



125 Sedgefield Street
BRISTOL, VIRGINIA 24201

THE FIRST WORD

February 2025

First Baptist Family,

As I've mentioned to you before, I typically wait until February to share with you how we finished the previous financial year. By waiting a month, it gives Terri time to finish all the end-of-the-year financial work she has to do. And since people can make donations as long as they are postmarked by 12/31, it can take a few days for everything to come in and for Terri to finish her work. Those few days, of course, are after our First Word deadline – hence sharing all of this with you in February. **Happily, I have good news to share! Our budget for 2024 was \$464,387. Now, because of several unexpected and costly repairs (primarily to HVAC units), our expenses for 2024 were \$480,558.29. Yet our total revenue for the year was \$482,575.94, allowing us to finish 2024 in the black by \$2,017.65.** Thank you for your continued faithfulness in giving! And thank you for your continued presence in the life and the work of the church! As you hear me say regularly, good things are happening here at First Baptist Bristol – good things worth inviting others to, good things worth celebrating. I believe that your faithful giving is but another testimony to the ways at which God is at work in and through this church! And since God is blessing us as a congregation, we are called to continue in the good work we have started.

One of the people who has helped lead us in this good work is our Minister of Music, Rev. Leigh Clark. With the hustle and bustle of December, I failed to mention that Leigh celebrated her 5-year anniversary with us then as our Minister of Music. As those who serve in our Music Ministry can attest, Leigh is not only an exceptionally talented musician, but she's an even better person, minister, and friend! We are incredibly fortunate to have her on staff. **Truthfully, we have been blessed as a church when it comes to all of our church staff. We've had high degree of staff stability, which has become increasingly rare in churches, and that stability has allowed us to grow closer together and work better together to expand our efforts for God's Kingdom. In fact, our most recent hire is Niki, our Administrative Assistant, who will be celebrating her 4-year anniversary with us later this month.**

And Emma Vance, who has been involved in this church for years and has been working with our children for the last few years, is now attending seminary to further her theological education. All of these are incredibly good things that we need to celebrate as a church! So, I encourage you to share your words of encouragement with our staff when you get the chance.

As for February, there are a few events and activities that are taking place this month that I want to mention. While things will really get going in March with the start of Lent, we still have a few things in February I want to make sure that you know about. **First, on Sunday, February 2, we'll have our monthly Family Breakfast before Sunday School and then later that day in worship we will take communion.** During the month of February, I'm going to be working my way through our sermon series "The Mission of Jesus", so I hope that you'll continue to join us for that. **And then on Friday, February 21– Sunday, February 23, our Youth will have a mini retreat. They'll be going back to Wafloy, near Gatlinburg, where they've had several retreats recently. I ask that you continue to be in prayer for them.** Despite the bitterly cold weather we've had in January, we are off to a good start in 2025, so continue to look for ways to be involved in the life of the church and continue to bring some new people with you. Both they and you will be blessed if you do.

As always, it is a pleasure to be your pastor.

Grace and Peace,

Kris

YOUTH GROUP



YOUTH CAMP 2025 UNIDIVERSITY TO MARYVILLE COLLEGE

July 7-11

1. COMMITMENT TO COME PAY - OR WORK FOR \$200 TOWARD THE COST.
2. COMMITMENT TO WORK AT THE FUNDRAISER.
3. WILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW ALL RULES.
4. FILL OUT AND SIGN A CAMP COVENANT.

To register: Turn in registration, \$100, and Medical Release for 2025.



May 30-June 06, 2025

1. THE COST IS \$175 OR 17.5 COMMUNITY HOURS.
2. ALL MEMBERS OF THE MISSION TEAM ARE COMMITTED TO TRAINING FOR OUR WORK SIGHT. TRAINING TBA.
3. YOU WILL NEED AN ADDITIONAL \$35 FOR ONE FREE-DAY ACTIVITY AND \$35 FOR MEALS THAT WE WILL EAT OUT AND ON THE ROAD

YOUTH RETREAT! February 21-23, 2025 Knoxville, TN

**\$100- Includes lodging, transportation,
and the concert!**



**See Ben for
more
information!**



Notes... from Leigh

Thank you for your faithfulness to worship even when the weather is uncooperative – and we've had plenty of that already this year! February's weather can be unpredictable as well, but I hope you will join us in person whenever possible. I'm thankful that we have the streaming option, but nothing is better than being in worship together.

On February 23, I have invited my friend, Martha Painter, to share some music with us during worship. Martha is a professional harpist. We have known each other for many years. She is an incredible musician, and she has a sweet spirit; I know you will enjoy meeting her and hearing her play.

Beginning February 5, I will lead a study on the book "A Lineage of Grace (Five stories of unlikely women who changed eternity) by Francine Rivers. It is a collection of five novellas on the women in the lineage of Jesus – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary. Please let me know if you'd like me to order you a book.

Finally, Mark and I will be in Germany during March. Mark is on sabbatical this semester and the archives for his research sources are in Germany. I am leaving the music ministry in good hands – Jackie, Andrea, David Hicks, David Haga, Nevaeh Ondrak, Kevin and Ann Townsend have all agreed to lead in my absence. First Baptist Bristol won't miss a beat (see what I did there)! I am grateful to the church for allowing me to take this time away. I will be available by text and email should you need to reach me.

Blessings, Leigh

Sunday,
February 09, 2025



Sunday, February 02, 2025
9:00 a.m.

Family Breakfast
Rosser Hall

There will be a full or partial breakfast
available at no charge.

So, come and enjoy a meal and some fellow-
ship before heading off to Sunday School.




**Please check your bookshelves.
Bring extra Bibles, non-fiction
Christian books, Sunday School
literature to the church.
Collection bins are in the
conference room.**

First Baptist Church of Bristol Staff

Dr. Kris Aaron.....Senior Pastor
 Rev. Ben Ondrak.....Associate Pastor
 Rev. Leigh Clark.....Minister of Music
 Mrs. Jackie Burnette.....Pianist
 Mrs. Andrea PenningtonOrganist

Ms. Marcine Robinette.....Parish Nurse
 Mrs. Emma Vance.....Ministry Asst. for Children
 Ms. Terri Thomas Church Administrator
 and Financial Secretary
 Ms. Niki Judy..... Administrative Assistant



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 You can also find us on
 Facebook. 



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
 125 Sedgefield Street
 Bristol, VA 24201

Deacon of the Week for February

February 02	Jeff Burnette
February 09	David Crockett, Jr
February 16	Jennifer Rouse
February 23	Darin Denton

February FBC Minister On-Call Schedule

February 01 & 02	Rev. Ben Ondrak	(423) 217-8934
February 08 & 09	Dr. Kris Aaron	(803) 225-0795
February 15 & 16	Rev. Ben Ondrak	(423) 217-8934
February 22 & 23	Dr. Kris Aaron	(803) 225-0795