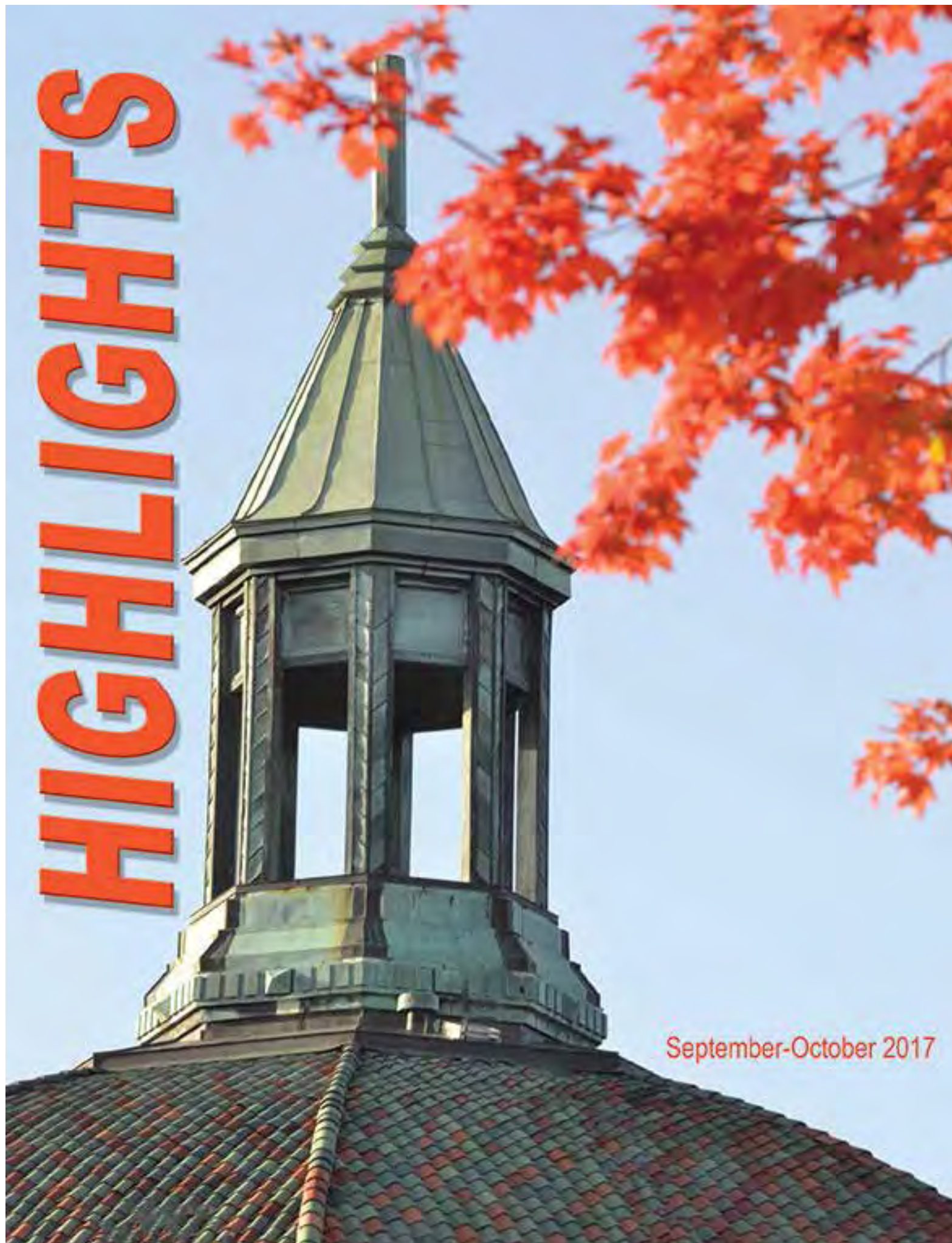


HIGHLIGHTS

September-October 2017





ABOVE AND BEYOND

“I am going to rain bread from heaven for you,” the LORD tells Moses, as the Israelites embark on their 40-year wilderness journey to the promised land (Exod. 16:4). As promised, the very next morning they woke up to “a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground.” They called it manna, and it would be their primary source of nutrition for decades to come.

It’s no wonder the Israelites regarded manna as a providential gift. In the arid regions of the world where it can be found, manna appears to spring up out of nowhere. There are dozens of varieties of manna, some of which you might even find on the menus of fine dining establishments. According to one New York Times food critic, a version of manna called hedysarum “resembles Grape-Nuts mixed with aquarium sand, and tastes like a combination of maple syrup, brown sugar, blackstrap molasses, honey and nuts.” Bon appétit!

Though we live in the temperate rainforest of Appalachia, far from desert climes, there are spiritual qualities intrinsic to manna that can teach us new things about God’s generous providence, and our own capacity for giving.

First, God’s gift of manna teaches us to look “above” to the source of our life together. “Every generous act of giving,” James says, “with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...” (James 1:17). What’s more, God “showers” us with gifts, just as God rained bread from heaven on the Israelites. Our sustenance is not self-generated. We do not create it. We gather it. God provides everything we need, freely, and even lavishly.

Second, though the bread of heaven comes freely and lavishly, it comes with an admonition: “Let no one leave any of it over until morning” (16:19). Manna doesn’t come with preservatives. It spoils quickly, so it must be shared, or it “breeds worms and becomes foul” (v. 20). In Luke, Jesus even warns a man against storing his bountiful harvest in bigger and bigger barns. “You fool!” Jesus says, lovingly (Luke 12:20). Faithful reception of God’s lavish gifts involves making sure everyone has enough. The extra we store up for ourselves is spoiled rotten.

. . . this “bread from heaven,” compels us to look above and beyond . . .

Third, God provides a double portion of manna on the day preceding the Sabbath, so that the Israelites could rest from their labors. This extra serving also enabled them to look “beyond” their immediate concerns, in order to participate in the vital rhythm of rest and recovery God built into the created order. They could cease “striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and...instead, strive for God’s kingdom” (Luke 12:29-31).

This manna, this “bread from heaven,” compels us to look above and beyond—above to God as the source of our abundance, and beyond ourselves to God’s dream for every creature and all of creation. A church with such a posture of generosity will stand out for its faithfulness.

