



THE WINDOW

A publication of The First Baptist Church of Ahoskie, North Carolina

Volume 53

September 9, 2020

No.17

Bell Towers and Back Alleys

Some time ago I was on the grounds of First Baptist Church of Greensboro for a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship meeting. As I walked through their building and around their property, I noticed that the building and the grounds were in immaculate condition. If there was any deferred maintenance, I did not see it. Well-maintained church facilities reflect a congregation's priorities. Well-maintained facilities serve as evidence that a congregation cares about the work of sharing the good news of Jesus the Christ as well as maturing disciples who then carry the light of Christ wherever they go when they exit the church premises.

Well-maintained church facilities cost time and money – significant amounts of time and money. From time to time I sense the need to evaluate my personal priorities. When this occurs, I ask myself two questions: 1) How do I spend my time, and 2) How do I spend my money. Time and money speak volumes to what we deem important, essential even, in our lives. The same is true with the church. How does First Baptist Church of Ahoskie use time and money? Indeed, church facilities in disrepair indicate a lack of concern and investment.

Perhaps even more significantly, church facilities in disrepair lack hospitality. A Christian congregation should be inviting to new faces. When I was on the grounds and in the building of First Baptist Greensboro, I felt welcome when I pulled into the parking lot. Of course, there is more to Christian hospitality than well-kept facilities. However, people are less likely to visit with a congregation that meets in a neglected structure. First impressions are important!

I am so pleased that our congregation has decided to invest in the maintenance of our church building

and properties. It communicates that we care about God and about people made in the image of God. As you know, I am pleased with the progress on the sanctuary, as I made known in my last newsletter piece. However, there is more. Have you noticed that our bell tower now has a fresh coat of paint? I noticed the bell tower needed paint in 2017 when my journey with our congregation began. Once the outside windows received a fresh coat of white paint, the need of the bell tower was even more obvious. I know our deacons tired of me asking, "Where are we in relation to painting the bell tower?"

I am also thrilled about the work on the back alley carried out last Saturday (9-5-2020). The building and grounds committee, among other tasks for the day, tidied up the back alley. They removed a clothesline, removed old wire and pipe, removed bricks, and cut down bushes. It looks so much better to the eye.

The outside of our building is, once again, in immaculate shape. The exterior of our building says to those who pass by, "We care, and you are welcome here." You might not think that a bell tower and a back alley communicates so much of value. But, they do.

In Christ,
Trey



Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, September 15 at 6:00 pm via Zoom



Worshipping Together
September 13, 2020
The 15th Sunday after Pentecost
11:00 am

Wait and See
 Genesis 42:1-10
 Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam

Our worship services are broadcasted live over the radio at 99.3 FM, and live-streamed on our church Facebook page.

In-Person Worship Plans

We anticipate our sanctuary renovation will be completed in late September or early October. At that time, we plan to offer in-person worship with specific guidelines in place. Please begin to pray now for that day, as worship will still feel quite different from our pre-covid-19 days. We look forward to gathering in our beautiful sanctuary once again to worship our magnificent God who continues to walk with us through this epidemic.

Worship Flowers

During this time of sheltering in place, persons who have signed up to provide worship flowers have the option of observing our usual practice, or using the lovely peace lily that one of our families provided. The choices have varied from Sunday to Sunday. At the appropriate time, please let the church office know of your preference. Here is the schedule for September and October.

Sept. 13	Whit & Chris Powell
Sept. 20	Family of Dot Williford
Sept. 27	Rick & Jamie Burns
Oct. 4	Sharon Roope
Oct. 11	Family of Mary Frances Johnson
Oct. 18	Henry & Pat Byrd
Oct. 25	Jim & Dana Wiggins

Prayer Chain

2020-2021 Church Year

Our Prayer Chain Ministry has been a strong one during our journey through the pandemic. We are thankful for every link (person) in that chain. If you have a matter for which you'd like the Prayer Chain group to pray, please call the coordinator, Peggy Springfield at 252-332-8701.

Building & Grounds Work Day

On Saturday, September 5, the Building & Grounds Committee had a successful Work Day completing projects both inside and outside our facilities.



Stewardship Statement

September 6, 2020

Weekly Need	\$	9,130.28
Weekly Offering	\$	9,126.00
Difference	\$	-4.28

YTD Needs	\$	328,690.08
YTD Offerings	\$	273,262.57
YTD Difference	\$	-55,427.51

Heck-Jones Weekly Offering	\$	215.00
Heck-Jones Total Offering	\$	740.00
Capital Campaign Offering	\$	795.05

Please remember to be generous!

