



FBC Monthly Encourager

Volume V, No. 8 August 2026

The Judge Who Stood in the Dock

“In the place of justice, even there was wickedness, and in the place of righteousness, even there was wickedness.” (Ecclesiastes 3:16)

The Preacher of Ecclesiastes had seen enough of the world to lose his illusions about it. What troubled him most was not that wickedness existed—everyone knows that—but where he found it. He found it in the courtroom. In the one place appointed to set wrong right, wrong had made itself at home. When the remedy itself is corrupt, where do you go to appeal?

Perhaps you know that feeling. You have watched someone get away with it. You have been failed by the very people who were supposed to protect you, or wronged by a system with no one to answer for it. The Preacher does not pretend otherwise. He looks straight at it and does not look away.

And yet, in the very next breath, he says something his own eyes could not prove: “God will judge the righteous and the wicked” (3:17). He does not explain away what he saw. He does not abandon what he believes. He holds both—what his eyes report and what his heart trusts—and leaves them side by side. His confidence rests not on any human court, but on the promise that God has appointed a time for every matter, including justice.

Israel waited a long time for a King whose throne would rest, as the psalmist said, on righteousness and justice (Psalm 97:2)—a King who would judge the poor with equity and never be bought. That King has come. But here is the wonder the Preacher could not yet see. Before Jesus takes his seat as the Judge of all the earth, he first stood in the dock as the accused.

He stood in the place of justice—and wickedness was there. Pilate declared three times that he found no guilt in him, and handed him over anyway. The Holy and Righteous One was condemned by the unrighteous. The one court that never should have failed, failed utterly—and delivered the innocent to death.

But do not miss what God was doing inside that perversion of justice. The Righteous One was condemned by the wicked—and for the wicked. “Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). At the very moment human justice failed most completely, divine justice was most fully satisfied, so that God might be both just and the one who justifies all who trust in Jesus.

And then the reversal: the condemned man is the coming Judge. God “has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed,” and he proved it by raising him from the dead (Acts 17:31). So if you are weary of a world where wickedness sits where justice should be, hear this. The Judge is not distant from your wound. He has stood where you stand, under a verdict he did not deserve—and his vindication is the promise of yours.

“The righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God.” — 1 Peter 3:18

*Abiding In Christ,
Pastor Jason Pounds*

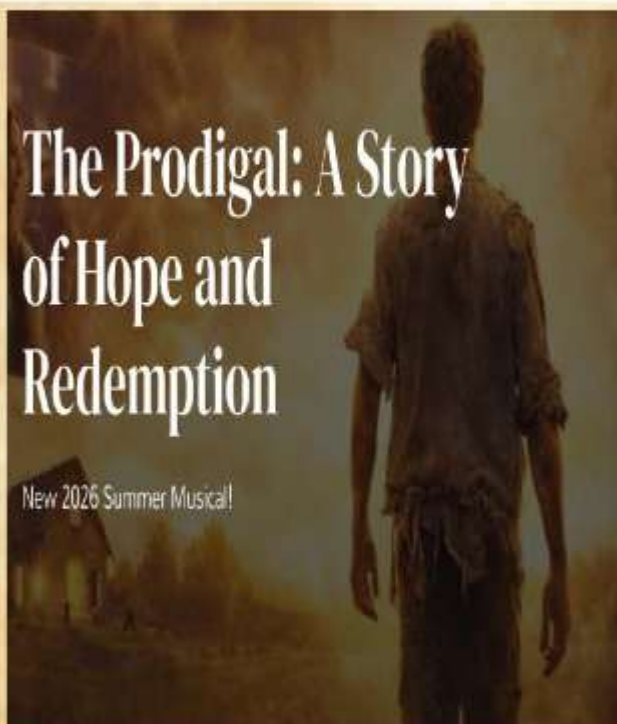
Senior Adult Ministry



Overnight Atlanta Trip September 18-19

Join us on this incredible trip to Atlanta to see two of the most amazing things you can experience in the city. On this trip we will visit both the Botanical Gardens and the Georgia Aquarium. We will depart the campus early on the 18th and take in the Georgia Aquarium first. After a stay in the city that night we will get up and tour the Botanical Gardens. Both venues offer wheelchair or scooter rentals for those that may have difficulty walking.