In the pages that follow, you’ll see exemplars of this generous, above and beyond posture. Indeed, you’ll see just how surrounded we are by a great cloud of witnesses who’ve tasted and seen that the LORD is good (Psalm 34:8).

— Mack Dennis

Looking Above...

Through worship and prayer, study and vibrant Christian community, we turn our gaze upward to the Holy. We wake up to the ever-present generosity of God's love across the seasons of our lives. This experience of mercy shapes our giving and receiving, our serving and our caring. Listen to just a few of the stories from pilgrims across the generations of our congregation.



The front porch is where my mother, now at 92, thrives in the warm months. It's where she gathers and imparts gifts of affectionate conversation, encouragement, and discovery with friends and passers-by alike. The short, but ample and gusty, afternoon storms over Black Mountain this July sometimes rush the party indoors and blow her lightweight yard furniture across the street. One day a passing driver jumped out of his car at the storm's peak, retrieved the chairs, returned them to their places, waved, and went on his way. Ever since, my mom has regularly offered up her story of the man who, with no prompting, took on "the pouring rain" (the inevitable refrain in her telling) to do that service.

Sometimes I wonder if any driver would have noticed the displaced chairs on a good day, under clear skies. And I recall, with its dual implications of receiving and offering, the instruction in I Timothy 4:14, "do not neglect your gift...."

We've given, gathered, and shared so well through First Baptist Church during "pouring rains" like economic downturn, capital campaigns, and interim. The challenge before me is to honor my gifts with thanksgiving in these continuing seasons of clear skies, even after giving, to applause, in the rains.

— Paul Grass

I have always heard that sharing finances is one of the most difficult aspects of marriages. A part of handling finances is agreeing on how much to give. When my husband and I first got married, I considered myself a pretty giving person and was convinced I'd have to talk my husband into giving as much as I wanted too. However, God proved me wrong. Knowing that soon we would complete our annual giving plan at FBCA, I begin to pray that God would give my husband a generous heart. Little did I know, God was changing both our hearts. When the time came to discuss how much we would give each month, my husband recommended an amount that was larger than I would have suggested. It was a reality check into my own generosity levels. God used the experience to reveal that when it comes to generosity, we should never expect it to change just one person's life.

— Christine Quinley

I grew up in a family that loved church, and the church loved us. The churches of my childhood were welcoming and safe places to be, filled with generous people. The kind of place where you made sure you locked your car doors on Sunday night — not because someone would steal anything, but because they'd secretively leave a big bag of zucchini in the back seat! I can still hear my dad say, "Which one of you kids left a door unlocked?"

As children, my brothers and I loved church so much we "played" church. I was the song leader, one brother was the preacher, and the other had double duty . . . he took up the offering and got saved every Sunday. (Well, there were only three of us and someone had to do that part).

Now, I am in my fifties and treasure the unbelievable joy of having spent half my life actively participating in the life of this church. I know it's from God, and yet also from my parents. Their faithful, lifelong pattern of church attendance, consistent tithing, and committed volunteering of their services proved to me that it can be done. What a gift! It has shaped my entire life.

As an adult, I try not to "play" church as I join in with the singing, preaching, and tithes and offerings. And though I am assured of my salvation by our loving Lord, there is no doubt that parts of me are still being saved every Sunday. Thanks be to God.

— Donna Lewis





Dr. Crouch, our pastor in the late 1950's began a campaign to address some of the problems that were plaguing us. We had retired our old debt from the original church building in the early fifties, but because of the bare bones budget to that point, nothing could be done to take care of some mounting problems.

Our old coal furnace was on its last leg. The organ would often cither in the middle of a service without any human aid. The parking which was primarily on the street became inadequate.

He asked the church to pledge over and above their regular budget pledge a small amount to relieve this situation. It was decided that all who agreed would pledge one dollar per person each week, and that is what nearly everyone did. It was amazing how quickly these small amounts added up, and how God took them and used them.

The furnace and the organ were replaced, and additional property was acquired to be converted to parking.

What we have returned to God through First Baptist has been returned ten-fold in the help that it has given raising our children, and through the fellowships that have strengthened us spiritually.

— *Dot and Richard Hart*

A roof over my head, nourishing food, not having to walk and carry water...in most countries I am considered wealthy. Even more, I have a faith that carries me, comforts me and assures me of salvation. What love, what unfailing grace Jesus has offered. God has truly been generous to me.

I have experienced many gifts of generosity from this church and the people who grace its door. Early in my marriage, Dot and Richard Hart fed (literally) and nurtured our Bible Study class. My children were taken under wing and benefited from many music experiences, youth trips, and mission opportunities.

These blessings would not have been possible without time, and most importantly money donated from the church body. Because of what I have received, I find joy in offering gifts to others. Hosting youth and college students in my home is rewarding to me. It is pure joy to watch the smile on a face of a child while helping at Vacation Bible School or while leading a child on horseback at First Shine Camp. But even more importantly, I feel that regular giving shows God my appreciation for the generosity he has shown me. Being able to give beyond that to building campaigns or mission trips has helped me feel like I am saying "Thank you," to the God that has given me so much.



CS Lewis says it best, "I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare." This is a sentiment I strive to embrace and work toward.

— *Bonni Hannah*

Called Beyond Ourselves . . .

God's love is our greatest gift. As we give thanks...as we look above, grace nudges us to meet needs beyond our own lives and outside the walls of our church. God works through us as we respond to our Good Shepherd's extravagant generosity. Over the past year, here are just a few of the ways we have said, "YES," to God's calling to reach out to our city and our world.

Crossroads After School Program (CAP) - Hours of tutoring

Twenty-two at risk students kindergarten - third grade engaged in tutoring, play, and chapel. Forty-four volunteers provide more than 130 volunteer hours per week.

June 14, 2017

Dear Mr. Clark and the Team,

RE: CROSSROADS AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (CAP) FOR 2016/17

This program has a very significant impact on our students at Claxton and Jones elementary school for the past few years and especially this school year.

This year we had 11 students from Claxton and 13 students enrolled from Jones elementary school.

