

Livestreaming every Sunday at
10:00 a.m. on Facebook/
YOUTUBE or the churches APP
or website.

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Our Pastoral and Ministerial Staff

Rusty Guenther	Lead Pastor
Blake McFarland	Associate Pastor of Students and Families
Sid Greene	Worship Pastor
Karen Pommier	Children's Director

Support and Administrative Staff

Mark Williams	Office Administrator
Becky Guinn	Property Manager
Kayla Potter	CDC Director
Charlotte Black	CDC Teacher

WEEKLY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Every Sunday

Prayer Ministry	9:00 a.m.
Worship Service	10:00 a.m.
Small Group Bible Study	11:15 a.m.

Fall Wednesday Evenings (Suspended)

Worship Team Practice	5:30 p.m.
Life group Classes	6:00 p.m.
Children's Activities	6:00 p.m.
Worship Choir Practice	7:00 p.m.

SUNDAY SMALL GROUPS

11:15am

ADULTS

Adult 2 (Garrett/Greene) - Room 1
Adult 4 (Foster) - Room 4
Adult1 (Craig) - Room 6
Unity Class (Bray) - Fellowship Hall

11:15am

COLLEGE & YOUTH

Youth House Across Street

10:00am

CHILDREN

Ages 0-18mos - Baby Nursery
Ages 2-PreK - Nursery
PreK-K - Room 4
1st-5th - Fellowship Hall

11:15am

CHILDREN

Ages 0-18mos - Baby Nursery
Ages 2-K - Nursery
1st-5th - CDC

EARLY FALL 2020 VOLUME 31

Monthly Newsletter
of First Baptist Blowing Rock



This is our first newsletter since the start of the Coronavirus and is packed full of information. While this has been a unique season for all of our lives—including the cancelling of most church activities and even our meeting in person worship for ten weeks—the ministry of First Baptist Church has not stopped. We continue to teach, reach, serve and minister to the people of Watauga County and beyond. Please take a moment to read through this newsletter to discover how you can be involved as we move forward with new ministries and opportunities for service. While we might have to cancel and postpone many of our traditional Fall events and activities; we continue to exploring new venues, ideas and opportunities to be able to continue the mission of our church to "Believe, Belong and Become". Thank you for your continued involvement, encouragement and support as we "think outside the box" to discover God's incredible plan moving forward.

Join us live or online as we celebrate the start of the college football season during worship on Sunday, September 6th. Wear your favorite college teams gear to our worship service or if you are joining us online, dress the family in their colors and take a picture of you worshiping with us so we can post it on our Facebook page. This may be a unique sports season but we can still support our colleges, students and staff.





FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

For anyone who has ever read the book of Job in the Old Testament, one thing becomes abundantly clear—God is always in complete control. In our finite way of looking at situations and circumstances it can seem like everything is spiraling out of control; a pandemic that has taken thousands of lives and has wrecked our economy with lost jobs and business, schools and education thrown into disarray, a divided nation with deadly riots and anarchy threatening major cities, it seems like every day brings more troubling news—yet God remains in control. Job faced tragedy upon tragedy in his personal and business life; the world he knew burned to the ground around him, yet he continued to place his hope and trust in God and God rewarded him. That doesn't mean he didn't face depressing low points, or question why it

was happening—those are common human responses that we all struggle with—what it means is, that when he looked beyond what he could see with human eyes, he discovered a faithful God who never abandoned him. Back in January, no one could have predicted what 2020 held in store for us as individuals and a nation, yet the same God we celebrated and worshiped then, remains faithful and true today. As followers of Jesus Christ our hope remains in the one who brought love, grace, forgiveness and salvation into our lives—not a politician or political party, not a vaccine, not in some hoped for utopia—Christ and Christ alone. God has provided a great opportunity over these last several months for the Church and His followers to examine themselves; our faith, our daily intimate relationship with Him, where we place our hope, and even how we accomplish our mission and calling—my prayer is that we will not waste it.

