



**1 VIRGINIA STREET
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201**

THE FIRST WORD

March 2021

First Baptist Family,

Lent has officially begun. It started with our Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 17 and will continue through Holy Week until we reach Easter on Sunday, April 4. Lent is a period of forty days, excluding Sundays, that calls us to be more intentional about our relationship with Christ. We can do that by praying more frequently, engaging in self-examination, repenting, and practicing self-denial. If you're like me, though, you've probably already been doing that. COVID has caused me to do all of those things with a greater frequency than ever before. In fact, it feels as though we've been in a Lenten-type season full of self-denial since last March. It seems as though Lent never left.

Out of curiosity, I looked back at my First Word article for our March 2020 edition. In it, I mentioned all sorts of events that we had planned for that month, many of which had to be cancelled. Last year we sponsored a Community Poverty Simulation along with United Way, the YWCA, Bristol's Promise, and Family Promise of Bristol. We were able to have that event, but the King University lecture we were supposed to host, the one with the Holocaust Survivor, had to be cancelled. The Family Fun Night that Ben planned for the end of March had to be cancelled, too. March 1, 2020 was the last time we had a monthly Family Breakfast. Since last March we've alternated meeting in person for worship and having online-only worship services. We started live-streaming our services. Wednesday Night Bible Study and Sunday School moved to Zoom. We've all gotten accustomed to wearing masks everywhere we go and dousing ourselves with hand sanitizer.

The world has changed a lot in the last year. Our plans have changed. Our thoughts and ideas on what it means to "go to church" have changed. But God hasn't changed. God's love for God's children hasn't changed. Our call to be redemptive agents for God's Kingdom,

our call to be Christ's hands and Christ's feet, those things haven't changed. The last year has been hard for everyone. And I know that the idea of entering another Lenten season when it feels like we never left the last one can be overwhelming. We all keep waiting, keep hoping for Resurrection. So, during Lent 2021, I want to encourage you. I want to encourage you to continue to draw closer to God, to continue to lean on God. I want to encourage you to continue to pray, to continue to engage in self-reflection, and to continue to remove the barriers that stand in your way to a closer relationship with God. Because if Lent teaches us anything, it teaches us that Resurrection is coming. And Resurrection is still coming, my dear brothers and sisters. So, journey on. Hope on. Resurrection will be here soon enough.

Even during times of pandemic and physical distancing, it remains a joy to be your pastor.

Grace and Peace,
Kris



Maundy Thursday

On Thursday, April 1st, you are invited to come into our sanctuary any time between 6:00-7:00 p.m., to receive silent communion. Many people come and sit for a few moments in silence before coming to the table to receive the bread and cup.



Friday, April 2, 2021. 6-7 p.m.

Flowering of the Cross . .

Please join us for our annual Flowering of the Cross on Easter Sunday, April 4. The cross will be located on the front steps of the church. Please bring some of your favorite spring flowers from your garden to decorate the cross which symbolizes Jesus' resurrection. Pictures will be taken during the Sunday School hour. If you forget your flowers, the church will have some available for your family.



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If you would like to place an Easter Hydrangea in the sanctuary during the Easter season, please fill in the information below and return it to the church office. By March 26th. The Cost is \$15.

In memory of:

In honor of:

Given by:



The Soup delivery ministry has been discontinued. A new system of delivering food is now operating. The United Company is providing bags of food. FBC is scheduled to help assemble the bags on the third Thursday of each month starting in March. Louise Crusenberry is in charge of signing up volunteers. Please contact her at (336-755-1921) if you are interested.

Little things mean a lot,

Please do not throw away greeting cards or SS literature. St Jude's is accepting all cards except Hallmark or American Greetings. They only use the front of the card. Cut off the back and don't send any that have a personal greeting. These may be placed in a bin in the copier room.

We no longer have someone collecting SS Literature. Please recycle that instead of putting it in the trash.

Add several items to your grocery list and bring them to the Blessing Box. Even though many FBC members, community folks, and organizations are regularly donating, it is very difficult to keep it stocked.

Beverly Bowers

For the Record Year to Date, February 21 , 2021

Weekly Budget Needs	\$8,705.00
Giving This Month.....	\$21,510.00
Giving This Month Last Year	\$32,645.00
Budget Needs to Date	\$69,694.00
Giving to Date.....	\$54,167.00
Giving to Date Last Year	\$83,483.00
Giving to Date vs. Budget Needs to Date	(\$15,887.00)
General Operating Fund.....	\$154,749.00



FBC Youth Ministry Opening Up with Safety Standards in Place!

