A Faithful Approach to Giving

Our giving is a response to the blessings we've received from God. When we give, we become part of something greater than ourselves: supporting ministries that feed the hungry, caring for the broken, spreading hope, and sharing the message of Christ. It's not about the amount, but about the heart behind the gift. Giving deepens our trust in God's provision and transforms our community one step at a time.

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly. in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:7-8)

The financial support of all members, regular attendees, participants, and patrons will enable our church to fully serve God, our community, and congregation as shared in this report. Thank you for helping us live into this vision.

WAYS TO **GIVE**

Give securely online at **fbca.net/budget2027**

Scan QR Code with your phone's camera to complete a 2027 Pledge Card.

Fill out a 2027 Pledge Card and return to the church office in person or by mail

A Guide to Giving

A Guide to Giving as a Percentage of Annual Income

STEP 1

If you are not regularly giving to the church, **make a commitment to giving $25 per week ($100 a month)** and return a 2027 Pledge Card.

STEP 2

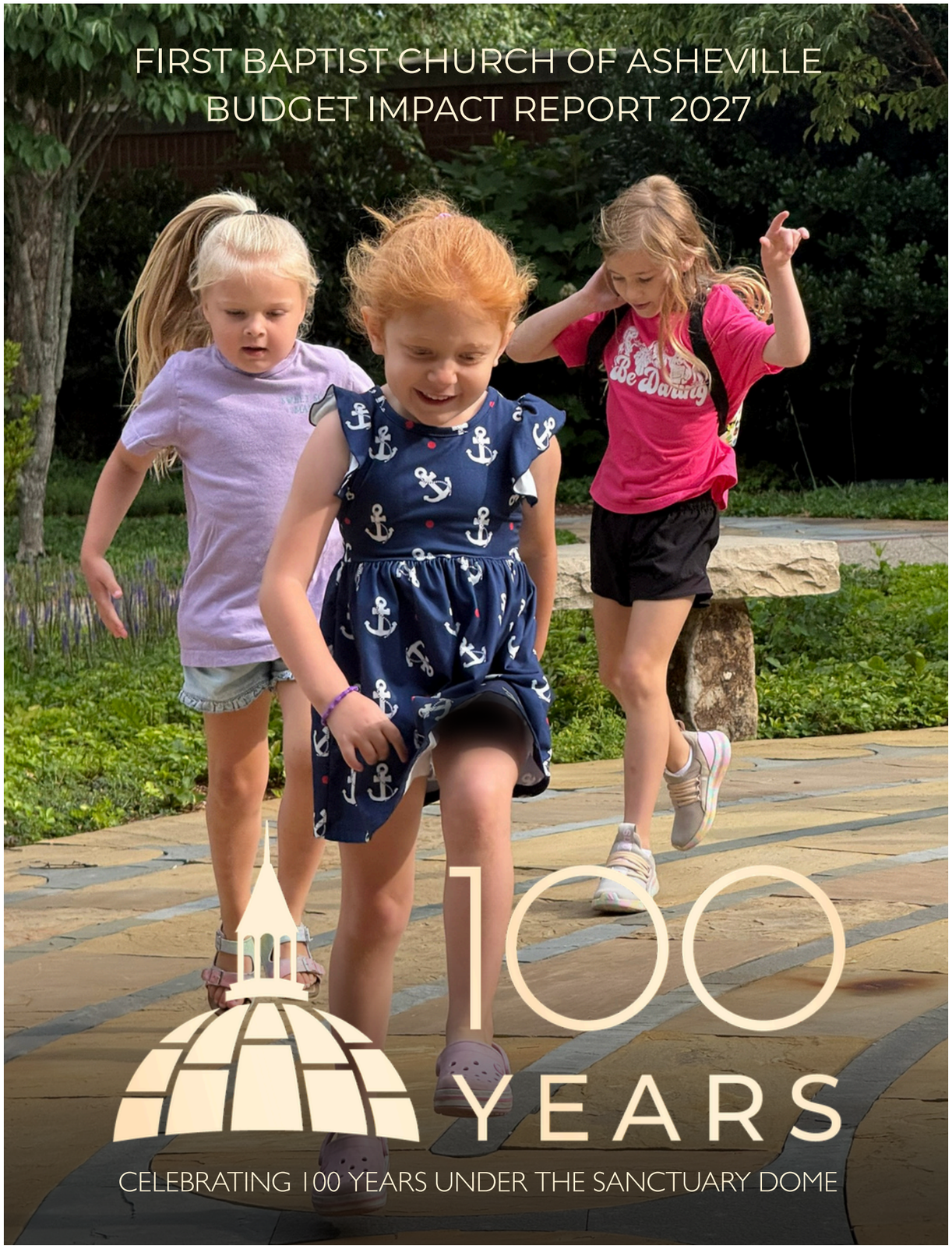
If you are already regularly giving to the church, prayerfully **consider increasing your giving by 5%** (e.g., $105 per week instead of $100). Indicate this on the 2027 Pledge Card.

