



125 Sedgefield Street  
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201

## THE FIRST WORD

January 2022

It's hard to believe that a new year is upon us. Normally, I would review with you how things ended in 2021, but I'm afraid I can't do that quite yet. Because of the holidays and the corresponding office closures, the deadline for First Word submissions was earlier than it usually is. I will be sharing with you some final 2021 numbers once they are available, but they will come at a slightly later date. I do want to share with you some things I'm optimistic about for 2022, though.

First, I'm hoping to see an even greater return to normalcy in 2022. When we resume Wednesday Night Bible Study on Wednesday, January 5, we're also going to be resuming our Wednesday Night meals. Ginger will be preparing the food for us again, so you know that it will be good. We'll review the prayer list at 5:30 PM. The supper line will open at 5:45 PM, and it will stay open until 6:15 PM. Please let the office know if you are planning on joining us for supper, so that we can get an accurate head count to Ginger. If you'd like to have a standing reservation, you can let Terri or Niki know that, too. We'll resume Wednesday Night activities for children and youth, too. For adults, you will have two options to choose from concerning Bible study. I will be leading a discussion on the book *Devotional Classics*. We will meet in Rosser Hall, and there will be a Zoom option for those who wish to call in. *Devotional Classics* is a compilation of devotionals from various authors. I'll share a little bit of background info about the author, read an excerpt from his or her work, share a selected Bible passage to go with the devotional, and then we'll have reflection questions and suggested exercises to go through as a group. This book is actually designed for groups to use. In fact, it's frequently used by pastors' groups. It's also a book that I use regularly for devotional reading, so I hope that you will enjoy it as much as I do. The other option is going to be led by Rev. Leigh Clark. Leigh will be leading a discussion on *Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life* by Tish Harrison Warren. This is a wonderfully practical book that I think you'll enjoy. Thus, one group will focus on growing deeper spiritually through devotional material, while the other will focus on applying principles of our faith to everyday life. I think both will be great options, and I encourage you to invite friends to join you! During our first meeting on Wednesday, January 5, Leigh and I will preview a bit of what we'll be doing. We'll also share a little more about the books, so you can pick the option you're most interested in. The studies themselves will begin on Wednesday, January 12.

The second thing I'm optimistic about is the future of the church itself. As a reminder, we're going to be having a quarterly business meeting on Sunday, January 23 immediately following

worship. One of the things we'll be voting on is the Long Range Plan that was presented at our Annual Business Meeting on Wednesday, December 8. If you have questions or concerns about the plan, I encourage you to talk with any of the members of the Long Range Planning Team or Ben, Leigh, or myself. Regardless of whether the congregation ultimately votes for the plan or not, though I hope you will, we will be making a decision about our future as a church. In fact, we won't just be making a decision; we'll be forging our future. And that's going to be our theme for 2022 – Forging Our Future. Life doesn't just happen to us. We get to make decisions. We have agency. We have a choice. We can choose to follow the direction we believe God is calling us or not, but we have a say in what our future looks like. To forge the future, however, there are a few things that you have to do first. You have to regain a sense of who you are and where you are. That's especially important after a disorienting past two years. You have to remember who and what God has called you to be, both as an individual and collectively as a church. You have to be bold enough to dream big dreams. And finally, you have to be willing to step out on faith and follow those God-inspired dreams. You will notice that my sermons for 2022 are all centered around this theme, especially those in the early part of the year. Consequently, you'll be hearing me say a lot more about this idea of forging our future moving forward.

I hope that Advent and Christmas allowed you to rest and recharge your batteries. I hope that you are as excited and optimistic about the start of 2022 as I am. Most importantly, however, I hope you are as optimistic about the future of First Baptist Bristol as I am. Without question, this pandemic has been hard. It halted much of the positive momentum we had at the beginning of 2020, but I'm sensing some positive momentum building again. And I'm seeing encouraging signs all around. I hope that you can see them, too, because God is at work in us and through us. I firmly believe that the best days for First Baptist Bristol lie ahead of us and not behind us. I firmly believe that we have agency and choice, so we get to decide what our future is going to look like. And I firmly believe that if we choose to continue to be faithful, God will bless our choice and our church.

As always, it is a joy to be your pastor.

Grace and Peace,

Kris

# WELCOME TO FBC!



## The Boyles Family

Scott and Stephanie  
Anna, Will,  
Millie, Lottie, and Libby  
Carol Ann Boyles-Jernigan

## TO ALL 2021 BOARD AND TEAM CHAIRS

I would like to remind you as a Board or Team Chair that according to our Church's By-Laws you are requested to give a summary of your group's activities during the past year at the first Quarterly Business Meeting of the new year. The report can be either written or oral. If the report is written, please give a copy to Terri by Thursday, January 20, so she can make copies for the membership. The information you share will be helpful in keeping the membership informed of what is happening in our church. Our business meeting will be held Sunday, January 23, immediately following the morning worship service.

