

CALENDER OF EVENTS

Wednesday, May 8

12:00 Noon Bible Study/Johnathan Bryson  
 Chapel Class/Bring a bag lunch if you so desire  
 5:15 pm Family First Feast

Menu: Hot Chicken Salad Casserole/Green Beans/Sweet Potato Casserole/  
 Rolls/Dessert Drinks

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, May 12 – Mother’s Day

9:45 am Baptism Class with Pastor Dwayne/Parlor

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship

5:00 pm The Chosen – Season 4

Wednesday, May 15

12:00 Noon Bible Study in the Chapel/Johnathan Bryson

5:15 pm Family First Feast

Menu: Hamburgers/Trimmings/Slaw/Chips/Dessert/Drinks

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, May 19

9:45 am Baptism Class with Pastor Dwayne/Parlor

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship

5:00 pm The Chosen – Season 4



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# The Builder

First Baptist Church of Gastonia

Volume XIII Number 19

Week of May 12, 2024

## Join Us for a Special Mother’s Day Event with Makaila Freeman Hopper



We warmly invite you to hear Makaila Hopper share her touching life journey. Makaila will open up about her personal experiences, including the challenges she's faced, and will connect these stories to biblical principles related to fostering and adoption.

**Date: Sunday, May 12**

**Time: 11:00 AM**

**Location:**

**First Baptist Church, Gastonia**

Don't miss this opportunity to invite others to gain insights and encouragement in the areas of fostering, adoption, and loving our neighbors as Christ loves.

### Worship Greeters

May: Art Queen, Ann Siva

Welcome

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May 12 – 22

19 – Scott Irvin

20 – Shawn Desmond

22 – Martha Jean Stegall

### WEDNESDAY NOON BIBLE STUDY

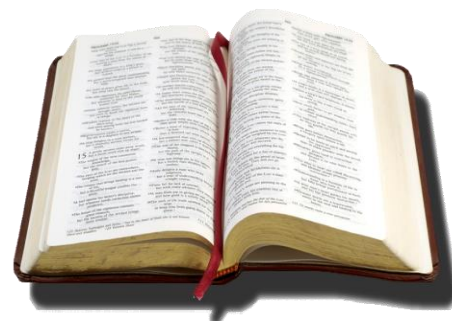
May: Kindness

May 8: Isaiah 54:8

May 15: Jeremiah 31:3

May 22: Romans 2:4

May 29: Ephesians 4:32



COMING SOON

A STUDY OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

- SUMMER 2024 -



First Baptist Church, Gastonia North Carolina

First Baptist Church 704-865-8576

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

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## MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's Day is a wonderful time for most families as we celebrate the wonder that is our mothers. Yet, for many this holiday can be challenging. I think of several Biblical characters as well as contemporary illustrations of those challenges that can get swept aside in the rush of Mother's Day activities.

There is the older testament woman named Hannah who longed for a child yet remained barren. Can you imagine the social and cultural pressures on Mary, the mother of our lord? The culture of her day viewed Mary's pregnancy as scandalous, conceived out of wedlock and rushed to marry. Then, after a lifetime of side-eyed whispers her son died the violent, public death of a criminal. From that moment she was a bereaved mother, for few believed the story of Christ's resurrection to be anything more than another piece of fake news in the life of her illegitimate son.

In today's world there are barren women, whether by choice or for medical reasons who are continually asked the well-intended, but, misdirected question, "When are you going to have a baby, Dearie?"

There are mothers whose children are away, serving in the military or separated from mom by misunderstandings and estrangement.

The list goes on and on.

As we gather to celebrate this special day may we remember those for whom Mother's Day can be bittersweet.

KeEp DaNciN'  
Pastor Dwayne



## What is Baptism?

Over these three sessions, we hope to explore the what, why, and how of baptism in the Baptist tradition.

Baptism is a person's public proclamation of their identity as a Christ follower. In some respects, it is like a wedding. When two people love one another and want everyone to know this they publicly declare their love by being married.

John the Baptist, and other biblical characters like Lydia, the Ethiopian eunuch, and the Philippian jailer provided examples of baptism for us. Their stories may be read in Mark 1:1-11, Acts 8:26-40, Acts 16:25-34, Acts 16:14-15, Acts 9:10-19.

Recently, someone asked me, "What exactly are you talking about when you say 'Christ follower'?" This is a great question! After all, getting baptized means identifying as a Christ follower, so it might be important to define just what a Christ follower is.

Consider the story of Saul of Tarsus, set shortly after his baptism, as described in Acts 9:20-22. Clear points about baptism emerge from this commentary on post-baptismal life:

In verse 20, it is clear that Saul believes Christ to be the Son of God.

20 and immediately he (Saul) began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

Verse 21 reminds us what a transition this was for Saul. Prior to his conversion and baptism he had persecuted and even martyred those who claimed that Jesus was God. Saul's original religious position was that to claim Christ was god was blasphemous.

21 All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name?"

But once Saul had an encounter with God and surrendered to the truth, he became perhaps the most influential proclaimer and follower of Christ ever. Saul went on to pen over half of the Bible's New Testament.



## What is Baptism All About?

Join Pastor Dwayne in the parlor on May 12, 19, and 26 at 9:45 to learn more about baptism.

Open to All Ages

Open to anyone - even if you've already been baptized and just want to learn more.

Some questions we plan to discuss.

- Why was Jesus Baptized?
- What does baptism do for me?
- What if I never get baptized?
- Why do some churches immerse and others sprinkle the baptismal water?

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(continued from page 2, column 2)

Saul's conversion and baptism were the launching points for a new life - a life wherein he would no longer lean on his own version of truth but would accept Christ as LORD. We see this in verse 22, where he became known for proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah.

22 Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

When you decide to be baptized, you are publicly proclaiming that even your best behavior, wisest knowledge, or most extreme intellect are not where your hope is found. Rather, your hope is found in Christ, the Son of the Living God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

So, now that we have considered what baptism is, our next lesson will uncover why and how we baptize.

## CHILDREN'S VERSION

### What is Baptism?

Okay, so imagine you're at a big gathering, and you want everyone to know that you really, really love Jesus and want to be like him. That's what baptism is! It's like saying to everyone, "Hey, I'm a friend of Jesus, and I want to live my life following his teachings."

Lots of characters from the Bible were baptized after they learned the truth about Jesus. John was even baptized by Jesus himself. He became known to Bible readers as John the Baptizer because he also baptized others in the name of Jesus.

Now, let's talk about what it means to be a "Christ follower." In the first century there was this guy named Saul, and he used to not like Jesus at all. He even did mean things to people because they followed Jesus. But one day, Saul met Jesus in a big way, and his whole life changed. He started telling everyone that Jesus was the Son of God! Saul even wrote large portions of the Bible we study in church each week.

So, when we get baptized, it's like saying, "I'm with Jesus! My hope and trust are in him, not just in what I can do or know."