



First Baptist Church  
of MURFREESBORO

# the WITNESS

## Growing In Christ. Sharing His Love.

July 2019, Volume 62, Number 7

200 East Main Street  
Murfreesboro, TN 37130  
615.893.2514  
www.fbcmboro.org

### Welcome, new members!

#### Church Members

Evie Wrye  
Baptism

Aidan Hayes  
Baptism

Julianne & Lucy Utter  
Baptism

Holden England  
Baptism

### Financial Report

Year to Date	
Budget Requirements	\$70,442.31
Budget Receipts	\$79,320.46
Designated Receipts	\$21,981.00
L.I.F.E. Campaign Receipts to Date	\$877,386.51
Outstanding Loan Balance	\$472,633.93

### Our Ministers

Rev. Phil Potratz,  
Minister of Christian Formation

Rev. David Cates, Minister of Students

Pam Pilote, Minister of Senior Adults  
& Congregational Care

Bryan Anderson, Minister of Music

Rev. David Berg, Minister of Preschool/Children

Dr. Eugene Cotey, Pastor Emeritus



### GOD AND TRANSITIONS

By Phil Potratz

The announcement that the Schoonmaker family would be transitioning to a different church was a significant shock for me personally, as well as for our church family. I wasn't surprised that another church might be in need of Noel's gifts, but I did wrestle with a real sense of loss. Grief is something we each process in our own way. Part of my processing included one morning set aside for prayer and fasting. Providentially, the Old Testament passages I was reading for the Old Testament Challenge that morning were I Samuel 4-7. Chapter 4 told of Israel losing Eli the High Priest, a beloved spiritual leader, and of the Ark of the Covenant being captured by the Philistines. The chapter ends in despair with Eli's daughter-in-law stating "The Glory of God has departed from Israel." Turn the page to chapters 5-7, however, and it is very clear that God is still at work. The ensuing time of transition eventually resulted in a time of spiritual repentance and renewal in which the Israelites rededicated themselves to serving God and experienced God's work among them in new ways. (7:3-12) The message was clear: God is greater than any one leader and is always with us. Our challenge in a time of transition is to renew our spiritual commitment and to be open to the new things that He will do in our own hearts and in the life of our church.

Church consultants say the first step in a successful Pastoral transition is to celebrate the good things accomplished together and have a healthy goodbye. I

was so pleased to watch during the 3 weeks following Noel's announcement as people came by to say thank you, helped out, gave cards and gifts, and remembered the good things from the Schoonmakers' time with us. At the farewell reception for the Schoonmakers, our church also presented them with a gift. One regret of Noel's was that he had never been to the Grand Ole Opry. Our church gave his entire family tickets to the Opry complete with a night's stay at the Opryland Hotel and a \$100 gift card for meals, etc. Looking back, I believe these 3 weeks were a time of both celebration and grief which were important to being a healthy church community.

Looking forward, many of you have offered your support to go the extra mile and make sure that our church ministries stay strong. I am so grateful for this positive spirit! Our Personnel Committee has been working diligently with the Ministry staff and Deacon leadership, and you will be receiving a letter soon regarding an Interim/Transitional Pastor candidate for our church. This holds great potential for new growth.

In conclusion, this transition is not one I would have chosen. After reflection, however, the times I have experienced God most clearly in my life have been during times of transition. My personal prayer times during these past few weeks have continued to lead me to passages like Isaiah 44:1-4 in which God says essentially, "Don't be afraid. I want to lead you to fresh experiences and new growth." Join me in praying for God's leadership and guidance during this time of transition. Together let's open our hearts to the new things that God plans to do in and through First Baptist Church.

