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IN THIS ISSUE

Page 2:
Worship

—

Page 3:
Music Ministry

—

Page 4:
FBC Early Learning Center

—

Page 5:
FBC Kids

—

Page 6:
Missions

—

Page 7:
Our Libraries

—

Page 8:
Financing Our Future

THE SPRINGTIME OF OUR MINISTRY

From winter's end to the beginning of springtime, our church has blossomed—literally and figuratively. Our church grounds have shown their colors: from vibrant pink and white azaleas to dogwoods bursting with cross-shaped blooms. The greening is now underway, bringing hints of warmer weather and sun.



When I look out my office window, I can't help but see the newness of life, and it's not just because of the beauty of springtime. It feels like we have come out of a very challenging season of separation and struggle—which we faced with dignity, love, and grace, by the way—and are now embarking on a new season that builds on the spiritual growth we have experienced through our journey through the pandemic together.

Church family, we are a stronger people for our perseverance and willingness to adapt. As we slowly find our new routines of being out and about, including the regular in-person attendance at church we also are joined by people around the world through our online presence as well. We worship and study and

serve in all kinds of new ways now. In the past two years, we have added 9 new church members, held three dedications of four sweet babies and children, and have seen new life sprouting up in new and joyous ways in every part of our ministry—music ministry, children's ministry, Bible studies, and more.

Our Early Learning Center is at max capacity with a waiting list, and it is working to grow its capacity with licensing and renovations. Our Personnel Committee will soon hire an Associate Pastor for Families, shared with our sister church, Chatham Heights Baptist. Our Building & Grounds and Finance Committees are prayerfully seeking creative ways to use unused space in our facilities for ministry and income. Our Missions Committee and WMU keep us focused on God's goals for this world: to reach them with the love and message of Christ.

As we continue to work through our shared goals in ReShaping our ministries, I really believe that we will see the springtime of our ministry—new growth, new life, and new hope for what it means to be the people of God who meet at the corner of Starling and Mulberry.

By: Libby Grammer

Worship



HOLY SEASONS: LENT & EASTER AT FBC

The seasons of Lent and Easter are filled with symbols of our faith—from the symbol of ashes we don on Ash Wednesday, reminding us of our mortality and belovedness, to the palms of Palm Sunday, the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, the Cross on Good Friday, and the empty tomb and new life of lilies and other flowers on Easter Sunday morning.



On Palm Sunday, we reenacted Jesus's triumphal entry with the waving of palms. We also had a special covenant signing ceremony with our CBF Field Personnel as we became a CBF Encourager Church.

During Holy Week, we shared services with our sister church, Chatham Heights Baptist Church. On Maundy



Thursday, we worshiped in the FBC Sanctuary, partaking in communion and a service of water and towel to remember Jesus's final meal with his disciples. On Good Friday, we worshiped in the Chatham Heights Baptist sanctuary, walking through the stations of the cross and remembering the crucifixion in word, image, and song.



Easter was a beautiful Sunday at FBC, beginning with an Early Service in the Fellowship Hall, followed by a breakfast hosted by our Deacons. At the

11:00 a.m. service, we hosted guest musicians and retold the Easter story for children and adults alike, remembering the empty tomb and the first preacher of the resurrection in our Gospel lesson—Mary Magdalene!



On the Sunday after Easter, April 16, we dedicated two of our FBC Kids to God during a Parent-Child-Church Dedication service: Adalyn Grace White (4) and Noah John White (1). We covenanted with their mother, Kaylee White, to love and cherish them as our own, to teach them the faith, and to be a church family to them. It was a beautiful service, reminding us of the importance of children in our congregation!

By: Libby Grammer

Music Ministry



SONGS SUNG & PLAYED, FAITH STORIES TOLD

The Psalms instruct us to praise God at all times, through all things, with heart, voice, and instruments in joyful song. I am proud of the way we have lived into those instructions over the past months through the season of Lent.

Our Sanctuary choir beautifully presented fourteen anthems by various composers from current composers such as David Lantz III and Craig Courtney through classical composers Haydn and Mozart. They were joined at times in leading our worship by guest instrumentalists playing flute, trumpet, trombone, timpani, and cello.

We are blessed on a weekly basis with beautiful music by our organist Baxter Jennings as he leads from both the organ and piano in accompanying the choir. Baxter was joined by Rev. John Fulcher for several wonderfully moving

piano-organ duets during Lent and Easter as well.

In addition to the beautiful music, we experienced scripture in a vibrant new way through several reader's theatre presentations of our scripture texts. I hope you were as moved as I was by our readers as they sought to help us live through the events of scripture.

It was a blessing to be part of the Scripture Reader's Theatre scripts that Dr. Grammer discovered. With my background in Church music and drama, I look forward to working more with the talented interpreters at First Baptist Church.

Thanks to all who helped make my first Lenten/Easter season here such a meaningful and beautiful time of worship and song!

By: David Cameron



Baxter Jennings, Organist



Guest Instrumentalist
Kieran Rooney, Cello



Scripture Reader's Theatre



First Baptist Church Early Learning Center



SPRING HAS BLOOMED AT FBC ELC



February, our Pre-K4 class had the opportunity to host an intern from Longwood University. Felisha Mellott chose the ELC as her intern project for graduation. She helped create a lesson plan using our curriculum, Community Helpers.

Two officers from the Henry County Sheriff's and the Martinsville City Sheriff's office came to teach the children that Police Officers are our friends.