Each of the children that participated has expressed specifically that they enjoyed going to the Crossroads After School Program at First Baptist Church. The students looked forward to this program every Wednesday.

My observation as a social worker in charge of monitoring school attendance for kids, students that attend CAP rarely miss school on Wednesdays because they don't want to miss CAP program.

Also, we have few kids with classroom behavior problems, those students made every effort to be on their best behavior on Wednesdays so that they can attend CAP program.

Many of our students enjoyed the one on one tutoring by those wonderful volunteer tutors. They felt loved and cared for by all the volunteers in the program.

The students enjoyed the dinner, the chapel time and other planned activities that they participated in.

The fact that the church picked the kids up from the school at 3:00 p.m. and then took them to their individual homes at 6:00 p.m. was a big blessing and the parents are so very grateful for the transportation services that allowed their kids to participate. Without the free transportation services that you provided, none of the students will be able to attend.

I met with some of the CAP students during the last two weeks of school and I asked about CAP experience. They went on and on about how much they enjoyed CAP and they want to be sure Ms. Abby put their names on the list for next school year. In fact, some of the younger kids that did not attend this year, because of the experience of their friends, said they would like to be considered next time.

The school staff and the parents of these students are very grateful for the opportunity you gave to our students to experience such a quality one on one tutoring services and for your generous gifts to both the students and their parents especially at the beginning of the school year, Christmas, and at the end of the school year.

Thank you for the free luncheon for the CAP Parents in May this year. The food and the fellowship were fantastic and the parents enjoyed the opportunity to connect during that afternoon luncheon.

We appreciate every aspect of this CAP program and we look forward to another great year for 2017/18.

Have a wonderful restful summer.

Abigail Owolabi, School Social Worker Claxton & Jones



Lunch at the Crossroads (LCR) - Meals Served

Almost 6,000 meals served a year through 75 volunteers giving more than 5,300 volunteer hours per year.

“This is such a blessed place to come each week...thank you.”

Haiti Mission Trip

Our Haiti Team served April 1-8 alongside Jenny Jenkins, RN and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionary. They worked in a remote section of Haiti providing a health clinic for those in need. During the week, the 11 members of the team:

- served over 400 patients with 240 medical visits.
- extracted 250 teeth.
- provided 25 prescription glasses and more than 200 sunglasses; and filled more than 1,000 prescriptions. Patients represented a wide range of ages and acute/chronic health needs. The team even provided a baby with her first exam as a newborn. One team member commented that the experience was one of the most meaningful things she has been able to do. Thanks be to God for their service and our church’s generous spirit as a people on mission.



Academy for the Arts (AFTA) - Lessons Taught

Two hundred students receive more than 200 half-hour lessons per month. Seventeen students with financial need receive more than \$6,000 in scholarships.



Asheville Youth Choirs (AYC)

The goal for 2017-2018 is four choirs with more than 200 students involved.

Child Development Center (CDC)

The CDC is a Five Star rated center employing 17 staff members and serving 60 children.

We have been so blessed to be a part of the CDC family from early on. Our daughter’s care has been obviously their main priority. We feel very safe with all of her teachers, Jennifer, and Bree; and, that’s not something that has a monetary value.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to making this place great.

— CDC Parent

We feel so blessed to be a part of the First Baptist CDC family. The staff and teachers here set the gold standard for child care and early childhood education. As working parents, it means the world to us to know that our son gets so much love, support, and patience here. He has thrived at FBCDC and we are so grateful. It is truly an excellent program and a wonderful place for children to grow.

— Luke and Molly Boganny

First Baptist Church CDC means love, support, and security for our family. Our two-and-a-half year old loves going to school each day. She is always excited to see her friends and teachers, and she comes home each week day smiling and happy. My wife and I are so grateful for the never-ending help and support we receive from the CDC staff each week day. We can go to work knowing that our daughter will be safe, loved, and educated in life’s most important values.

— Lisa Stander and David Byers

Our April, 2017 medical/dental mission trip to Haiti marked my 5th visit there. I learned early on that our humble efforts were not going to “fix” Haiti. However, our teams have grown to love Jenny and the good people of Grand Guave; and the treatment we provide, whether curing illness, improving childcare, giving the gift of clear vision, or simply relieving acute pain, has undoubtedly improved lives in this little corner of Haiti. I am also continually amazed at the enthusiasm, compassion and skill of our team members. These clinics overwhelm me with a sense of humility and gratitude. I am humbled by the resilience and dignity of people faced with enormous challenges, and grateful to our church, and the opportunity to be a part of God’s grace.” — Bob Busey



First Kids

First Kids started in 2004 with two teachers and five children. Now First Kids employees nine staff members and serves 36 students.

FirstShine Camp

FirstShine Camp involved 17 volunteers ministering to 10 children with special needs for four days and three nights. Forty family members received a much needed respite.



I am so thankful for the years my children were at First Kids. The quality of care and enrichment given to them was extraordinary. Bree and her staff are very dedicated to helping your child learn, grow, and most importantly have fun. My children each made some wonderful friendships that I know will continue on beyond their preschool years. There is a wonderful sense of community/family within the program. I know that the time my children spent at First Kids helped to prepare them to be confident and successful in kindergarten. My husband and I will forever be grateful for the First Kids program and each staff member who loved and cared for our children while they were there.

— First Kids' Parent

Vanderbilt and Battery Park

Vanderbilt and Battery Park are apartments for low income seniors. On average, First Baptist feeds 150 people from these apartments per month and have an emergency pantry at each location to take care of needs as they arise. ***“It is just a wonderful thing, at the end of the month a lot of us are broke and out of food this helps us to eat”.***

Room in the Inn (RITI)

The Room in the Inn program is a shelter option, for 12 women who for a variety of reasons can't stay at a shelter. Ninety First Baptist volunteers are involved in hosting the women for a week twice a year, providing meals, shelter, and evening activities.

Cuba

First Baptist Church of Asheville sent three teams to Cuba in 2017.



Cuba is about:

- Building relationships
- Developing unique friendships
- Sharing life's journeys
- Worshiping together
- Praying for each other
- Dreaming together
- Opening eyes to a bigger world



“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

– Dr. Seuss

“I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world.”

