

# Highlights

January-February 2018



## ***'Tis the Season for Epiphanies***

The liturgical season of Epiphany rarely gets its due because it has the unfortunate job of following Christmas and preceding Lent. But every year, after Christmas celebrations have ended, and our unadorned Fraser firs lie waiting on the curb for pick-up, the season of Epiphany goes about its work in the dusky days of

January and February, shooting off fireworks all around us that we often don't notice.

Epiphany comes from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, which means “appearance” or “manifestation.” In our tradition, it commemorates the appearance of the star to the Magi, as well as God's manifestation to the Gentiles. More broadly, the season of Epiphany teaches us to recognize the many ways God has begun lighting up the world in the person and work of Jesus Christ. While Epiphany begins with a pinpoint of starlight in the night sky, it concludes with Transfiguration Sunday, when Jesus' face shines so brilliantly and mysteriously that the disciples are left dumbfounded.

We learn in this liturgical chapter of the year that the light of Christ has begun to vanquish the darkness with a dazzling array of divine disclosures. If we know how and where to look, we can see epiphanies happening all around us—a biblical text shines on a truth we'd never noticed; a spark of insight excites us at our desk or in our workshop; a message in a dream awakens us to previously unimaginable possibilities; a surprising turn of events brings new life to a struggling relationship; or a simple story told around the dinner table rekindles our imagination.

For us, this particular season of Epiphany holds the potential for just such a host of brilliant revelations. Beginning on Sunday, January 21, we will hold the first of several congregational conversations for the purpose of dreaming new dreams about our church's mission and future. By faith I can say with great confidence that epiphanies will abound for us, but we'll all need each other's help to discern them.

On the opposite page, you'll find an invitation from our Chair of Deacons, Steve Miller, as well as a schedule of opportunities for you to come and share your stories and dreams. Through this congregational method of storytelling and dreaming together, it's our hope that we will not only realize what unique calling our church has to perceive, but also what new directions our specific gifts can enable and empower us to go.

So, I invite each and every one of you to consider the prompting questions on the following page. Pray through them. Take notes about your thoughts. And then come and share your story on a Sunday morning or Wednesday evening.

There are seven available times. You will only need to plan on attending one. We've spread these opportunities over several weeks, including snow dates if needed. It's our aim to hear from everyone—children and elders, singles and couples, 20-somethings and 90-somethings, members and devoted non-members. Yes, everyone should come who cares about First Baptist Church of Asheville and hopes to see our congregation continue to thrive for the next generation.

When the Magi first see the star, they begin their journey to Bethlehem to “pay homage” to “the child who has been born king of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2). But they do not respond to this epiphany empty-handed. As we know so well, they bring precious gifts of “gold, frankincense, and myrrh”—gifts only befitting a king.

May we respond likewise to this star at its rising, bringing our precious gifts of faith, hope, and love, for the sake of a new vision for our congregation, for the upbuilding of our church, and for the sheer joy of recognizing the marvelous works of God in our midst.

— Mack Dennis

### ***Becoming a Parable Church***

The title of our vision campaign will be “Becoming a Parable Church.” Why? Because just as parables provide captivating glimpses of who God is and what God is like, so does First Baptist Church of Asheville when we're at our best. We believe our church—like Jesus' parables—has extraordinary and surprising gifts to share with the world. We also believe parable themes will keep us focused on Scripture as we ask God's Spirit to guide us.

Yet, Jesus' parables are given not only to be read, but to be lived. That's the purpose of this vision campaign. So, we invite you to wonder how our church can build on the extraordinary gifts God has given us. How can we, through our mission and ministries, show the world glimpses of God's kingdom that are at once both surprising and revelatory?

Our ultimate hope is for First Baptist Church of Asheville to be like a living parable, giving the world glimpses of who God is and what God is like by the way we live our faith. Come and join us on this new adventure!

## Becoming a Parable Church

In January, the deacons will launch a congregation-wide initiative to discern what God has in mind for the future of our church and to identify and implement ministries, programs, and activities consistent with God's leading. We will follow a strengths-based approach developed by the Indianapolis Center for Congregations and used in their work with more than 4,000 churches. The question we are seeking to answer is: "What is it that God has uniquely gifted First Baptist Asheville to do at this particular time in the history of our church, faith, and community?"

The need for the Christian church to respond to the divisiveness so disturbingly evident in our culture with concrete expressions of the love of Christ for all people has never been greater. I am challenging us to build on the blessings God has already bestowed upon our church including a forward thinking and challenging young pastor, a highly capable staff, a strong and caring congregation, active programs and missions, a strategic location, and a landmark building and campus to meet that need in our community and beyond.

Please add your voice to the process by participating in one of the planning sessions. You will have the chance to tell your personal story about what First Baptist Church of Asheville means to you and to help us envision the future God is calling us to create. Our future won't be all it can be without you!

— Stephen P. Miller, Deacon Chair

### Join in the Conversation

Our visioning work in *Becoming a Parable Church* demands as many stories as we can collect. Wisdom about God's dream for First Baptist Church of Asheville will come through the voice of each person who shares his/her best experiences and deepest hopes. Search for a time below in which you can join **ONE** of these conversations. While signing up for a particular time will help us plan for food and facilitators, all sessions are open to everyone. Come and tell your story!

