



Emily Ray created a mural for our preschool.

THE INTERIM



From the Pastor...

Life can seem overwhelming. The entire world is fighting COVID-19, our polarized nation just saw a riotous mob attack the Capitol, and locally we are concerned about friends and family who are struggling in many ways. It is easy to think there is not much we can do and give into despair.

My friend, David Smith, recently inspired me in his Manna Connection devotional by reminding me that God often uses the weakest of us to accomplish God's greatest works. David gave several examples of how God can work through the feeblest folks.

With God's help: little David defeated giant Goliath, covering Gideon won a major battle, stuttering Moses became a great leader, a young boy provided lunch for thousands, denying Peter professed a faith that built the Church, and murderous Paul led thousands to eternal life.

David's main example was the widow who had only a portion of a penny, but gave her all. Jesus exalted this poor woman and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others." Jesus explained that "They gave out of their wealth, but she out of her poverty" (Mark 12:43-44).

When we think there is nothing we can do, we are mistaken. When we think our meager efforts can't make a difference, we are wrong. Jesus taught his disciples that, "with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). There might not be a lot we can do, but there is always something God can do through us.

The 19th Century English cleric Sydney Smith first said, "It is the greatest of all mistakes, to do nothing because you can only do little." Or as my father (and many others) taught me, "When you don't know what to do, simply do the next right thing." We can always do something good and God has the power to multiply these efforts to change the world.

As I watched the horrendous pictures of our Capitol being trashed and plundered, I was encouraged to see one photo that offered hope. Rep. Andy Kim was on his hands and knees picking up trash and broken items in the Rotunda. Though his heart was broken, he found something he could do for good and so can we.

What might be some of these small things we could do to improve our community, nation and world?

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Schedule

Sunday, January 17

7:00 a.m. Sunday School Lesson

Uploaded to YouTube

9:00 a.m. Sunday School - FLC & Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship

Monday, January 18

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

7:00 p.m. Pickle Ball

Wednesday, January 20

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

12:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study

5:30 p.m. To-Go Meals

Menu: chicken marsala, roasted potatoes, green bean casserole, & cookies

Thursday, January 21

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

Sunday, January 24

7:00 a.m. Sunday School Lesson

Uploaded to YouTube

9:00 a.m. Sunday School - FLC & Zoom

10:00 a.m. Worship

Monday, January 25

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

7:00 p.m. Pickle Ball

Wednesday, January 27

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

12:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study

5:30 p.m. To-Go Meals

Menu: pot roast, corn on the cob, rice pilaf, & brownies

Thursday, January 28

8:30 a.m. Pickle Ball

1:00 p.m. Clothes Closet

Church Staff Directory

Dr. Nelson Granade.....Senior Minister
Mr. James Martin.....Minister of Music & Worship
Rev. Melissa Wilson.....Minister of Children & Youth
Mrs. Elizabeth Kilby.....Minister of Young Families & Missions
Mr. Eddie Wiseman.....Accompanist / Music Assistant

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Mon - Thur, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Fri
Tel: 704-873-7231

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Financial Update

Challenges:

- We significantly missed our December offering goal by \$68,334.
- We typically receive the largest portion of our budget in December and will need to work hard to underwrite our ministries for the rest of the year.
- Our giving for the first two Sundays in January was lower than normal due to being online only.

Celebrations:

- We received a \$10,000 grant from the Campbell-Johnson Foundation which enabled us to fulfill our entire yearly mission giving to Iredell Christian Ministries, Power Cross and Iredell-Statesville Schools Bible Association.
- Despite missing our December goal, our receipts were up compared to the previous December and our spending is down – which gives us a healthy fund balance.

Our Continuing the Dream funds continue to come in regularly and we hope to begin the painting and carpeting projects this month.

Thank you for continued faithful giving to First Baptist Church of Statesville. Your support makes a difference.

Spiritual Statistics

Weeks of January 3 & 10, 2021

	1/3	1/10
In-Person	0	.8
Live Stream Views.	71	.66

Note: Due to Covid-19, there was no in-person worship on January 3 & 10. Worship was through the live stream on our YouTube channel.

Financial Statistics

	January	Year-to-Date
Giving Goal	15,927.00	335,123.00
Budget Receipts	43,186.00	268,304.00
Goals Not Yet Met	27,259.00	66,819.00
Alms	185.00	1,670.00
Designated	529.00	21,534.00



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Here are a few actions that have come to me:

- Pray for God's will and direction
- Examine your own heart and repent where needed
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Count your blessings
- Donate to a good cause
- Reach out to someone who is hurting
- Listen with an open heart and mind
- Stand up for the downtrodden
- Practice peacemaking
- Plant bulbs that will bloom later
- Renew an old friendship
- Encourage the good you see in others

I invite you to add your own thoughts and actions to this list.