Cost for the trip will be around \$200 depending on the hotel cost.



Biblical Times Dinner Theater Trip Friday, October 23

Hop on the bus for the ride up to Pigeon Forge for an evening of fellowship at the Biblical Times dinner theater. The evening features a worship concert during the dinner portion of the evening followed by a drama that tells "the story of the Prodigal Son, and the lessons of redemption and forgiveness that comes with the relationships we all have with our loved ones, and the strength we can find in Christ to treat each other with the same grace he treats us."

Cost of the trip is \$70.00.

Worship MINISTRY



It has been exciting to see our children's choir grow over the last five years. Through our children's choir, Music and Art's camp and Worship Academy, and Wednesday night youth praise team we have been blessed to see our young people blossom in their ability to sing and lead us in worship. With the youth that are rising out of the children's ministry this Fall we will be endeavoring to add another layer of opportunity for them to grow in their abilities by starting a youth choir. While our youth are regular participants in our sanctuary choir, my desire is to also have a group of their own where they can grow in community and fellowship. The choir will meet in the choir room across from the church office from 5:30 - 6:00 each Wednesday night before



Gaither Homecoming Christmas Saturday, December 2nd

This is a little worship ministry and a little senior adult related! The Gaither Vocal Band will be at Redemption to the Nations Church the first weekend in December. Tickets have just gone on pre-sale. These tickets go very fast so if we are going to put a trip together we need to order tickets as soon as possible. Group tickets can be ordered for right at \$50.00 a ticket for general admission. If you would like to attend this concert please contact the church office and bring a check for your tickets. This will be an amazing way to start the Christmas season!

STUDENT MINISTRY IN AUGUST

The foundation of the life of a follower of Jesus is built on the Gospel and God's glory. Up to this point we have had conversation of these things and will continue to until Jesus comes back or we take our last breath here on earth. This month, like all months, will not waiver from that. By God's grace, Paul's letter to the Romans will deepen our mind's and heart's understanding of the Gospel and God's glory.

"So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."

Romans 8:12-17 ESV

For His Renown,
Jordan Lopez

What we'll be studying during the school year:

Paul's letter to the
ROMANS



FBC CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY



It has been an incredible summer with Jesus, now let's get started with our school year programs!

FBC Missions News



Mission trip available for everyone!!

It is just down the street, right here in Sweetwater.

Don't have to travel far.

You pick which Sunday you would like to be involved.

There is a place for everyone, bring the family.

We have Sunday School each Sunday from 9:00 to
10:30 am.

There are classes for both children and adults, with
breakfast being served each Sunday.

Come and join Ken and Loretta Hall, Jacki Hicks, Yvonne
and Phil Roy.

FBC Missions News

THE HAUNS IN AFRICA

Your IMB Missionaries Serving in Ghana

<https://haunsinafrica.com>

We just realized today that this is our 50th newsletter. Some of you have been along for the ride since the very beginning and we are so grateful!

Looking back, it's interesting to see how God has brought us through different seasons of ministry. Twelve years ago we were very much in a season of learning. You may recall the challenges of learning the language in those early years. That's what makes this latest ministry development such a surprising and exciting one:

Mampruli Bible Translation



A few months ago, the Mampruli Old Testament translation team contacted me and asked if I would review their first drafts of Genesis through Deuteronomy. I was happy to try to help and after I had reviewed Genesis, the team invited me to their office in Walewale to discuss my corrections and suggestions.