– Mother Teresa

Operation In As Much 2017

During the month of April, 628 volunteers from First Baptist Church of Asheville took on 42 different projects with 22 community agencies. From the 6-month old who helped bring joy to friends at Givens to the 92-year old who packed boxes at MANNA FoodBank, we joined as a community centered on Jesus, committed to showing his love to the world. Our prayer? That over the 1371 volunteer hours, that good news lived in us as a bright light, beacon of God’s mercy.



Comments from agencies:

Black Mountain Home for Children

Volunteers are essential to our success in providing a safe, nurturing environment for the children that are sent to us.

Verner Center for Early Learning

If it weren't for our volunteers, we would be at least two years behind in implementing the dreams that we have for quality programming for the young children in our community.

Comments from participants:

- *We certainly accomplished getting to know each other better and doing some good at the same time.*
- *This is exactly what our church should be doing.*
- *Today was spectacular!!!*
- *It is beyond me to even try to imagine a better day serving folks we don't even know. Even more so we get to know those we sit with every week and find how close our hearts really are.*
- *I couldn't have been happier with the results of our work today or the great fun time we had being together! Along the way we laughed, talked, argued about the best way to cut fabric, celebrated a recovery, and came closer together as a community.*
- *This was a good day and a learning experience. Missions in our own town is so important for us to do!*

Children's Summer Programming

This summer First Baptist Church of Asheville ministered to more than 200 children through Vacation Bible School (VBS) and three children's camps.

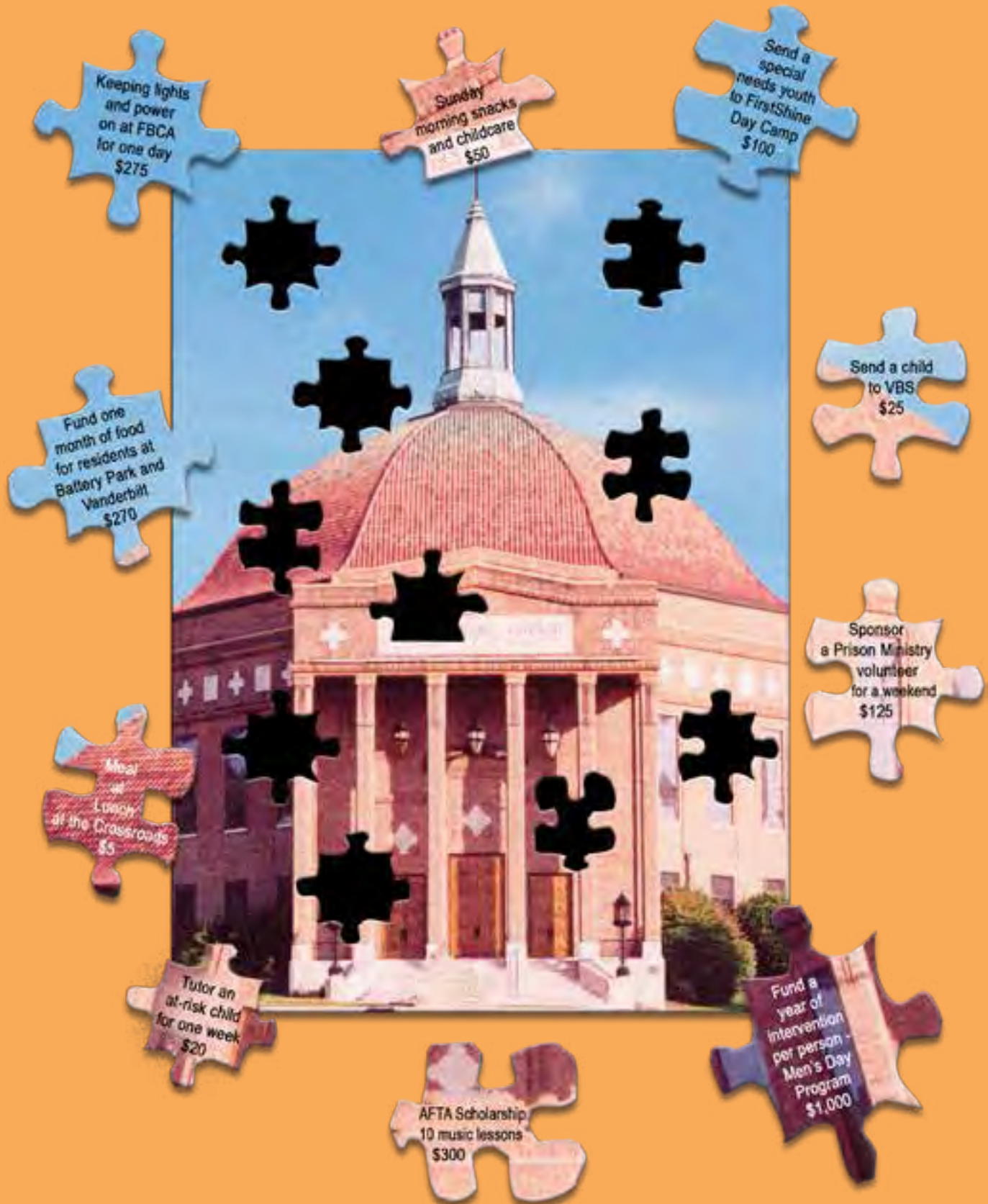


As the summer comes to an end, I can't help but reflect upon the absolutely awesome experience Zuri and Jabari had with VBS and Discovery Camps this summer. They are both still overflowing with exciting stories and sweet memories that they made at camp. This morning they were discussing how they cannot wait for VBS and Discovery Camp next year. Out of all of the summer camps that they have participated in, VBS and Discovery are hands down their favorite. Thank you for creating an opportunity for them to cultivate and strengthen their spiritual relationship with God. They both established friendships with their peers, developed a sense of community and made connections with your strong team of counselors. Your leadership, organizational skills and genuine regard for youth are clearly a few of the reasons my children had such an amazing experience. Thanks for sharing your love and compassion with them and we are looking forward to next year!