### Reminders

FALL KICK-OFF  
Sunday, August 4  
9:15 AM: Bible Study  
Promotions  
10:30 AM: Blessing of the  
Backpacks

POPS CONCERT  
& Covered Dish Dinner  
Sunday, August 18  
5:00 PM  
CLC

DEEPER RESUMES  
Wednesday, August 21  
5:00 PM: Fellowship Dinner  
5:40 PM: Children's Activities  
& Prayer Time  
6:00 PM: DEEPER classes for  
adults

## STUDENT MINISTRY

## SOUTH TEXAS MISSIONS PERSPECTIVES

By David Cates

This year's mission trip took FBC's large intergenerational "youth" mission team to the US/Mexico border. (The team had 67 members with ages ranging from 7 years to Bobby Wells!) This mission field held a unique opportunity for us to show the love of Christ to children, refugees, and people living in extreme poverty. Our team hosted VBS, served meals and sorted and distributed clothing in a refugee processing center, and impacted local border communities called "colonias" by building shelters for two families, as well as distributing food alongside Iglesia Vino Nuevo. We were granted opportunities no one expected when our group experienced a devastating storm which caused extreme flooding. We were able to assist with flood relief, helping a small local church clear out ruined carpets and sort through damaged property to find what was salvageable.

Every person's experience is unique, and God uses our circumstances to shape our perspectives as we grow and learn through service and fellowship. First timer Britton Call had this to say when reflecting on his experiences: "I really didn't know what to expect, but I definitely came out of the experience having grown in relationships with the youth and others in our church, in my relationship with those we came to serve, and in my personal relationship with the Lord. I had so much fun getting to know the others in the youth group on a deeper level. We had so many laughs and made a ton of great memories. Being with the children that we led in VBS was amazing. I felt like I really had a connection with the boys in my group, and I hope I was able to show them God's love in a fun way. My personal relationship with the Lord grew stronger, too. I was present in the moment and was able to feel God and see how God was working on me and working through me. I am so thankful I was able to go on this mission trip and I hope that God will continue to shape and prepare me

for many more mission trips."

Middle school student Tessa Long also had her first mission experience in South Texas. "Being with the people in Texas was incredible, and it was amazing to see how people who had so little were able to give so much to our group. Watching the kids interact as they played and made crafts was beautiful; I realized how incredibly important it is to see the joy in the little things that God has given us. We saw so much poverty in the Rio Grande Valley, and yet many people were full of joy and ready to learn about God."



Seasoned mission tripper Erin Stump shared: "This year was unlike any of the previous trips I have been on. The third night, a storm flooded the camp we had been staying at. But that didn't stop this amazing team from doing God's work. I learned that God always has a plan and our team could handle anything thrown at us. The storm flooded our place? We found a new place. Kids in poor conditions? We built them shelter. God placed us in these kids' lives for a reason and most of these kids just needed to be reassured that someone does love them and cares for them. I learned a lot about myself too. I learned that you don't have to stay in one group. I branched out and now the 6th graders are some of my best friends. (I also learned not to sit in the back of the van when you get sick...that was not fun!) Doing a VBS really puts your mind in perspective. We take so much for granted when these kids were just happy

to have someone to talk to. With that said, goodbyes are the hardest. It's hard to say goodbye to kids you've made a strong connection with in such a short time, but the kids are what make these trips unforgettable and that's what I love most about mission trips."

Another first timer, Mike Petroka, was excited for the opportunity to serve alongside his son, Gunnar. He shared this: "Looking back, I found that the preparation meetings that Rev. David Cates held before the trip were definitely helpful. A common theme that really seemed to stick with me was "flexibility". Plans are made but can change in an instant. This may be the understatement of the year for the South Texas trip! We make plans, but God may have something else in mind. The storms produced some of the worst flooding that I have ever seen. At this point, being flexible was a must and I felt this was the message that God wanted me to realize. It's not our plan, but God's plan. From having the meaningful fellowship with others while we were trapped in our compound, to losing one of our vans for a day because of mechanical failures, (Note: see me for additional information on the cause of the failure!), God certainly had a distinct plan for us. It was great seeing the group work together during these unexpected circumstances. I am thankful to God for every single instance that required flexibility. I am looking forward to next year's trip! For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure, Philippians 2:13."



## PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN'S MINISTRY VBS: AN ATHENS ADVENTURE

By David Berg

Earlier this month we hosted our annual Vacation Bible School from July 7-11. This year our theme was Athens Adventure: Paul's Dangerous Journey to Share the Truth, and our children learned about Paul's missionary travels throughout Greece and how he was willing to face difficult and sometimes dangerous situations because he knew that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the truth and that it needed to be shared with everyone! We averaged 70 children a night throughout the week and had three confessions of faith, which we celebrated with Baptism on July 14. Last year we tried something new



by using the Marketplace format of VBS. It was such a big hit with the children and our volunteers that we continued with that format this year. Each

night the children's Oikos (Family) Groups had time together to discuss the Bible story for the day. They visited Paul and his friend Damaris, played by Rick and Cathy Bean, for a dramatized Bible lesson. The children also had the opportunity to visit the Marketplace shops to do crafts and activities, played games, and tried Mediterranean themed snacks. I am so thankful for all the volunteers who invested their time and energy into making VBS a success. Their hard work was certainly rewarded by the enjoyment and spiritual growth each child experienced throughout the week.



## PRESCHOOL/CHILDREN'S MINISTRY FEAR LESS TO LOVE MORE

By David Berg

In June our Children's Ministry sent 14 students to PassportKids! Summer camp. This year the camp was held on the campus of Cumberland University in Lebanon, TN. The theme for this summer was Fearless and our theme verse was 1 Corinthians 16:13-14. The children learned about the importance of fearing less so that we can love more by studying various Bible stories centered on that theme. Passport Camps as an organization is highly Missions focused and this year the missions focus was the Refuge and Hope Mission in Uganda. This organization works with African refugees, helping them recover and



reestablish their lives after being forced to flee their homes. The kids also had opportunities for fun and making new friends throughout the week. We even won the first ever PassportKids! Kickball Tournament! I am so thankful for the wonderful chaperones who went with me:

Elena Jones, Allyson Long, Cory Call, and Chris Dye. It was a great four days! Kids and chaperones alike had a good time, and I am already looking forward to next summer!



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## MISSIONS

### MANDERSON, SD 2019

By Sara Bell

First Baptist Church Murfreesboro members, Community Connection Church in Lafayette, and individuals from Kentucky and Virginia traveled to the Pine Ridge Reservation in Manderson, South Dakota. Our goal was to be the hands and feet of Christ during our week with our Lakota friends. Our team works with various age groups and prepares crafts, games, Bible studies, prayer times, food boxes, meals, activities, construction projects and more. Primarily we come to show love and respect to our Lakota friends. While the trip to Manderson may be considered a short term mission trip, it has actually evolved into a long term mission ministry. Friendships have been formed over 30 years, and our long term commitment has created a sense of trust and genuine caring. Our Lakota friends are burdened with poverty, teen suicide, unemployment, lack of medical

and dental services, drugs and alcohol addictions, and virtually nothing to do to occupy time. It is hard to paint a picture with words of what we see when we go to Manderson. Since we know of the burdens they carry, we find we carry those with us. Through the year we hear by phone calls, facebook posts or general news some of the happenings in Manderson and that creates a sense of connection. On a personal note, Manderson has a special place in my heart and I feel a sense of God's calling to minister as long as I can with the Lakota in this place. They are my friends. I am concerned about them, want to help them, and want to assure them of Jesus' love for them always. Some people have asked me if I have seen any changes in people over the years, and I say yes! I have seen our friends become more receptive to hearing about God. I have seen them grow to love us and each other. One person told us our visit is the best week of the year. Another took her vacation time to come participate in our VBS,

while another came from Pine Ridge and slept in a tent all week so she could be with us in our VBS. God is alive and well in Manderson. Continue to pray and seek opportunities to be a part of this short term, long surviving mission ministry.



