



# THE WINDOW

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

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No. 6

## I am NOT Preaching to You

I became the pastor of Henrietta First Baptist Church in March of 1997. I was 25 years old. I do not recall the exact moment it happened. However, I suspect that sometime within the first two years of my service as pastor to this congregation, I learned an important lesson about the preaching task. The lesson: the preacher should not prepare a sermon with individual people in mind. The reason: whenever I did this, the person or persons I thought really needed to hear the message were *not* in worship that Sunday. This occurred almost without fail! So, for example, let's say I preached from James 3:1-12. This is where James calls the tongue a fire and he says that while beasts and birds and reptiles have been tamed by humankind, no one can tame the tongue. I chose this text because Brenda and John gossip about other folks in the church. Brenda and John need to hear this message from James 3:1-12. Brenda and John are faithful and regular in worship participation. Most every Sunday, they are there. However, as it so happens, the Sunday I rise to proclaim this message about the dangers of the tongue, Brenda and John are out sick.

### Lesson learned.

So, on Sunday mornings, I am NOT preaching to you (insert your name). Rather, on Sunday mornings, I preach to the church – to the congregation that is the First Baptist Church of Ahoskie – to whoever's ears and heart happen to be in the sanctuary. Thus, each week I choose a text from the Bible to preach from on Sunday morning. I then do my best to understand what the text meant in its original setting from the ancient world. My goal then is to strike the same point with my modern congregation that the biblical author struck what his ancient congregation. There is a bit more

to it on my end. I also desire to address the needs of the First Baptist Church of Ahoskie – whatever I discern those needs to be in the current life of our congregation. Here then is my preaching process: 1) choose the biblical text, 2) decide the meaning of the chosen biblical text, 3) integrate the meaning of the chosen biblical text with the perceived needs of our congregation, and 4) present the results, in a Sunday sermon, with enthusiasm and clarity.

We just completed a sermon series from 1 Peter. During this series, I reminded you (the congregation) each week that Peter's remarks are not addressed to any single individual as are, say, some of Paul's letters. Rather, Peter's remarks are addressed to the congregations of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. These places are found in modern-day Turkey. In this letter, Peter's approach to preaching is like mine. He discerns a need that these congregations share – the encouragement to withstand some sort of persecution while demonstrating godly behavior to the persecutors. He is not so much concerned with Cecil or Lisa or Brad or Stephanie. How could Peter know all that is going on in each of their individual lives? Peter then confronts the needs of the churches with his words.

Weekly preaching reminds me that church is a “we”. Church is not an “I”. Church is more akin to basketball than to tennis. We Americans struggle with the concept of communal needs (plural) over individual needs (singular) to the detriment of the church. It is a daily challenge for me to lead our congregation to comprehend that when just one church member neglects gathered worship on Sunday mornings the vibrancy of the entire congregation is diminished. We simply do not think like this. We are often more concerned about our individual desires than what is best for the entire community.

Please know that when I take the pulpit on Sundays, I am not preaching to you (insert your name). Rather, I am preaching what I sense the church – the gathered community – needs to hear. Of course, I treasure the individual meetings I have with you (insert your name). During these times, you share with me your specific concerns. I then pray for those concerns and offer words of counsel if desired. However, on Sundays I am aware that no two people have the exact same needs. And, often, I am not privy to the specific burdens many people carry. If I were to preach to you (insert your name), a lot of others would be left out. So, I opt to address the needs of the church with the biblical text and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

I so look forward to preaching to the First Baptist Church of Ahoskie this Sunday!

In Christ,  
Paul



**Worshiping Together**  
**June 12, 2022**  
**11:00 AM**  
**Trinity Sunday**  
*Our Sins*  
 Revelation 1:1-9  
 Rev. Dr. Paul R. Gilliam III

### Christian Women’s Job Corps



CWJC is transitioning to its new space in the First Presbyterian Church building on June 11, 2022. Let us continue to pray for this vital ministry.

### Adult Bible Study Lunch

Wednesday | June 15, 2022 | 12 PM

Fellowship Hall



### Welcome New Member



On Sunday, June 5, 2022, Jean Parker joined our church family. We are so pleased to have you with us, Jean!

## Retirement Thank You From Former Pianist, Bland Baker

Dear Church Family,

This has been a lot more emotional than I ever imagined, but 27 years is a long time after all.

I cannot begin to tell you how much your words of encouragement and appreciation have meant to me over the years. You have been so much more than a congregation, you all have been my friends and I love all of you.

Thank you so much for my love gift and the weekend in Richmond. Nancy and I can’t wait to use it. Thank you so much for everything!

