



125 Sedgefield Street
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201

THE FIRST WORD

April 2025

First Baptist Family,

March was a good, full month in the life of the church. We began our Lenten journey together with a delicious seafood boil on Fat Tuesday/Shrove Tuesday and then a meaningful Ash Wednesday service the very next day. We heard from CBF missionary and our friend, Jessica Hearne, in worship as she updated us on the good work she's doing in Danville, VA. We joined with Baptist Women in Ministry (BWIM) in celebrating the ministerial giftedness of women as our very own Rev. Leigh Clark preached on the last Sunday in March. We took up a special offering for our friends and CBF missionaries, Gennady and Mina Podgaisky, to support their work with Ukrainian refugees in Poland. And we supported our Youth in their annual Spaghetti Luncheon and Cake Auction fundraiser. Delicious desserts were purchased, good food was eaten, and even better fellowship was had – with all the money going to a good cause. I'm sure that Ben will update everyone on the final amount raised as soon as he can.

This month, however, we celebrate the highlight of the Christian calendar year – the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. Consequently, we have plenty of opportunities for you to worship and celebrate this month. We also will be hosting a community event this month that I'm sure you'll want to check out – a lecture in the King Institute for Faith & Culture lecture series. **On Monday, April 7 at 7 PM in the sanctuary, we will host Dr. Gretchen Huizinga. Dr. Huizinga is a Research Fellow at AI and Faith, and her lecture is entitled "From Ethical AI to Righteous AI: Can AI be Good?"** This promises to be an interesting and informative lecture, so I hope that you'll be able to join me in attending. I also hope that you can bring some people with you, as I suspect lots of people are going to want to learn more about AI. As for worship opportunities this month, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention everything happening during Holy Week. **Our Holy Week festivities will begin on Sunday, April 13 with Palm Sunday. We will have our traditional Palm Sunday worship service that day. Our children will remind us of the festive nature of that day by processing into the sanctuary and waving palm branches.** That procession will happen towards the beginning of worship on the 13th. **On Wednesday, April 16, our youth will meet like normal, but we will NOT have Wednesday Night Supper, Bible study for adults or children, or choir practice. On Thursday, April 17, we will have our annual Maundy Thursday Drop-In Communion**

Service from 6-7 PM in the sanctuary. Then, on Friday, April 18, we will have our Good Friday Tenebrae Service. That will also be in the sanctuary at 6 PM, but please note that the Good Friday service will NOT be livestreamed. As I've shared with you before, a Tenebrae Service is a service of increasing darkness, and darkness makes livestreaming exceedingly difficult. Consequently, the only way you'll get to experience this powerful service is by being here in person, so I hope that you will join us. **Then, on Saturday, April 19, we will have our annual Easter Egg Hunt from 2-4 PM.** As always, we'll need people to donate candy, but we could also use some volunteers, too. If you're interested in helping with this event, please see Ben or Emma. And then finally all these events will lead to the culmination of our journey together – Easter Sunday. **On Sunday, April 20, we'll have**

our annual sunrise service with our friends from First Presbyterian Church and Lee Street Baptist Church at 7:30 AM in East Hill Cemetery. After the sunrise service, we'll have a churchwide breakfast here in Rosser Hall (our friends from both First Presbyterian and Lee Street have also been invited to join us). We will have Sunday School like normal that day, and then we'll have our traditional Easter service at 11 AM in the sanctuary. We'll also have our flowering cross, so be sure to bring some flowers with you, and we'll have a photographer so that you can take family pictures after worship. All in all, it should be a wonderful week and a wonderful day of celebration, so I hope that you can join us both for Easter and for all our Holy Week events leading up to it. **Please note that because of the Maundy Thursday communion service and the Easter Sunday breakfast, we will NOT be having Family Breakfast on Sunday, April 6 or having communion in worship that Sunday.**

Great things are happening here at First Baptist Bristol. And they are things you will want to be a part of, things you will want to invite others to – so I encourage you to do just that – come and bring someone with you. Both you and they will be blessed if you do.

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

Grace and Peace,
Kris



CALLING ALL YOUTH!

YOUTH MISSION TRIP

May 30-June 06, 2025

1. THE COST IS \$175 OR 17.5 COMMUNITY HOURS.
2. ALL MEMBERS OF THE MISSION TEAM ARE COMMITTED TO TRAINING FOR OUR WORK SIGHT. TRAINING TBA.
3. YOU WILL NEED AN ADDITIONAL \$35 FOR ONE FREE-DAY ACTIVITY AND \$35 FOR MEALS THAT WE WILL EAT OUT AND ON THE ROAD

YOUTH CAMP 2025 UNIDIVERSITY TO MARYVILLE COLLEGE July 7-11

1. COMMITMENT TO COME PAY - OR WORK FOR \$200 TOWARD THE COST.
2. COMMITMENT TO WORK AT THE FUNDRAISER.
3. WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW ALL RULES.
4. FILL OUT AND SIGN A CAMP COVENANT.

To register: Turn in registration, \$100, and Medical Release for 2025.



HOLY WEEK

Sunday, April 13 - Palm Sunday

Thursday, April 17 - Maundy Thursday Drop-in communion from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Friday, April 18 - Good Friday Service at 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 19 - Easter Egg Hunt from 2-4 p.m.

Sunday, April 20 - Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service 7:30 a.m.

Breakfast-Rosser Hall

Worship 11:00 a.m.

Notes...from Leigh in Berlin!

Guten Tag, my friends! Mark and I have had a wonderful time in Germany during March. We have seen so many beautiful and meaningful places. Mark's research kept him busy for the first three weeks, but I didn't let that slow me down. I have averaged over 20,000 steps per day - that's a lot of walking. We started our journey in a very small town near the Black Forest. We traveled on the weekends to the towns of Rothenburg and Heidelberg. Then, we headed north to Berlin - very big city with lots of people and even more bicycles!

Thank you again to the church, the staff, and the many individuals (Jackie, Andrea, Kevin and Ann, David, Nevaeh, David, and Terri) that agreed to cover my responsibilities while we traveled.

Mark and I were able to experience different styles of worship during our travels - a contemporary English service in Stuttgart, and a Protestant service in Berlin at the Berliner Dome Cathedral. But we are very much excited to be back in worship at First Baptist Bristol. Mark your calendars for our Good Friday and Easter worship services (April 18 and 20). Hope you will invite someone to join you.

Blessings,
Leigh



Recommended bi-law change:

The Board of Administration shall elect annually a chair and a vice-chair. The chair for the Board of Administration shall typically serve a 1-year term, however, a longer tenure as chair is possible. Anything beyond a 1-year term shall require a majority vote from the Board of Administration, for which the chair is ineligible to vote, and approval from the church at the next quarterly business meeting.

Our **Quarterly Business Meeting** will be held at **12 p.m. on Sunday, April 27**, in the sanctuary following morning service. 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 **Wednesday, April 16**. 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

Ms. Marcine Robinette.....Parish Nurse
 Mrs. Emma Vance.....Ministry Asst. for Children
 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 April

April 06	Gene Eller
April 13	Dena Cunningham
April 20	Harry Scanlan
April 27	Nelson Gwaltney

April FBC Minister On-Call Schedule

April 05 & 06	Rev. Ben Ondrak	(423) 217-8934
April 12 & 13	Dr. Kris Aaron	(803) 225-0795
April 19 & 20	Rev. Ben Ondrak	(423) 217-8934
April 26 & 27	Dr. Kris Aaron	(803) 225-0795