



BRANCHES

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, COMMERCE, GEORGIA

VOLUME 18,
ISSUE 2
JANUARY 24,
2024

FBC Commerce is a family of faith who believes in experiencing and extending Christian community through authentic worship, spiritual formation, impactful ministries, global missions and relational fellowship.



Seeds from the Pastor

REV. PHILIP VESTAL

If you've watched any of the recent NFL playoff games, you'll see men and women who go to the extreme in displaying their loyalty. For example - faces are panted, costumes are worn and believe it or not some fans will stand through an entire game in subzero weather with no upper body clothing on! So, are those fans or followers? There is a difference. One will do the minimal, the other will go the extra mile. One will show up when things are good, the other never waivers. One doesn't concern themselves with wanting to invite others to join them, the other will never stop asking everyone they know to join them. One will know their team in general terms, the other knows their team's history, their team's culture, their leadership, their personnel, their playbook, their traditions/customs and basically every single dynamic.

This fan vs. follower theme can be applied in the church as well. ***In our faith, are we fans or followers of Jesus?*** Again, there's a difference. There are those who sit in the Sunday stands and there are those who live out their faith in every aspect of daily culture they walk in.

You see, fans are in it for themselves, followers are in it for God. Fans desire the perks of Christianity, followers just desire Jesus. Fans want to be seen by others, followers seek to lead others to Christ. Fans will cheer, followers of the Messiah aren't afraid to do anything...they'll take up their cross, daily, and follow Jesus wherever he leads them. The Dallas Cowboys come and go (yes, I'm still heartbroken from their recent playoff loss - again!), but this brief article is a way to encourage us to be followers of Jesus. I'll be preaching on this subject in more detail on February 11, in a new series focusing on inviting more of God into us (and since that date is Super Bowl Sunday, if you would like, I invite everyone to wear something that morning which represents your favorite sports team, High School, College or Pro). *"But thanks be to God for He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* 1 Cor. 15:57.

I look forward to seeing you Sunday as we gather together to be on mission together!

Blessings,
PV

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Important Meeting!

This Sunday, **January 28 at 4:00 PM** in the Fellowship Hall is a meeting of all the Committee Chairpersons and Ministry Team Coordinators to discuss and plan calendar events for the rest of the year. Please plan to attend.



We are assembling Valentine gift bags for our homebound friends. Please bring any of the suggested items by **Sunday, Feb. 4**. Collection boxes are located near the elevator. Items need to be SMALL SIZED, and include hand sanitizer, lotion, Kleenex, nail clippers, emery boards, socks, note paper & pens, crossword puzzle books, Chapstick, and devotional books. We will meet to assemble and deliver the bags at 3:00 PM on **Wednesday, February 7** in the Fellowship Hall.



Bingo Night Fundraiser

Street Love Ministries will be having a fundraiser on **Friday February 2 from 6:00-8:00 PM** in the Chapel of The Jefferson Church at 267 Mahaffey St., Jefferson. Bingo ticket prices are \$15 for all night (5 games) and \$10 for 3 games; 3 cards per game. 50/50 raffle tickets available for purchase throughout the evening. An 8 oz cup of soup is \$5, a flight of soups (3 to a tray) is \$10, drinks \$2, and sweets from Bakers Dozen335 & Mady's Bakery will be available for purchase.



The next luncheon will be **February 6 at 12:00 noon**. This will be a GAME DAY with Bingo and more! Bring a covered dish and/or donations for prizes and come enjoy the fun!



The Spaghetti Dinner and Cake Auction will be **February 11 at 6:00 PM**. It will be a fundraiser for both our Youth and Children's Ministries to help fund Passport Camps. Come for a great dinner and bid on the delicious cakes! Sign-up for cake donations at the Church Office. Tickets for the dinner are \$10 for each person. Contact Todd Chandler for further information.



Ash Wednesday service will be **February 14 at 6:00 PM** in the Sanctuary. There will be NO Wednesday night supper.

Men's Community Breakfast

Come for a wonderful time of good food, great fellowship and an opportunity to join other men of faith as we explore the theme "Living the Legacy." The breakfast is complementary, but donations are welcomed. For more information, please contact the Church Office.

Sunday, February 25th, 2024

7:30 AM: Breakfast

8:30 AM: Program

Fellowship Hall of First Baptist Commerce

(A joint ministry partnership of First Baptist Commerce and Mt. Calvary Baptist Church)

REFLECTING ON SCRIPTURE

*“Put on the
new self,
created to be
like God in
true
righteousness
and holiness.”*

EPHESIANS 4:24

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday

- 9:45 AM Bible Study
- 11:00 AM Morning Worship
- 6:00-7:30 F4-Youth

Wednesday

- 5.30 PM Family Supper
- 6:00 PM The Gathering
- 6:15 PM Choir Rehearsal

THANK
YOU

Thanks for being such a loving and caring church. You are such a blessing to me. Thanks for all the prayers, cards and calls. Hope to be back soon. Miss all of you.