STEP 3

If you are currently tithing (giving 10% of your annual income to the church), thank you for your commitment. **Return your 2027 Pledge Card** and help encourage others to prioritize faithful giving.

WEEKLY GIVING BY THE NUMBERS

ANNUAL INCOME	WEEKLY GIVING				
	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%
$10,000	$4	$8	$12	$15	$19
$20,000	$8	$15	$23	$31	$38
$30,000	$12	$23	$35	$46	$58
$40,000	$15	$31	$46	$62	$77
$50,000	$19	$38	$58	$77	$96
$60,000	$23	$46	$69	$92	$115
$70,000	$27	$54	$81	$108	$135
$80,000	$31	$62	$92	$123	$154
$90,000	$35	$69	$104	$138	$173
$100,000	$38	$77	$115	$154	$192
$110,000	$42	$85	$127	$169	$212
$120,000	$46	$92	$138	$185	$231
$130,000	$50	$100	$150	$200	$250
$140,000	$54	$108	$162	$215	$269
$150,000	$58	$115	$173	$231	$288





"Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing," Paul says (1 Th. 5:11). One of the great gifts of being the church together is that we may find encouragement in every direction—in the beauty of worship and the wisdom of the saints, in the breaking of bread and the eloquence of the prayers, and in the friendships across generations together with the generous sharing of gifts. Where else does real courage find its source but in the places and people who, empowered by the Spirit, know the joys of encouraging one another? May the many glimpses of mutual encouragement we find in our congregation lift up our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, as we build up each other in hope, courage, and love.