You may sign up in Bible study, by calling the church office, online at [www.fbca.net](http://www.fbca.net), or in the Atrium December 31-January 21.

#### **Sunday Mornings, January 21, 28, and February 4 • Dining Room**

Lite Breakfast 9:30 a.m. • Conversation 9:45-10:45 a.m.

#### **Sunday Lunch, January 21 • Dining Room**

Lunch at noon • Conversation to follow

#### **Wednesdays Evenings, January 17, 24, 31 • MB303**

Conversation 6:00-7:00 p.m.



### Suggested Sunday Morning Dates

#### for Bible Study Classes to Help with Crowd Management

Consider attending with your Bible study class on this date below. If you are absent that day, choose another Sunday.

**January 21 - All Classes on First Floor, Single Connection, Joy Class, Agape Class**

**January 28 - Young Adult Classes in Sherman Center, Classes in MB302-MB307**

**February 4 - Stephen, Mark, New Testament, Journey, Life Class, Loyalty Class, Youth**

**Prepare Now:** Ready your heart for this conversation about our church's journey with God by giving some thought to the following prompts that will guide our discussion in these sessions:

***Tell about a time when you felt most alive, most fulfilled, or most enthused about our congregation. Share the story of this best moment. What were you doing? Who was with you? What feeling did you have? What happened as a result?***

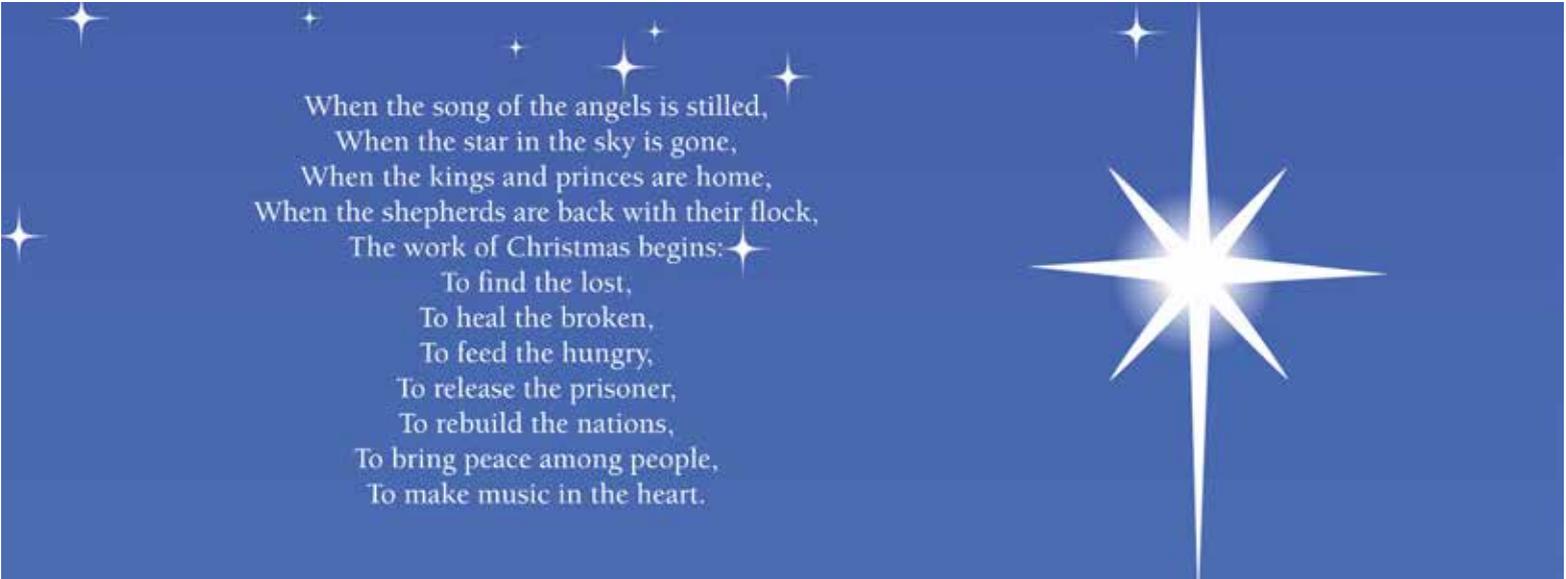
***Imagine that it is five years from now. Our congregation is living God's call in fresh, vibrant, and powerful ways. What are one or two things you see happening? Who is involved? What good is happening as a result? What value is being expressed?***

# The Liturgical Year

## Epiphany: January 6-February 13

In the seasons of Advent and Christmas, we celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world, Emmanuel, God with us. It is a time filled with hope, peace, joy, and love. Now, we enter into an often neglected season of the liturgical year – *Epiphany*. The word *epiphany* means “to shine upon,” “to reveal,” “to appear,” or “to make manifest.” During the season of Epiphany, the church celebrates God’s dream for the world revealed in Jesus, and how we can participate in that dream to share the love and grace of God, fully living the life God has called us to live.