They don't prepare you in Seminary for Pastoring a church during a pandemic where you must cancel in person worship for weeks on end, where people are confined to their homes and social interaction is frowned upon. Those are some of the very foundations in which the church was established yet as we have faced these trials—God continues to bless First Baptist. Even without meeting in person for worship; we have had families and individuals joining the church, we celebrated baptism and communion, we opened a new door of online worship which allowed us to reach hundreds more than we could ever reach in person and we discovered new ways of reaching out and ministering to our faith community. Thank you for your encouragement, faithfulness, support and sacrifice over these past seven months as it has continued to challenge our staff to dream big, be flexible and adapt and to trust in God moving forward.

With our State still in a “phase 2” of dealing with the Coronavirus, we have put on hold many of our normal Fall activities. Events like Harvest Day, Trunk or Treat and our Wednesday night discipleship classes are all on hold until we have further guidance. We continue to see our numbers grow on Sundays for our in-person worship with around 20% gathering here each week and around 80% still worshipping online. We continue to remain sensitive to those of you with health issues that require you to join us online and I want to encourage you to make worshipping on Sunday with your family online a priority until you feel comfortable joining us in person. We hope to allow our Sunday morning small groups and Sunday school classes to start meeting in person in October and our plan is for many of the classes to have an online component so anyone can join in the discussion. We are also in the process of recording and uploading many of our Wednesday night classes from the past year (Understanding the Bible, History of the Bible, This is Us, Financial Peace and Spiritual Gifts) so you can participate and view them from home. These will all be uploaded to our YouTube channel and we will let you know when they are available and complete.

I will be starting a new mini-sermon series this week called “Building Bridges not Barriers” that I pray will give each of us some Biblical insight into how Christians are commanded to deal and interact with many of the challenges we are currently facing. I hope you will join us in person and online for this important series. Like many of you, I have struggled with grieving over not seeing church family and friends during this time but I am praying for each one of you and your families daily. Please continue to let us know how we can minister to you and your families and if there is anything I can do for you, don't hesitate to contact me. May God continue to bless each of you and our faith community called First Baptist Blowing Rock. Rusty

DEACON INFORMATION

One of the ways we have been able to stay in contact with our church family over the last seven months is through our deacon family ministry. When you join the church or attend for over six months, we assign every person to one of our deacons as a part of their deacon family. This allows us to personally minister to each of our families and individuals. If you do not know who your deacon is, please contact the church office so we can put you in contact with them. Our deacon families will be changing in October as we rotate our leadership.

In a normal year, our deacons rotate off at the end of June from their 3 year term and we elect new deacons to replace them. This year, since we did not have a means to hold a normal election, those 3 deacons rotating off committed to remaining on the leadership board until we could hold elections. I want to thank Reggie Bray, Lindsey Gough and Hersel Story for their wonderful service to our church and their willingness to serve a couple of months beyond their terms. We now have 3 nominations for new deacons from our nominating committee for consideration by the church and we will have deacon elections on Sunday, September 13th during the morning worship. You will have 2 ways to participate in the election; you can either vote in person by paper ballot during the service or go online to our website and submit an online ballot. We will have a link on the homepage of our website and on our APP for the paper ballot on the morning of the election. At the bottom of each ballot will be a place for you to approve/disapprove the interim budget to run through the end of the year as well. Both of these come to the church by a recommendation from the deacon board. **The three nominations for new deacons are; Dave Kinser, Donna Hampton and Rachael Mills.**



Please be on the lookout for a churchwide email which will include the link to an online survey seeking your opinion for online ministry and service opportunities that we are planning for the Fall and Winter. Your participation and answers will help us in our planning!



STUDENT AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

This month we will be studying the life and experiences of Daniel in scripture. Babylon rolled over Judah in three waves of conquest. Daniel and three Hebrew companions—Hananiah, Mishaal, and Azariah—left Judah for Babylon in the first wave, around 605 B.C. (verse 6). In Babylon, they took their place among other captives (Jewish and other-

wise). As circumstances for captives go, they could have done worse. They had good food and lodging, an elite education, and likely a guaranteed position in the administration after success in their studies. Yet one thing was clear: Babylon expected them to abandon their former beliefs, or at least to make them secondary to what Babylon ordered.