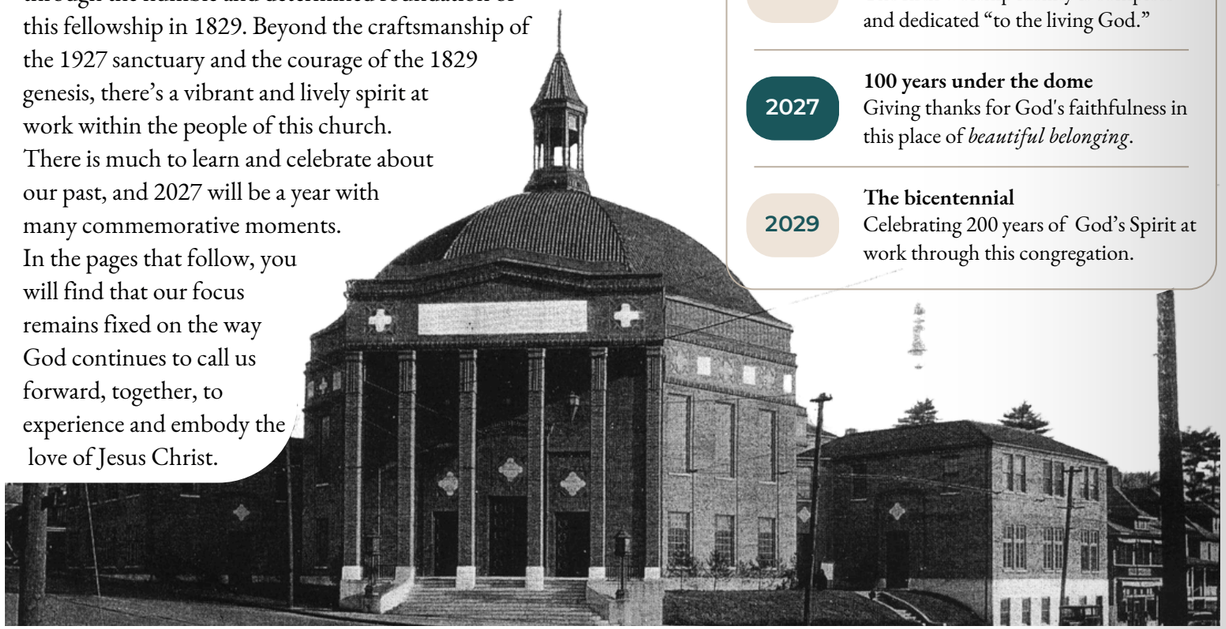
MACK DENNIS
Senior Pastor

A Century Under the **Dome**

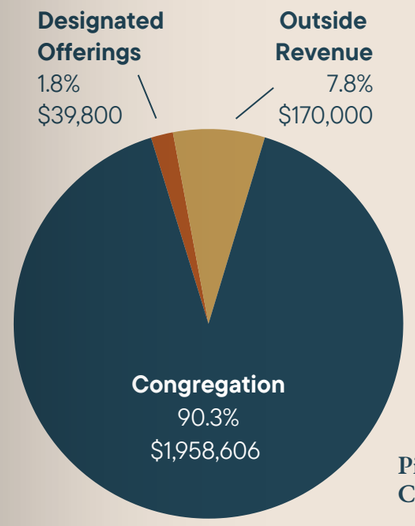
Rooted in Faith, Called Forward

On March 7, 2027, we will gather under the dome to worship God and give thanks for God's provision of 100 years of faithful life together as a church planted here at 5 Oak Street in downtown Asheville. In 2029, we'll celebrate our church's bicentennial, testifying to the work of the Holy Spirit through the humble and determined foundation of this fellowship in 1829. Beyond the craftsmanship of the 1927 sanctuary and the courage of the 1829 genesis, there's a vibrant and lively spirit at work within the people of this church. There is much to learn and celebrate about our past, and 2027 will be a year with many commemorative moments. In the pages that follow, you will find that our focus remains fixed on the way God continues to call us forward, together, to experience and embody the love of Jesus Christ.

1829	**A church is planted** Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, forerunner of First Baptist Church.
1927	**A new downtown sanctuary** The fifth worship facility is complete and dedicated "to the living God."
2027	**100 years under the dome** Giving thanks for God's faithfulness in this place of *beautiful belonging*.
2029	**The bicentennial** Celebrating 200 years of God's Spirit at work through this congregation.



Church Budget: Sources of Revenue



Pie Chart 1

Total: $2,168,406

The total Church Budget for 2027 is $2,168,406. Net outside revenue projected at $170,000 (7.8%) primarily comes from community partnerships with Mountain Aging Partners and the Asheville Symphony Orchestra. $39,800 (1.8%) comes from designated gifts for Building Maintenance and Missions.

Pie Chart 1 (left) shows how our total revenue for $2,168,406 is sourced. Our congregation is being asked to fund $1,958,606 or 90.3% of the total revenue through 2027 tithes and offerings. The 2027 Church Budget requires an increase of $87,221 or 4.7% over 2026 budget gifts.