This poem written by Howard Thurman that reminds us that Christmas is not the end of the story but is just the beginning.



When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
    To find the lost,  
    To heal the broken,  
    To feed the hungry,  
    To release the prisoner,  
    To rebuild the nations,  
    To bring peace among people,  
    To make music in the heart.

## Lent Begins with Ash Wednesday • February 14



Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, which means “spring.” The forty days represent the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting, and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others.

Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a “mini-Easter” and the reverent spirit of Lent is empered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.

# SUNDAYS

at **First Baptist**

## Why Bible Study?

- As followers of Christ, we need one another to help us grow in faith.
- In the context of life-giving community, we share and learn from each person's unique experiences with and understandings of God, as we explore scripture and our lives.
- We develop authentic friendships in which people care for one another, rejoicing when one rejoices, and weeping when another weeps.
- Life-giving community is where the church begins to share its mission of hope, expressing the love and grace of God made known to us in Jesus.
- Bible study connects us to worship; worship connects us to Bible study. We need both.

### Bible Study Communities for All Ages

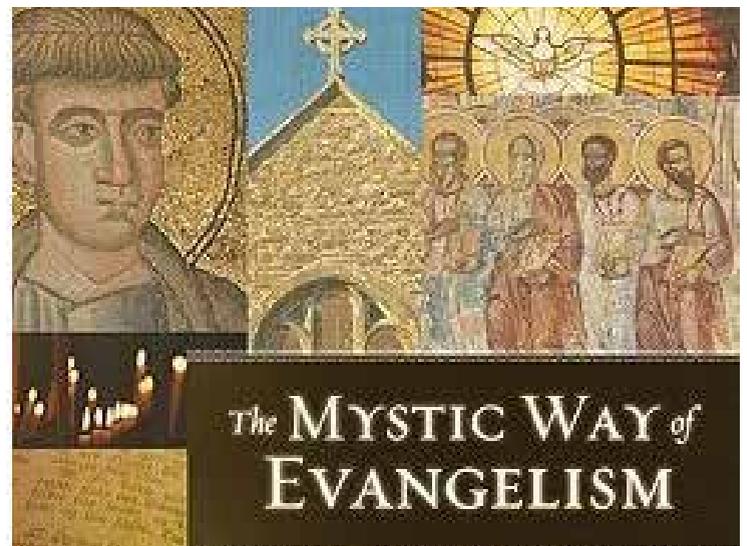
- 9:25 a.m. - Senior Adult Assembly  
Eisenhower Hall (MB119)
- 9:35 a.m. - Kids Connect for grades 1-5  
Children's Library (CB310)
- 9:45 a.m. - Bible Study for all ages

# DISCIPLE

## BECOMING DISCIPLES THROUGH BIBLE STUDY

**Begins Sunday, January 7**  
**8:00 – 10:30 a.m. • MB356**  
**Debbie Miller, facilitator**

Disciple is a small group, in-depth, high commitment Bible study that aims at transformation, not just information. This group will commit to a 17-week study of the Old Testament, exploring its themes together in a covenant group. This study will continue in the fall of 2018 with the New Testament. **Must register by January 4** by calling Debbie Miller at 274.9553 or Tommy Bratton at 252.4781. Space is limited.



**Tuesdays, February 6 – March 20**  
**9:30 - 11:00 a.m. - MB303**  
**Facilitated by Tommy Bratton**

This study brings a fresh perspective to the theory and practice of evangelism by approaching it through contemplative spirituality. By looking to mystics, saints, and martyrs of church history — such as Ignatius of Loyola, Julian of Norwich, St. Francis, John Wesley, Mother Theresa, and Henri Nouwen — we can discover ways of thinking about God that result in a life of outreach.

# Wednesdays

FELLOWSHIP AND FORMATION

Please join us each Wednesday evening as we gather to share a meal and fellowship around tables, followed by Bible study and activities for all ages.

## Weekly Schedule (beginning January 3)

- 5:00 p.m. Fellowship Meal in the Dining Room**  
Cost: \$3/children, \$7/adults, \$6/senior adults, \$20 family max.
- 6:00 p.m. Preschool/Children: Agapekids**  
**Youth: Agape**  
**Adults: Chapel Vespers and small groups**

Childcare provided for children under three.



## Epiphany Celebration: *Arise, Shine, for Your Light Has Come!* Wednesday, January 3 • 6:00 p.m. • Chapel

Join us as we gather together and welcome the season of Epiphany. This contemplative service of candles, prayer, singing, and reflection will challenge us to open our eyes to the presence of God within and among us. To live as Children of Light is to let the light of Christ shine through us in love and grace and peace and to recognize the image of God in each person we meet.

*There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun. It was as if I suddenly saw the secret beauty of their hearts, the depths of their hearts where neither sin nor desire nor self-knowledge can reach, the core of their reality, the person that each one is in God's eyes. If only they could all see themselves as they really are. If only we could see each other that way all the time. There would be no more war, no more hatred, no more cruelty, no more greed.*

(Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*)

## Chapel Bible Study • *Jonah: Reluctant Prophet, Merciful God* January 10 – January 31 • 6:00 p.m. • Led by Tommy Bratton

This Bible study will revisit the classic tale of “Jonah and the Whale” and discover rich and complex story that proves far more interesting than we might suspect. Along with the prophet, we find ourselves asking, *How will I respond when I discover that God loves the people I love to hate?* Bring your Bible and get ready to discover God's unfailing love and mercy for both the worst of sinners and the most reluctant of prophets.

