



FIRST BAPTIST
COLUMBUS
JOIN OUR *Family* OF FAITH

Rev. Evan Guse, Senior Pastor
Tyler Griffin, Associate Pastor

From the Pastor's Pen

Dear First Baptist Family,

The stretch between Christmas and the New Year always feels a little strange. The celebrations are (mostly) over, the calendar is turning, and most of us are trying to get our footing again. It is a natural moment to look back on the year behind us and to wonder what kind of year we are stepping into.

If you joined us on Christmas Eve, you heard me say that God does not shout His love from a distance, but comes near in the person of Jesus. The Word became flesh. God met the world not with better instructions, but with His very presence.

That matters as we begin a new year. We tend to start with self-assessment: what went well, what we need to fix, and what we hope will finally be different. But when Paul writes from prison in Philippians, unsure of his own future, he does not talk about starting over. He talks about being claimed and empowered. “Not that I have already obtained all this,” he writes, “but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”

His life is no longer built on what he has achieved, but on the fact that Christ has already taken hold of him. Luke tells us that at a turning point in His ministry, Jesus “set His face toward Jerusalem.” His direction mattered, leaning fully into the will of the Father, even knowing the road would be hard.

As we enter 2026, maybe the question before us is not what we will finally fix, but where we are setting our faces. Toward God’s Word. Toward prayer. Toward generosity. Toward compassion. Toward peace. Toward the small, faithful practices that shape a life over time.

We do not start this year from scratch. We start it held by the One who has already come near and who will continue to walk with us into whatever lies ahead.

Looking forward to a new year with you,

Pastor Evan



FBC News

As we stand at the edge of a new year, many of us find ourselves reflecting on what 2025 has brought us and wondering what lies ahead of us for 2026. The replacement of our wall calendar is a reminder that can bring back many feelings from the past year. We remember moments of joy and growth, but we also carry memories of challenges, unanswered prayers, losses, and possibly seasons that stretched our faith. Yet Scripture reminds us that God meets us not only on the mountain, but in the valley, and in every season.

Lamentations 3:22-23 tells us,
"Because of the Lord's faithful love we do not perish, for His mercies never end. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness!"

This promise does not depend on how successful our year felt, how strong our faith was, or how well our plans worked out. Praise God, His mercy is not earned, it is freely given. Each morning, including January 1, 2026, arrives carrying more grace from a faithful God. A new year does not mean we erase the past; although we may want to sometimes. It means we entrust the past to a faithful God. He does not waste seasons. He uses them. The lessons learned, the faith refined, and even the wounds we carry can become places where God's grace is most evident. When we look back, we can see how God has already been preparing us for what is next. Even though we didn't realize it at the time.

As we step into the coming year, the invitation before us is not to have everything figured out, but to walk forward in trust. Proverbs reminds us to acknowledge the Lord in all our ways, trusting that He will direct our paths. That kind of trust shapes how we pray, how we love, how we serve, and how we live together as the body of Christ.

May this new year be marked not simply by busyness or activity, but by deeper faithfulness. A deeper trust in the God whose faithfulness never ends. May we be a church that listens for God's voice, depends on His Spirit, and reflects Jesus' love to one another and to our community. Let us be people who step forward into the new year with courage. Not because we know what the year holds, but because we know the One who holds us.

As we move into the new year together, may our prayer be simple and sincere:

Lord, lead us. Shape us. Use us for Your glory.

Pastor Tyler

FORWARD IN FAITH

First Baptist Church 2025/2026 Capital Campaign

“Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you.”

Joshua 3:5

For generations, God has been faithful to our church. In worship, fellowship, and service, the Spirit has shaped us into a people who share God’s love and participate in His mission. We are grateful for the legacy we have received and the ministry that continues to grow here.

Forward in Faith is our shared commitment to strengthen this ministry for the years ahead. By caring for our building, renewing spaces for worship and discipleship, and extending welcome to our community, we take the next step in the work God has entrusted to us.

Together, we look back with gratitude and forward in faith.

