



125 Sedgefield Street  
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201

## THE FIRST WORD

March 2022

First Baptist Family,

It's hard to believe that it's already April. The first quarter of this year has seemingly flown by, and I'm happy to report to you that things are going exceedingly well! Attendance continues to slowly trend upward to the point that if, and if is the key word in this sentence, if we maintain our current trends, we're on pace to average more in worship by the end of the year than we did pre-COVID. And if you've looked in our Orders of Worship or read your e-news recently, you know that giving has been very strong, too. People have given joyfully and generously to start the year. In fact, as of the moment I'm writing this, we're approximately \$8,700 ahead of budget. This is incredible, especially considering we raised the budget this year! There's a sense of momentum that we're continuing to build upon every week, and that is incredibly exciting. So, I want to encourage you to keep up the good work!

Encouragement, of course, requires that we do two things at once. It requires that we look backward to celebrate the good things God has done in our midst. And it requires that we look forward so that we can discern the ways God is still leading us and guiding us. If you look back over the last quarter, you'll find lots of things to celebrate. We voted as a congregation to unanimously pass the long range plan our Long-Range Planning Team worked so diligently on. We now have a preferred plan for the future, and we're making nice progress on turning that plan into a reality. We've resumed Wednesday Night Meals. We've given people options to choose from on Wednesday nights with regards to Bible study. We're seeing more children and more teenagers in church seemingly every week. We've eaten too many pancakes and too much bacon together at our Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper. We've journeyed together through Lent. We've hosted missionaries, collected items for Ukraine, raised money for our Youth Mission Trip, sent our Youth off on a Spring Retreat, started new discipleship opportunities, and more! It has been a good, busy 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. We have a lot of things to celebrate. And yet, I remain more excited about the good things God is doing and will do in our midst.

Much of what we have planned for the month of April revolves around Holy Week, of course. **While we won't**

**be meeting for our normal Wednesday night activities on Wednesday, April 13, we will be having our annual Maundy Thursday drop-in communion service on Thursday, April 14 at 6 PM in the sanctuary. Then on Friday, April 15 at 6 PM we'll have a Good Friday Tenebrae service, which will also be in the sanctuary. On Saturday, April 16, we'll have our Annual Easter Egg Hunt from 2 to 4 PM. On Sunday, April 17, we'll have an ecumenical Sunrise Service in East Hill Cemetery at 7:30 AM. We'll be joined by First Presbyterian Church again this year. And then at 11 AM, we'll have our Easter Sunday service in the sanctuary.** I think our Holy Week festivities will allow us to close out a meaningful Lenten season exceptionally well. Because of that, I hope you'll join us for as many of them as you can, and I hope that you'll invite other people to join you, too. There's no time like the present to get more involved in the life of the church, especially when things are going so well!

**One other thing in April is that we're going to host CBFVA's Mission Madness. Mission Madness is a mission event for teenagers, and we're hosting the very first one ever held in Southwest Virginia on April 22, 23, and 24.** We're going to have well over 100 teenagers from churches in Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee come to Bristol to worship together, fellowship together, and serve together. All of these teenagers are going to be going out into the community to do valuable service work. If you are interested in volunteering to help with this event, please let me know.

We have many reasons to be encouraged as a church. And in the coming weeks and months, you're going to hear about even more. I want to urge you to pay particular attention to our upcoming discipleship and mission opportunities. If you haven't found a place to get plugged in yet come and talk with me. We have a lot of good things happening at First Baptist Bristol, and I can assure you that you don't want to miss out on them.

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

Grace and Peace,  
Kris

# DISCIPLESHIP

## BIRTHING A NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

We're excited to welcome a new Sunday School class! It was recently born as the Fellow Travelers class at First Baptist Bristol. The co-facilitators are Scott and Stephanie Boyles, and they invite any adults to join them each Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in Room 112. This class features the application of Bible truths to everyday life. Not only will you be able to grow spiritually, you will meet new friends and enjoy sharing with other "fellow travelers."

## SENIOR LUNCH AND "MEET THE AUTHOR"

The Senior Lunch will return on April 26. At 11 a.m. Carol Ann Boyles-Jernigan will share highlights of her book, *The Safety Deposit Box Shock: Your Secrets Will Find You Out*. That will be followed by lunch prepared by Harry Scanlan. All seniors are invited. The first ten people to register with Niki ([niki@fbcbristol.org](mailto:niki@fbcbristol.org)) will receive a free book following Carol Ann's presentation. The suggested donation for lunch is \$5.

## BOOK STUDY

The ladies' study of Max Lucado's book, *You Were Made For This Moment*, will continue until April 11 in Rosser Hall at 11 a.m. Participants are learning about hope and courage through the story of Esther. Sue Hughes, May Tabor, and Leigh Gleis are leading the weekly Monday sessions, and it's not too late to sit in on the discussions on April 4 and April 11.

Please note,  
The church office will be  
closed on Monday, April 18



### Flowering of the Cross

Please join us for our annual Flowering of the Cross on Easter Sunday, April 17. The cross will be located on the front steps of the church. Please bring some of your favorite spring flowers from your garden to decorate the cross which symbolizes Jesus' resurrection.

