answers to questions about small groups at First Baptist Bristol.

Why do we create small groups?

1. God created us to be in relationship with him and with others (Gen. 2:18).
2. Jesus' presence is stronger when two or three are gathered in his name (Matt. 18:20).
3. Fellowship with other believers is part of God's plan for discipleship (Acts 2:41-42).

The experience of other churches shows that small groups promote engagement among all members, especially those who attend less frequently.

What will small groups at First Baptist look like?

Small groups at First Baptist Bristol will have specific beginning and ending dates, will be discussion-based, not lecture-based, and have two facilitators. They may meet in homes, a restaurant, or another location, and they may include a meal or refreshments. Topics are based on books which have been approved by the pastor. In the fall semester, all the groups study a common theme. In winter and summer, a variety of topics will be offered.

What about training for facilitators?

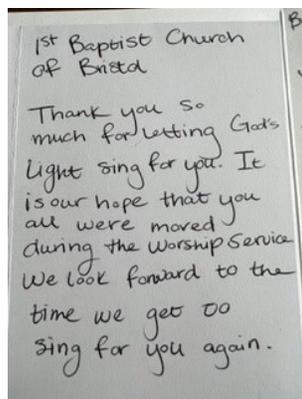
Prior to each semester, facilitator training will be provided. Anyone who thinks that they may be interested in facilitating a small group is encouraged to attend this training. The first training will be on August 12 or August 13, 2022.

What is the current plan for small groups?

This fall the theme for small groups will be "Generosity." Books will include *One Simple Act* by Debbie Macomber for a ladies' group, *Giving to God* by Mark Powell for a young adults group, and *The Generosity Secret* by Nelson Searcy for a coed group. In addition to these, the pastor will teach *What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?* by Martin Thielen on Wednesday nights at the church.

Look forward to more information and the opportunity to be a part of a small group at First Baptist Bristol!

God's Light Choir thanking FBB. Also, thanks to the choir. We received an overwhelming response from our members expressing what a blessing it was to have the choir perform.



FBC PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE Business Meeting - July 2022

Article IV - Business Meetings

The annual business meeting shall be held on the second **week** in December for the purpose of electing officers, receiving the report of the Ministry Team, and adopting the Annual Church Budget.

Personnel Handbook (Replaces existing FBB Policy Manual)

The proposed Personnel Handbook is now available to review on Realm. If you are a member of FBB you have access to the handbook under the resources tab in your Congregation group. If you are not on Realm, email the church office and a pdf version will be emailed to you.

Notes from Leigh...



It has been a busy and exciting month at FBC Bristol... Our 5th Sunday service with breakfast was a big hit, new anthems by our sanctuary choir with Susan Mullins joining Jackie for a four hands accompaniment; a great cookout and ice cream social; the God's Light Gospel Choir; VBS; Father's Day; an incredible four hands piano duet...just to name a few!!!

The God's Light Choir is led by Kim Duggins, a former member of FBC Bristol. FBC Bristol was their final stop on their 10-day choir tour. We were able to provide them with a place to stay and three meals. The choir was wonderful, and they were very grateful to our congregation for their hospitality. Each of the students wrote a thank you note to the church. (Pictures of those notes are in First Word). Special thanks to Linda Pruner, Harry Scanlan, Trish and Leroy Doran, and a number of other helpers, for providing delicious meals. It was such a blessing to witness the hospitality of our congregation!

Mark and I had an incredible journey to Turkey. We learned so much and saw so many amazing things. I hope that we will get a chance one Wednesday this fall to share our experience and some of our pictures with you.

Finally, Kris mentioned on June 19 that I was having surgery on June 24. While dad was undergoing treatment for his cancer, the doctors did some genetic testing. Turns out he had the BRACA2 gene which is also known as the breast cancer gene. My sisters and I were urged to have the testing done. I tested positive for the gene (my sisters were negative). Therefore, as a preventative measure, Mark and I have chosen to undergo a bilateral mastectomy with reconstruction. It will be a difficult surgery and recovery, but the good news is I do not have cancer, so I won't have to undergo any follow up treatments. We covet your prayers and look forward to texts, FB messages, or calls to check up on us!

I will miss being in worship with all of you, but Jackie and David will lead the music in my absence, and I know they will do an excellent job!

Blessings,

Leigh

Library Lines

July 2022

Summer is here and reading for enjoyment and relaxation is on your library's radar. New-to-our-library books of fiction are *Mercy's Rain* by Cindy Sproles, *The Crow's Call* by Wanda Brunstetter, and *The Color of your Skin Ain't the Color of your Heart* by Michael Phillips. *Mercy's Rain* is a nineteenth century Appalachian novel set in Wadlow Mountain, Tennessee. It is centered around a very young woman who has spent her life under the authority of an abusive father and a pastor who rules both her family and the community-- a story of man's depravity and God's mercy. *The Crow's Call* is a mystery about events that plague a greenhouse in Pennsylvania's Amish Country after a terrible accident leaves three women to become providers for their families via the greenhouse. *The Color of Your Skin...* tells the story of the orphaned daughter of a plantation owner and a former slave who have worked hard to keep the plantation going while hiding the fact that they are alone. These books are on display in the library's reception room.

~May Tabor

Mission 2022 To Charleston, South Carolina July 17-24

We are working with
Sea Island Habitat for Humanity
helping build a family home.

We are staying at the
James Island Presbyterian Church Mission House.

The base cost is \$100
or commitment to work for 10 hours to offset the cost.
There are also training hours required TBA.
Flex times are available if needed.



Our Quarterly Business Meeting will be held at 12 p.m. on Sunday, July 24. According to our church's by-laws, chairs of teams and boards are asked to give a quarterly report of the group's activities. The report can be either written or oral. If the report is written, please give a copy to the church office so copies can be made for the membership. **Please submit the report no later than July 20.** The information you share will be helpful in keeping the membership informed of what is happening in our church.

First Baptist Church of Bristol Staff

Dr. Kris Aaron.....Senior Pastor
 Rev. Ben Ondrak.....Associate Pastor
 Rev. Leigh Clark.....Minister of Music
 Mrs. Jackie Burnette.....Pianist
 Mrs. Andrea PenningtonOrganist

Mr. Dennis Thomas.....Sexton
 Mrs. Marcine Robinette.....Parish Nurse
 Ms. Terri Thomas Church Administrator
 and Financial Secretary
 Ms. Niki Judy..... Administrative Assistant



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Website: www.fbcbristol.org
 You can also find us on
 Facebook.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

125 Sedgefield Street
 Bristol, VA 24201

Deacon of the Week for July

July 03, 2022	Jamie Barger
July 10, 2022	Leroy Doran
July 17, 2022	Terri Cook
July 24, 2022	Jordan Pennington
July 31, 2022	David Hicks

FBC Minister On-Call Schedule

July 02 & 03	Rev. Ben Ondrak (423) 217-8934
July 09 & 10	Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
July 16 & 17	Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
July 23 & 24	Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
July 30 & 31	Terri Thomas (423) 963-7576