— Melissa Blake (Parent)



Gifts Big and Small



Developing Your Annual Generosity Plan

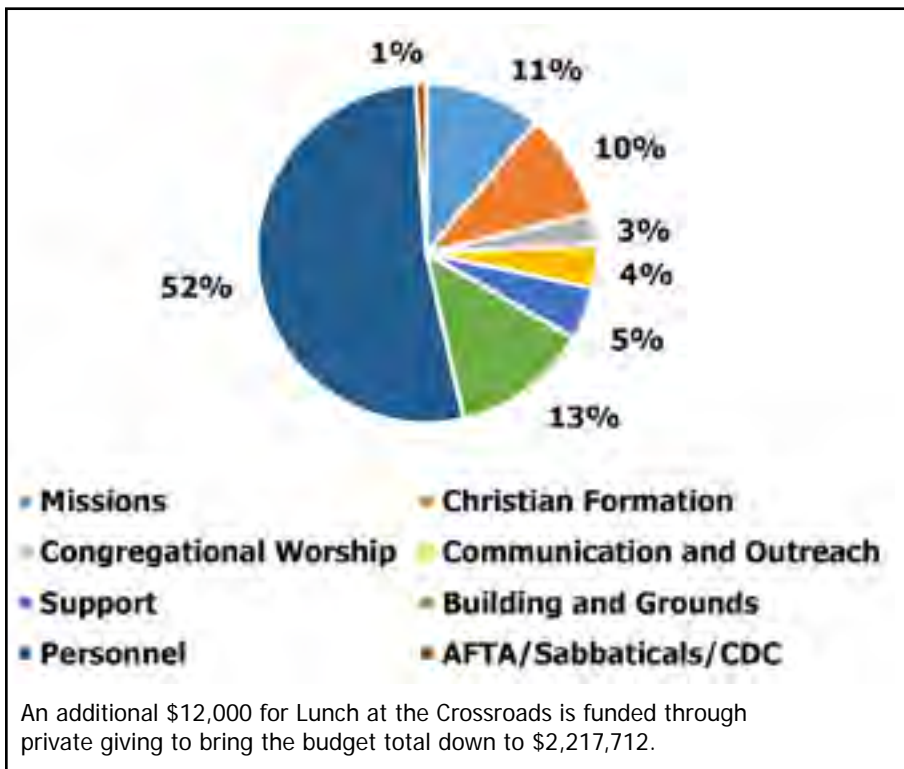
Giving to make a difference is just like saving. You have to make a plan if generosity is your goal. Here are some simple steps that may lead you to live in more generous ways as a follower of Jesus:



- **Pray.** Reflect on who you are and what you have. Take an accounting of your gifts, talents, time, and money. How have you experienced the generosity of God?
- **Write it down.** Survey how you give now through investments in your spiritual life, service for others, and sharing of your financial resources. How do you worship, serve, and give?
- **Begin with love.** Focus on the need that most stirs your passions and connects with your gifts.
- **Identify a Step.** Refine or expand what you do now. Keep a balance as you worship, serve, and give. What small steps can you take? Is there a big commitment you want to make?
- **Make a plan.** Commit to a targeted season of prayer, study, or worship. Craft one new way of serving in your church or the community. Build one new friendship that enriches both of your lives. Give more where you can so that others experience God's generosity.

Where Will Your Gifts Go?

During the month of October, church members will have the opportunity to explore line by line how our church plans to spend a proposed budget of \$2.2 million dollars. All the numbers will be online and in print. Members will have a chance to attend discussion sessions and ask a question to leaders in person or online. Here's an overview of the draft proposal.



Proposed 2018 FBCA Budget	Dollars	Percentage
Missions	238,440	11%
Christian Formation	232,250	10%
Congregational Worship	60,000	3%
Communication and Outreach	98,030	4%
Support	118,500	5%
Building and Grounds	288,900	13%
Personnel	1,163,592	52%
AFTA/Sabbaticals/CDC	30,000	1%
Total	2,229,712	100%

*fraction of a % account for 1% of total.

Welcome to Worship!

At First Baptist, we value intergenerational worship. This fall we welcome our First Graders to join their families in the service. Teaching children to worship is one of the most important things parents and the church family do. Join us in creating an environment where children experience the mystery and love of God while building trusting relationships with those around them—people of all ages.

To the parents of children:

Relax! God put the wiggle in children. They wouldn't be children if they sat perfectly still through the whole service. We understand and it's okay. Here are some things they may help you as you worship with your child(ren):

- Visit the restroom before the service begins.
- Sit toward the front or in a place where it is easier to see and hear what is going on.
- Quietly explain the parts of the service.
- Sing the hymns, pray the prayers, and voice the responses. Children learn to worship by copying you.

To members of our church

The presence of children is a gift to the church and they are a reminder that our congregation is growing. Here are some ways you may help welcome them:

- Greet and learn the names of the children who sit near you in worship.
- Give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

Bringing children to worship may not always be easy, but it is an essential part of their growth in Christ and we all benefit by their presence. Welcome to worship!



1st – 6th graders CB221
Preschool and Kindergarten CB303
Childcare is provided for children under age 3

Agapekids is a time for preschoolers and children to participate in missions, faith development, and worship. Agapekids resumes on Wednesday, September 6. Get your new t-shirt and refreshments. Be a part of a great year with wonderful folks ready to learn and grow. Contact Amy Stertz at astertz@fbca.net or 252.4781 for more information.

Children's Sabbath

Sunday, October 15

11:00 a.m. • Sanctuary

Our congregation will join congregations around the world in celebrating children as a part of our worship on this special day. Children will lead in our worship service through reading scripture, prayers, and song.



Friday Night Madness

Friday, October 13 • 6:00-8:00 p.m. • Preschool – 6th grade

This is a free evening for parents while children rehearse for worship for Children's Sabbath. We will have snacks, games, and lots of fun. Contact April Nance at 252.4781 or anance@fbca.net to sign up.

Our Kids Had A Great Summer!



FALL FAMILY festival

October 31
5:30-7:30 p.m.



FREE community event!

inflatables, door prizes,
game booths, face painting
CANDY!

Concessions available
for purchase.