## *Deeper Knowledge of Ourselves, Compassion for Others, and Love for God* Enneagram: *The Road Back to You*

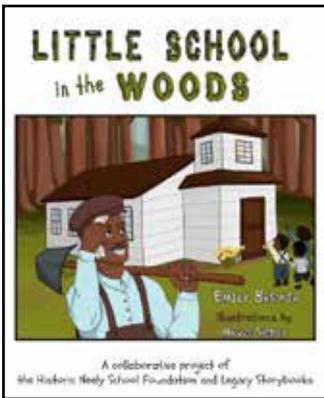
January 10 – 31 • 6:00 p.m. • MB304 • Facilitated by Laura Addis

Ignorance is bliss—except in self-awareness. What you don't know about yourself can hurt you and your relationships—and even keep you in the shallows with God. Do you want help figuring out who you are and why you're stuck in the same ruts? The Enneagram is an ancient personality type system with an uncanny accuracy in describing how human beings are wired, both positively and negatively. We will explore its connections with Christian spirituality for a deeper knowledge of ourselves, compassion for others, and love for God. Contact April Nance at 252.4781 or [anance@fbca.net](mailto:anance@fbca.net) to register.

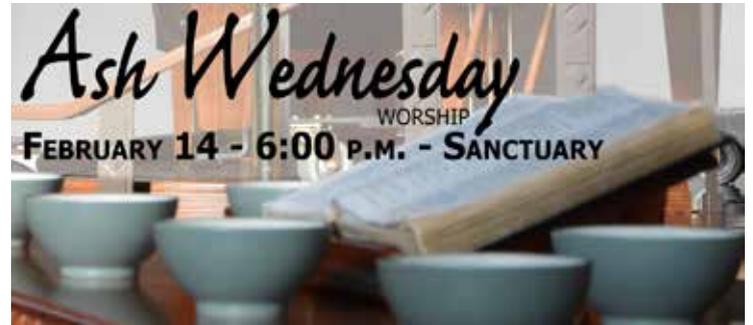
## ***Little School in the Woods***

**Wednesday, February 7 • 6:00 p.m. • Chapel**

**Special Guest: Dr. Emily Brewer**



*Little School In The Woods* tells the true and inspiring story of a father's love and determination, and of the restored one-room Neely School in China Grove that is teaching a new generation about the educational struggles of the early Jim Crow era in North Carolina.



The Lenten season begins with the ancient practice of the imposition of ashes within this service of spiritual discipline. The church will gather in the Sanctuary to be reminded of our mortality and our need for God's grace.

## **Celtic Evening Liturgies**

**Wednesdays, February 21 – March 21 • 6:00 p.m. • Chapel**

You are invited to this contemplative evening worship experience, with prayers and liturgy informed by the Celtic tradition. This service invites you to enter into a place of rest, prayer, and reflection. The atmosphere is one of stillness and peace. Musically, you will hear expressions from Celtic and other local traditions. Silence has a place of importance at various intervals as well. Visually you can expect to see a darkened space with many lighted candles. Each week, there will be a homily around the faithful practices of discipleship. Often, you will hear testimony from one of our church members.

The Celtic Evening Liturgy is a wonderful opportunity to invite a friend, family member, or acquaintance to join you. This service is intended to be inclusive and welcoming of all people. We invite you to this experience, hoping it will allow you a deeper place of spiritual attentiveness, a place where you experience God in your midst.

## **Hospitality Greeter Team**

Hospitality is a celebrated Christian virtue. The first impression most people have of our church family, and maybe of the Christian faith itself, is formed by how they are cared for and welcomed by those they meet.

Faithful volunteers are always needed to be a welcoming presence as people enter the church on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in being a greeter on Sunday morning, please contact Tommy Bratton at [tbratton@fbca.net](mailto:tbratton@fbca.net) or 252.4781.



## **Affinity Groups and Recreation**

- Christian Crafters • Tuesdays • 1:30 p.m. • CB222
- Yoga • Tuesdays • 6:00 p.m. • MB423
- Zumba • Tuesdays & Thursdays • 6:00 p.m. • Gym
- Men's Bible Study – Thursdays • 7:45 a.m. • City Bakery on Charlotte Street.
- Girls' Night Out – Occasional gatherings for young adult women for food and conversation.

If you are interested in one of these groups or in beginning a group based on a common interest, contact Tommy Bratton at [tbratton@fbca.net](mailto:tbratton@fbca.net) or 252.4781.

## Praying with Friends on Mission

Across January and February, First Baptist Church of Asheville members and friends will serve locally and internationally. Those going welcome your prayers as they offer God's love through their relationships and actions. Keep these efforts near your heart as you move through the coming days and weeks. Use the FACTS and the PRAYERS to go on mission with them. Watch for new opportunities to SERVE and PRAY in upcoming issues of *Highlights*.