# AUGUST

## WEEKLY at FBC

Sunday		Wednesday, July 31	Monday, August 19
8:45 am	Media Library Open	5:30 pm Bible Study Teacher/Leader Training	7:00 pm Men's Small Group, Conference Room
9:15 am	Bible Study	7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	
10:30 am	Worship	Thursday, August 1	Tuesday, August 20
6:00 pm	Youth Small Groups, Meet in Host Homes (begin 9/8)	6:00 pm WEE School Open House Greece Trip Meeting, Fellowship Hall	4:30 pm Budget & Finance Committee, Conference Room
Monday		Friday, August 2	Wednesday, August 21 (Deeper resumes)
9:30 am	Beginners' Watercolor, Arts & Crafts Room	10:00 am Joyful Sound sings at Red Cedar Glen, Hendersonville, lunch at Chocolate Covered Strawberry	6:00 pm "II Corinthians," led by Larry Taylor, Fellowship Hall
Tuesday		Sunday, August 4 (Fall Kick-off Sunday)	"Understanding World Religions," led by Phil Potratz, Room 107
4:45 pm	Basketball, CLC	9:15 am Promotion Sunday	"Ceramics," led by Daune Jordan, Arts & Crafts Room
6:30 pm	JCM, CrossMain (begins 9/3)	10:30 am Blessing of the Backpacks	7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
7:00 pm	Boy Scout Troop #416, Basement, CLC Cub Scouts, Room 208 (begin 8/27)	Tuesday, August 6	Wednesday, August 28
Wednesday (DEEPER begins 8/21)		10:45 am Adults on Mission, Room 107	6:00 pm "II Corinthians," led by Larry Taylor, Fellowship Hall
9:00 am	Media Library Open	Wednesday, August 7	"Understanding World Religions," led by Phil Potratz, Room 107
4:00 pm	Fiber Arts Group, Room 211	9:00 am Senior Adults to Castalian Springs, Lunch at Keller's Restaurant	"Ceramics," led by Daune Jordan, Arts & Crafts Room
5:00 pm	Fellowship Dinner, Fellowship Hall	6:00 pm Ceramics, Arts & Crafts Room	7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	Media Library Staff Available	7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Friday, August 30
5:30 pm	Nursery for Children, Birth - 2 years, Nursery Suite	Friday, August 9	10:00 am Joyful Sound Rehearsal & Potluck Lunch, Fellowship Hall
5:40 pm	Preschool & Children's Choirs	10:00 am Joyful Sound sings at Stones River Manor	
	Youth Endeavor, CrossMain	Sunday, August 11	
6:00 pm	Adult Deeper Classes	4:00 pm Deacons' Meeting, Fellowship Hall	
6:20 pm	Preschool & Children's Missions	Tuesday, August 13	
7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	12:00 pm Round Table II, Room 107	
Thursday		Wednesday, August 14	
9:30 am	Watercolor, Arts & Crafts Room	6:00 pm Ceramics, Arts & Crafts Room	
		7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal Renovations Committee, Conference Room	
		Thursday, August 15	
		10:30 am Insight Counseling Luncheon, First United Methodist Church	
		Friday, August 16	
		10:45 am Young at Heart, Fellowship Hall	
		Sunday, August 18	
		5:00 pm POPS Concert & Covered Dish Dinner, CLC	

### O.T. CHALLENGE READINGS FOR AUGUST

2 Kings 9 - 2 Chronicles 11  
Psalms 104 - 115

A detailed reading schedule  
may be found on our website  
[www.fbcmboro.org](http://www.fbcmboro.org)  
under the "News" tab.

## On Call this Month

July 28 - August 3

Staff  
Bryan Anderson - 615.519.0875

Deacons  
Cory Call - 615.293.7015  
Ashli Lamons - 615.631.1134  
John Ward - 615.310.2137  
David Dykes - 615.895.8962

August 4 - 10

Staff  
David Berg - 205.517.1250

Deacons  
Mark Ricketts - 615.653.3081  
John Stracener - 615.848.8005  
Gary Green - 615.890.5493  
David Peterson - 615.418.6791

August 11 - 17

Staff  
Pam Pilote - 615.631.6402

Deacons  
Carl McKnight - 615.893.4489  
Butch Campbell - 615.896.1951  
Ben Parris - 615.653.7862  
Sean Prince - 615.713.0776

August 18 - 24

Staff  
David Cates - 615.273.2806

Deacons  
Jenni Stinnett - 615.848.4900  
Jim Cotey - 615.948.4755  
Billy Vaughn - 615.867.8713  
Ben Wells - 615.849.9685

August 25 - 31

Staff  
Phil Potratz - 615.830.7790

Deacons  
Randy Bozeman - 615.456.5645  
David Dykes - 615.895.8962  
Dale Krisle - 615.804.6588  
Jim Whitaker - 423.903.0641

## Announcements

**FROM NOEL SCHOONMAKER** - Dear First Baptist Church, Thank you a million times for the wonderful reception! Your support means the world to me, and I greatly appreciate the gift of Opry tickets and a stay at the Opryland Hotel. Being your pastor has been a tremendous honor full of blessings. I pray the very best for you! In Christian love,  
Noel Schoonmaker.