Disarming Scripture

Tuesdays, September 12 – November 14 (10 weeks)

9:30 – 11:00 a.m. • MB303

Led by Tommy Bratton

For many Christians the problem of violence in Scripture can result in a crisis of faith - especially when we see how such passages have been used throughout history to justify horrific bloodshed in God's name. Moving beyond typical approaches, which seek to either defend or whitewash over violence in the Bible, this study will take a more compelling approach: Learning to read the Bible like Jesus did.

Along the way the group will consider important issues, ranging from passages commanding genocide and infanticide in the Old Testament to passages in the New Testament that have been used to justify slavery, child abuse, and state violence. The take-away is an approach to Scripture that not only sees questioning as an acceptable part of a healthy faith, but as an absolutely essential part of it.

Contact April Nance at anance@fbca.net or 828.252.4781 to register by September 1. Cost for book will be \$18 and will be available on September 10.

(Re)Engage in a Bible Study Community

Sunday mornings • 9:45-10:35 a.m.

Why Bible study?

- As followers of Jesus, 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 and understandings of God as we explore scripture together.
- We develop authentic friendships in which people care for one another, rejoicing when one rejoices, and weeping when one 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 and worship are interconnected.



Sunday mornings, October 1, 8, 15, 22
9:45 a.m. • Conference Dining Room

If you are new to the First Baptist Church of Asheville community, or if you've been here for a while and are interested in getting more deeply involved in the mission and ministry of the church, please join the ministers for this time of fellowship and conversation about our faith tradition, our worship life, and the many ways to be a part of this community of faith. Compass is an opportunity to ask questions about the church, spend time with the ministerial staff, get to know other people on their journey of faith and church connection, and learn how to get involved in our common life and ministry.

During our time together, we will provide a brief orientation to our ministries, talk about our worship and the ways we read and interpret scripture together, and discuss next steps for becoming more involved. Each week will be led by one or more of our ministers, from 9:45–10:35 a.m.

The fall season offers us all the opportunity to re-engage with Sunday morning Bible study, or maybe to become a part of a group for the first time. These ongoing communities focus on in-depth Bible study, theological reflection, exploring the connection between one's faith and everyday life, reaching out to those not involved in a community of spiritual friendships, and learning to practice together the way of Jesus.

Contact Tommy Bratton at tbratton@fbca.net, if you want to find out ways to connect to a Sunday morning Bible study community.

WEDNESDAYS for Adults

Don't "Drown the Dippers", Yet! **An Invitation to a New Baptist Adventure** **September 6-October 25 • Led by Mack Dennis**

When local magistrates once consulted Swiss reformer Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531) about the fate of several Anabaptists, he called for their execution by saying, "Drown the Dippers." There are many today who might echo his decree. As tarnished as the Baptist name has become, it's no wonder that churches are considering whether to keep "Baptist" in their title. But rather than distance ourselves from our history, this two-month study will invite us to re-envision our Baptist identity, and equip us to repurpose for our own time the prophetic witness of the earliest Baptists. By pairing (mainly) Old Testament prophets with Baptist "saints" through the centuries, we'll explore Scripture and history together, while turning a prophetic eye to contemporary challenges. Who knows...we might find that being Baptist is still just as full of heart-pounding adventure as it was for the first Baptist "dippers" who called the church to faithfulness.

Flu Shot Clinic



Wednesday, October 11
4:00-7:00 p.m. • MB304

- Ages 14 and older are eligible
- No Appointment Necessary
- BC/BS and Medicare Part B Accepted
- Insurance Filed (Please Bring Card)

Rev. Sarah Jobe to Preach at FBCA **Sunday, October 8**

We welcome guest minister, the Rev. Sarah Jobe, to preach for the Sunday morning worship service on October 8. Rev. Jobe was ordained at First Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee after completing studies at the University of Virginia and Duke Divinity School. She currently serves as a chaplain at North Carolina Correctional Institute for Women through Interfaith Prison Ministry for Women. She also works for Duke Divinity School bringing seminary classes into North Carolina prisons. Sarah offers hospitality from her home and community garden with her husband Dan and two girls Naomi and Fay. She is the author of *Creating with God* and is pursuing a ThD from Duke Divinity School.

Rev. Jobe will also lead a theological discussion on prison ministry during the Sunday School hour. A light breakfast will be served, but you will need to call the church office to sign up 828.252.4781. More details of the event are forthcoming on the church website.



Reformation

Five Hundred Years 1517-2017

Ever Reforming: The 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation

Why do we observe and celebrate the Reformation?

Reformation is rooted in baptism, remembering that our true identity is as beloved children of God. Each day we are called to remember who we truly are, to die to sin, and to be raised with Christ. While we remember the Gospel convictions that led the early reformers to separate from their mother Church in Rome, we also hope for the consummation of Jesus' prayer that we may all be one (John 17). As we remember, we celebrate that the Holy Spirit is alive and loose in the world (John 3:8). God in Christ is ever-creating, ever-reforming: "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).

The Church increased in numbers and influence in the 1500 years after Jesus' death. From its humble beginnings as a small Jewish sect, it expanded to become the religion of Europe. In the 2nd century, Christianity became majority Gentile, yet was still a religion with its heaviest concentration in Israel, Asia, and North Africa. It was not until Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion of the Roman empire that Christianity began to be associated with Europe and Western culture.

Those attracted to the earliest expressions of Christianity mainly came from lower-class backgrounds. Yet their example of faithful commitment to the way of Jesus, willingness to suffer, and desire to care for the poor and outcasts attracted more and more people, many among the educated elite, to follow this way of Jesus.



Martin Luther
1483-1546

The Reformation was a 16th-century movement in Western Europe. Many leaders recognized the corrupt practices of the hierarchy within the Roman Catholic Church and sought to rid the church of what they believed to be exploitation and false teachings. Through their faithful study of scripture and worship, these reformers understood themselves to be reclaiming the biblical faith and the best of the ancient traditions. For Martin Luther, this involved a return to Paul's teaching of the justification by grace through faith, not by our works.