Honoring Our Legacy

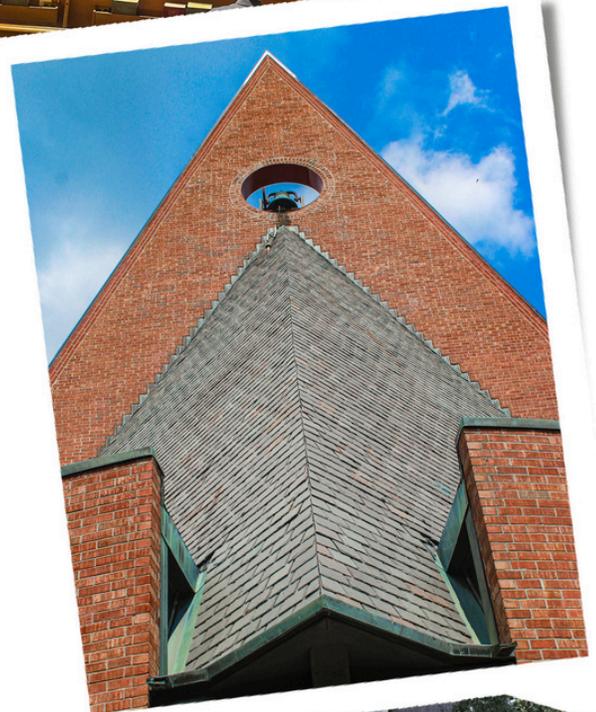
God has been faithful through every generation of our church. Caring for our shared life honors the legacy we have received and strengthens the foundation for the ministry ahead.

Strengthening Ministry

Worship, discipleship, and mission shape who we are as a church. Renewing the spaces where we gather helps us serve with clarity, welcome, and joy as we follow Christ together.

Welcoming Our Community

God calls us to share His love beyond our walls. Creating warm, inviting spaces reflects the heart of Christ and extends hospitality to neighbors who seek connection, care, and hope.



➤ Phase 1: Roof and Windows Repair - \$120,000

This work protects the building envelope by replacing our flat roof (not the sloped, slate roof) and addressing window failure points. These repairs prevent leaks and preserve the spaces where worship, fellowship, and ministry take place. Caring for the facility in this way honors the legacy entrusted to us and strengthens the foundation for the ministry God is continuing to grow here.

➤ Phase 2: Sanctuary A/V and Lighting - \$200,000

Our current system is aging and at the point of needing full replacement. This project renews the heart of our worship life by updating sound clarity, projection, lighting, and livestream quality, while honoring the beauty of our historic building. These improvements enhance accessibility and support meaningful worship for every generation. This work reflects our commitment to creating a space where the church can hear the Word proclaimed clearly, worship together with joy, and warmly welcome all into our beautiful sanctuary.

➤ Phase 3: Children's Ministry Spaces - \$20,000

Refreshing our children's classrooms and nursery with new flooring, lighting, paint, furnishings, updated toys and equipment, and a dedicated Mother's Room creates a warm and welcoming environment for families. These updates communicate care, safety, and belonging to the youngest among us and reflect our commitment to nurturing the next generation in their faith.

➤ Phase 4: Pickleball and Beautification - \$100,000

This project converts our worn and unutilized volleyball court into a welcoming outdoor space featuring two pickleball courts and a landscaped gathering area. Revitalizing this part of our property strengthens our visibility, improves our grounds, and helps us embrace our place in the neighborhood. These updates extend hospitality, create natural opportunities for connection, and provide a beautiful space where neighbors and friends can gather, play, and experience the warmth of our church family.

➤ Spiritual and Missional Commitments - \$20,000

As part of Forward in Faith, we are also committing to outward mission and congregational spiritual renewal. Increased generosity through this campaign allows us to make missional giving a greater priority. A designated gift to Love Chapel enables us to share Christ's compassion with our community in a tangible way, supporting neighbors who face real needs. In addition, a churchwide retreat in April 2026 will give our congregation time to worship, rest, have fun, pray, and grow together during this important season. These commitments remind us that the heart of this campaign is not only about our building, but about the people God is forming and the mission we are called to share.

Campaign Principles

- We will complete all projects debt-free, moving forward in phases as funding allows.
- Every gift matters, and we will continue to pursue creative funding sources such as grants and partnerships to support this work.
- We will maintain an "As the Lord Provides" list, adding additional ministry projects and opportunities as God supplies the resources.
- We will seek God's leading through prayer as we step forward in faith together.

Total Campaign Goal - \$460,000

Through God's provision, we are grateful to share that as of early December, over \$150,000 is already committed toward our \$460,000 goal. This amount comes in large part through the Sacred Places Indiana Grant and seed money from our General Fund, giving us a strong and hopeful foundation as we begin this journey. As our congregation steps forward in generosity, we look forward to bringing these projects to life and, with above-and-beyond giving, expanding our impact even further. For questions or for further information, please contact the Church Office or visit www.firstbaptistcolumbus.org/forward.

Around The Church ...