**FALL KICK-OFF SUNDAY!** - August 4. Invite a friend to come as we start our new Bible study year. If you aren't currently in a Bible study class, this would be a great day to start! Doughnut holes will be available in the Welcome Center and CrossMain prior to Bible study as we begin a new year together!

**PROMOTION SUNDAY** - August 4, 9:15 a.m. Preschool, Children & Youth go directly to their new classes.

**BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS** - Sunday, August 4, 10:30 a.m. All students are encouraged to bring empty backpacks or ones containing Bibles and what is needed for Bible study and worship. There will be a time of prayer for our students as well as a time of prayer and commissioning for school staff and volunteers.

**MISSION ACTION PROJECT FOR JULY** - Please help stock the Giving Box! The Girl Scout Giving Box is located outside the CLC entrance and is a way to help the needy in our community. Needs: Pop-Top Canned Food, Dry Food, Granola Bars, Cleaning Supplies, Toiletries, Combs & Brushes, Antibacterial Wipes, Bottled Water, Sunscreen, Lip Balm. Please place in designated tub in Donation Area by Wednesday, July 31.

**WEE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE** - Thursday, August 1, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

**TRIP TO GREECE** - Sawyer Shoates, our Collette representative, will be here on Thursday, August 1 at 6:00 p.m. to talk about Greece. Join us in the fellowship hall to talk about Footsteps of Paul and another NEW Greece option.

**ADULTS ON MISSION** - Tuesday, August 6 at 10:45 a.m. in Room 107 with discussion of possible mission projects. All are invited to come and share a potluck lunch to follow.

**CO-ED SOFTBALL TEAM!** Doubleheader games on Thursday nights against other church teams beginning August 14. Contact Charlie Runion (615.506.6830) or Rick Bean (615.785.2173) for more info. Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board across from the conference room.

**INSIGHT COUNSELING CENTER'S ANNUAL LUNCHEON & FUND-RAISER** - Thursday, August 15 at First United Methodist Church. Doors open at 10:30 a.m.; lunch served at 11:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to come learn about the center's work and give to make counseling services available to all. \$25 per seat/\$200 for a table of 8. Checks can be made payable to Insight Counseling Centers and given to Risé Hayes, Justin Holder, Jeff Fryer, or Karen Potratz. They can also be mailed to FBC c/o Karen Potratz.

**POPS CONCERT** - Sunday, August 18, Covered Dish Dinner at 5:00 p.m., concert begins at 5:30 p.m., CLC. Bring food for your family to share. The church provides drinks and paper products.

**WEDNESDAY EVENING DINNERS** resume August 21 at 5:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Everyone needs to make a new reservation. Please be sure to let us know if you want a standing reservation or just for the one Wednesday evening by calling the church office at 615.893.2514. You may also go to our website ([www.fbcmboro.org](http://www.fbcmboro.org)) and click on Fellowship Meal under the "News" tab.

**ADULT DEEPER CLASSES** beginning August 21 at 6:00 PM:  
**II Corinthians Bible Study** led by Larry Taylor in the Fellowship Hall  
**Understanding World Religions** led by Phil Potratz in Room 107  
**Ceramics** led by Daune Jordan in Arts & Crafts Room

**DR. MIROSLAV VOLF** - Sunday, September 8. Dr. Volf will be our guest preacher at 10:30 a.m. as we have a joint worship with St. Paul's Episcopal in our sanctuary. Dr. Volf will also deliver The Dr. Martin McCullough Lecture at 3:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. Details on church website.

**MISSIONS NEWS** - After careful consideration, the FBC Missions Committee recently voted to shift our regional missions emphasis away from the Neverfail community outside Sparta, TN. Our regional emphasis will be directed instead to deepening our partnership with Olive Branch Ministries ([OliveBranchMinistriesKY.org](http://OliveBranchMinistriesKY.org)) in South Central Kentucky. There will be announcements about upcoming opportunities to get involved in future publications.