

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Sunday, August 10

9:45 am Sunday School; 11:00 am Worship with Pastor Johnathan

Tuesday, August 12, 19, 26

6:00 pm Bible Study with Pastor Johnathan

Wednesday, August 13

11:15 am Missions Committee; 12 Noon Bible Study with Pastor Johnathan;

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, August 17

9:45 am Sunday School; 11:00 am Worship with Pastor Johnathan

Monday, August 18

7:00 pm Church Council

Wednesday, August 20

11:15 am Christian Ed Comm.; 12 Noon Bible Study with Pastor

Johnathan; 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Monday, August 25

6:00 pm Finance; 7:00 pm Deacons

Sunday, August 24 and August 31

9:45 am Sunday School; 11:00 am Worship with

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE FOR THE NEXT QUARTER IS
AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX AND CHAPEL CLASS



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The Builder

Volume XIV Number 8

August 10, 2025

The Pastor

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.

John 21:15-17 NRSVUE

Jesus was a pastor. This was his role while living among us. Yes, we live in a time where many inside and outside of the church want to recast Jesus as a glorified social worker or some type of divine first responder, concerned only with disaster response and sociocultural issues. Yet, even a cursory reading of the Gospels reveals a consistent truth about our Lord, and that truth is that Jesus considered himself a pastor before anything else. The term pastor comes to us from the Latin word meaning “shepherd”, a word which finds its roots in the imagery of feeding and tending flocks. It is beautiful imagery found throughout scripture and probably best illustrated in Psalm 23.

Jesus cherished being The Good Shepherd, and in John 10:27-28 Jesus details his commitment to his pastoral ministry when he states, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” This is only the tip of the iceberg though. John 10 as a whole is Jesus’ declaration of the importance of good pastors, and of an unwavering commitment to the needs of the flock (congregation). But what do these statements look like in practice?

Again, the trendy model of the day for many is to paint Jesus as someone who is waiting to take off to every destination that the headlines of the day beckon him to. This Jesus will not be tied down to a flock, but must found standing out in front of whatever issues we have deemed important and newsworthy. This Jesus’ Facebook status would identify him as a “public figure” first, and a pastor second. This Jesus has no time for Bible study because there is a crisis in Bangladesh. This Jesus cannot visit the sick because there is a protest happening in Milwaukee. This Jesus counts on men and women finding and following him via his social media profile and not his preaching. This Jesus believes that good deeds lead to heart changes rather than heart changes leading to good deeds.

(Continued on Page 3)

Worship Greeter August Scott Irvin

*Satisfy us in the morning
with your unfailing love, that
we may sing for joy and be
glad all our days.*

*May the favor of the Lord
our God rest upon us;
establish the work of our
hands.*

Psalms 90:14,17



August

2 – Jim Eddings

4 – Gwen Gladish

12 – Jessie McSwain

Frances Rhodes

15 – Marion Cameron

24 – Kenny Spencer

26 – Naomi Caldwell

29 – Jim Willis

September

1 – Johnny Murdock

7 – Evelyn Leggette

8 – Art Queen

12 – Jay Talluri

29- Charlotte Eddings

SYMPATHY

*Our Christian sympathy is
extended to Jessie McSwain
and family upon the death of
her son, Perry Baumgardner
on Sunday, August 3, 2025*

IN LOVING MEMORY

PERRY BAUMGARDNER

AUGUST 3, 2025



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

MISSIONS UPDATE

The third quarter of the year is underway with two worthy missions in focus, Viddykh, a mission to support the mental health of youth in Ukraine, and the Women’s Shelter in Gastonia.

Dump Harper spoke to the congregation on July 27th. His organization is providing a journal to Ukrainian youth as a tool to be used to express their feelings as their country is torn apart by war. The journal gives the youth daily prompts for writing. They have been asked by the Ukrainian girl and boy scouts to provide these journals for their members and training for their use.

