

CALENDER OF EVENTS

July 5, 12, 19, 26

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship

Pastor Johnathan – 5, 12, 19; Pastor Dwayne – 26

July 12 – Youth Sunday

July 19, 20 – 6:00 pm - Revival

Tuesday, July 14, 21, 28

6:00 pm Bible Study

Wednesday, July 15, 22, 29

12 Noon Bible Study; 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

July 22 – Noon – Healthy Aging Group



Email: fbcgast@gmail.com

Website: www.fbcgastonia.org



July

1 – David Wright
7 – Mary Hope
Chip Taylor
14 – Dottie Eddings
Jamie Eddings
15- Marsha Long
29 – Julia Blalock
Tommy Hamrick
Ann Siva

August

2 – Jim Eddings
4 – Gwen Gladish
12 – Jessie McSwain
Frances Rhodes
Pat Taylor
15- Marion Cameron – 100 Yrs
24 – Kenny Spencer
26 – Naomi Caldwell
29 – Jim Willis

IN LOVING MEMORY

LINDA HAMRICK

MAY 5, 2026

*God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear.
Psalm 46:1*

**Our Christian sympathy is
extended to the family of
Linda Hamrick upon her death,
May 5, 2026.**

MEMORIALS

In Memory of: Linda Hamrick

Given by: Bill & Julia Blalock
J.D. & Paula Farmer
Larry & Loretta Harris
Mary Lou Hord
Ken & Rebecca Howe
Martha Spurrier

In Memory of: Geraldine Johnston (JOY Club Member)

Given by: Martha Spurrier

Happy 100th Birthday to Doris Davis on July 8, 2026.

Ms. Doris is the mother of
Ann Siva



The Builder

Volume XV Number 5

July 2026

Revisiting, Remembering, Reciting

"Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise." Deuteronomy 6: 6-7 NRSVUE

The words that are referenced in these verses remain the central focus of our faith to this day. These words, or as I like to call it, this opportunity, was one that we have been instructed to keep close at heart, and always in mind. The "Shema Yisrael" is the gift from God that instructs us to love him with everything that we have. These are words, the commands, the teaching that Deuteronomy 6 is calling us to remember.

Why is this important? Well, when we finished our series, The Autobiography of Jesus, we were all set to start a new sermon series in Revelation. When possible, I like to be able to plan out as far as I can, and then spend the bulk of my time executing. God had other plans. An idea began to form, and that idea became a desire, and that desire became what we've been doing for the last month or so, and for the foreseeable future. We are remembering.

You see, what I heard God calling us to as a church was to remember the most basic things that form our faith. These are things that we have heard of often, speak of frequently, but spiritually, have potentially become desentized toward. These things center on words and ideas that we use regularly, but the meaning of which, and in some cases the majesty of which, perhaps are not as rich and robust in our spiritual lives as they should be. I began to ask the question of myself, and of the congregation, "Do we really know what X or Y means?" and I found that at once, these very familiar but forgotten ideas and practices could come alive again for us with a simple call to remembrance.

So I started asking questions like, "What is Christian?" What does the Bible say about fear, faithfulness, God's identity, and so many other things that we think we know? I realized that we needed a deeper understanding of "the basics" of our faith, much more than we needed grand new theological propositions. We certainly aren't shying away from exploration of the hitherto unknown, but we must understand that a firm foundation is all that can support any new additions.

Therefore, the goal for the foreseeable future is to build a level of spiritual comfort and understanding with the things, and the ideas that make us the people of God. It is to ask and to answer questions about our faith without assuming that everyone already knows the

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First Baptist Church, Gastonia North Carolina

First Baptist Church 704-865-8576

2650 Union Road Fax: 704-865-8579

Gastonia NC 28054 -Mailing: PO Box 6298, Gastonia NC 28054-6018

A place to belong, a place to become, a place to bear witness

(Continued from front page)

answer. It is a grand revisitation or recitation of the foundations, cornerstones, and guiding principles that form out the Church, and this incredible privilege known as Christianity. It is an intentional lingering with the things that could so easily be taken for granted as it relates to our relationships with God.

I don't know about you, but I want to be sure and very sure about this thing on which I have staked my present and future hope. I want to speak of my faith, and more importantly, my relationship with God with joy, confidence, and ease. I want to celebrate having access to the answers via a God who answers prayers, and a Bible that comes alive for us via The Spirit of God bringing it to life. I want my faith in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ to inspire others to put their faith in his faithfulness as well.

This is the opportunity that we have before us at First Baptist Church. of Gastonia. This is what we have the privilege of inviting people into. We will be the church that slows down and lingers, listening for God. We will be the church that will not pretend to know, but instead, will earnestly seek to know. We will be the church that will ask the questions, welcome the curiosity, yield to the leading of God's Spirit, and celebrate the ways in which God is growing us spiritually. The unlearned and the well versed can sit together and lean deeper into the beauty of our faith, and our Father who is the source and object of our faith. Join me in praying that God will reveal to us the things that we need to know in order to be the church that He desires us to be. I know that you will.

May God continue to richly bless you all, His beloved.
Pastor Johnathan
Here is where the rubber meets the road Church. When the things of God get good to us, so good that we hunger and thirst to know more, then others will hunger right along with us. Our church will be one that I pray, that demonstrates this hunger, that remembers, and that shares what we are excited about with others.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RETIREMENT

Dear Church Family,
The Bible tells us in the book of Ecclesiastes 3:1, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” After much personal reflection, and even more prayer, I have determined that my “season of serving/working” should now come to a close. Accordingly, I will be retiring with my final day at FBC being July 31, 2026.
Looking back over these 42 1/2 years with FBC, I want to assure you that it has been a labor of love for me. It has been my joy and privilege to come to know and love many hundreds of members over the years. Although never an actual member, you embraced, encouraged, and included me in friendship, programs and activities as if I were.
Memories thru the years flood my mind and heart. Right along side of you, be it on Franklin Street or Union Road, I celebrated the joys, successes and accomplishments, and I mourned the times of sadness, disappointment and loss- all of which are almost inevitable in a church with such a rich and celebrated 150 year history. The influence of FBC stretches further than we can hardly imagine.
I don’t know what the Lord has in store for FBC. But, I do know that He has promised never to leave or forsake any of His children. So, my prayer for you is simple: *Keep Christ and the Cross at the center of everything.* It is our constant reminder of who we are and why we’re here. FBC will always be in my thoughts and prayers, and may God bless and keep each one of you in His care.
Yours in Christ,
Alice



**First Baptist Church of Gastonia
2026 Bible Study Schedule
Tuesdays 6 PM
Wednesdays 12 PM**

**Third Quarter Bible Study: 1 Thessalonians
July 7 - August 26**

Bible Institute: August 31 - September 3

Break: September 8-30

**Fourth Quarter Bible Study: 2 Corinthians
October 6 - December 2**

Bible Institute: December 7-10

Break: December 15-30

For any questions contact:

Johnathan W. Bryson, MDiv

**Senior Pastor
First Baptist Church of Gastonia
2650 Union Road, Gastonia, NC 28054
704-865-8576 (w)
704-840-0710 (c)
jbrysonfbc@gmail.com**



**AT FBCG
Sunday, July 19 and Monday, July 20
6:00 pm
INVITE YOUR FAMILY, NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS**