



# Steeple Talk

Faith Fellowship Mission

December 2024

## First Baptist Church Lexington, NC

### NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, marks a special day in our heritage at First Baptist Church. We will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our annual Nine Lessons and Carols service. Not only will the sanctuary be filled with beautiful, poignant music, but we also will be honoring a few of our former Minister's of Music and their families. Al Martin, the one who brought this tradition to our church, will be in attendance all the way from California, as well as Phil Rector and Paul Freeman. From the inception of this hallowed service to today, these three, and many others, have honored this tradition with their work and dedication. They, and the ones who can't be here with us in December, all have upheld the tradition of significant music making not only for this service, but year-round. I am fortunate to have heard of the stories of former choir directors from our choir and church members and am thrilled to get to share this experience with everyone here at First Baptist Church in December.

I have been planning this service for a few years and the time is quickly approaching! This service is important to the choir members, the congregation, and our community. There is no other church around our area that showcases the talents we have here at First Baptist Church like we do in December. The work of our former Minister's of Music has NOT been forgotten and lives on in this place. Good music is still important here and is valued. Worship services NEED the choir, and we are still happy to provide our best, especially during the advent season.

So please join us as we thank our directors for their legacy and for paving the way for us to continue to thrive in music, faith, and love. Join us to hear the beautiful voices of our hard-working, dedicated choir members. And join us to be together, under one roof, to be reminded of the most precious gift to humanity: the birth of Christ.

### DECEMBER 29th LOVEFEAST

On the final Sunday of 2024 we will join the congregations of Second United Church of Christ and First United Church of Christ for an informal "LoveFeast" in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 10 a.m. It will be a potluck brunch. Biscuits and fruit will be provided. Please bring a breakfast casserole or other dish of your selection. We will enjoy a delicious meal together followed by singing, Scripture, and selected readings. We will conclude our time together with communion around the tables. We will not have Sunday School on December 29th and there will be no service in the sanctuary.

### CHRISTMAS FOOD BOXES PREPARATION

December 11th

Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, December 11th** for our annual Christmas Food Box Project- a hands-on mission opportunity that each member of our church can participate in. We will be preparing Food Boxes for 65 food insecure families in our community. Volunteers with trucks are needed to pick up food from Food Lion on the 11th at 8:45 a.m. We will need volunteers to meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:30 a.m. to help unload, sort and pack food. Please call or text Jim Honeycutt (336) 408-7294 if you can assist with transporting. Monetary support is needed to fund this project. The cost of food has risen significantly since last year so please make checks payable to the church earmarked Food Boxes. Together we can ensure this project is successful. With gratitude, Julia Dunn

### BLANKETS OF LOVE FOR OUR MOUNTAINS

We are receiving blankets and sleeping bags for people in our mountains who have been devastated by the storms. Please bring new or gently used, clean blankets, baby blankets, or sleeping bags to the stage in the fellowship hall. Thanks to the Family Matters Sunday School class for coordinating this ministry. Donations will be received through December 16th.

## MARY HUFF UPDATE

Around 30 church members attended the meal and presentation by Mary Huff on Wednesday night, November 20th. Mary shared how FBC originally developed ties with Thailand prior to she and Hunter taking the assignment to work with the PM people group there in the 1990s. She described the involvement and projects of she and her husband working in southern Thailand and then in the North. Hunter had over 25 years of service prior to Covid and his death from cancer during that time. Mary now has close to 30 years of work with the agencies and people of Thailand as a field personnel of CBF. Since 2018 FBC has been an Encourager Church for the Huffs. Mary expressed great appreciation for the funding, prayers and support of our church.

## DECEMBER CALENDAR

Dec 4th - Quarterly Church Business Meeting - 6:30pm Fellowship Hall  
Dec 9th - Stage Set-up Nine Lessons and Carols  
Dec 11th - Christmas Food Boxes Preparation - 9am - Fellowship Hall  
Dec 15th - Nine Lessons and Carols (50th Anniversary) - 11am - Sanctuary  
Dec 15th - Third Sunday of Advent  
Dec 15th - Finance Committee Meeting – 9:00am  
Dec 16th-17th - MBCC Christmas Programs - 6pm - Sanctuary  
Dec 19th - Cancer Services Christmas Party – 5:30pm - Fellowship Hall  
Dec 22nd - Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Dec 22nd - Tentative – Deacons Meeting – 4:00pm  
Dec 24th - Candlelight/Communion Christmas Service – 5:30pm Sanctuary  
Dec 24th-26th - Christmas Holidays – Church Office and MBCC CLOSED  
Dec 29th - LoveFeast Potluck Breakfast - 10am - Fellowship Hall - No Sunday School  
Dec 31st - End of the Church Financial Year

## CAROLYN PHILLIPS MISSION GROUP

The Carolyn Phillips Mission group delivered 20 hygiene bags for needy students to Lexington High School. There were some extra items for them plus items were donated to the homeless at First Hope and Open Hands. Thanks to all who contributed items, money and help in packing.

## GRAPE JELLY & SOUP FOR FIRST HOPE MINISTRIES

For many years we collected Grape Jelly and Tomato Soup for the Crisis Ministry of Davidson County. Crisis Ministry is now First Hope Ministries but the need for jelly and soup remains. Please bring Grape Jelly and any type of soup to the container in the elevator lobby. Thanks to Ralph and Jean Ashley for coordinating this ministry.

## WORSHIP STREAMING VIA TELEPHONE

Sunday morning worship services are now available via telephone.  
Call 833-659-9737 and listen to the service.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL MATTERS

Connie I. Russell

Sunday School continues to be on the upswing! For the month of November, we averaged 103 a Sunday. So far in this new church year (2024-2025), we have had 9 out of 13 Sundays with attendance of more than 100. In the 2023-2024 church year, we had a total of 15 Sundays with attendance over 100. Thank you for supporting our Sunday School. If you are not in a class, please talk with me or Joe Leonard so that we can help you find a class that will meet your needs. Due to the busy Advent Season, we will not have a Leadership Meeting in December. We will resume in January with a meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of January at 4:00. We will continue to talk about ways our Sunday School can continue to improve. Looking ahead, we have another Sunday School Breakfast on March 16, 2025. Rev. Brian Alexander, our new Associational Mission Strategist for the Liberty Association will be our guest and will share with us about the things happening in the Association, and things he would like to see happen. Mark your calendars now for this special time we have come to enjoy. Also at the Breakfast that day, we will have a Donation Box in order to collect more money to send to Baptists on Mission as we continue to support the work they are doing in Western NC for Helene Relief. As I understand it, Baptist on Mission plans to work in Western NC for at least 5 years. Our Sunday School: Learning, Worshipping, Praying, Growing and Serving Together in Love!

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION – AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2024

### FBC

October income - \$50,847.41  
October expenses - \$47,346.70  
October surplus - \$3500.71  
Year-to-date shortfall - \$47,484.73  
Needed to meet 2024 budget - \$247,802.82

### MBCC

October income - \$56,145.36  
October expenses - \$52,680.68  
October surplus - \$3,462.68  
Fiscal year surplus - \$11,764.43

### FBC ENDOWMENT

Balance as of \$2,298,921.06

## MEMORIALS

**General Fund:** *William Dillahunt and Deb Watson* by Brenda Hipp

**Music Memorials for Nine Lessons:** *Jean Davis* by Sandra Westervelt

**Building & Grounds:** *Deb Watson* by Hal & Donna Routh

## HONORARIUMS

**Christmas Food Boxes:** *Dr. Ray Howell, Jim Tate, Sherri Salinas, Wes Richardson and Krystal Craven* by David & Julia Dunn

## CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Thursday evening, December 19th, will be the annual Christmas party for patients of Cancer Services of Davidson County. We need donations of food and monetary donations. If you can volunteer, we need you. You will be blessed by this festive evening of joy with so many who are suffering from cancer. Please let Ray know if you can help.



*“For unto us*

*a child is born.”*

*Isaiah 9:6*



## CONTACT US!

**Ray Howell** – Senior Minister - [ray@fbclex.org](mailto:ray@fbclex.org), (336) 239-4828 or (336) 245-1261 Ext. 104

**Jim Tate** – Business Administrator – [tate@fbclex.org](mailto:tate@fbclex.org), (336)689-1392 or (336) 245-1261 Ext. 111

**Wes Richardson** - Minister of Music & Director of Youth & Children - [wes@fbclex.org](mailto:wes@fbclex.org), (336) 970-3983 or (336) 245-1261 Ext. 105

**Krystal Craven** - Martha Best Children's Center Director – [krystal@fbclex.org](mailto:krystal@fbclex.org), (336) 245-1261 Ex. 108

**Sherri Salinas** – Financial Assistant – [sherri@fbclex.org](mailto:sherri@fbclex.org) (336) 245-1261 Ext. 103

**Beryl Phillips** (Newsletter): [bhphillips1960@outlook.com](mailto:bhphillips1960@outlook.com), (336) 245-1261  
(Information Deadline is the 23rd of each month)



Periodical Postage paid at Lexington, NC  
Return Service Requested

**Steeple Talk** (USPS 763-910)  
Published monthly by  
First Baptist Church  
Post Office Box 436  
Lexington, North Carolina 27293