Allocation of Church Resources

Worship, Serve, Learn, Belong

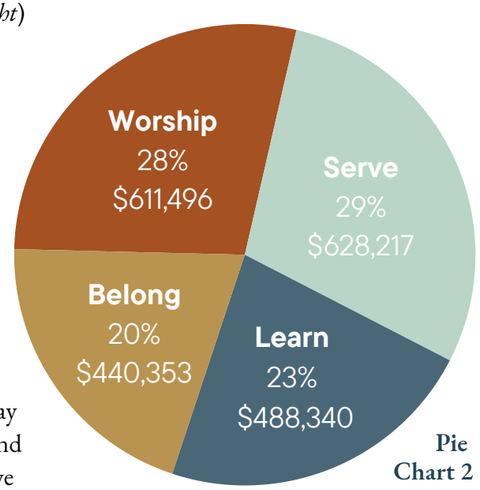
There are four essential categories of our church life, and each one of them reflects a vital dimension of Christian discipleship: **Worship, Serve, Learn, Belong.**

Just as God's Story has the power to reach out and draw us in, so will the living stories of this ministry budget draw you in, informing and inspiring you to know that every gift matters.



Sacred Garden

Pie Chart 2 (*right*) shows the allocation of all financial gifts and resources. This is a **narrative budget**, revealing the story of real ministry happening each and every day at 5 Oak Street and beyond. Narrative budgets include not only program, but also property costs and personnel investments. Every single dollar of the church budget has been integrated into the four dimensions of our church's story.



Pie Chart 2

Worship

NEW MEMBERS REPORT 2026

15

New Members
(3 youth, 12 adults)

5

New online members
(from 3 states:
South Carolina, Georgia,
and Pennsylvania)

Exciting opportunities lie ahead for Worship and Music as we seek to nurture faith, inspire creativity, and strengthen connections across generations. A central priority in 2027 is revitalizing our Children's Music Ministry through regular rehearsals and greater participation in worship.

Most recently, we celebrated over 30 young choristers singing on Children's Sabbath, an encouraging sign of new life and growth.



Cherub and Junior Choir rehearsal



Choirs

167

People across **all six choirs**!

- **65** Adults in FBCA Choir.
- **50** Youth in the Asheville Youth Choir.
- **37** Children in Cherub and Junior Choirs.
- **15** Handbell Ensemble members.

We resumed Handbell rehearsals with a total of 15 ringers in an intergenerational ensemble that ranges in age from 15-93 years!

To support this momentum, we hope to welcome a part-time staff member dedicated to children and youth music.



AYC Youth Choral with director Aleisa Baker

We envision new possibilities for the Asheville Youth Choirs through expanded community partnerships, particularly with the Asheville Symphony Orchestra.

We hope to collaborate with Karis Lab to incorporate more liturgical arts into worship, engaging both children and adults in creative expressions of faith.

Another exciting initiative is the restoration of our **Choral Scholar Program**, initially providing two scholarship-supported positions in the Adult Choir for students attending local universities. This investment will strengthen our choir while nurturing the next generation of church musicians.



Adult Choir rehearsal led by new Pastor of Music and Worship, Justin Addington.

Through excellent music, thoughtful worship, and an invitational spirit, we remain committed to building a thriving, intergenerational ministry where all may experience the joy of worship and the gift of *beautiful belonging*.

FOR EVERY $100

100

$28 funds Worship

Serve

THURSDAY COMMUNITY MINISTRY REPORT

203 Neighbors served weekly

+35%

Up from 150 in 2025

102 Food Pantry shoppers weekly

+29%

Up from 79 in 2025

235 Household members reached weekly through the Food Pantry

+34%

Up from 175 in 2025

+33% combined total **weekly engagement**

Weekly figures compare 2025 and 2026. Percentage increases are based on the supplied numbers and rounded to the nearest whole percent.

It began 23 years ago with an outdoor grill, hamburgers, hot dogs, and a conviction to step outside our historic downtown church and feed the hungry.

Nowadays, our Thursday community ministry takes more than a grill to fire up, occupying an entire section of our church facility. Outside, there's new signage, steps, benches, and a covered entrance. Inside, there are new volunteers and community partnerships. Still, at the end of each Lunch at the Crossroads, we are still feeding those who are hungry. And we are also working to help neighbors out of deep cycles of poverty by giving them a reliable and safe place to fill their bodies and souls, by recognizing them as beloved children of God, by breaking down barriers as we break bread around common tables, and by connecting them with people and resources that can make a positive impact in their lives.