May God bless,
Love,
Virginia Carithers

Dear First Baptist Church,
Thank you for your contribution to the Banks Jackson Foodbank. Your support helps in immeasurable ways to purchase food so that we may serve others. So many families benefit from this ministry each month. We are grateful to every donor that continues to help us to provide this service. Blessings upon you!

Board of Directors
Banks Jackson Foodbank

I wanted to take a moment to thank you all for the kind (and exceedingly generous!) Stock the Pantry collection. As I settle into my new home here in Commerce, this stockpile of pantry staples, paper goods, gift cards, and other goodies will be a blessing for weeks and months to come!

Thank you, once again, for being such a welcoming and generous church!

Cara



January 25:
Andrew Lathem

January 26:
Samantha Akers

January 27:
Oliver Pratt
Lily Head

January 28:
Ann Brown

January 29:
Macie Fouche

January 30:
Mattie Canup

February 2:
Cole Spear

February 3:
Carolyn Golden
Katie Sinquefield

February 4:
Deborah Adams

February 5:
Janice Minish

SERVANTS @ A GLANCE

DEACONS

Jan. 28: David Sanders &
Joyce Bradshaw

Feb. 4: Jennifer Sanders &
Kathy Pruett

COUNTERS

Jan. 28: Pam Canup &
Deborah Adams

Feb. 4: Trell Wilson &
Shirley Willis

GREETERS

Jan. 28: Kenneth Bridges

Feb. 4: Cameron Shirley

USHERS

Jan. 28: William Westbrooks, Bill
Hairston, Chas Hardy, Matt Shirley,
Dakota Malcom, Tyson Sosby

Feb. 4: Terry Canup, Jon Massey,
Pam Canup, Jimmy Bray, Tricia
Massey, Clarence Bryant

OUTREACH LEADER

January Karen Westbrooks

February Deborah Adams

NURSERY WORKERS

Jan. 28: Tricia Massey &
Leslie Pitts

Feb. 4: Marsha Perry
Nicky Wilbanks



Meals on Wheels

Jan. 29: Donna Sosebee

Jan. 30: Amy Halley

Jan. 31: Mark & Barbara Beardsley

Feb. 1: Jon Massey

Feb. 2: Cindy Owensby

Feb. 5: Bob Greco & Susan Harper

Feb. 6: Gail Allen &
Brenda Puckett

Feb. 7: Bob Harper

Feb. 8: Carol Hodgkins &
Brenda Meadows

Feb. 9: Johnny & Geraldine Bridges



Jan. 29-Feb. 2:
Sharon Highsmith

Feb. 5-12:
Mark Beardsley

Notes and Reminders

One-Year Anniversary

As we mark the one-year anniversary of Diane Henson and Jennifer Renzetti, it is with great joy and gratitude that we say "thank you" for their unwavering dedication and invaluable contributions to our congregation. Both of these ladies play a crucial part in the smooth functioning of our church. They are constant sources of support to our church family. They have created an atmosphere of comfort and reassurance for all who enter our church doors. We are truly blessed to have such remarkable individuals who care about First Baptist Church, and we look forward to many more years of their invaluable service.

Thank you, Diane and Jennifer! We are so grateful for you!



Memorials and Honorariums

Window/Building Fund in memory of Joyce Eubanks
General Budget in memory of Joyce Eubanks
Window/Building Fund in memory of John Rylee

Reports



Stewardship Reports as of January 24

Monthly Giving Required	\$38,334.00
Monthly Giving as of Jan. 24	\$25,848.24
YTD Giving Required through January	\$153,336.00
YTD Giving Received through Jan. 24	\$176,663.07



Attendance Report for Jan. 14 & Jan. 21

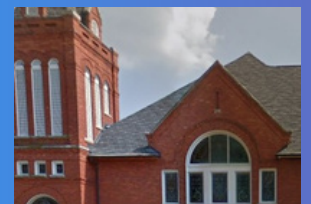
Sunday School	74	54
Morning Worship	105	66

Upcoming Meetings



Church Conference

Sunday, **Jan. 28** after
Morning Worship



**Sunday Jan. 28 at
4:00 PM**

meeting of Committee
Chairpersons and
Ministry Team
Coordinators.



Sunday,
Feb. 11 at
8:30 AM



The WMU will be
meeting **Feb. 14** at
10:00 AM in the
Fellowship Hall.