



November 15, 2023 | Volume 2 | Issue 1

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 2:
Music

—

Page 3:
Worship

—

Page 4:
FBC Kids

—

Page 5:
Missions

—

Page 6:
FBC Early Learning Center

—

Page 7:
Our Libraries

—

Page 8:
Photo Collage

REFLECTION AND RENEWAL



It's been a busy and fulfilling fall season at First Baptist Church! I was grateful to you all for celebrating with me five years of ministry and service together on August 6. Our journey together has produced much fruit, and I'm hopeful for the future of this congregation because of the hard work and dedication of those with whom I serve.

I am amazed at the growth and flourishing of our Early Learning Center under the Directorship of Beth Kotchish, who has given 46 years of dedicated service to that ministry. I am so glad we celebrated her well in September with recognition and lunch.



Also in September, we hosted a conference called "Now What?!" sponsored by Barnabas Partnership and CBF of Virginia to help churches learn about how to best be the church in our changing

world, especially as we face challenges in our communities. Eight sister churches from our area sent members to learn together from speaker Mark Tidsworth of Pinnacle Leadership Associates, Steve Zimmerman of Barnabas Partnership, and Rickey Letson of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (header photo).

We have learned and implemented many of our ReShape initiatives, and shared our own processes with other churches. Now, as we move into a season of waiting and celebration—Advent and Christmas—I hope your hearts are full and hopeful.

The new year will be here soon! In 2024 we'll celebrate 140 years of First Baptist Church of Martinsville. We will celebrate this milestone by not only reflecting on what has been, living into a renewed future together as the people of God.

I'm praying for you, Church, and I know God's Spirit is still working among the people in our congregation and our community to change this world.

By: Libby Grammer

Music Ministry



SOUNDS OF PRAISE IN AUTUMN

We've had a wonderful fall through our music together at FBC. Our choir continues to bless us with wonderful anthems ranging from classics, such as "The Prayer of Saint Francis" through contemporary anthems like "Jesus You Alone are King" to Spirituals such as "Wade in the Water" and "Down to the River to Pray."

Our choir works hard to prepare and sing their very best each week, and they are a blessing to direct. Thank you for encouraging them in their music making.

We were also glad to introduce a new Pepper Choplin Anthem for World Communion Sunday, "One World, One Communion" featuring Martha Hayes on flute. Martha also joined in on our hymns that Sunday and played beautifully throughout.

We are blessed with fine instrumentalists here at FBC. Baxter Jennings continues to bless and



inspire with his Organ solos and choral accompaniments, and it is a double delight when he joins forces with John Fulcher for piano-organ duets.

My thanks to our sound technicians, Tom Hall and Mike Evans, for their good work in making sure each word and note are heard. They have a

lot more on their plate each Sunday than most folks realize and we are thankful for their hard work each week.

Along with our choral and keyboard music we were blessed by the lovely duet "All of Our Tomorrows," sung by Marcy and Jim Heffinger, and I was pleased to bring the solo "The Voice of Truth."



We continue making music with our ELC preschool choir and the FBC after school choir and are looking forward to Christmas presentations from both, in addition to the Sanctuary Choir Christmas Cantata.

Thank you for supporting music and our FBC musicians as we seek to lead this congregation in praise and song each week. May God bless you and fill your life with music!

By: David Cameron

SOUL FOOD: WORSHIP AND COMMUNION

The beginning of the school year always brings with it a rich period of worship in the liturgical calendar, and even more so this year!



On August 20, we blessed our kids and teachers as they headed back into a new school year. We promised to be with them and gave them a tag for their bag to remember that, "You Got This!"

On World Communion Sunday, observed the first Sunday of October, we recognized our shared communion meal with Christians around the world. We heard the words of institution in various languages. We adorned the Lord's Table with bread from around the world. We invited our church family of all ages to partake in this special

service, with children to older adults learning the importance of God's welcome at the communion table for everyone (header photo).



On October 8, we held an outdoor Blessing of the Animals service. This service, held in October in honor of the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi (patron saint of ecology/animals), honored God's good creation and gave us a chance to bless our companion animals and give thanks to God for them.



We also had a chance on October 15 to bless two sweet

babies and their parents in a Parent-Child-Church Dedication for the Heffinger family. Ainsley and Sam Heffinger brought Helen and Hutch to be



dedicated to God among their home church family. Proud Grandparents are Dean and Mary Lewis Johnston and Great-Grandmother is Sue Lester.

We ended October with a service commemorating the Protestant Reformation and remembering Christ's call to get back to the basics of loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves as we consider our theology, traditions, and ministries. I'm grateful to worship alongside you in so many ways!

By: Libby Grammer



FAITH, FAMILY, AND FELLOWSHIP

The kids at FBC have had a fall full of Bible stories, mission projects, songs, and lots of fun! In September we started using a new kids curriculum following the Revised Common Lectionary called *Sparkhouse Lectionary*. Learning about the same story in both Sunday School and worship increases the chance that the children will retain the story and helps them be more engaged in worship. Twice now during worship, one of our FBC kids tugged on her Sunday School teacher's arm saying "I know this story, we did this!" This excitement excites me! I look forward to seeing how this new curriculum continues to help the children of FBC grow in their faith!