Gene Eller

## PLEASE RECYCLE Sunday School Literature.



## DISCIPLESHIP

### Discipleship Team Meeting

The Discipleship Team will meet in Rosser Hall on the third Sunday in January (January 16) at 12:15 p.m., immediately following the worship service.

A light lunch will be served.  
The meeting will last approximately one hour.

### Will You Teach a Craft?

A church-wide survey indicated that some of our people are interested in learning a craft, and the Discipleship Team would like to schedule a "craft day" in February.

Would you be willing to teach a short class (one or two hours) on a craft?

If so, please call Marilyn Butler, 276-466-9727 or email [bmari216b@yahoo.com](mailto:bmari216b@yahoo.com).

### New Women's Book Group

A book study is being planned for March-April using the book, *For Such a Time as This*, by Max Lucado.

Plan now to attend and register with Niki in the church office. (276-779-8191)

If you would like to be included in a group book order, please let Marilyn Butler know ([bmari216b@yahoo.com](mailto:bmari216b@yahoo.com)). One copy of the book will be available in the church library. Dates and Times TBA.

### Meet the Author!

Join us on January 25, 2022, at 10 a.m. for a presentation by Carol Ann Boyles-Jernigan, author of *The Safety Deposit Box Shock: Your Secrets Will Find You Out*. She will share her father's story and the surprising mystery. Register with Niki in the church office (276-779-8191).

# Notes from Leigh...

Wow! What an amazing Season of Advent! The sanctuary was decorated so beautifully. Our attendance was very good. I think we had visitors at every service. It is always great to see our people welcoming our guests. When Mark and I were visiting FBC in 2017, we were always warmly greeted—that is a true congregational gift!

Another gift is our many talented musicians! From the cantata to the children to our many soloists and instrumentalists, we enjoyed some wonderful music during Advent. I am especially thankful for Jackie and Andrea and their weekly contributions to worship and preparation for worship.

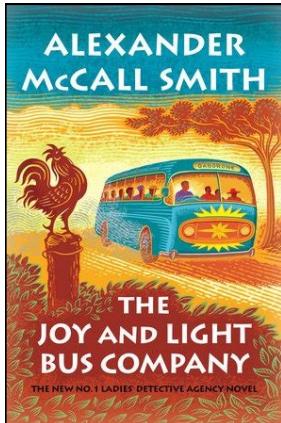
As we look forward to 2022 I want to encourage all of us to be “seekers.” By that I mean: seeking ways to be useful for Our Savior, our church, and our community. I pray that we will be contributors and not just consumers (this takes effort and intention). Try to find a place or group that matches your gifts and interests and dive in!



Finally, I hope you will make plans to be a part of our Wednesday night activities! Prayer time begins at 5:30. Dinner is from 5:45-6:15. And, beginning at 6:15, we will have two study options for you: Devotions with Kris or the book study “Liturgy of the Ordinary” by Trish Harrison Warren with Leigh. If you choose to do the book study, please go ahead and purchase a copy of the book from your favorite book seller.

On a personal note, I am so thankful for all of the prayers, cards, messages and hugs that I have received since losing my dad. The holidays have been different but good. Mom is doing well and staying busy. She was so excited to meet so many of you at the cantata. You, as a church, are so loving and giving! I can't thank you enough! It is an honor and a blessing to serve here.

Blessings,  
Leigh



## Library Lines

January 2022

First Baptist readers, don't let the cold, gray days of January pass without occasionally transporting yourselves to more pleasurable times found in a variety of books in your church library. Our newest fiction adventure can be found in **The Joy and Light Bus Company** by Scottish author, Alexander McCall Smith. Set in Botswana, Africa, Mma Ramotswe, chief detective of the Ladies No. 1 Detective Agency, is challenged by her husband's attempt to embark on a new business venture about which she is not happy. Readers will be intrigued by the creative solutions she discovers with the support of family and a charming array of coworkers and friends. ~ May

## 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 Pennington .....Organist

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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You can also find us on  
Facebook.



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
125 Sedgefield Street  
Bristol, VA 24201

**Happy New Year!**

### Deacon of the Week for January

January 02, 2022	Gene Eller
January 12, 2022	Matt Chandler
January 16, 2022	Mike Browder
January 23, 2022	Jaime Barger
January 30, 2022	David Hicks

### FBC Minister On-Call Schedule

Jan. 01 & 02:	Rev. Ben Ondrak	(423) 217-8934
Jan. 11 & 12:	Dr. Kris Aaron	(803) 225-0795
Jan. 15 & 16:	Rev. Ben Ondrak	(423) 217-8934
Jan. 22 & 23:	Dr. Kris Aaron	(803) 225-0795
Jan. 29 & 30:	Terri Thomas	(423) 963-7576