FIRST BAPTIST
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JOIN OUR *Family* OF FAITH



SCAN ME



Check out our new
Online Store!
Scan the QR Code
or go to our
website!

Medical Equipment Available for Loan

Durable medical
Equipment is
available at the
church to lend to
church family and
friends as needed.
Items available:

- Transport Wheel Chairs
- Bedside Commodes
- Elevated Commode Seats
- Rollator Walker
- Suction Handles for shower wall
- Walkers
- Canes
- Four Quad Canes
- Crutches
- Wheel Chairs

Please contact the church office or call Judy Rhude (812-764-9175) if any of this equipment is needed.

Leadership

Pastoral Care Team

- Jan. 4th: Linda Reid & Linda Mayfield
- Jan. 11th: Heidi Jones & Stephanie Olson
- Jan. 18th: Paula & Tim Pickup
- Jan. 25th: Kerry & Alice Richmond

LOVE CHAPEL FISH OFFERING

Did you know that over 1,500 families and 6,000 people receive food from Love Chapel every month---over 800 children receive food every Friday to get them through the weekend---each month, almost 200,000 pounds of food are given out?

Many in our community struggle to feed themselves and their families. As needs continue to increase, our church wants to help by receiving donations for the annual Love Chapel Food Pantry FISH Offering in January. Part of Jesus' earthly ministry focused on feeding the hungry. We become the hands and heart of our Lord when we help the hungry.

In January, all monies received will purchase food items needed by Love Chapel. Consider increasing your contribution this year because the need is so great. Bring or send donations by the end of January. Check weekly e-news for updates.

Emergency Responder Schedule

- Jan. 4th: Judy Rhude
- Jan 11th: Cole Bennett
- Jan. 18th: Lindsay McIntosh
- Jan. 25th: Jean Williams

Wednesday Night Dinner & Bible Study

Join us every Wednesday evening beginning January 7th for a meal at 5:00 pm followed by Bible study and choir. There will be a free-will donation taken every evening to offset the cost of the meal.

A Staff Thank You!

Thank you so much to our wonderful church family who have blessed us in many ways throughout the year, and now with your special gifts of appreciation.

We are fortunate to serve and support the ministry of First Baptist Church!

Communion

We will celebrate Communion on Sunday, January 4th. For those of you who join us for worship via live stream, we invite you to have something available to use for communion as we come to the Lord's Table together.

Around The Church

January Birthdays

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 6. ~ Marcia Cheek | 16. ~ Elliott Adams |
| 8. ~ David Akers, Bobbie Walker | 17. ~ Wayne Lovelace |
| 9. ~ Linda Rea | 22. ~ Emily Nelson |
| 11. ~ Nick Porter | 24. ~ Cara Chitwood |
| 12. ~ Jerald Hatton, Stillman Whittington | 26. ~ Ken Greenlee, Ryan Jones |
| 13. ~ Connie Baldwin | 28. ~ Daniel Greene |
| 15. ~ Frank Eldridge | 30. ~ Marian Miller |

The Body of Christ Prays For...

Bill Griffith, Janet Bailey, Dorothy Abney, Susan Carter, Tim Pickup, Priscilla & Roger Day, Bobbie & John Walker, Daryl & Dot McMath, Jenny Wilkerson, John & Liz Lipson, Jon Carlstrom, Marge Betz, Anita Burton, Dick & Beth Miller, Ramona Harlow, Claude Wright, Jr. "Bub", Anita Yancey, Allen Rea, Larry Alexander, and Roger & Ben Glick and all persons who are homebound & in nursing care centers.

Looking Ahead to January

- 1- New Year's Day- Office Closed
- 11- Annual Congregational Meeting
- 15- Newsletter Deadline
- 20- Council Meeting (5:30 PM)
- 27- Abigail Circle (6:30 PM)

Weekly:

- Prayer Shawl Group: Tuesdays at 11:00 am
- Prayer Group: Weds. at 12:30 pm in Prayer Room
- Wed. Meal & Bible Study: @ 5:00-6:45 pm.
- Choir Practice: Weds. at 7:00 pm
- LIGHT Ladies Bible Study: Thurs. at 9:00 am
- Men of Faith Bible Study: Thurs. at 9:00 am

Service: Sunday Morning - Worship 9:30 am
(in-person worship & Live Stream)

2nd Hour Learning - following worship at 10:45 am

Live streaming available for Sunday Services

In addition to watching our streaming service on our website, the service is also streamed to Facebook, Roku and AppleTV. It is also sent internationally.



Just Press Play

Live Video Every Sunday at 9:30
firstbaptistcolumbus.org



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