

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Wednesday, January 17

12 Noon – 1:00 pm Prayer Meeting/Bible Study/Rev. Johnathan Bryson
Chapel Class/Bring a bag lunch if you so desire

5:15 pm Family First Feast/Pastor Dwayne

Menu: Chicken Pot Pie/7 Day Cole Slaw/Cup Cakes/Coffee/Tea/Water

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, January 21

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship/Dwayne Burks

5:00 pm The Chosen – Chapel Class

Monday, January 22

6:00 pm Finance

7:00 pm Deacons

Wednesday, January 24

12:00 Noon – 1:00 pm

Prayer Meeting & Bible Study in the Chapel

Rev. Johnathan Bryson

5:15 pm Family First Feast/Pastor Dwayne

Menu: Breakfast for Dinner: Sausage/Hashbrown Casserole/
Fruit Cups/Honey Bun Cake/ Coffee/Tea/Water



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The Builder

First Baptist Church of Gastonia

Volume XIII Number 3

Week of January 21, 2024

SEAM (Afterschool Care & Summer Camp)

People in the clothing industry emphasize the significance of well-crafted seams in garments, as misaligned seams can affect fit and lead to premature wear. My friend and colleague Kim Looney notes that poorly constructed seams may struggle to withstand the stress of wear. This analogy extends beyond clothing to the seams that hold our lives together, reflected in First Baptist's after-school student care program named "The SEAM."

Mrs. Jamie and her team at The SEAM go beyond traditional childcare, strengthening the seams of school, faith, family, and life for their students. Their daily efforts, from assisting with homework to demonstrating love, contribute to a vital and holy calling.

As you pray for The SEAM staff, consider asking God to bless their work with each student and to acknowledge their commitment to academic, life, family, and faith preparation. Seek guidance on how you can encourage and support The SEAM ministry. Don't forget to express gratitude to the entire SEAM TEAM, perhaps by offering prayers, thanks, or even stopping by with donuts to meet the students they impact daily.

Jamie Lewis, Director

Shana Gamble, Asst Dir.



Church E-Mail: fbcogastonia@gmail.com

Church Website: www.fbcgastonia.org

Worship Greeters

January: Bill and Julia Blalock
and Scott Irvin

Welcome

Happy Birthday

January 15-24

15 – Jim Blalock

Carrie Desmond

17 – Cindy Rouse

19- Steve Medlin

21- Chris Magnum

Cy Rowe

22 – Cary Craig

Kim Elmore

EMAIL ADDRESSES/PHONE NUMBERS FOR OUR PASTORS

Rev. R. Dwayne Burks
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704-860-2957

Rev. Johnathan Bryson
Associate Pastor

jbrysonfbc@gmail.com

704-840-0710

MEMORIALS

In Memory of: Betty Jones

By: Martha Spurrier, Jeff &
Tammy Worley

In Memory of: Phil Lindsay

By: Martha Spurrier

In Memory of:

Billy Stafford

Son of Margaret Stafford

By: Bill & Julia Blalock, Larry
& Loretta Harris, David &
Linda Wright

In Memory of: Lois Withers

By: Wally & Patti Black, Bill &
Julia Blalock, Jerry & Eloise
Conder, Joe & Claudia Grigg,
Douglas & Jeanne Paschal,
Martha Spurrier, The Ted
Stegall Family, Jeff & Tammy
Worley

c

First Baptist Church, Gastonia North Carolina

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A place to belong, a place to become, a place to bear witness
Gastonia NC 28054 -Mailing: PO Box 6298, Gastonia NC 28054-6018

WHY CAN'T WE SEE?

Center for Action and Contemplation

“Whatever is received is received according to the manner of the Receiver”

In other words, we receive everything through our own lenses/biases.

BIAS is a preconceived inclination in favor of, or against, something. Our pattern of distortion. The author identified 13 BIASES that we all have, they are:

CONFIRMATION: The human brain welcomes information that confirms what we already believe and rejects information that contradicts what we already think/believe.

COMPLEXITY: The human brain prefers a simple lie to a complex truth.