Over the last year, we've seen a significant increase in the number of neighbors who enter our doors each week.

To meet the rising demands, we have made new partnerships, applied for new grants, and have appealed to our congregation for a higher budget.

This year, we are budgeting for two security officers to help us maintain an atmosphere of welcome, inclusion, and safety. We continue partnering with Manna Foodbank to support our Food Pantry, with weekly food donations from congregants and grocery stores Trader Joes and Aldi. We also enter our third year of partnership with All Souls Counseling to provide an on-sight mental health professional and enter new partnerships with Equal Plates and Misfit Misprints. Every gift to the Church Budget, every donation of food and clothing, every hour volunteered to support this ministry, and every prayer offered on behalf of our downtown neighbors helps us continue to feed the hungry, recognizing that insomuch as we do this for them, we do this for Christ.



Lunch at the Crossroads 2026



Cuba Mission Team with Pastor Maura (on far right) 2026

Cuba Partnership - Iglesia Elohim

We are blessed by our sister church in Las Tunas, Cuba. Under the steadfast leadership of Pastor Mauricia Solo, we have shared prayers, communion, worship, outreach, wisdom, and friendship for over 12 years, with over 80 members of our church participating in one of our many trips to Cuba.

Present crises across Cuba and escalating political tensions have produced incomparable hardship for our sisters and brothers in Las Tunas, and we continue to respond to their immediate needs through special donations of food, medicines, and essential supplies, in addition to offerings of church support and meal sponsorships. The 2027 budget includes a 66% increase of our financial support. Beyond the numbers, members of our congregation continue to contribute to special projects and programs, including the recent purchase of an electric trike. What may seem like small gifts are transforming into large impacts on the lives of our friends in Las Tunas.



Farmworker Community Mission Focus

In 2025, we explored a new global mission initiative through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. After a second planned mission trip in 2026, we are poised to become an Encourager Church with CBF Field Personnel Rick Burnette in Immokalee, Florida, working alongside him through Cultivate Abundance and the local ministry center, Misión Peniel. Our mission work allows us to learn about the histories, hardships, and faithful testimonies of migrant farmworkers and their families. We are excited to deepen our connections with the people of Immokalee in 2027.

FOR EVERY $100

100

$29 funds Service

Learn

DISCIPLESHIP REPORT

26 **Bible Study Classes** meet Sunday mornings.

250 **People** attend **Bible Study** each week.

79 **Children & Youth** attend **Bible Study** and **Wednesday Night activties** each week.



Youth Ministry 2026

Wednesday nights are full of life at First Baptist! More and more young families are finding their way to our church through AgapeKids and Koinonia. AgapeKids introduces kids to the life of faith as they explore scripture, serve our community, and build lasting relationships. In Koinonia, youth explore questions of meaning and purpose as they strive to "let their life speak" in faith. From children's programs to a growing and engaged youth group, our church is a place where young people build meaningful connections, participate in the wider life of the church, and grow in faith together.

For our adults the Chapel Study continues to offer thoughtful and relevant opportunities to explore scripture and engage current events through the lens of faith, and discover and practice spiritual disciplines. We are grateful for partnerships with the Center for Faith and Life and the Academy for the Arts which enrich these gatherings.



AgapeKids 2026

Children & Youth

Our children and youth attended **seven camps and retreats** this year!

Childrens participated in three summer camps. **3**

Youth participated in two retreats. **2**

Youth participated in a summer camp and served as counselors at FirstShine Camp. **2**

A New Ministry

We are excited to launch a new ministry for college students and young adults! Led by our new Pastor of Youth and Young Adults, Will Arledge, monthly lunch outings on the first Sunday of each month will create opportunities for fellowship, meaningful connections, and spiritual growth.