Youth Camp "University" 2021 Maryville College, Maryville TN July 27-31

Dates are July 27-31! Registration is open now! Cost is \$100 to register (refundable) and \$100 due the week of camp. We are having fundraising opportunities between now and camp that can offset your total cost. We will be observing safe practices during camp to keep our folks safe from Covid risks. Fill out our FBC registration form and medical release to save your spot for "University" 2021!



Notes From Leigh

I would like to express my deepest thanks to the church for allowing me the opportunity to preach for the Baptist Women in Ministry emphasis. It was a wonderful experience.

During my sermon I challenged us all to do three things:

1) Look at our lives and determine if there are "things" that we need to let go of so that we can trust God more.

2) Develop our community— personally and as a congregation

3) Want more of God's Spirit so that others will see God at work in us.

Earlier this week I listened to a podcast on Lent. It was very interesting, and I learned a lot. The guest on the show kept referring to Resurrection Sunday. The host asked why she didn't just call it Easter. Her response was, "Easter seems like a holiday. Resurrection Sunday reminds me that Christ died and rose again and loves today. And, because of His sacrifice, I too, can have eternal life."

I hope that during the season of Lent, you will make time to reflect and receive God's direction through the Holy Spirit and to prepare your heart for Resurrection Sunday!!

Blessings,
Leigh

Youth Mission 2021

We have already begun working on local mission projects. We are scheduling work on Sunday afternoons when weather permits to provide handicap ramps and assistance with local needs and requests. We are working on a Mission 2021 Trip and having to be flexible with our plans. Look for more information coming as the Mission Trip comes together.

Getting Together

Youth Wednesdays and Sunday Events!
Our youth are invited to Wednesday evening Bible study and games starting back March 3rd from 6:00-7:30 p.m. We are working within the latest Covid safety guidelines and spending quality time together!!! On Sunday afternoons we are either working on a local mission project or having a group building activity. Look for details in our weekly emails!!! See you soon!!!

2021 FBC Lent Schedule

1st Sunday of Lent Sunday, February 21	"In and Out of the Desert" Mark 1:9-5
2nd Sunday of Lent Sunday, February 28	"Bumper Sticker & Billboard Theology" Mark 8:31-38
3rd Sunday of Lent Sunday, March 7	"The Stumbling Block to Self-Preservation" 1 Corinthians 1:18-25
4th Sunday of Lent Sunday, March 14	"The Danger of Handling Snakes" Numbers 21:4-9
5th Sunday of Lent Sunday, March 21	"The Living Dead" John 12:20-33
Palm Sunday Sunday, March 28	"Transportation Worthy of a King" John 12:12-16
Maundy Thursday Thursday, April 1	Drop-In Communion Service 6:00-7:00 p.m.
Good Friday Friday, April 2	Tenebrae Service 6:00-7:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday Sunday, April 4	Ecumenical Sunrise Service— East Hill Cemetery at 7:00 a.m. Worship Service 11:00 a.m. "Salvific Silence & the Gospel Shout" Mark 16: 1-8

First Baptist Church of Bristol Staff

Dr. Kris Aaron.....Senior Pastor
Rev. Ben Ondrak.....Associate Pastor
Rev. Leigh Clark.....Minister of Music
Mrs. Jackie Burnette.....Pianist
Mr. Rob Griswell-Lowry.....Organist

Ms. Kaitlyn Courtney Sexton
Mr. Dennis Thomas Sexton
Ms. Kaitlyn CourtneySexton
Mrs. Marcine Robinette.....Parish Nurse
Ms. Terri Thomas Church Administrator
and Financial Secretary
Ms. Niki Judy Administrative Assistant



Contact Information:
Church Phone: (276)669-8191
Fax: (276)669-5082
Hours: info@fbcbristol.org
Website: www.fbcbristol.org



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

1 Virginia Street
P.O. Box 116
Bristol, VA 24203

FBC Minister On-Call Schedule

March 6-7: Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
March 13-14: Rev. Ben Ondrak (423) 217-8934
March 20-21: Dr. Kris Aaron (803) 225-0795
March 27-28: Rev. Ben Ondrak (423) 217-8934

Deacon of the Week for March:

March 7, 2021	Mark Fuller
March 14, 2021	Steve Talbert
March 21, 2021	Tom Makres
March 28, 2021	Nelson Gwaltney