Education, at all levels, remains one of the primary ways to instill culture and worldview in young people. It is never neutral. It will always be a potent force for transmitting philosophy and beliefs to its students. Babylon explicitly sought to transmit its values through its educational system. We must understand that the educational system we use for our children will seek to mold them into a certain way of thinking and acting. We do well to prepare them for the forces and influences they will meet, especially if it is an unbelieving system.



Off the Cuff

Check out the new video series that corresponds with our church-wide daily devotionals. Pick up a devotional at the FAITH AT HOME center just outside of the sanctuary. Videos released weekly on our App to get the conversation going.



New Youth Hangout Near the High School

Another exciting announcement is the continuing development of a youth facility being constructed by Sid and Lauren Greene within walking distance from the High School. We're hoping to begin hosting some events in the near future! This two-level facility boasts an outdoor basketball goal, indoor batting cage, weight training equipment, ballet space with barre, 9' pool table, bathroom, and group discussion space equipped with couches and tables.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Our Church budget year ended in June 2020 and considering all the disruptions in the Spring, we finished very well due to the churches continued support and the strength of our online giving options. Thank you for your faithfulness. If you have not checked out our online giving platform, this might be an easier option for you to offer your support. The year end (2019/2020) financial report is listed below and remember that a monthly financial report is always available in the boxes on the wall near the main bulletin boards. You can also find them on our website under documents.

In a “normal” year, we start our new budget year in July with a new proposed and adopted budget but due to the continuing financial unknowns; the Deacon board recommended that the church continue on a “interim” budget that is identical to the one adopted last budget year and we have been operating under this “interim” budget since July. The plan is to continue with this interim plan to allow us to gauge where we are financially and for the finance committee to come up with anew proposed budget for 2021 to begin in January. This needs to be approved by the church body and will be on the new deacon election ballot on September 13th and will also be available online. If you have any questions about these plans, please contact the church office or a member of the deacon body.

First Baptist Church of Blowing Rock

Comparison of Current Fiscal Year vs. Previous Fiscal Year
6/30/2020

<u>Operating Checking Account Balance</u>			<u>Operating Checking Account Balance</u>		
7/1/2018	Balance	\$ 62,667	7/1/2019	Balance	\$ 35,623
6/30/2019	Balance	\$ 35,623	6/30/2020	Balance	\$ 33,660

Operating BudgetSummary 2018-19				Operating Budget Summary 2019-20			
	Income	Budget Needs	Difference		Income	Budget Needs	Difference
Jul*	\$ 49,058	\$ 41,943	\$ 7,115	Jul	\$ 48,705	\$ 38,378	\$ 10,327
Aug	\$ 45,732	\$ 40,851	\$ 4,881	Aug	\$ 59,079	\$ 39,943	\$ 19,136
Sep*	\$ 46,802	\$ 39,003	\$ 7,599	Sep*	\$ 48,369	\$ 36,648	\$ 11,721
Oct	\$ 29,489	\$ 39,270	\$ (9,781)	Oct	\$ 40,430	\$ 38,288	\$ 2,142
Nov	\$ 48,864	\$ 43,073	\$ 5,791	Nov	\$ 37,264	\$ 37,622	\$ (358)
Dec*	\$ 62,082	\$ 44,817	\$ 17,265	Dec*	\$ 65,624	\$ 45,870	\$ 19,754
Jan	\$ 24,110	\$ 38,243	\$ (14,133)	Jan	\$ 39,219	\$ 43,004	\$ (3,785)
Feb	\$ 33,089	\$ 52,023	\$ (18,934)	Feb	\$ 27,702	\$ 39,235	\$ (11,533)
Mar*	\$ 43,935	\$ 40,335	\$ 3,600	Mar*	\$ 34,088	\$ 45,190	\$ (11,102)
Apr	\$ 30,363	\$ 35,866	\$ (5,503)	Apr	\$ 37,663	\$ 34,115	\$ 3,548
May	\$ 42,828	\$ 39,994	\$ 2,834	May'''	\$ 31,482	\$ 40,646	\$ (9,164)
Jun	\$ 82,327	\$ 38,673	\$ 43,654	Jun	\$ 47,230	\$ 38,866	\$ 8,364
YTD	\$ 538,479	\$ 494,091	\$ 44,388	YTD	\$ 516,855	\$ 477,805	\$ 39,050