### Disaster Relief • January 10-14

Last Thanksgiving, we were driving with our grandchildren and asked them how they were thankful. Our granddaughter said family and friends and other usual things we all say. Our grandson said: "Thank you for poor people." "What, wait, why?" we said. "Because they need our help."

We had just passed a homeless person asking for money. In his four-year-old mind, emotions and actions run pretty close together. He looked out the window, saw a person in need, and wanted to help. I guess he thought, "Thank you for showing me a person that I can help." For him, being thankful and being helpful are the same thing.

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#### **Prayer for Disaster Relief**

*Pray with Jim Worley . . . Most of the time, my Adult prayers are filled with more words than wisdom. So maybe the best prayer for our Disaster Relief Ministry at FBCA would be the genuine prayer of a child and simply say: Thank you for showing us people to help, Amen.*

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Each year our country experiences many kinds of disasters. It seems strange to be thankful for those disasters, but I think we can learn from a four-year-old child and realize that we have an opportunity to be helpful. We certainly aren't happy our neighbors are hurting, but, by being helpful to our neighbors we are being thankful to God.

In January, a group of us are going to Lumberton to repair homes damaged in 2015 by Hurricane Matthew. Disasters get overshadowed by newer disasters, but our neighbors still need our help.

— Jim Worley



### Mission to Cuba • January 25-29

On January 25-29, six members of First Baptist Church will be joined by two members of Hominy Baptist Church on our trip to Cuba. Part of our role in this trip is to help facilitate Hominy's own partnership with a Cuban Baptist congregation. For our

#### **Facts**

- FBCA began a partnership with Eloheim Baptist Church in 2014.
- Six teams from FBCA have made "pilgrimages" to Cuba, with the seventh planned for January, 2018.
- The water filtration system we installed at Eloheim Baptist Church is improving the health of children.
- Churches in Cuba often serve as the religious, social, and political hub of their community.
- The average Cuban citizen makes less than the equivalent of \$40 per month.
- Very few pastors in Cuba have cars for travel.

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#### **Prayer for Cuba Missions**

*Please pray with Cliff... Lord, we pray for our fellow Christians in Cuba, especially those in our partner church in Las Tunas. May you bless them in the daily hardships of life. As we pray for them, teach us also your ways in order that we might better embrace all people. Amen*

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sister congregation in Las Tunas, we will be participating in their yearly "Homecoming" worship. We will be sharing crafts from our children and bringing back some from theirs. There are needed items that we will take with us, such as a blood pressure cuff and a laptop computer. The pastor at Eloheim Baptist is taking seminary classes and needs the computer for her studies. We will also have discussions about future needs at the church and the process of transfer of ownership of the church property so that it is protected from government takeover.

## Mission to Haiti • February 3-10

There is a Medical team of doctors, dentists, dental assistants, pharmacists, nursing, and other medical support people going to Haiti February 3-10, 2018. They are meeting up with Jenny Jenkins, RN, who is a CBF Missionary living in Haiti. For several years, First Baptist Church of Asheville has been sending a medical team to work alongside Jenny in providing health services to areas in the mountainous regions where health access is difficult.

### Facts

- Eleven FBCA members are going to Haiti February 3-10.
- Providing free medical, dental, and eye care.
- Working alongside Jenny Jenkins with CBF Missionaries.



The team will be holding/caring for precious babies, treating medical conditions which are sometimes serious in nature, filling prescriptions for patients who could not otherwise afford medications, providing dental care/pulling teeth, praying with the patients, and performing basic eye exams /giving

out glasses to those in need. Jenny is also raising money to have a clinic built in the mountains which will make access so much easier for the Haitians and will also provide some temporary housing for medical teams.

### Prayer for Haiti Missions

*Please pray with Kara Kelley...Help us find the needed supplies for this medical trip. For our team's health and safety in our travels, and for all aspects of our paperwork and logistics to go smoothly. For the Haitian people to be able to receive the care they need, and to sense God's presence in their lives. And for Jenny Jenkins in Haiti – for her provision, and for the monetary support for the clinic to be built. Thank you for all of your prayers and support!*

## Room in the Inn • February 25-March 4

Homeward Bound's *Room in the Inn* program in Asheville has been providing shelter for 12 women at a time since 2001. FBCA, along with 60 other faith communities, take our turn twice yearly to provide a full week of daily meals, a safe place to sleep, and encouragement as the women actively participate in this special program. As the women wait for permanent housing facilitated by Homeward Bound, they keep busy each day working with case managers to learn what is required to successfully maintain permanent housing.



Dorothy and Bob Porter enjoyed encouraging these women last September during FBCA's week for Room in the Inn. "It was such a blessing to see the smiles on the ladies faces as they rode in the van, they expressed so much gratitude. It surely puts a different perspective in mind when we come home to our nice warm house each night and lay our heads down on our comfy pillows." We often think of homelessness as an issue too large and complex for any one person or faith community to tackle, but together, we can! Consider providing meals, driving the church van, offering encouragement or staying overnight with our Room in the Inn guests! To get involved please contact Dorothy Porter at dorothy.porter01@gmail.com or 778.2010.