COMMUNITY: The human brain finds it very hard to see/accept what the group does not want you to see. (tribe over Truth)

COMPLIMENTARY: If people are nice to us we are more apt to believe them than if they are rude. (mirror back what we receive)

CONTACT: If we have some contact with the person we are more apt to believe them than if we have no contact with them.

CONSERVATIVE vs LIBERAL: Our brain likes to see what our party sees. We flock to those who think/believe as we do.

CONSCIOUSNESS: Our maturity makes some things seem impossible to accept and others possible.

COMPETENCE: Our brains think of ourselves as above average, thus we are incompetent to discern how incompetent we truly are.

CONFIDENT: Our brains prefer a confident lie to a hesitant truth. We confuse confidence with competence and prefer the former.

CONSPIRACY: When we feel shame we are vulnerable to stress that casts us as victims of an evil conspiracy by an enemy or other. We prefer to be a victim or a Hero, but never the Villain!

COMFORT/COMPLACENT: Our brain welcomes data that allows us to relax and be happy; and rejects data that requires us to adjust, or inconveniences us

CATASTROPHE: (baseline bias) Our brain is wired to set a baseline of Normalcy and assumes that what is normal will always remain, thus we minimize threats, and ignore disasters, especially disasters that develop slowly.

CASH: We like what helps us make money, and find it hard to see what interferes with our making money.

By Brian McLaren

SEAM STAFF



Mrs. Kathy, teacher



Ms. Tkeyah, teacher



Mrs. Melissa, teacher



Mr. Jerry, Bus Driver

PRAYER FOR TODAY

Abba, we don't know what tomorrow holds, but, we know that without YOU we have no tomorrows. May the peace of God that passes all understanding flood the hearts and minds, washing away our angst and anxiety AMEN.

Jesus and the marginalized in Luke's gospel.

Things have changed. There aren't as many people participating in church choirs these days. Some have gone on to sing in the heavenly choir. Some of the voices have weakened a bit. Some have lost a portion of their vocal range. The traditional ways of doing things are disappearing. Many choirs do not sing in robes anymore. The instrumentation has changed. The piano and organ are supplemented with other instruments, including drums and guitars. Things definitely have changed, and change is inevitable (and sometimes very healthy!).

However, choral singing is still beautiful. Dynamics are still breathtaking. Articulations and phrasing are still painting vivid pictures of the text. Good breath support is still creating notes that are on pitch and carry with them great depth of sound. Choir members are still dedicated to working hard each week to bless the Lord and His people.

What has not changed is the fact that choir is still one of the most beautiful and engaging ministries in the local church. It provides a powerful expression of praise and worship that a soloist, a band, or the congregation cannot do.

So make sure your choir (if you are still fortunate to have one) is affirmed and appreciated regularly. Don't take the choir for granted. It takes a lot of commitment to create and maintain a church choir. Pray for your choir members regularly. Let them know how much you are inspired by their ministry.

Hurray for all those church choir members and their leaders! May God continue to use you powerfully in a world that desperately needs to hear your message.

The message is the mission!
Travis Boyd FACEBOOK



BACK PACK MINISTRY

Monetary donations are needed to buy the items that are needed. We have 9 families which includes 37 people. It takes approximately \$300-\$400 per month to feed these families. Your donations will be greatly appreciated.

"In our recent Sunday sermons, as we contemplate the essence of God and its significance in our lives, the words of Walter Brueggemann resonate deeply:

'The great problem in our faith is not whether God is alive and well, but whether we are available to the real God rather than the God we imagine.'

These profound words challenge us to forge a more profound connection with the divine, moving beyond our preconceived notions. It is often said that humanity, created in God's image, hastily fashions a safe god in our own image.

Preparing for Billy Stafford's homily and celebration of life service has compelled me to reflect on our perception of God. Billy lived life to the fullest. He did not half-do anything, embracing the old adage of going big or going home. Contemplating his life prompts me to question whether, as God's children, we have held a significant enough view of God. Do we approach God with the same boldness that characterized Billy's approach to everything, or do we see God merely as another tool in our religious toolkit, accessed only in times of need?

Let's aspire to reimagine God, allowing Billy's vibrant life and Brueggemann's sincere words to lead us to perceive God not merely as a resource but as our all in all – the One in whom we live, breathe, and discover the freedom to live with boldness and grace."

Pastor Dwayne