

THE MESSENGER

SEPTEMBER 2023

FROM THE TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

Two years ago, I accepted your call to serve as your Transitional Pastor for up to two years. Since then, I've tried to walk alongside you in the ways you requested: By preaching, teaching, working with the Transition Ministry Team and the Center for Healthy Church's coach, and partnering in a collegial relationship with the church staff. Naturally, I found my job description expanding from time to time, as I got to know you and in response to emerging needs.



Together, we've taken quite a journey. You've done the hard work of self-assessment, clarifying your congregational identity, making major decisions related to inclusion and facilities, launching a pastor search, and adjusting to the changing environment in which the congregation ministers. Many of you have invested substantial time and energy along the way. Thank you for your willing participation!

Come the end of September, my time as your transitional pastor will end. This does not mean, however, that my interest in the life and ministry of First Baptist Church, Jefferson City will come to a close. In the spirit of British understatement, I've become awfully fond of you. I will continue to pray for you, commend you to others, and celebrate each success which comes your way.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Transitional Pastor, and may God bless First Baptist Church as you continue to walk by faith into the future.

Mike

FEATURE ARTICLE

By Edna Langley

DEPARTING

I am told, and I suppose it is true, that all good things must end. And when that time comes, there are many ways to say “good-bye”. Besides good-bye, we can say farewell, adieu, adios, so long, peace, Godspeed, take care and many other ways to express departing. While we have many choices, I must admit, I don’t like any of them...simply because I don’t like good-byes! And yet, departures happen and we find ourselves from time to time needing to use one of those expressions.

One such time is fast approaching in the life of our good church as our church family will experience Mike’s leaving us. That time, September 24, is coming much too fast for me and I know for most of you as well. Goodbyes can make one think. They make one realize what one’s had, what one is losing and often what one has taken for granted. Thinking back on Mike’s coming to be with us, I am reminded of a quote from the movie, Forrest Gump. Forrest said his momma told him, “Life is like a box of chocolate. You never know what you’re gonna get.” Well, so is choosing a transitional/interim pastor and our church got a winner! As I personally look back over the past two years, it is hard to believe all we have been through together as a church under Mike’s leadership. His wise, thoughtful, steady leadership through some difficult decisions we have made as a church in our efforts to follow Christ at this time and in this place have been such a blessing and help. I know there are new and challenging days ahead for our First Baptist family and I am so appreciative for all Mike has done these past two years to prepare us for the days which lie ahead for us. It’s been a good ride, filled with more blessings and personal growth than I can even begin to express. For sure, Mike will be missed among us. As he departs, I pray God’s blessings on him and his family in the days ahead and as he once again ATTEMPTS retirement!!

I am a “touchy, feely” person. I am also a collector of quotes. As our journey together with Mike ends, I am remembering two quotes by the great Helen Keller which I find meaningful for me at this time. The first one speaks especially to a lesson Mike, the introvert, has taught me. That quote is: “The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched—they must be felt with the heart!”. While I remain sad, the second Ms. Keller quote gives me a sense of peace in Mike’s departure: “What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.”

Oh, I just thought of two more “good-bye” expressions which I say to Mike in his departing:

“See you later, alligator!”

and

“May the Force be with you!”



FINANCIAL UPDATE

By Josh Gibson, Administrative Coordinator

Summary of Operational Budget Income & Expense through July 2023

Items of Interest

- **Online Giving** is simple and convenient, and you do not have to set up a Realm account to give online. Visit: <https://onrealm.org/fbcjeff/give/now> to initiate an online gift today!
- **Designated Benevolence Fund total** (as of 08/31/2023) = \$0.00
- **Our Forward in Faith Capital Campaign** has come to a close. Please see the article from the Stewardship Committee in this issue for more information. Thank you to all who have contributed!

	April	May	June	July
Income	\$29,851.65	\$30,957.87	\$25,563.08	\$25,612.44
Expenses	\$28,870.98	\$25,616.71	\$26,920.58	\$29,765.49
Net	\$980.67	\$5,341.16	\$1,357.50	\$4,153.05
YTD	\$3,750.51	\$9,091.67	\$7,734.17	\$3,581.12

ATTENDANCE

SUNDAY	BIBLE STUDY*	IN-PERSON WORSHIP
August 6	59	88
August 13	55	88
August 20	50	77
August 27	51	83

**Bible Study number includes online participants*

DEACONS & MINISTER OF THE WEEK

September 3: Ann Porter & Karen Smith/Josh Gibson

September 10: Heidi Thomas & Carey Herring/Chad Hartssock

September 17: Ken Morton & Bruce Davenport/Nenette Measels

September 24: Ray Dalton & Betty Watkins/ Josh Gibson



A CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REFLECTION

By the Stewardship Committee

The First Baptist Church five-year Forward in Faith Capital Campaign "officially" ended August 31, 2023. Since the beginning of the campaign in September of 2018, more than \$285,000 in campaign pledges have been received, additional funds came in from the sale of church property, and several other gifts were designated to the capital campaign. Due to the faithful giving of FBC members and friends, the capital campaign funded the new roof for the sanctuary, paid for the new chiller installed a couple of years ago, and covered the repair of water damages from the busted pipe in December, as well as several smaller jobs. No loans were required for any of these projects!

The Stewardship Committee wishes to thank each of you who contributed to the wonderful success of the Forward in Faith Capital Campaign, and to remind you of the following:

- During this continued time of transition, it is especially important that we continue to support our church ministries through giving so the church can remain on solid financial ground as we soon welcome a new pastor, and as we continue to worship and serve in this place.
- Campaign pledge gifts are still being accepted.
- Capital needs will continue to arise even after the campaign, so please continue to give to the capital fund.

Gratefully,
FBC Stewardship Committee

PASTOR SEARCH UPDATE

By Thomas Milligan, Chair, PSC

In August the Pastor Search Committee met twice by Zoom with consultant Bill Owen. We began receiving resumes from potential candidates and our meeting on August 26th was devoted to reflecting on these resumes and deciding with which candidates we wanted to proceed. Over the next few weeks we will make our initial contacts with these candidates by telephone. We have a list of questions to ask these candidates as we interview them. We call this interview the "Getting to Know You" interview. The next step will be a more detailed interview by Zoom which is called the Topgrading interview. Please continue to pray for the Search Committee as we continue the process.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

By Bethany Davenport, Chair, Children and Youth Committee

REMINDER!

OUR NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE IS
UP AND RUNNING! COME JOIN US!

**Babies-Kindergarten
Room 119**

Drop off begins at 10:30

**1st-5th Grade
Room 218**



Children will begin the morning in worship at 10:45. They will be dismissed to Sunday School at time listed in the bulletin.

Looking for a way to support First Jeff Kids?

As we jump into a new church year with a new Sunday School schedule, you may be wondering how you can support our church's children's ministry. There are two opportunities that would be a huge help!

Sunday School Sub List: You may not be able to commit to teaching Sunday School on a regular basis, but emergencies arise, and there may be Sundays when we need someone to jump in. If you would be willing to be a last minute substitute for one of our Sunday School classes, let Bethany know! If you have an age preference (babies-kindergarten or 1st-5th grade), you can let her know that too!

Preschool Greeter: We want our families, whether regular attendees or visitors, to feel welcome when they drop their children off in the preschool area. We are looking for a few people to volunteer as a Preschool Greeter once a month from about 10:25-10:45ish. You would simply be responsible for greeting families upon arrival and helping new families fill out information forms. If you would be willing to do this on a rotating basis, please let Bethany know.

Bethany's email address is bethanyk83@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for considering these opportunities. Your support of our children's ministry means the world!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER
September MENU

SEPTEMBER 6TH:
 CHICKEN, MAC & CHEESE, GREEN BEANS, SLAW, ROLLS, &
 PINEAPPLE UPSIDE DOWN CAKE

SEPTEMBER 13TH:
 SPAGHETTI, GREEN SALAD, TEXAS TOAST, & ICECREAM

SEPTEMBER 20TH:
 SOUP, CORNBREAD, CHEESE & CRACKERS, CHIPS & SALSA, &
 STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

SEPTEMBER 27TH:
 LASAGNA, GREEN SALAD, FRENCH BREAD, & BROWNIES

*Please make and cancel reservations
 through the church office

SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

9:30am Sunday Bible Studies
 10:45am Worship Service

CONTACT INFO

(865) 475-3826; (865) 262-9026 (Fax)
Church Office Hours:
 Monday-Thursday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Find us at www.fbcjeff.org or follow us online on *Facebook* and *YouTube*

STAFF

Sierra Bevins (sbevins@fbcjeff.org)	Ministry Assistant
Angie France	Organist
Josh Gibson (jgibson@fbcjeff.org)	Administrative Coordinator
Chad Hartsock	Interim Minister of Youth & College Students
Steven Lloyd (slloyd@fbcjeff.org)	Facility Caretaker
Nenette Measels	Interim Minister of Music
Cameron Rowlett	Video Editor
Gage Rustin	Youth Ministry Intern
Melanie Simpson	Pianist
Mike Smith	Transitional Pastor

The Messenger (ISSN 766010) is published monthly by First Baptist Church, 1610 Russell Ave., Jefferson City, TN 37760-2299. Periodicals Postage Paid at Jefferson City, TN POSTMASTER. Send address change to *The Messenger*, 1610 Russell Ave., Jefferson City, TN 37760-2299.