March was very busy with Zumbini, a music and

movement class taught by Christina Kinzer. This class meets twice a month with our Pre-K3 & Pre-K 4 classes. The children love the music and are encouraged to create dances along with the song.



Piedmont Arts invited our Pre-K4 class over to help plant their new pollinator trail. The children were so excited to ride the bus over and get their hands dirty!

First United Methodist Church's Puppet Ministry came and



performed a Puppet Show for the entire ELC. What a fun way to learn about Jesus through song!

A special thank you to Pete and Karen Compton who designed and built our new play structure in the Playroom in the basement. The children are head over heels with excitement for such a wonderful gift of time they gave us!



By: Beth Kotchish, ELC Director



GROWING UP FBC: FUN & LEARNING WITH FBC KIDS



In February, our children made very special, handmade Valentine's Day cards over the course of two Sundays, which were

delivered by Pastor Libby and her daughter Elena (4) to some of our resident members at King's Grant.

As some of our children are getting older, we have decided to bring them into the worship service earlier, so they can experience more of the service. So far, they are doing great!

Our committee also voted to fund the much-needed reorganization of our Sunday School classroom closet. A great big thank you to Erica and Marcus James for doing such a great job with that project.



We joined forces with the Early Learning Center Committee in March and April to plan an Easter Egg Hunt for our First Baptist Church children and our ELC children.

In addition to hunting for Easter eggs, our children had "stations" for fun and learning: decorating a flowering cross, remembering the new life of Jesus; decorating a butterfly as a symbol of the newness of life; planting seeds/plants reminding them of new growth; painting a sunrise to remember the sunrise on Easter morning; story time, hearing the story of Easter read. There were also fun stations like bubbles, sidewalk chalk, and a visit with the Easter Bunny!

Due to the rain forecast for Saturday, we held the Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday afternoon. It was such a beautiful day! We appreciate all our volunteers who were able to come out to help.

By: Crystal Darden, Children's Committee Chair

Missions



ENCOURAGING MISSIONS

The last few months the missions committee has been involved with the missions programs of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF). The church decided to become involved in the CBF Encourager Church program by supporting a local and an international field personnel at an investment of \$3,000 over a three-year period.

A CBF Encourager Church covenant signing service was held April 2. Our field personnel are Jessica Hearne (Danville) and Karen (North Africa). We were fortunate to have discussions with Jessica in Sunday School on April 2 and with Karen at a potluck supper, April 12. We are greatly looking forward to supporting these two dedicated servants. The committee would like to thank our great congregation for their support—the potluck supper was outstanding because of you.

We will continue to serve the Henry County Food Pantry by packing food boxes and sorting clothes. Our next date is June 10, 10AM-12PM in Bassett. Sign up by calling or emailing the church office. Please let us know what needs you become aware of where we may be of service.



Jessica Hearne, Danville, VA



Karen, North Africa



Separately, we supported the CBF Global Missions Offering in conjunction with the WMU. The goal this year was set at \$3,000, and because of the generous donations of the congregation which contributed about \$2,200 and the wonderful FBC Kids who collected \$213 in their paper banks, only a small contribution from the Missions Committee allowed us reached our goal.

By: David Lewis, Missions Committee Chair

Our Libraries



SHARING A LOVE OF BOOKS

McCabe Library has been very busy in the last few months. We have completed about two-thirds of the barcoding required to make the collection a true database. Three sections to go!



Reading Dr. Seuss



Serving Ice Cream



Ice Cream Day!

We celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 3! The ELC classes came to Kesler Room and heard a Dr. Seuss story from our Library Committee members. Books were given to all the ELC children, including those for parents of babies and toddlers, as well as the after-school students. Ice cream was served at lunch and after school for children and teachers, too!



The library staff spends a good bit of time creating displays of our media wares. We hope you have a chance to view these. We are blessed to have such artistic talent to add another feature to our beautiful church home. Here is one of the very best creations we have ever done on Raggedy Ann & Andy.

We hope you get to see this display, which compliments the various aspects of FBC life, emphasizing the gentle candidness and always kind ways that Christ set up for all his disciples. This was the feature of the Sunday School lessons for January and February in the Smyth & Helwys curriculum. If you are not "up" on your Raggedy Ann, the library has a few copies you can look at to refresh your memory. One of our staff has a large collection of them that is currently available in the library to browse.

By: Dottie Lewis, Librarian

FINANCING OUR FUTURE



THANK YOU for your generosity in giving to the ministry at First Baptist Church!

Because of your financial support, First Baptist has more than \$230,900 pledged to meet our financial ministry goals (up from \$156,000 in 2022), along with gifts from non-pledging regular givers. Your ongoing giving sustains our ministry in Martinsville and around the world in worship, study, and service.

Enclosed with this newsletter is your quarterly giving statement. If you didn't receive one, you are invited to become a regular giver! Giving is easy: write a check to First Baptist Church and drop it in the offering plate or by the church office, or give online at fbcmartinsville.com/give.

Rev. Dr. Libby M. Grammar
Senior Pastor

Rev. David Cameron
Associate Pastor for Music & Worship

Baxter Jennings
Organist

Mary Taylor
Administrative Assistant

Kaylee White
Financial Secretary

Beth Kotchish
ELC Director

Kenny Smith
Support Staff

Pete Compton
Maintenance Technician

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