From the Associate Pastor

During the first few months of the Covid-19 pandemic's rise in the US, routines were majorly changed. Many of us became work-from-home, school-from-home, eat-at-home people. Additionally, some of us became what-else-can-I-do-at-home people! And for many of those, that "what else" became a determined effort to thoroughly declutter their home. This decluttering phenomenon became so widespread that several of the charitable organizations that receive donations of furniture, clothing, housewares, etc. had to turn donators away. They just didn't have enough room to store all the stuff!

For many months, long before Covid-19 arrived, I have been slowly working toward the goal of decluttering certain areas around the church. After eighteen years of ministry at FBCA, there was youth and children's ministry stuff here, music ministry stuff there, and way too many "I'll get to it later" stacks of stuff. So when Covid-19 necessitated a routine change, I decided to kick my decluttering efforts into high gear. In the process, I have learned that there is a thin line between being resourceful and hoarding!

There are times when I find joy in the work of decluttering. I'll come across a program or picture that reminds me of a marvelous time spent with our youth. I'll find a notebook filled with plans from a previous Music Day Camp and realize that many of those children now have children of their own! Or I find and listen to a CD of a Christmas cantata from the early years of my ministry at FBCA. There's some good stuff in all that stuff!

But there are times when I find the work a drudgery. Going through item after item, determining if I should keep it or throw it away is so tedious. And if I decide to keep something, where am I going to put it? The amount of stuff feels overwhelming and even paralyzing at times. What in the world am I going to do with all of the stuff?!

It has not escaped my attention that the physical decluttering of the stuff in our lives is a pretty good metaphor for what needs to take place in our spiritual lives. We are just as skilled at hoarding negative emotions and attitudes as we are at hoarding material things. We hoard blame and disgust, shame and fear, anger and rage. We put up emotional barricades that keep us from forgiving, and accepting, and understanding, and loving. We clutter

our minds with thoughts that are untrue: "I'm not good enough. I can't do anything right. I'm not smart enough." The spiritual clutter in our lives is much more overwhelming and paralyzing than any material clutter.

So, as I continue to work through the material clutter in the church building, I'm also striving to take stock of the spiritual clutter in my life. What do I need to keep? What do I need to throw away? What do I need to make more room for?

I don't know that I'll ever truly finish decluttering the material and spiritual stuff in my life. But with the Holy Spirit's help, I just may make a considerable dent in it.

*For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to keep and a time to throw away.*
- Ecclesiastes 3:1, 6

Grace & peace,
Anita

Sanctuary Renovation Progress



Carpet installation continues this week in the West St. entrance area and staircase.

In the sanctuary it has been completed in every area except the aisles. The aisle runners will be installed at a later date.

On the 2nd floor, carpet was replaced in every area except the music suite & pastor's office.

Follow the progress through photos posted on our church Facebook page.

SERVING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Week of September 13-19, 2020

Minister on Call

Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam, 398-7321

Deacons on Call

Rick Burns, 209-4058

Peggy Springfield, 287-5119

Sound System—September 13

Frank Britt

Floral Offering—September 13

Whit & Chris Powell

Food Pantry— September 18

Anita Thompson & Carroll Thompson

Week of September 20-26, 2020

Minister on Call

Rev. Anita Thompson, 395-0061

Deacons on Call

Austine Evans, 398-2724

Claire Presley, 287-6132

Sound System—September 20

Walt Pierce

Floral Offering—September 20

Family of Dot Williford

Food Pantry – September 25

Pat Askew & Pansy & Robert E. White

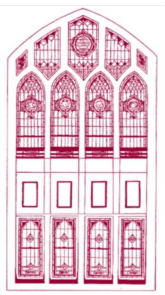
The FBC Ministers

Trey Gilliam, Pastor

trey@fbcahoskie.org • 252-398-7321

Anita Thompson, Associate Pastor

anita@fbcahoskie.org • 252-395-0061



The Window

First Baptist Church of Ahoskie

Main and West Streets

PO Box 649

Ahoskie, NC 27910-0649

NON PROFIT ORG.
BULK RATE
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
AHOSKIE, N. C.
PERMIT NO. 64

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

phone 252-332-4003

fax 252-209-0225

email office@fbcahoskie.org

web www.fbcahoskie.org