- Month with 5 Sundays

- Month with 5 Sundays

Payroll Protection Program Loan Balance:	\$ 56,300.00
Payroll Protection Program Transfers to Operating Checking Account through June:	\$ 56,242.00
Funds transferred from Operating Checking Account to Missions/Reserve in June:	\$ 45,000.00

Balance Sheet Summary 2019-20		Balance Sheet Summary 2020-21	
July		July	
General Operating Account	\$ 26,495	\$	27,468
PPP Checking Account		\$	58
Special Projects Money Market	\$ 84,376	\$	159,798
Cessna Scholarship CD	\$ 10,360	\$	10,389
Stock Portfolio	\$ 10,943	\$	24,441
PPP Loan		\$	(56,300)
Equity	\$ 132,174	\$	165,854

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

August Birthdays

- 1 - Polly Johnson
- 2 - Sally Newcomm
- 4 - Richard Dunn
- 4 - Ashlyn Smith
- 5 - Buddy Barker
- 5 - Jennifer Chick
- 8 - Diane Moore
- 9 - Gretchen Piasecny
- 13 - Caleb Guenther
- 15 - Lynn Williams
- 16 - Shawn Clark

September Birthdays

- 1 - Kati Mac Greene
2 - Greg Barr
6 - Annette Beeler
9 - Jill Venable
9 - Blakely Woolard
11 - Brayson Gough
13 - Samantha Bowling
13 - Loretta Horn
16 - Kim Ford
18 - Linda Freeman
18 - Steady Cash
19 - Jensen Lawrence
20 - Emma Clark
20 - Ruth Klutz
21- Carol Greene
24 - Olivia Caldwell
25 - Alice Crocker
26 - Andrea Foster
27 - Beverly Smith
28 - Kim Guenther
29 - Hersel Story

October Birthdays

- 4 - George Bishop
4 - Paul Fairbetter
13 - Helen Cain
13 - Jake Dalton
14 - Madi Greene
14 - Richard Hill
15 - John Butler
19 - Grant Martin
19- Beth Jackson
20 - Dudley Mizell
20 - Greg Frank
21 - Olivia Reese
22- Nancy Kronmen
23 - Brenda Fairbetter
23 - Jim Cain
23 - Jake Mills
27 - Garrett Bowman
31 - Nancy Gossett

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 - Sid & Lauren Greene
6 - Jim & Helen Cain
17 - John & Beverly Butler
20 - Charles & Margaret Hardin
20 - Ed & Lynn Williams
29 - Larry & Donna Hampton

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

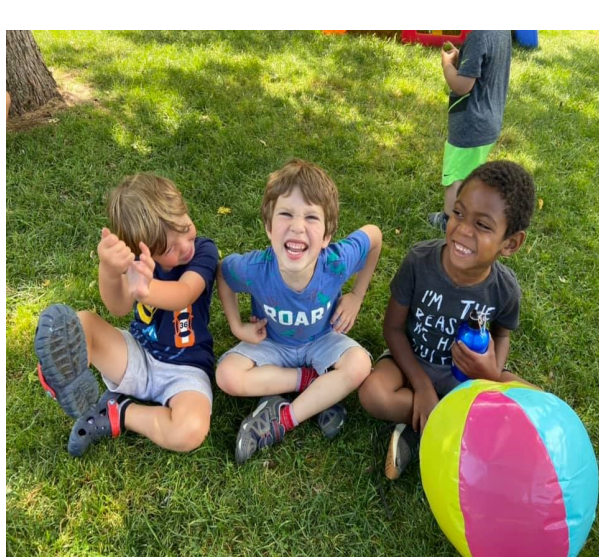
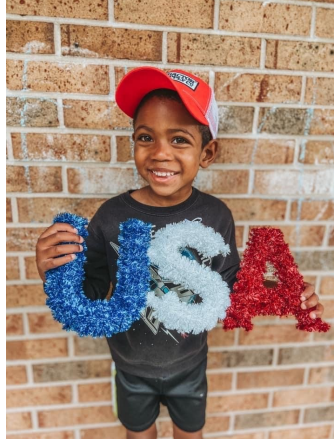
- 2 - Carl and Linda Freeman
4 - Billy and Jennifer Chick
5 - Shawn and Jonelle Clark
9 - Wayne and Theresa Shoemaker
14 - Michael and Lynda Swann
15 - Matt and Katie Blackburn
25 - Jack and Paula Simms