Pictures will be taken during the Sunday School hour. If you forget your flowers, the church will have some available for your family.



If you would like to place an Easter Lilly in the sanctuary during the Easter season please fill in the information below and return it to the church office.  
Cost: \$15.00

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

### FBC Notice Invitation to Bid No. 2022-001

In accordance with Financial Policies of First Baptist Church, all repairs and improvements of \$2,500 or greater require three competitive bids. Prior to advertising the bid to reputable contractors, notice must be provided to Church members so that they have an opportunity to either personally submit bids, if qualified to complete the project, or contact individuals they may know who may be qualified to complete the project. The church will be accepting bids to add doors to block off the preschool hall (upper and lower level) as a part of the implementation of the Phase 1 of the long-range plan. The details of the requirements are available in the finance office. All sealed bids must be received no later than April 29, 2022, to the church office.

## Notes from Leigh...

Busy, exciting, encouraging, heartbreaking, new, eye-opening, heart-felt, uplifting, beautiful, sad, reflective, inviting...these are all words that I would use to describe what is happening here at FBC Bristol. These words and more! Over the past month we have experienced some wonderful moments of worship in our Sunday morning services and at our special Ash Wednesday service. Our worship regularly includes our young people sharing their talents and time and that is SO exciting to me!!

We have celebrated women in ministry; we have heard from local and foreign missionaries; we are seeking ways to partner with local organizations to help those in need in our community. We have also experienced loss and heartbreak through the deaths of loved ones in our congregation and community and from the ravages of COVID and of war.

Our attendance is steadily increasing, we have guests in worship almost every week, and our giving is encouraging. The sanctuary choir continues to provide beautiful music for worship AND we have added two new members – Amy and Darin Denton. Amy (Owens) grew up in this church; she and Darin were married here, as well. Jackie and Andrea amaze us with their gifts weekly. Ann and Kevin Townsend share their incredible talents regularly. Our Wednesday night study groups are going well, and we now have a women's group that is meeting regularly for discipleship and fellowship!!

Y'all, I say all of this because it is important to recognize, acknowledge, and celebrate God's goodness to us! We have much to be thankful for AND we still have lots to do – the work for the KINGDOM is never done; we can't and won't grow weary when we depend on HIM. So, let me encourage you to get involved by finding a group (SS or Wed. Night or Ladies group, etc.) and by finding a way to serve (team, greeter, children's volunteer, choir). There is a place for everyone. Invite, better yet, bring someone with you!!

Finally, we have some very important worship services during April that I hope you will mark as a "Do NOT miss" occasion on your calendar. April 10 is Palm Sunday – our children will process with Palms during worship. April 14 is Maundy Thursday – there will be a time of reflection and Holy Communion in the sanctuary. April 15 is Good Friday – we will have a service of drama, music, and reflection on Jesus and the Cross. April 16 is the Easter Egg Hunt. And April 17 is Easter morning! We will once again flower the cross on the steps of the church. Please bring lots of flowers for this beautiful tradition.

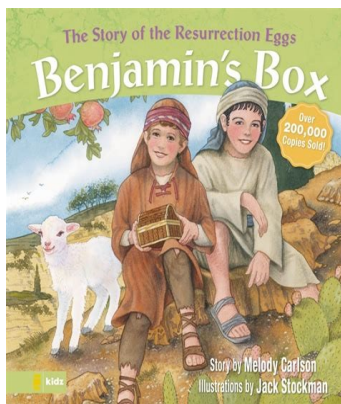
I am so excited about the present and the future of our church! And I am blessed to serve as your Minister of Music.



Blessings, Leigh

## Library Lines

### April 2022



**Benjamin's Box** is an Easter story for school-age children by Melody Carlson. Like all boys and girls, Benjamin, who lived in the days of Christ, was curious. When Jesus came to Jerusalem, Benjamin decided to follow him and find out who he really was. Along the way, he collected mementos in a treasure box given to him by his grandfather that was filled with straw from the stable in which a baby, who was proclaimed to be a king, was born. At first, he thought Jesus was a teacher, then a king. At last he learned the good news--news that every child (and grownup) will want to share.

~May Tabor



Our **Quarterly Business Meeting** will be held at 12 p.m. on Sunday, April 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 April 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 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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**Hours:** [info@fbcbristol.org](mailto:info@fbcbristol.org)  
**Website:** [www.fbcbristol.org](http://www.fbcbristol.org)  
 You can also find us on  
 Facebook. 



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

### Deacon of the Week for April

April 03, 2022	Gene Eller
April 10, 2022	Jordan Pennington
April 17, 2022	Brad Talbert
April 24, 2022	Harry Scanlan



### FBC Minister On-Call Schedule

April 02 & 03:	Rev. Ben Ondrak (423) 217-8934
April 09 & 10:	Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
April 16 & 17:	Rev. Ben Ondrak (423) 217-8934
April 23 & 24:	Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
April 30 & May 01:	Rev. Ben Ondrak (423) 217-8934