Wednesday Programming

- Family Meal
- AgapeKids
- Koinonia
- Adult Chapel Study
- Adult Choir
- Cherub Choir and Junior Choir

Growing in Faith Through Via Karis

The Via Karis continues to serve as the theological framework for formation and learning at First Baptist. Its five guiding words – water, word, table, body, and creation – shape how we study scripture, pray, worship, build community, and live out our faith. The Via Karis team offers various learning opportunities throughout the year as well as seasonal breakfasts for new and prospective members. Each summer, children from our church, FirstKids Preschool, and our Child Development Center participate in Via Karis Camp. At camp we use Bible stories, crafts, and other activities to introduce children to the Via Karis as they explore a Bible character or story.


Via Karis breakfast

FOR EVERY $100

100

$23 funds Learning

Belong

NEW FELLOWSHIP INITIATIVE

100

People attended the documentary hosted in September with our new group "Ron's Rainbow Fellowship"

What started as a conversation between a church member and Paula Garrett, our Pastoral Resident, has grown into an energizing ministry of the church. This church member reached out to Paula to express a desire to talk more openly about his faith journey as a Christian who is also a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Then another church member invited Paula to lunch for a similar conversation. Then a couple in the church sought her out for the same conversation.

On the third Sunday in February, the first group of LGBTQ+ members of FBCA met. About eight people had been invited. Almost twenty showed up. The group, now known as Ron's Rainbow Fellowship (named for beloved long-term member Ron Gough), meets every month to share their faith journeys, invite allies into conversation and questions, process long-held religious trauma from being told by other churches that they are broken, unworthy, even destined for torment. With a focus on healing and connection across other differences, participants have grown to love one another, love God, and love FBCA more fully.



Ron's Rainbow Fellowship meeting 2026

The group has met with other LGBTQ+ groups from local churches, hosting ecumenical conversations about how to show up as faithful LGBTQ+ Christians. The group hosted a viewing of the documentary, *1946: The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture,* on a Sunday in September, with almost 100 people in attendance.

Ron's Rainbow Fellowship has fostered friendships across generations, backgrounds, and identities, and it has inspired further conversation at FBCA about what *beautiful belonging* really means.

As they continue to meet, we hope that Ron's Rainbow Fellowship can serve as a model for other small group connections around interests, activities, and life stages.



FirstShine Summer Camp 2026

FirstShine Camp

FirstShine Camp, a free camp for youth and young adults with special needs, was founded by our church many years ago. It's always about the people, not the numbers, but we celebrate a growth in participation and engagement in our church and community.

42

people participated in **FirstShine Camp** (10 campers and 32 volunteers) .

↑+31%

increase over 2025 in FirstShine Camp participation!







Church Picnic

In 2026, we hosted a church picnic at Camp Rockmont in Black Mountain. We will build on this new tradition in August 2027.

FOR EVERY $100

100

$20 funds Belonging

Ministry Partners

have grown out of the life of the church. These ministries impact the wider community, but they remain rooted with support and guidance by committees and teams from our congregation along with the provision of facility space. We celebrate the creative and forward-thinking church members who dreamed and worked to bring these vital ministries to life and continue to do so. Financial offerings to the 2027 Ministry Budget provide essential support and facility provisions to each one of these programs.

Est. 1973

First Kids Preschool

Our First Kids Preschool offers a warm, nurturing, safe environment where children grow in all areas to their fullest potential—including spiritually—through age-appropriate learning and Christian values. We serve ages 1 through PreK, with classes Monday–Thursday, 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m., September–May.

Est. 2014

Academy for the Arts

The Academy for the Arts is committed to excellence in music education, performance, and community. Our diverse students thrive under skilled faculty in a supportive, high-expectation environment. We celebrate our growth and look forward to years of continued creativity and innovation.

Est. 2014

Asheville Youth Choirs

The Asheville Youth Choirs (AYC) welcomes students in grades 3–12 who love to sing and seek community. AYC nurtures musicianship, leadership, and lasting friendships. Sponsored by First Baptist Church of Asheville and the Asheville Symphony Chorus, the choirs perform at concerts, civic events, and choral festivals.