I was a little nervous about bringing them my list of proposed changes but it turned out to be an incredibly encouraging experience. I was impressed by the commitment and dedication of these scholars to the immense task of translating God's Word. They approach their work with remarkable humility, readily accepting my corrections and engaging in thoughtful discussions about several items.

Praise & Prayer Requests

- We are so excited and grateful to have two weeks together as a family in Austria! **Please pray that all our travel logistics will go smoothly.** We have so many different flights and connections to make to get there!
 - Dr. Nastia Furtak's dental issues are all resolved and she returned to Nalerigu at the start of the month (with two Ukrainian volunteers in tow). **We thank God for her presence at BMC as well as Dr. George Faile who will assist while Heidi is on vacation.** With the upcoming Unicycle World Championships, please pray that Trey rides injury-free and is a light for Christ to the other riders in his actions and words.
 - In the last newsletter, we asked you to pray for William as he worked on three high-profile video projects for the IMB. **Praise God that he just wrapped up shooting on the last one this week!** After our vacation he will resume traveling abroad for photo assignments.
- Please continue to pray for the church plant in the village of Dindani. William has preached there eight times now and while it still only has 3-4 adults attending, the number of children grows every week!

FBC Missions News

Trey to Compete at Unicycling World Championships



This weekend our whole family is traveling to Austria to enjoy two weeks of vacation and to support Trey in his events at [UNICON 22](#), the Unicycle World Championships. We've got an Airbnb booked where we look forward to relaxing in the Austrian Pre-Alps while simultaneously anxiously biting our nails and cheering our heads off for Trey.

A huge thank you to [Seminole First Baptist Church](#) in Florida that has been letting him train in their air-conditioned youth building all summer!



[KJ celebrated her 11th birthday last month](#). Thanks to all of you who sent her birthday cards and well wishes.

Generous folks from Seminole FBC donated money allowing us to fulfill her wish of going to northern Ghana's Mole National Park for her birthday. She got to [see elephants right outside our hotel room!](#)

KJ also recently aced her fifth-grade end-of-year assessments and will be starting 6th grade next month.

Serve Tour France

William had a productive trip filming the work of [Send Relief's Serve Tour](#) in France last month. He spent most of his time with the teams in Paris but also went down to Marseille. The whole project was a big encouragement to the Baptist churches in France where the American volunteers served. You can [learn more about Serve Tour](#) and see the list of upcoming opportunities to join them in the US and overseas.

It was also a joy for William to take some time off and [visit with the Darriet family in southern France](#). Madame Darriet was William's high school French teacher in the 90s and we have stayed close to their family for over three decades!!! They hosted him well and fed him so much cheese, chocolate, pastries and other French delicacies (like oysters and snails).

UPCOMING EVENTS



SUNDAY, AUGUST 2

Important Announcement

Volunteer Training

Anyone who volunteers/works with children will need to watch a video for insurance after morning service. This includes Nursery, Sunday School, Choir, Awana, Missions, and Youth workers/volunteers.

Lunch Provided

Pizza will be served for lunch.

Childcare

Childcare provided.