October 31, 1517, is usually identified as the watershed moment of the Reformation. It is said that the German monk and university professor Martin Luther sent a copy of his 95 Theses to the archbishop and may have posted them on the door of the All Saints Church, and others, in Wittenberg, Germany, as a protest against the practice of selling indulgences. This document began with Luther's stated purpose, "Out of love for the truth and from desire to elucidate it." This protest awakened a movement of others who desired reformation in the Church, and this movement ultimately led to the emergence of various protestant demoninations. (elca500.org)

As we remember the Reformation from 500 years ago, we also recognize that the church, and we ourselves, are always in need of reformation, of listening to where the Spirit is leading us in a new day and new culture. Through the study of scripture, through contemplative prayer, through opening our eyes to the needs of our community, and through reflection on our calling, as individuals and as a community of faith, to live the way of love in all we do, we too can be ever-reforming, becoming more like Jesus, loving and serving God and others.

— Tommy Bratton

Killing Time and Finding God in the Streets

It was Day 5 and we were in Sancti Spiritus, which is in the central region of the country. We had just had a delicious buffet-bar style lunch, complete with multiple oscillating fans mounted on the wall, which felt heavenly after a long morning of touring the city in the Cuban July heat. The restaurant was located in a neighborhood 10 minutes outside of downtown, discreetly blending in to all of the residential homes on the street. As would be the case on other occasions, our group was larger than the venue, and so we had to eat in shifts. All of the youth – Cuban and North American – had eaten in the first shift, so now it was a matter of killing time while the rest of the adults ate. Only, what happened next was so much more than just that.

Some of our older guys immediately got out the frisbee, and suddenly there was a toss around game in the street. (Don't worry – we stopped and cleared the road every time we saw a car, or even a horse and buggy.) Meanwhile, others opted to sit in the shade, where it was discovered that the neighbor liked blasting upbeat pop music. This quickly led to a spontaneous dance party on the sidewalk. At some point, a group game of “Ninja” broke out, which is too hard to explain here but was simple enough for several first time “ninjas” to join in. At one point, youth who had been sitting on the air conditioned bus couldn't help but come off the bus and into the outdoor heat, because the unplanned activities were simply that joyful and enticing.

Every single one of these unplanned happenings occurred in mixed groups of Cuban youth and North American youth. There was even a local kid who walked up and joined in the frisbee toss, and a kind neighbor who let us retrieve that frisbee off her roof. Twice.

This moment was significant for more ways than I can articulate, but it gives a glimpse at what this pilgrimage was about. Not living from one strictly scheduled activity to the next, and not filling every lull and gap with self-serving digital content at the palm of our hands. This is a vivid memory of when our two groups, separated by language and so many other imposing barriers, opted to live as one pilgrim family instead, trusting that the commonalities we know in Christ are indeed bigger than the distinctions we know in culture.

— Casey Callahan

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.” — I Thessalonians 5:16-19



Jubilee Luncheons

Tuesdays, September 19 and October 17 • 1:00 a.m. • Dining Room

All senior adults are invited to join us for fellowship, programs that inspire, entertain, and inform, and a delicious meal. The cost is \$3 for the meal, and first-time guests eat free. Contact Leah Brown at 252.4781 or lbrown@fbca.net for more information.

- **September 19** - Community Programs for Seniors at Harvest House and Senior Opportunity Center
- **October 17** - Josh Goforth, Grammy-nominated Old Time and Bluegrass musician (Meet in Crocker Auditorium)

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.) Contact Leah Brown at 252.4781 for more information about how this ministry might assist you.

Prime Time Senior Adult RETREAT

Good God! It's Time for Some Whole Tending!

Join Eddie Morgan and Leah Brown for a lively discussion as we ask, "How can we change our ways of thinking about God, ourselves, and others that will bring repair and hope to all relationships?" We will also consider the false narratives in Christian culture that have weakened our understanding of a radical Jesus and a good and beautiful God. Bring an open mind, caring heart, and the determination to move deeper into the loving Kingdom of God.

The cost of the retreat is \$70 (\$35 per person) for a double room and includes three meals, transportation, and conference materials. Please register online at www.fbca.net or by calling Leah Brown at 252.4781 by Monday, September 25.

October 5-6, 2017

Bonclarken Retreat

ARE YOU 60 OR OLDER?

September
Summit

Sunday,
September 24
Dining Room
Noon

WE NEED YOU!

Lunch is **FREE**,
but you do need to make
a reservation before
September 18.

Join the Senior Adult Leadership Team and Leah Brown for lunch and conversation about a creative vision for ministry for adults over 60. Call Cynthia or Leah at 252.4781 to reserve your spot for this exciting time of exploration and fellowship.

THE SACRED GARDEN

First Baptist Church of Asheville



Gifts of \$5,000 or more by individuals or groups will be recognized on a plaque near the chapel entrance just outside Crouch Chapel. These recognitions may be in honor or memory of someone.



I've been a member of First Baptist Church Asheville since 1988. This community has supported me and my daughters, Dalva and Lauren, throughout the years and it is my family of faith. When the Sacred Garden and Columbarium project was first presented to the congregation, I was immediately interested. I had attended the military inurnment service for my cousin and her career Army veteran husband, at the Arlington National Cemetery Columbarium and was very moved. I wanted to be a part of the Sacred Garden and Columbarium and purchased a niche. I have felt great peace in that decision, knowing that I will be with my family of faith. Supporting the Sacred Garden, through donations, has been meaningful to me, also. I envision the day when the Sacred Garden will be a place for quiet contemplation but also, celebration of life. I give thanks to God and First Baptist Church Asheville for this beautiful place.

— Dennis Kabasan

Current Giving Opportunities

Fountain, Meditation Garden	\$50,000
Fountain, Reflecting Pool	\$50,000
Landscaping, Labyrinth Area	\$10,000
Landscaping, Meditation Garden	\$10,000
Landscaping, Memorial Garden/Columbarium	\$10,000
Stone Motif Outside Sanctuary	\$2,500
Stone Motif at Garden Entrance	\$2,500

Sacred Garden Informational Table October 8, 15, 22 • Noon • Atrium

The Sacred Garden team invites you to stop by the table in the Atrium to learn more about how you can purchase a niche/memorial plaque or support the garden with a gift. If you have any questions or want an informational packet about the garden, please contact Leah Brown at 252.4781.