### Facts

- Twenty percent of women cite some form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse as the reason for their becoming homeless.
- Women typically stay in the Room in the Inn program 7-9 months while working directly with a case manager.
- Room in the Inn maintains a 90% housing retention rate, a direct result of requiring women to work daily with case managers.
- In 2018 FBCA will provide Room in the Inn February 25-March 4 and October 7-14.
- More than 70 volunteers work together to provide one week of Room in the Inn at FBCA.

### Prayer for Room in the Inn

*Please pray with Dorothy Porter...Holy One, thank you for the daily comfort and safety you have provided to us in the gift of our homes. Help us to encourage these women that are homeless while they work hard in the Room in the Inn program. We ask that they may experience the blessing of coming to know of the many folks who do care for them, and wish to support them along their journeys toward ending their homelessness.*

## Meals on Wheels • February 24

Most of us do not think much about running down to the store or out to a local restaurant for a meal? It is just part of our routine. Meals on Wheels of Asheville recognizes this is not the case for many elderly and low-income seniors, They partner with churches like ours and other volunteers to prepare and deliver about 120,000 hot meals to 500 senior adults each year in Buncombe County and Asheville. FBCA has a long history of delivery on Saturdays, especially in the high-rise apartment complexes downtown, like Battery Park and Vanderbilt. Early risers prepare meals. Teams of families and friends of all ages deliver good cheer along with good meals. Carole and Joel Cotter recall, "Delivering Meals on Wheels was a little out of our comfort zone at first, but we decided to

### Facts

- Meals on Wheels in Buncombe County — 40 Years and Running
- \$1,800 Feeds a Senior for a Year
- FBCA — Delivering Saturday Meals Each Quarter
- Up to 40 Meals Delivered
- Weekly Volunteers Deliver 12-16 Meals Along 90-minute Routes

### Prayer for Room in the Inn

*Pray with Carole and Joel Cotter... Dear Lord, thank you for the blessing of time. Help us to use this gift outside of ourselves, and our own little worlds. Give us the patience to listen to the lonely, and the courage to be kind to the stranger. Help us to be generous with our time to help others. Amen.*

sign-up several years ago. We're usually more behind-the-scene types instead of knocking-on-the-door, right-up-front types. We have been so blessed by the folks we've met, the chats we've had, and the smiles that we've received through slightly opened doors. These deliveries don't take much time, but hopefully as we're feeding the body, we're also feeding the spirit. I know our spirits are well fed afterwards." This February, we are renewing our commitment to Meals on Wheels through a quarterly commitment to share those

Saturday meals. Ron and Laura Grover will lead us. We'll be looking for 12-13 teams to deliver three or so meals each beginning Saturday, February 24. Plan now to be a part of this gospel work of feeding the hungry.





## Explore Your Calling

Everyone makes resolutions at the beginning of each new year. Take some time to discover your calling to serve. During January and February, information booths in the church atrium will introduce you to five of the opportunities offered at First Baptist Church of Asheville. You will learn more and have the opportunity to sign on for an upcoming project.

**January 7** - Meals on Wheels

**January 14** - Creation Care

**January 21** - Room in the Inn

**January 28** - Disaster Relief & Home Repair

**February 4** - Ministry with Those in Prison

### Creation Care Team

*The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for God has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.* — Psalm 24:1-2

Living in Western North Carolina, we have bountiful opportunities to reflect on the majesty of God's creation. You may have experienced the wonder of creation during a silent morning hike, an exhilarating rafting trip down the French Broad, or perhaps just glimpsing the golden sun sink behind the mountains on your commute home from work.

Join us in honoring and preserving the earth that has been shared with us. The Creation Care Team of First Baptist Church of Asheville is actively making plans for fellowship and missions in 2018. There are ways to get involved within six categories: Energy Use; Educational Opportunities; Appreciation of Nature / Spiritual Nourishment; Sustainability; Legislative Concerns; and Protecting Resources. Whether you'd enjoy planting trees along the riverbank with friends, joining a film discussion, or saving electricity in our building, there is a way for you to plug in.

I am increasingly called to creation care as I see the world anew through our toddler's eyes. When Liam crawls through our yard and wonders at the birds, leaves, and bugs, we pause in awe at the beauty that surrounds us. I know we can preserve what is good — for us, for God, and for our children.

Contact Brenda Denton at [bbelle2001@gmail.com](mailto:bbelle2001@gmail.com) to learn more.

— *Marian Arledge, [MarianSadler@gmail.com](mailto:MarianSadler@gmail.com)*

### FBCA Prison Ministry Team

Did you know that the US has less than five percent of the world's population and almost 25 percent of the world's total prison population? As of December 9, 2017, the NC Department of Public Safety estimates 135,000 persons incarcerated, at a cost of nearly \$33,000 per year each, and those numbers do not include the 85,000 incarcerated juveniles, increasing year after year.