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 17 - John & Beverly Butler | 8 - Zack & Mary Ladd |
| 20 - Charles & Margaret Hardin | 9 - Bill & Carol Pitts |
| 20 - Ed & Lynn Williams | 11 - Bill & Pat Wheeler |
| 29 - Larry & Donna Hampton | 20 - Ralph & Lynn Pitts |

CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Child Development center has welcomed lots of new faces the past few weeks and we are so excited to jump into the Fall season with many fun and engaging activities for our children. Our staff is doing all we can to ensure the safety of our center. The Child Development Center is currently operating at full capacity. We are using all precautions, following guidelines and implementing regulations the state has asked us to do. Currently, we are only allowing staff and children inside the building. Drop off and pick up are done outside on the sidewalk. We do mandatory temperature checks upon arrival of children and staff and periodically throughout the day. All staff are required to wear masks inside and outside the building while we are around the children and we are spending as much time as possible outside for the fresh air. We have a very in-depth daily cleaning routine and are sanitizing toys and surfaces daily. Our top priority is to keep our Center a happy and healthy environment for our children to learn and grow in.



CHILDRENS MINISTRY



Like everyone else, the Children's Ministry is trying to find ways to stay connected at a distance... We were so sad to not be able to do a VBS this year. Especially since plans were already well on their way. But God is in control of everything and He is using this time to make us stop and re-evaluate our relationships... With Him, with our families and friends, and with ourselves.

For now, we continue doing our Jr Church during the message on Sundays. Our numbers of kids are smaller, so it makes it easy to keep a distance. But we make the most of our time singing songs with powerful truths, learning from the Bible, memorizing Psalm 150, memorizing the books of the Bible among other activities... And once in a while we have a special guest, like Miss Pat, just to add a little excitement. Our teens continue to be a big help.



Madi Greene taught the lesson on August 1st and planned the whole meeting on her own. There is a lot of talent in this church!

Many parents have found it challenging to have their kids around. Others have felt very blessed by being forced to have more quality time. I've felt both ways. It depends on the day and the circumstances. But I don't get tired of the relationship, only of the constant work it takes to raise little disciples. And now the big announcement that schools are going virtual for the first 9 weeks... It is hitting everyone at once! So, Blake and I have been brainstorming and praying about how the church can be a support in these times. We have so many things to take into consideration and so many options... but we know God will guide us and with the help of parents and God's wisdom I know we can come up with a great plan. Please help us pray for this new season because it has the great potential of giving us the opportunity to raise our church family kids with the Gospel at the center!

As you may know, July 26th was Morgan Ayer's last Sunday! We will miss her. She has been a huge blessing, but we are excited for this new season of her life where she is moving close to her parents so that she can help her dad with his business.