Melissa



New Mural in the Preschool

While the Preschool was out for Christmas break, something new appeared! Emily Ray, Valerie Granade's daughter, offered to paint a mural in the church. I immediately knew the exact wall that would be perfect in the preschool area. There was a small wall that we had used for photo booths for the preschool that really needed a fresh coat of paint. Kari Lindeman, the preschool director, and I agreed on an idea for a mural that would convey one of our goals in preschool. The preschool works to foster creativity in the children we serve. The children who attend our preschool create crafts or artwork every single day. Our inspiration was the phrase "We create because we are made in the image of our Creator." Kari and I gave this phrase and the idea of artist's tools to Emily with the freedom to create something beautiful for our church and preschool to enjoy. Emily worked hard over the Christmas break to bring this idea to life. She designed and painted a beautiful mural that we will be able to enjoy for many years to come. I wish you could have witnessed the excitement of the preschool children as they walked by the mural and saw something new and fun. I am sure it will inspire our little artists to be creative just like their Creator. We have included pictures of the mural so that you can enjoy it as well. I hope you will visit the preschool hallway to see it in person one Sunday soon!

Melissa Wilson, Minister of Children & Youth

The Purpose of Prayer

Why do we pray? Is it to manipulate God to give us what we want or think we need? I'm sure all of us have been guilty of this at one time or another. Is it to check it off our "good Christian things to do" list? Again, guilty. Or do we pray for ourselves, for loved ones, for enemies, for circumstances so that when God answers He will receive glory? Not so guilty? Over and over in the Old Testament when people of God prayed, they ended with the phrase, "so they will know there's a God in heaven". In 1 Cor. 6:11, Paul encouraged his readers: "You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf, for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many". (ESV)

Now I want to pay tribute to Louise Hunter, who was a faithful member of the Monday morning prayer group. In every prayer that Louise offered up, she gave God glory for First Baptist Church and the many people who gave their blood, sweat, and tears (prayers) to make it what it is: a sanctuary for the glory of God. Thank you, Louise, for teaching us the purpose of prayer.

His servant and your friend,
Ginny Stikeleather



Announcements

CBF Mission Bite

Mission Bite 207: Bread of Life

“In Northern Africa, bread is a way of life. Not that long ago, women would prepare their loaves of dough at home and then send them to the community oven, where the bakers would cook the loaves and then return the fresh bread to each home. This still happens in small, rural communities, but in the big cities you can pick up fresh loaves in almost every tiny convenience store. Bakers make their morning deliveries on scooters that are outfitted with gigantic baskets behind the seat. Bread is so critical to the Northern African diet that it’s eaten for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks (diabetes is a regional health challenge).

When a family prepares more bread than they need, the leftovers are never wasted. It’s considered shameful to throw bread away, so families will take their remaining bread and put the loaves outside somewhere safe, so that any hungry passerby can eat. These loaves are never put in the dirt or on an unclean surface, so you might be surprised to see random loaves of bread stacked on wall ledges, park benches, or even tucked into tree trunks. Stray animals, people living in poverty, farmers that can’t afford to feed their flocks are all welcome to it.

Every time I see bread stashed in random places outside, I’m reminded of how important it is for communities to be involved in caring for their neighbors in ways that bring dignity. The local church here is passionate about this work, serving our most vulnerable migrant and refugee neighbors with compassion and care. It’s an honor to partner together as we serve the One who called himself the Bread of Life.”

- Karen, field personnel serving in Northern Africa



Welcome to Our Church Family!



Brett Eckerman joined our congregation at the worship service on Sunday, January 10. Brett will be baptized at a later date. Welcome to our church family!

A Message from Minister of Young Families & Missions Elizabeth Kilby

How do you do missions when we are stuck at home and it is cold outside? Words I have both thought and have heard others say. This is something that we truly have to think about and think outside the box. Who can we reach out to without being in front of them? Sometimes it is right in front of our faces. The people that we live with and our families see our good, our bad, and our ugly and maybe, just maybe, need to be checked in with. What is one thing that your immediate family needs right now? How can you check in and invest in them? Can you make them their favorite breakfast or watch their favorite show with them? Make a point in the next few weeks to be on mission with your family. Pay attention to the ways in which you can invest in their lives differently than you do already. How can you make a difference and point those around you to Jesus more than you do already? Maybe invite them into the conversation during your quiet time or try out a new prayer for dinner. Switch up some things and see how God opens the doors. Find joy in the little things and you will find joy in life.

Many Thoughts and Prayers,
Elizabeth