First Baptist Church of Asheville is looking to be counted among the sheep who responded to our Lord in prison by going to share the Good News. Our hope is to gather teams of humans that I like to refer to as "Love with Skin-On" to become involved. Some opportunities include "Open Mic Night" at Swannanoa Correctional Center for Women on February 4, where residents invite men and women of FBCA to know them better. Also, available are teams to carry worship, Bible study, 12-step meetings and Kairos. Corrinne asked Kitty, "Why do people [like you] come here to work with people like me?" Kelly writes, "When I shared my answer I was floored when Corrinne replied, 'I don't think you know how much it means that you, people like you, show up here and talk with us.' Thank you, First Baptist Church of Asheville, for welcoming me, a person in long sustained recovery, into your community of "called out ones" to lead this ministry.



Contact Charlyne Boyette at [charlyneboyette@gmail.com](mailto:charlyneboyette@gmail.com) or 828.450.2919 to get involved, either inside or outside of our local men's and women's gated communities.

**MANNA Foodbank • February 13 • 6:00-8:00 p.m.**

Join fellow FBCA church members to sort and pack food for families in our community who are facing food shortages. This is a great opportunity for families to volunteer with their kids!

Sign-up sheet is in the Atrium or call Sarah in the church office for more information.

**Senior Team Volunteers with MANNA Foodbank**

The Senior MANNA Team finished the 2017 year by preparing and boxing 2,058 cans of corn. Thank you to all seniors who have worked on this team.

The 2018 year begins Thursday, January 25, at 1:00 p.m. Those who enjoy the fellowship meet at J&S Cafeteria at 11:45 a.m..

Seniors, have you thought about joining this team? Contact Ed Graham at 628.5857 to learn more.



**Wednesday, February 21**  
**First Baptist Church of Asheville Gym**  
**8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

All presenting donors will receive a t-shirt and great food, courtesy of area restaurants.

Call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) to schedule your appointment.



**First Hands**  
**Saturday, April 21**

Set aside a morning for missions followed by lunch with friends.

**Watch for more details!**



Agapekids is a time for preschoolers and children to participate in missions, faith development, and worship. Childcare is provided for children under age 3.

This winter we will focus on our church, our Cuba partnership, and learning about Jesus. We will read Bible stories, have special guests, do projects, make crafts, and play games.

Contact Amy Stertz for more information.

In this season of Epiphany, as we think about how we can share God's light with the world, I can't help but think back to the night our children sorted food for White Christmas.

When we arrived the the Atrium, there was a giant pile of food. When we left less than an hour later, 2,256 jars, bottles, cans, and boxes of food had been sorted and organized, ready to be bagged up and delivered to 80 families in our community.

It's wonderful to tell children how we share God's light with the world. It's even better to allow them to be such an integral part of the work. — Amy Stertz

As we reflected on the night, here's what a few had to say:

- *White Christmas is important because it's giving people food to eat for Christmas.* — Sophie
- *We can do anything!* — Doug
- *[Children] should have a voice, not be random people on the sidelines.* — Lenore
- *I enjoyed seeing how we help others.* — Azaria



Two easy ways to keep up with what is happening in the Children's Ministry is through our weekly e-mail and our facebook group. To be added to the email distribution list, please contact April Nance, at [anance@fbca.net](mailto:anance@fbca.net). To join the facebook group, search for FBCA Children and request to be added to the group.



Summer Camp registration will be available for church members in February and for the general public in April.

**June 11 - 15**

**Advocacy Camp**

A week of Hands on Missions  
Rising 5th - 7th Graders  
As a pilot program, this camp will have extremely limited spots

**June 25-28**

**Vacation Bible School**

Four year olds to Rising 6th graders

**June 25-29**

**VBS Day Camp**

Rising 1st - 6th graders  
Cost for Day Camp: \$100 with \$25 deposit

**July 11-14**

**Passportkids! Camp - Converse College**

Rising 4th - 7th Graders  
Optional Day Camp at FBCA on July 10  
Cost: \$275 with \$75 deposit

**July 30 - Aug. 3**

**Discovery Day Camp**

Rising 1st - Rising 6th Graders  
Cost for Day Camp: \$125 with \$25 deposit



**FBCA YOUNG ADULT**  
BOSTON JULY 8-12, 2018

URBAN IMMERSION  
●●●●●●●●

### About the Young Adult Urban Immersion: Boston

There are three primary goals for this trip:

- to experience the local Boston culture and history through a theological lens
- to nurture deeper friendships in faith with young adults at FBCA
- to provide time and space to engage in significant conversations about life and faith as Christ-followers in the 21st century.

Each day of this immersion, we will set out to explore parts of Boston - the historical, the popular, and the spiritual. Along the way, we will find moments for theological reflection and devotion. Participants should expect to spend most days out and about in the city, with occasional times for leisure and rest.

### Urban Immersion Cost

The cost of \$125/person covers housing, transportation around Boston, a ticket to the Red Sox game, and all other group tours and admissions.

### Additional Costs: flight and food

There will be no arrangement for a group flight, so each participant must arrange his/her own flight to and from Boston. Daily breakfast and snacks will be included, but each participant is responsible for all other meals.