Est. 2005

Child Development Center

Our Child Development Center (CDC) nurtures children in a loving, Christ-centered environment. With a 5-star rating, we offer full-time care for children ages 6 weeks through PreK, focusing on their physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and spiritual growth. Our mission is to help children experience God's love and support families in our community.

Est. 2005

The Center for Faith & Life

The Center for Faith and Life works to create spaces of beautiful belonging where people flourish in mind, body, and spirit. The Center partners with the wider community to host speakers and artists series, theological courses of study, and contemplative events.

Est. 2024

Karis Worship & Parenting

Karis Worship creates inclusive, lectionary-based artistic resources that invite all ages to engage with worship. We provide original art, music, liturgy, and worship plans for every Sunday of the three-year lectionary cycle, so pastors and church leaders can plan and lead worship that draws congregations closer to God and each other.

Karis Parenting equips parents and caregivers with tools to weave faith into everyday moments. Easy to use, theologically rich, and reviewed by experts, our resources empower families to explore faith together.

Community Partners

are organizations who have come alongside our congregation through mutual agreements involving facility usage and an alignment of community values. We respect the vision and goals of each partner, recognizing the unique gifts offered to the community through their collective work. We aim to find creative ways to develop friendships and serve our wider community together.

Mountain Aging Partners (MAP) supports older adults and their families through vital services. In Buncombe County, the Adult Day Program at FBCA offers a safe, engaging space for older adults and relief for caregivers. In Henderson County, MAP provides Meals on Wheels, adult day care, community dining, caregiver support, and personalized aging guidance. With compassion and dedication, MAP ensures that no one ages alone.

The **Asheville Symphony Orchestra** has performed and promoted symphonic music for the benefit, enjoyment and education of the people of Western North Carolina for nearly 60 years, embracing the orchestra's endless creativity, artistic expression and collaborative explorations.

Denominational Partners

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
cbf.net

Alliance of Baptists
allianceofbaptists.org

Baptist Joint Committee
bjconline.org

Baptist Women in Ministry of North Carolina
bwimnc.org

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina
cbfnc.org

Diaster Relief of North Carolina Baptist on a Mission
baptistsonmission.org

Western North Carolina Baptist Fellowship
wncbf.org



Celebrating Our Centennial

Lenten Vespers

Feb. 17, 24; March 3, 10, 17

Ellington's ecclesiastical symbolism in his design for the sanctuary will inspire our Lenten Vesper services on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.

Ellington 4-Mile Run/Walk

Feb. 20, 2027

Participants will begin the inaugural Ellington 4-Mile Run & Walk in the church's parking lot at 8:30 a.m. and will complete a course that passes three additional buildings that Ellington designed; Asheville City Hall, Asheville High School, and the S&W Cafeteria Building.



Exploring the Timeless Architecture of Douglas Ellington in Asheville, NC



FBCA Adult Choir

Centennial Worship Service

March 7, 2027

This 11:00 a.m. worship service will serve as the official anniversary observance. Modeled after the service from 1927, this worship will include beloved hymns of the faith, historic voices from our past, an inspiring sermon, and the premier of a new choral anthem composed by Earlene Rentz for the occasion.



Duomo di Firenze

Concert

Feb. 28, 2027

The Adult Choir will present a concert of beloved classical and sacred music that speaks to the witness of the Church throughout history. The 6:00 p.m. concert will also feature selections more closely associated with the history of our church, including selections from the 1927 dedication, as well as anthems that were written for our church or by former FBCA ministers of music.

* Note: Other Music Ministry events throughout the year will also honor the church centennial.



FBCA Sanctuary view from Sacred Garden

Pilgrimage

Sept. 27-30, 2027

As part of our centennial year pilgrimage, join fellow FBCA pilgrims for a three-night stay in Florence, where we will visit the Duomo di Firenze, the architectural inspiration for our own sanctuary dome. Optional excursions will offer opportunities to explore the country's renowned artistic, historical, and spiritual treasures.

100 YEARS