Grocery Relief Ministry



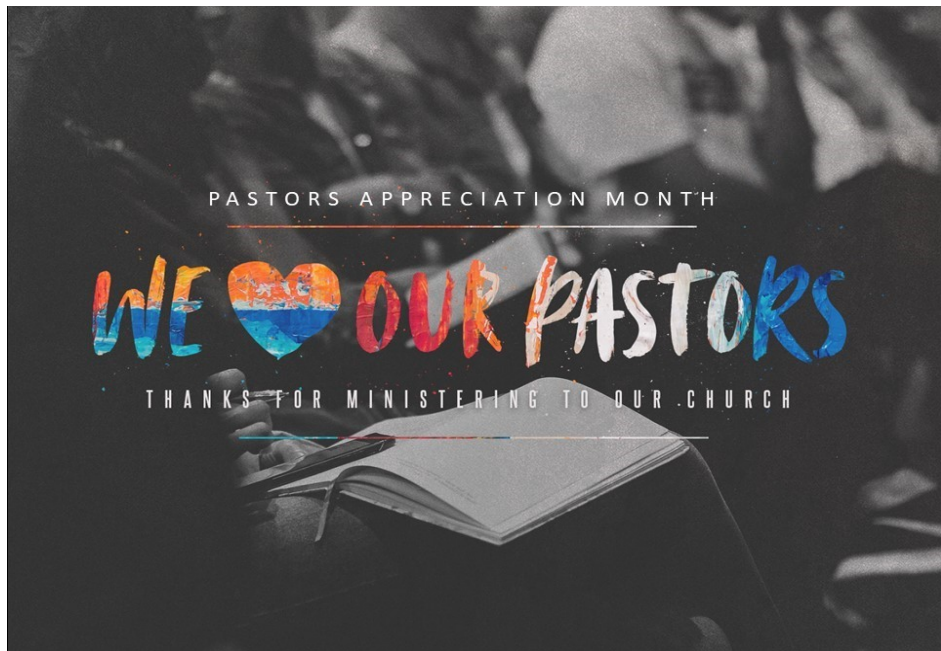
Nutritious food can be expensive and difficult for many people to access. Our church body is helping to bridge that gap by simply manning a grocery box distribution point on Thurs-

day's from 5:00 - 7:00 PM at our church for anyone in our community who has a need. To accomplish this, we are partnering with *Wine-to-Water* to offer quality food and hygiene items to our neighbors in the High Country. The boxes will be delivered to the church at 4:00 PM on Thursday; however, we need volunteers to hand them out with a smile. Please sign-up for the dates you are willing to help out by calling the church office or online through our church App under Connect >> Groups >> Grocery Relief. You may sign up as an individual or as a group. Also, you may sign up for the entire shift or a half-shift.



You can join us online or watch previous services three ways

- Go to the Church Website (firstbaptistblowingrock.com) or APP on your mobile devices and click on the link and it will take you to the page where the video is playing and prior services are available.
- Like the church Facebook page and a reminder will pop up on Sunday mornings that we are live and watch it on Facebook. Be sure to comment so we know you are joining us and share the link to your own Facebook page to help us get more views.
- Go to YOUTUBE on your computer, mobile device or smart TV and type in First Baptist Church of Blowing Rock and this will take you to the church page and simply click on the service you want to watch. Click the subscribe button and it will remind you when we have a new video posted.



Pastor Appreciation

The month of October is Pastor Appreciation month so please take an opportunity to thank our Pastors - Rusty, Blake and Sid, for all they do for our church, our church families and our community. It is also a great time to thank our Pastor's families for the encouragement, support and sacrifices they make in allowing these men to serve our church.



Sid Greene

Worship Pastor



WORSHIP MINISTRY

My sentiments as your worship leader... praying for the congregation and choir members. Asking for the bonus of seeing your faces and singing his praises together! Stay in His presence and that'll strengthen us for this season!

~Sid

1 Thessalonians 3: 3-13

Not that the troubles should come as any surprise to you. You've always known that we're in for this kind of thing. It's part of our calling. When we were with you, we made it quite clear that there was trouble ahead. And now that it's happened, you know what it's like. That's why I couldn't quit worrying; I had to know for myself how you were doing in the faith. I didn't want the Tempter getting to you and tearing down everything we had built up together.

6-8 But now that Timothy is back, bringing this terrific report on your faith and love, we feel a lot better. It's especially gratifying to know that you continue to think well of us, and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you! In the middle of our trouble and hard times here, just knowing how you're doing keeps us going. Knowing that your faith is alive keeps us alive.

9-10 What would be an adequate thanksgiving to offer God for all the joy we experience before him because of you? We do what we can, praying away, night and day, asking for the bonus of seeing your faces again and doing what we can to help when your faith falters.

11-13 May God our Father himself and our Master Jesus clear the road to you! And may the Master pour on the love so it fills your lives and splashes over on everyone around you, just as it does from us to you. May you be infused with strength and purity, filled with confidence in the presence of God our Father when our Master Jesus arrives with all his followers.