Also in September, we started Thursday Night Church for kids ages 4-10! Thursday Night Church has become a space for FBC & CHBC Kids to learn about

people who share God's love around the world, and how we can share God's love. We sing songs, make crafts, hear Bible stories, and participate in the church's mission projects.

We had two super fun events in October! The first was an ice cream family fun day held at Chatham Heights! The kids and their families from both churches ate lots of ice cream and

played a lot of games (header photo)!

At the end of October, FBC & CHBC hosted Harvest Fest! We had a lot of visitors and some familiar faces come by for all of the fun! We had crafts, face painting, trunk-or-treat, games, and food trucks.



The last three months have been so full of learning and fun! We are looking forward to all of the learning and fun to come this holiday season.

By: Caroline Tucker



Missions

MANY MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES

The Missions Committee has been busy over the past three months!

Missions in Action: On Saturday, September 9, a team of volunteers from FBC and CHBC traveled to Danville to Grace & Main Fellowship's community garden. The teams learned about the sustainable farming and community building of the farm and helped with the garden beds through building new beds, mulching, and more. Other volunteers also helped prep the elderberries for canning.



Missions in Giving: Through CBF we made contributions to the Maui and Morocco relief funds to aid in their recovery. We have also financially contributed to the MHC Warming Center, to the Hope Center and Hope Pack

Programs, as well as provide for the needs of a church family. We continue to support the Patrick Henry Elementary School Weekend Food Donation Project and the Henry County Food Pantry. WMU's God's Pit Crew Play Pail Buckets for disaster relief collection was a huge success. We collected 28 play pails for children in need!



ministries, and made children happy with FBC balloons!



Missions Outreach: On October 7, members of our staff and congregation hosted a booth at Martinsville Uptown Oktoberfest, where we met our neighbors, shared about our

We are very thankful for the tremendous giving of time and resources by our congregation.

By: David Lewis,
Missions Committee Chair



First Baptist Church Early Learning Center



FALL FUN AT FBC ELC



ELC Open House



Harvest Fest



Office Trick-or-Treat

The Early Learning Center (ELC) has been very busy as it has started and completed the expansion of the Pre-K4 and two-year-old classrooms. Both rooms provide much-needed childcare for our community. Once these classrooms were up and running, we had an open house for the community to come in and see all the wonderful things our center has to offer and to welcome in new families.

During the months of September and October our center participated in CLASS observations as well as Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP) and Virginia Literacy Partnership (VLP) Testing. Both tests help to establish and prepare our students for school age math and reading skills building. The results for these scores have been high.

There were many Halloween festivities for our students to enjoy. Our Pre-K4 class was able to go to the Mayo River Corn Maze and walk through the maze and pick out a pumpkin (header photo).

The ELC participated in First Baptist and Chatham Heights Harvest Fest on Friday, October 27. We had many families from the center come to enjoy our shared Harvest Fest in the FBC Parking Lot.

On Halloween, each classroom got to trick-or-treat at the church offices and later enjoyed their classroom Halloween parties.

We are looking forward to the end of the year, as we have our Christmas Play coming up very soon.

By: Erica James,
ELC Committee Chair



Our Libraries

MCCABE-KESLER-HEWITT: KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES

Our Library staff has been busy all summer and fall updating the library books sections of McCabe-Kesler with barcodes for easier check-out. We have completed Kesler and most of McCabe books and DVDs.

The picture you see below is of the church's membership library card. Your number will be on the back. When you choose a book, you may write your number on the sign out card. You may sign your full name on the sign out card if you do not have the number with you. We can find you by full name or by number in the database. NOTICE: the M is an integral part of the barcode (M12345)



We, on principle, are not in favor of book banning (header photo). We hope you saw in the Narthex our large display of banned books and the reasons given for banning. We feel one must be conscious of the current wave of banning (whatever one disagrees with) marching across our nation.



Libraries, especially special libraries, are dedicated to selecting suitable materials for their express aim. Sue Martin McCabe is in that category and considered choices have already been made, according to our declared aim, before purchase.

Our large display case has been featuring the beloved Winnie-the-Pooh this past month. It was interesting that two biographies were published this year of Pooh and his Christopher Robin. After reading of Pooh's adventures, one sees why he is so happy in the peaceful Hundred Acre Wood.

By: Dottie Lewis, Librarian

NOTICE: The library's annual bake sale is coming up on December 10. Hope you can bake for us and stock your larder for the holidays!



Be a part of all that happens at First Baptist Church of Martinsville! Come and join us for worship and service and learning— all ages welcome!



Rev. Dr. Libby M. Grammar
Senior Pastor

Rev. David Cameron
Associate Pastor for Music & Worship

Caroline Tucker
Associate Pastor for Families

Baxter Jennings
Organist

Mary Taylor
Administrative Assistant

Kaylee White
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Beth Kotchish
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