FINISH THE Vision

Capital Campaign

2,646 0%



3 Year Goal:
\$1.2 Million

Commitment:
\$1,197,354

1,200,000 100%

Offerings Year to Date

07/26/2026

7%



3 Year Goal:
\$1.2 Million

Offerings YTD:
\$1,115,605.89

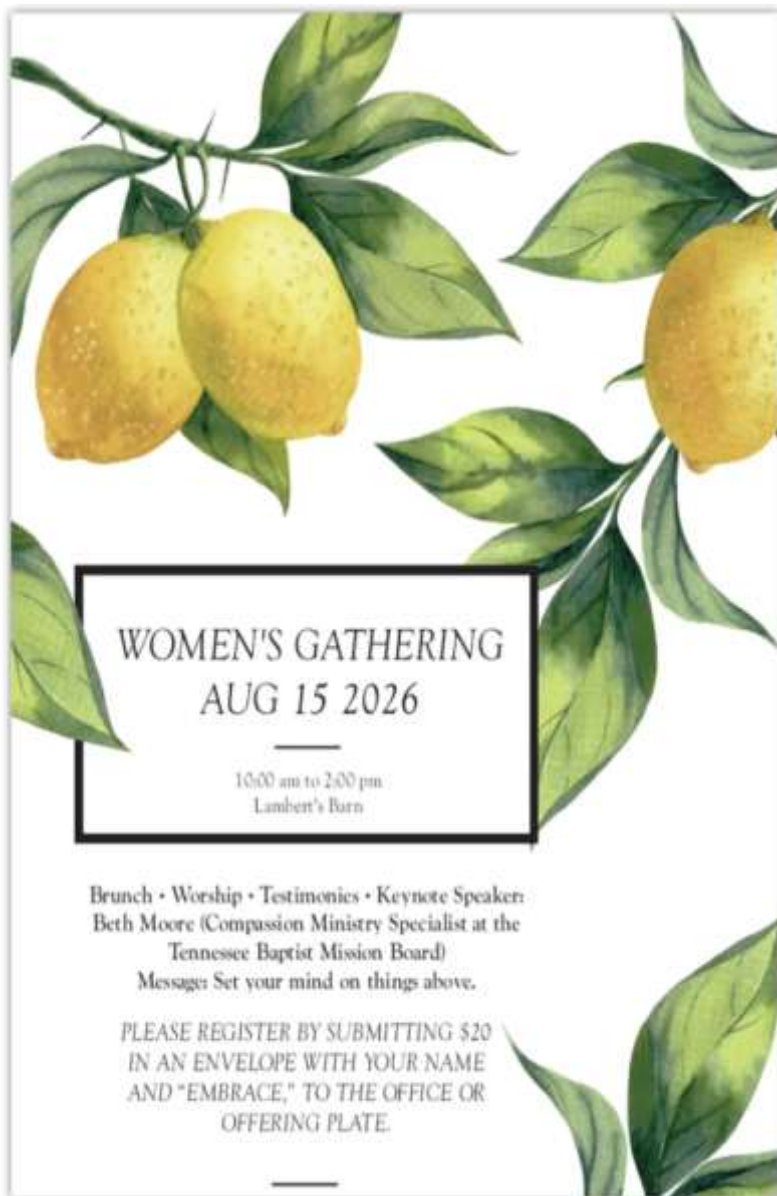
93%



**WE NEED YOUR HELP!! SCAN
THE QR CODE TO SERVE!**



¹⁶ BY THIS WE KNOW LOVE,
THAT HE LAID DOWN HIS
LIFE FOR US, AND WE
OUGHT TO LAY DOWN
OUR LIVES FOR THE
BROTHERS.
1 JOHN 3:16 ESV