### Specifics

We will be staying at The Walker Center, an historic ecumenical retreat center about 10 miles outside the city. Most of our transportation will be by way of the public transit system. In addition to attending a Boston Red Sox game, we will visit: the First Baptist Church in America (Providence, RI), the first college in America (Harvard University), the first Christian Science Church in America, and many sites along the Freedom Trail.

### Registration

There are a limited number of spots for this trip. To register, an online form must be submitted, along with a \$50 non-refundable deposit.



Youth come celebrate the end of the year in the sand and the surf of Caswell Beach. We'll enjoy thoughtful discussions, group games and challenges, and evening parties, as well as group affirmations and senior rites of passage.

### Caswell Retreat Cost:

The cost is \$150/student when registered online by April 16. There is a \$15 cost reduction for each additional sibling.



Experience a truly unique camp set on the campus of the University of Tennessee. Choose from a list of creative electives and seminars, attend thought-provoking worship sessions, and enjoy free time and recreation on the campus. Prior to camp, our group will spend two challenging days doing roof repairs in Knoxville.

### Early Bird Camp Cost

The cost for those who register online by February 28 is \$340/student. The cost for students registering after February 28 is \$360/student.

### Deposit

\$100 due upon registration.

## Jubilee Luncheons • 11:00 a.m.

All senior adults are invited to join together on the third Tuesday of each month for fellowship, programs that inspire, entertain and inform, and a delicious meal. This meal is \$3 per person and free for our first-time guests. Contact Leah Brown at 252.4781 or lbrown@fbca.net for more information.

- **January 16** - Hymn Sing with Tate Addis, organist (Meet in the Sanctuary)
- **February 20** - No Jubilee Meeting this month. Please attend our Youth/Senior Adult/PrimeTime Valentine's Banquet
- **March 20** - Keep checking back . . . something new is coming your way!!!

## Stephen Ministry Corner

Stephen Ministers are trained laypeople who are eager to provide one-to-one confidential care for people in our congregation who are experiencing difficulties in their lives (i.e. death of a loved one, a chronic or terminal illness, separation/divorce, unemployment, birth/adoption/miscarriage/infertility, etc.) Please contact Leah Brown at 252.4781 for more information about how this ministry might assist you.

*Youth/Senior Adult/Prime Time  
Valentine's Banquet*

Make plans now to celebrate Valentine's Day at this annual intergenerational event! This reservation-only event includes great food and fellowship! The cost is \$10 per person and the deadline for reservations is Sunday, February 4. Please contact Leah Brown at 252.4781 or lbrown@fbca.net for more information.

Sunday, February 11  
Dining Room  
Noon





## Fifty-One Years of Dedicated Service

Oklahoman by birth, Texan by raising, North Carolinian by choice, Carole James has been a stalwart member of First Baptist Church of Asheville's choir ever since she and her late husband Roger, whom she met at First Baptist, Houston, moved to Asheville in 1966. Fifty-one years ago, Carl Perry was choir director, Dr. Sherman was pastor, and high standards were the rule for both music and preaching, which of course are intertwined in worship. Carole says the anthem is the "platter" the sermon is served upon.

The average layperson might imagine fifty-one years of choir practice, choir retreats, early services, and the like (amounting to thousands of hours) would not be a pleasant memory, but for Carole, all that time "brings wonderful memories." But she does recall, with an infectious laugh, waking way before a cold winter dawn to be at church for early worship and saying, "Charles Crocker, I do not rise up and call you blessed on this day."

When asked how the music program has changed since she's been a member, she is quick to say, "Thankfully, it hasn't. Clark Sorrells has followed the tradition of Charles Crocker and Carl Perry by continuing to provide the highest quality sacred music. This music lifts both the church and community up and brings us into God's presence—and isn't that what it's all about? To God be the glory." We are thankful for people who bring us the finest music week in and week out. And especially we thank Carole, retired from choir after fifty-one years of dedicated service.

— Wayne Caldwell

# Fellowship Minister's Retreat

Tuesday, January 30

First Baptist Church of Asheville Chapel

*(If Buncombe County schools are closed on January 30,  
the snow date will be Tuesday, February 6.)*

## Presenter:

Casey Callahan, DMin. in Celtic Spirituality in the Church,  
Minister with Students, First Baptist Church of Asheville



## Schedule:

8:00 Coffee

9:00 Plenary

*(Each plenary session will include worship elements, some teaching, group interaction, personal meditation. Bring your earmuffs and pray as you walk the lovely labyrinth or find another spot of quiet.)*

10:30 Break

11:00 Plenary

12:00 Lunch: Sandwich, soup, dessert, beverage

1:00 Plenary

2:30 Dismiss

**The cost is \$25. Visit [www.cbfnc.org](http://www.cbfnc.org) to register.**

## First Baptist Church of Asheville

Freedom. Friendship. Faith.

5 Oak Street, Asheville, NC 28801 • 828.252.4781 • [www.fbca.net](http://www.fbca.net)

Child Development Center: 828.252.3234 • Fax: 828.254.2302

**Sunday Worship:** 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary • 9:45 a.m. Bible Study for all ages

## Minister on Call

A minister is on call 24/7 to support you in times of need. To contact the minister on call, dial 828.252.4781.

The deacon of the week can be reached through the church office or by contacting the minister on call.