At the end of June, Patti Black did an excellent job telling us of our history with the Women’s Shelter. If you would like to designate which of these two missions your mission donation is going to benefit, just write Ukraine, or Women’s Shelter on your check or the envelope you put in the offering plate or give to Alice. Any donations that do not have a designation will be divided equally to both missions. To date you have given \$240 for the Ukraine Mission and \$255 for the Women’s Shelter. (Please remember Mission offerings are separate from you offering to support the operation of our church)

If you have a heart for missions, or just want to find a place to put your talents to work, please consider joining the Missions Committee in 2026. Thank you,

The Mission Committee
Ann Costner, Evelyn Leggette, John Price,
Charlotte Eddings

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Charlotte Eddings

PRAYER SCHEDULE UPDATE

Fruit of the Spirit 40 Day Prayer Schedule.
September 3rd: Faithfulness
October 13th: Gentleness;
November 22: Self-Control



Church Council

Monday, August 19 @ 7:00 pm
Due to Revival

FINANCE MEETING

Monday, August 26 @ 6:00 pm

DEACON’S MEETING

Monday, August 26 @ 7:00 pm

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

WILL MEET THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EACH
MONTH @11:15 AM IN THE PARLOR

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

MEETS THE 3RD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH
@ 11:15 am in Johnathan’s Office

**MEN’S BREAKFAST
@ EGGS UP GRILL**



Last month our men had a wonderful fellowship breakfast together. We look forward to our next outing and hope that all of our brothers can join us as we build stronger relationships with God and each other.”

(continued from front page)

Who is the Jesus of scripture though? Jesus, the pastor, spent most of his ministry teaching his disciples ‘aka’ his flock, and expanding their understanding of scripture because he understood that they would soon be the ones teaching others. Jesus the pastor, made time for pastoral visits with friends and strangers. This is the same Jesus (John 3) who kept late office hours so that he could provide pastoral care and counseling to Nicodemus. This Jesus (Luke 4) made a pastoral visit to his friend Peter’s mother-in-law, when she was sick. Jesus the pastor (John 11) also comforted Mary and Martha with words of encouragement and hope upon the death of their brother Lazarus, and not only ministered to them in their grief, but in demonstrating his faith in God’s ability to bring life, ministered to an entire community that witnessed Lazarus’ resurrection, and subsequently put their faith in God.

None of this is to say that pastors cannot be concerned or involved with the issues of the day. Indeed, the church has a rich and robust history of being first on the scene where love and compassion are needed. However, we can never be so anxious to meet the needs of others that we neglect the needs of those whom God has entrusted to our care. Even the lost sheep, for whom the shepherd left behind the ninety-nine others, was part of his flock, and likewise, when we go out in search of the lost sheep it is with the assurance that there will be a safe and healthy flock for them to join when we return.

If you want to measure the effectiveness of a pastor then do so against the standard that Jesus, and not the world, has set. You see, it is our privilege to serve you. It is our privilege to join you in your joy and in your grief. It is our privilege to wrestle with you as you wrestle with the hard things in life. It is our privilege to teach and to learn with you through study of God’s word and Christian fellowship. It is our privilege to prioritize your spiritual needs over the tantalizing distractions of the day, choosing to labor in obscurity for the cause of Christ, rather than to gain the praises of the public at the expense of any of God’s beloved children.

You matter to God First Baptist Church of Gastonia flock, and as your pastors you matter to us. If we have ever made you feel otherwise let us know because we sincerely apologize, and covet the opportunity to make it right. Until then, know that we are praying for you and trusting that The Good Shepherd is continuously bringing us all closer to him. God bless you.

Pastor Johnathan

People need each other –

No matter how much we insist we don’t. Nobody is an island, an entity unto herself, or a Lone Ranger. We’re in this thing called community, and part of the joy of community is sharing the weight. The weight of burdens, losses, loneliness, and fear. Look around you, my friend. Who’s there for you? And who are you there for? Take a careful look. Even those who insist they can make it on their own may just be waiting for you to reach out and help.

Be there and available!!

Luci Swindoll