

Stay CONNECTED to First Baptist!

MAKE SURE the Church has YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS! We're sending out regular updates, Worship videos, and devotional messages through email. Call Alice (704-865-8576 - church) or Steven (601-955-2938) to add yourself to the church's email list.

- You can **GIVE** your tithe to the church ONLINE through our website (www.fbcgastonia.org) OR by mailing a check to the church's (PO Box 6298, Gastonia, NC, 28056)
- You can **FOLLOW** the church on Facebook: @firstbaptistchurchofGastonia
- You can **CALL** your fellow members using the new pictorial directory!
- You can **SUBSCRIBE** to our Youtube page: First Baptist Church Gastonia
- And you can **ENGAGE** one another as part of a ZOOM (video conference call) gathering. Let Felicia or Steven know if you'd like help getting ZOOM set up on your phone or computer.



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The Builder

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First Baptist Church of Gastonia

For the weeks of May 24, 2020

NOTES FROM STEVEN

Phasing In

I know that we are anxious to get back to church! We miss Sunday School class, greeting one another, singing together, praying together, and all the uncounted blessings that accompany our corporate gatherings. However, for good and wise reasons, we have not been rushing to come back. Instead, we have put extra effort into virtual gatherings, waiting for the time when it is safe for us to come together. We've had conference calls, YouTube videos, Facebook Live-streams, ZOOM business meetings, ZOOM prayer meetings, ZOOM Sunday School meetings, and even one ZOOM children's tea party! I've been very grateful for all of you who have made an effort one way or another to stay connected in this time. Some of you "ZOOM"ed for the first time to join Sunday School. Some have sent cards and made phone calls, and we've continued to serve and support First Baptist even in this diminished capacity, but now we want to start phasing in the good things we left behind when we first cancelled in-person gatherings back in March.

I'm writing this on Wednesday, May 20th, as I wait to hear if North Carolina will enter into "Phase 2" of re-opening. As of now, we are in "Phase 1" in which the Stay at Home order remains in place, while allowing for more commercial activity and gatherings limited to no more than 10 people. Some exceptions have been made for houses of worship as a few churches in Gastonia began gathering this past Sunday, some indoors and some outdoors.

If the Governor moves us into Phase 2 this week, the Stay at Home order will be lifted (with strong encouragement for vulnerable populations to continue staying at home) and restaurants and churches will be able to open with reduced capacity and while practicing social distancing.

Anticipating our move into "Phase 2", we've asked our Worship, Discipleship/Education, and Missions Ministry groups to meet in order to have an in-depth discussion about when/how we can begin resuming in-person activities at the church building, asking the chairs of their groups to bring recommendations to a meeting with the staff and deacon chair to plan to phase in our in-person gatherings. This will not be a "one-and-done" process in which we open the doors and everything starts back like it's June 2019. It will be a thoughtful and conscientious process of phasing in over time. For instance, we will likely have an "outdoor" worship service before we move indoors. We also won't choose to open the doors to all our Sunday School classes as soon as we start worship back.

Even before we begin the process of "Phasing In" in-person gatherings, I want you to know that we will still be taking extra effort to include people virtually, knowing that many of our members are vulnerable and should stay home and stay safe. There will be people who faithfully and prayerfully stay home from church!

That being said, I'm excited that we are coming to a place where we can Phase-in such essential parts of our life together. As a part of this church, this community, this nation, and this world, we have lost so much in recent months to this virus and our response, but I pray that our losses will reveal renewed strength, faithfulness, and love as we begin the thoughtful process of phasing in.

Church E-Mail: fbcogastonia@gmail.com

Church Website: www.fbcgastonia.org

MEMORIALS

In Memory of: Dan Page, Jr.

By: Bill and Cathy Bagwell, Julie Becker, Norma Dirks, Tim and Rosemarie Evans, Annelle Kelly, Ann Siva, The Stegall Family

Directory Change

Fairley & Marion Cameron
1351 Robinwood Rd., Apt. B115
Gastonia NC 28504
704-396-6511

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DEACONS

REMEMBER YOUR DEACON FAMILIES!
GIVE THEM A CALL AND/OR SEND THEM A CARD!!

WOMEN'S SHELTER

The Missions Committee is asking for us to feed the domestic violence shelter on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

If you or your class would like to sign up, please call the church office or Felicia.



The Church Office will be closed on Friday, May 22 and Monday, May 25, for the Memorial Day Holiday.

Be safe and healthy!!!



Be in prayer for all of those on our concerns list and pray for this Covid-19 to end soon!!!

Wednesday ZOOM Prayer Meetings and Business Meeting

We started meeting via ZOOM a few Wednesdays ago and have continued to share prayer and study virtually each week at 6pm. We send the link out over email each week, and we'd love to have you if you're able to join us! For our study, we've started taking hymns that we will have in worship the following Sunday and discuss the text as a group, using this time in which we can't sing beside one another in the sanctuary to look more deeply into the meaning of the words we sing so that when we come back together we'll have a renewed sense of the theology and praises we sing! We discussed "Come, Thou Almighty King" last week with its beautiful names for God and Trinitarian significance, and we'll look at "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" this week (May 20).

On May 27th, we'll look at "God of Grace and God of Glory", a hymn calling for the church to stand up for courage.

We've also used Wednesday nights ZOOM meetings to continue our church business meetings. Along with our regular reports, we'll have an update on our church and the Payroll Protection Plan loan we applied for over a month ago at our Regular Church Business Meeting on June 3rd.



FROM FELICIA

Each week we are doing a Zoom hangout with our children and youth.

Youth movies each week -

- May 21 - The Rugrat Movie
- May 28 - Despicable Me

Children's Activities

- May 26 - Disney Sing Along

Be sure to check our Facebook and YouTube pages for these videos each week.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

A Morning Message from Steven

Tuesday – Children's Activities

Wednesday – Story Time for Children with Felicia
Bible Study for Adults – 6:00 pm

Thursday - Youth Bible Study with Felicia

Sunday – Sunday School
Weekly Worship

**SAYING THANK YOU
TO
FELICIA FOX
FOR TWO YEARS OF SERVICE
TO
FBC ON MAY 23, 2020**

thank you!

NEWS OF INTEREST



May 24 - 31

27 - Jeanne Thompson
Bruce Yelton

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO MAIL YOUR TITHES/OFFERINGS AND DO NOT COME TO CHURCH OFFICE. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE YOUR ENVELOPE IN THE MAILBOX, PLEASE CALL ALICE AND TELL HER AND SHE WILL PICK IT UP.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT DURING THIS TIME.**

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The youth and children have been enjoying a few fun surprises delivered to their homes. Each week the youth zoom to talk about a new movie and its themes. Last week they were surprised with some movie inspired treats.

More News from Felicia



Graduation Sunday

Chris Mangum will be graduating from Forestview High School this year. We need your help celebrating his achievement. We are asking members to send Chris a card, surprise, or gift card the week of June 7 - 13. Make plans now to flood him with love as we celebrate this milestone together.

Sunday School

You are all invited to join us for our Zoom Sunday School time each Sunday at 9:30. We have been having between 30 and 40 each morning. We are following the Adult Sunday School books which can be picked up in the office. We are studying the Holy Spirit and will be focusing on the book of Acts for the rest of May. In June we will be looking at the Beloved Disciple in the book of John.

Spirit Week

Mark your calendar for our Spirit Week (virtual VBS). It will be coming up June 29 - July 3. This will be for the whole church. Each day that week there will be a lesson posted on our Facebook and YouTube pages. There will also be a fun activity each day for you to take part in. More information will be coming!