I love you all!  
Bland

### Food Pantry Volunteers Needed Wednesday June 15<sup>th</sup> | 10 AM - 3 PM

Must be able to lift 35 lb. boxes of food. Contact Rev. Thompson if you can assist.

### Vacation Bible School July 25-28 | 4:45 PM - 7:45 PM Age 3 through completed grade 5.



### Stewardship Statement



June 5, 2022

Weekly Need	\$ 9,143.50
Weekly Offering	\$ 10,139.56
Difference	\$ 996.06
YTD Needs	\$ 210,300.50
YTD Offerings	\$ 191,899.36
YTD Difference	\$ -18,401.14
Capital Campaign Offering	\$ 200.00
Benevolence Offering	\$ 175.00
Global Missions Total	\$ 7,689.00

*Thank you for your generous gifts!*

# July 2022

First Baptist Church of Ahoskie

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 	4 <b>July 4</b> 1776  <i>Church Offices Closed</i>	5	6	7	8	9
10 • 2 PM Children's Ministry Council Mtg	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 • 7 PM Building & Grounds Mtg	19 • 7 PM Deacon's Mtg	20	21	22	23
<b>CBF NC All-State Youth Choir ♦ July 17-24</b>						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	<b>Vacation Bible School ♦ July 25-28 ♦ 4:45 PM - 7:45 PM</b>					
31			<u>Sundays</u> • 9:45 AM Sunday School • 11 AM Worship	<u>Mondays</u> • 3 PM Staff Mtg  <u>Wednesdays</u> • 12 PM Adult Bible Study  Choirs are on summer break.	<u>Fridays</u> • 9 AM - 3 PM Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) at Presbyterian Church	

## July Birthdays

- |                     |                     |                       |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Cleo Mitchell     | 11 Carl Pierce      | 22 Edie Hauser        |
| 3 Wells Britton     | 11 Gretchen Zoch    | 23 Eddie Allen        |
| 5 Sandra Hassell    | 12 Harriet Byrum    | 23 Billie-joe Harrell |
| 6 Ernie Evans       | 12 Olivia Jenkins   | 23 Ruth Ward          |
| 8 Brian Outlaw      | 13 Sophia Byrd      | 27 Trey Byrum         |
| 10 Ruthie Daniels   | 14 Nancy Freeman    | 29 Vicky Overman      |
| 11 Spencer Matthews | 16 Jessica Brinkley | 31 Kerrae Joyner      |
| 11 Kari Pierce      | 21 Ben Woodard      |                       |

If we have neglected to acknowledge a birthday, please let us know by calling the church office.

# SERVING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

## Week of June 12 - 18, 2022

### Minister on Call

Rev. Dr. Paul R. Gilliam III, 398-7321  
paulrgilliam@fbcahoskie.org

### Deacons on Call

Don Joyner, 396-1957  
Walt Pierce, 642-7445

### Childcare During Worship - June 12

Babies: Nancy Cobbs & Joyce Leary  
Ages 1 & 2: Lyndsay Britt, Isabella & Leah Woodard  
Ages 3-5: Heather & William Alexander

### Ushers - June 12

Kay Byrd, Sophia Byrd, Gloria Freeman,  
Pike Harrington, Bill Magette, Frank Rose;  
*Balcony:* Larry Freeman & Henry Joyner

### Sound System Operator - June 12

Brandon Zoch

### Security Monitor - June 12

Walt Pierce

### Floral Offering - June 12

Family of William & Bess Leary

### Home Delivered Meals - June 13

Noreen Hannon & Joyce Leary

### Food Pantry - June 17

Kay Byrd & Vicky Overman

## Week of June 19 - 25, 2022

### Minister on Call

Rev. Anita Thompson, 395-0061  
anita@fbcahoskie.org

### Deacons on Call

L. Taylor Rose, 287-5322  
Eley Whitehead, 398-5256

### Childcare During Worship - June 19

Babies: Judy H. Pierce & Cheryl Slachta  
Ages 1 & 2: Alex & Sarah Grace Britton  
Ages 3-5: Avery & Harriet Byrum

### Ushers - June 19

Josh Brinkley, Lily Ann Brinkley, L. Taylor Rose,  
Peggy Springfield, Walter White, Eley Whitehead;  
*Balcony:* Andy Woodard & Isabella Woodard

### Sound System Operator - June 19

Rick Burns

### Security Monitor - June 19

L. Taylor Rose

### Floral Offering - June 19

Doug & Nancy Cobbs

### Home Delivered Meals - June 20

Austine Evans & Mary Ann Umphlett

### Food Pantry - June 24

June & Otis Payne