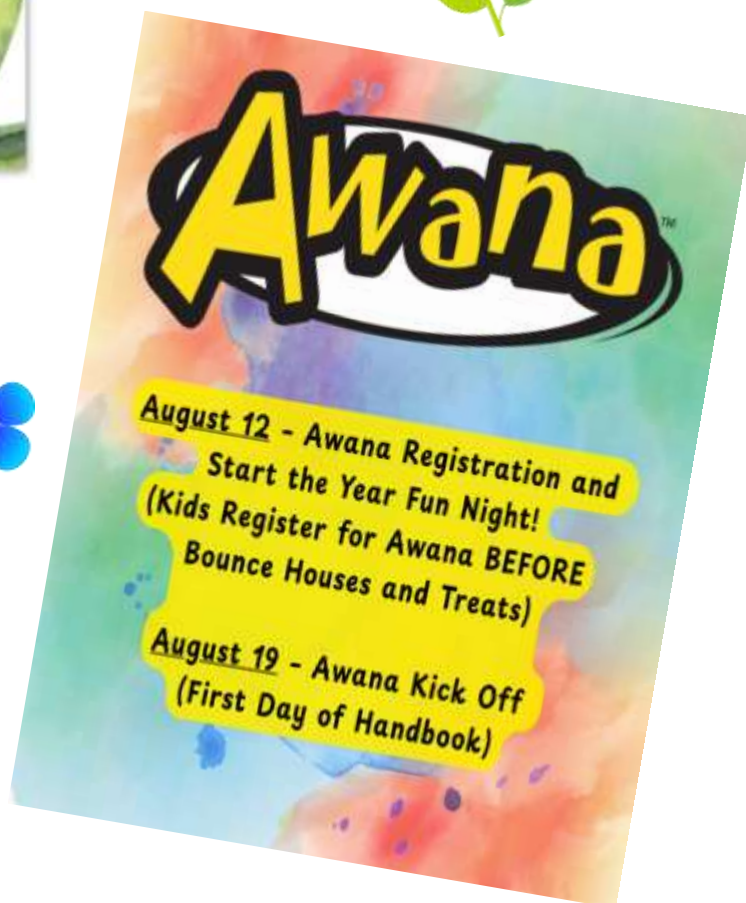


We have collected over \$??? since April!

Please be kind to our 4 gentlemen who take them off for us:

- ✓ **ONLY BRING ALUMINUM CANS.**
- ✓ **MAKE SURE THEY ARE DRAINED OUT, WE DON'T WANT TO ATTRACT BUGS AND CRITTERS WITH THE LIQUID.**
- ✓ **BAG IS SECURELY TIED, SO THEY DON'T HAVE TO PICK UP LOOSE CANS.**

Thank you for your help!



Next Sunday, August 9
Proceeds go toward the Brazil Mission Trip.



IF YOU HAVE VEGGIES, BAKED GOODS, FRUIT, EGGS, JELLYS AND JAMS, CANNED GOODS, ETC THAT YOU'RE WILLING TO DONATE FOR THE MARKET, PLEASE CALL OR TEXT KELLIE WHEELER 865-333-6308



HOT DIGGITY DOG



JESUS LOVES YOU!

FBC SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAMS KICKOFF

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12
FREE MEAL FOR ALL!

First Baptist Church

Cast your vote that night for which staff member has the best tasting hotdog style!



DATES TO REMEMBER

August 12 Fall Kick Off - free meal - sign ups for activities

August 19 Children's Choir and Awana begins

Men's Ministry Event Apologetics & Evangelism Conference 2026



Not Just a Book: Why the Bible Stands Alone

Is the Bible just another religious text—or the very Word of God?

In a world filled with competing truths, cultural confusion, and spiritual noise, how can we be sure the Bible is reliable, relevant, and absolutely true?

This October, join fellow believers, seekers, and leading scholars at the Steadfast National Conference as we explore why the Bible is not just a book, but divine revelation you can trust—completely.

Date: October 9th – 10th, 2026

Location: First Baptist Church Rock Hill, SC

Cost: Regular Admission (Early Bird) \$92.41 (By Aug 1, 2026) - \$103.07 (By Oct 8, 2026) – Tickets available via SEES website (**Purchase Directly**) (<https://ses.edu/events/steadfast-national-conference-2026/>)

Hotel Accommodations: Double Occupancy, Space is Limited – First Come Basis! (Deposit due by Sept 27, 2026 – Approx \$135 per person per night)

Sign up today!

For Carpooling and Information Contact Daryl West at (423) 271-7181 or sign up in the Church Vestibule.



"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." – Proverbs 27:17



Our Mission: Spreading the light of Jesus by loving one another and glorifying God.

Our Vision: Engage in inspiring worship encourage spiritual growth, reach youth an young families, witness to the unsaved and minister to the physical, spiritual, and emotional needs of member and non-members.

Contact Us

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