Having a conversation about what is planned for a final resting place is not what is expected from a newly married couple. Somehow the subject came up and we discovered that we were “of one mind” about this. Tim and I agreed that neither of us cared for the traditional burial. For ourselves we wanted to keep the ground for planting food. At 23 years old, it wasn't a priority to plan, but we determined that cremation was our preferred plan.



Forward 40+ years to learn that our beloved church was planning a Sacred Garden. It was with joy that we knew that our wishes could be realized. Even more joy when the place would be in this church that we called our second home. We were in Bible Study with friends before children came. Then our children were brought up in this place, came to faith here, and blessed by their friends and teachers here. We have now grown older here in this place of service. As soon as we could, we reserved a place in the Sacred Garden for ourselves. Little did we know that we would need it so soon. Tim's place in the Sacred Garden was completed several weeks ago.

It is a beautiful place. It is the place we have loved for 47 years. It is a familiar place for our children, other family, and friends to visit. It provides an area for quiet, for meditation, and memories. When you go there to visit, stay awhile and find the calm.

— Betty Towery



Kairos • *I Was in Prison and You Visited Me*

Did you ever stop to think that, “God so loved the world,” includes residents of correctional facilities in our area? Kairos is our international partner as we seek to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus to impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women, and youth, as well as their families. First Baptist of Asheville works alongside others to send teams inside the halls of local correctional facilities. These teams work with staff in the institution to host a weekend of prayer and study with the hopes of nurturing Christian community within the facility and beyond. This gift of loving and listening transforms both residents and those leading in the effort.

Are you interested in serving in this growing ministry in our congregation? You may want to go inside and work directly with residents. You may want to work on the outside helping with meals or notes of encouragement. You may choose to serve as a prayer partner. We are in great need of people to work at all levels of our effort.

Across this fall, members of First Baptist Church of Asheville will go serve on inside teams at Swannanoa Correctional Facility for Women (September 21-24) and Mountain View Correctional Center in Spruce Pine (October 19-22). Nancy McCrory will be helping with meals for the Mountain View Team. Our children and others will assist with placemats and notes to participants.



Would you like to talk to someone one on one about Kairos? Contact Kara Kelley at 828.552.3199, Charlyne Boyette at 828.450.2919, or Jim Baley at 828.337.3918. David Blackmon and Sarah Whitlock serve as staff contact points for this ministry. Contact them at 828.252.4781 or email David at dblackmon@fbca.net. Be open to God's call in your life to serve in this or another ministry of our church.



Manna FoodBank • Tuesday, September 12 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Come out and volunteer with fellow First Baptist Church of Asheville members and help sort and pack food for people in our community facing food shortages. Sign-up online at www.fbca.net or in the Atrium. Contact the Church Office at 828.252.4781 for more information.



Room in the Inn • September 17-23

We will be hosting and providing a safe haven for women to stay who are transitioning out of homelessness. Multiple volunteer opportunities are available including cooking a warm meal, transporting the women during the day, staying as an overnight host, bringing fresh flowers, making care packages and more. To get involved and nurture friendship and fellowship with these women and fellow First Baptist Church of Asheville members contact Dorothy Porter at 828.778.2010 or dorothy.porter01@gmail.com.



First Hands Churchwide Community Outreach Black Mountain Children's Home • Saturday, September 30

We are having our *First Hands* churchwide community outreach on September 30, at the Black Mountain Home (BMH) for Children. Black Mountain Home serves children from birth through college graduation who have been abused, abandoned, or neglected. Some may stay only a few weeks, while others may spend a considerable part of their growing up years at the Home. The BMH's mission statement is to glorify God by caring for children and families. First Baptist Church of Asheville members will support this goal by working on a variety of projects around the campus.

Schedule:

- 8:30 a.m. • Gather at the picnic pavilion for a brief orientation to the property
- 9:00 a.m.-Noon • Divide up into groups to complete both inside and outside projects.
- Noon-1:00 p.m. • Return to the pavilion for a picnic lunch.
- 1:00-2:00 p.m. • Hang out and play volleyball, basketball etc.

One hundred plus volunteers are needed for this churchwide mission opportunity. The sign up sheets will be in the Atrium during September, or contact Sarah Whitlock at 828.252.4781 or swhitlock@fbca.net.



Crossroads Afterschool Program (CAP) Begins October 4

Our Crossroads Afterschool Program, a tutoring and mentoring ministry for children (K-3) at risk of homelessness, will begin on Wednesday, October 4. Volunteers are needed to help as tutors. If you would like to get involved in this ministry, please contact Everette Clark at 828.779.8079.



**CROP
HUNGER WALK**
ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

Sunday, October 29

Join the Crop Hunger Walk to end hunger at home and around the world. Mark your calendar and watch for more details.

Dear FBCA,

Your generosity enabled us to host seven international refugee students August-7-11. They came from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania. Among them they spoke ten languages! Six of them have been in this country only one year, and the seventh for only six months. Their English was amazing. The Lutheran Services Carolinas, Refugee and Immigrant Services referred them to us.

The week began with dinner Monday, after which they went to be with their host families (Raybons, Corbins, and Littletons). In the mornings they toured UNCA, Mars Hill University, and ABTech. In the afternoons they hiked Dupont Park Triple Falls, toured the Nature Center and went swimming, and visited the Islamic Center, All Souls' Cathedral, Beth Israel Synagogue, and Saint Lawrence Basilica.

From 16 to 20 years of age, they formed friendships that, hopefully, will last, among themselves and with the host families who entertained them.

Sunday School classes provided delicious dinners; our own Nancy put lunches together, and financial gifts covered the cost of the Nature Center, etc. Youth and college students from First Baptist Church of Asheville joined us in the afternoons for friendship and important assistance. FBCA provided a bus for all our travels. Thank you to staff and adult chaperones without whose help it could not have happened. Thank you FBCA!

— Hal Littleton





Free community event, everyone is welcome!

FALL FAMILY festival

October 31
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.



Wear your costume and come and enjoy inflatables, balloon twisting, face painting, trunk or treat, game booths, cake walk, door prizes, and preschool zone. And don't worry about what you'll have for dinner, we will have concessions for sale!

First Baptist Church of Asheville

Freedom. Friendship. Faith.

5 Oak Street, Asheville, NC 28801 • 828.252.4781 • 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.