



The Torch

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CAPITOL HILL
2022 – JUNE VOLUME 64 NUMBER 8

PASTOR'S PEN

Recently, I had the opportunity to shoot an AK-47 assault rifle at a gun range. This is a military style rifle that was made by the Soviet Union in 1947 and became one of the most popular assault rifles because of its low production cost and it being able to hold up in harsh conditions. I took seven shots, hoping it was the last one, but told there was another bullet in the chamber. I shot that one, too. I hit the target (or got real close to it) with each of my shots. After I finished, the man who worked at the place asked me how did I feel? I told him, "Scared".

It is scary to know that what I had just shot was a weapon that contains so much power. These are not weapons that are used for hunting or shooting birds. These are weapons of war. In the pull of a trigger, if it had been a person instead of a target, I could have taken away a life. It is scary to think that a person who has a bad attitude, or a bad experience, or a bad outlook on life, or has bad perspectives on groups of people because of their race/ethnicity or just having a bad day, can just in a moment shoot and kill a person or people. It is scary knowing that there are people who have little regard for human life are walking, riding, and sitting around fully armed for whatever reason they conjure up.

Even as much as it happens, it is scary listening to news of gun violence here in the USA. I never get used to hearing of shootings, whether they are mass shootings, such as in California, New York or Texas, or the shooting of individuals. It is scary to think that there are those who feel personally empowered by simply carrying a gun, as they declare it to be for self-defense. Overwhelmingly, according to statistics, most of the times guns are used, they are used in domestic situations or in committing suicide. They may not get the same press as when we hear of mass murders. But tell that to the families who have been victimized by gun violence.

Jesus actually speaks to this situation of our weaponizing ourselves. And he speaks to it at a time when one would think he should have been open to it. It was in the garden of Gethsemane and they were coming to arrest him after Judas betrayed him. He was heading to certain death. One of those with Jesus (believed to be Peter) pulled out a sword and cut off the ear of one of those who had come to arrest Jesus. But Jesus said, "[Put your sword back in its place,](#)" ... "[for all who draw the sword will die by the sword](#)" ([Matthew 26:52](#)). And he healed the man's ear. In other words, he was saying that if we choose to live in this militarized culture, it will be to our detriment as well. Weapons used outside of their intended contexts have a way of turning on us as well. We don't create peace with them. We may just delay an inevitability.

Let us pray that the United States Congress will develop the civility of mind and spirit to address this national health crisis and create laws, and hopefully help to establish a culture that will allow guns to be used in the appropriate contexts by people who respect and value human life.

Kelly M. Smith Jr

Pastor

DISCIPLESHIP MOMENT

Choosing Self-Care

“But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” ~Luke 10:42

Article submitted by Rev. Joe Ella Darby, *Assistant to the Pastor for Discipleship*

We live in a world that values busyness. Often times, we brag about our busy schedules, giving greater worth to individuals who are seemingly able to do and produce more. Sadly, this value of busyness is found even within the church, as there is always work that needs to be done. When we wisely choose self-care, we are able to produce and be more effective far more than not. When was the last time you made a decision to preserve yourself, your energy, your mental health, your wellness, and your peace, etc. so you could experience life?

The gospel according to Luke, shares a story of two sisters, Mary and Martha, who have welcomed Jesus into their home (Luke 10:38-42). The older sister Martha was busy making preparations for Jesus while the younger sister, Mary, is busy being with Jesus, sitting at Jesus’ feet. In a fit of frustration, Martha demands Jesus to tell Mary to help her as she feels she has been left to serve alone. In response, “Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” Yes, what Martha was doing regarding serving Jesus was important and necessary, but I love how Jesus did not concede to Martha’s demand of him or Mary; but responds in a way that is radical and counterculture.

Mary’s decision to sit at Jesus’ feet was counterculture as this was the place of a disciple, mainly Jewish men. Men would sit at the rabbi’s feet and learn of Him; women would be doing just as Martha was busy doing. Jesus tells Martha that Mary has chosen the good part or good work. “Good” in verse 42, is translated “Agathos” in Greek, which means *intrinsically good or good in nature*. Mary’s good decision to choose the best work for her, even in the face of her sister’s demands and frustrations, would not be taken away from her.

Time at Jesus’ feet is always the better choice, even when one has a long laundry list of things to do. If you are in the habit of choosing the better thing, please continue to guard those choices as your life does depend on it. If you’re not in the habit of caring for yourself, I would like to share a list of some manageable ways you can begin implementing for self-care that leads to more effective flourishing.

*Shed thoughts and feelings that tell you that self-care is selfish. Believe that you are worth self-care. See yourself as God sees you; you are God’s beloved. Apply Colossians 3:12 by being gentle, kind, and patient with yourself.

*Set boundaries that guard your peace, energy, mental health and wellness. You are responsible for this. Never apologize for doing so. (Psalm 16; 34:5)

*Invest in a good devotional, being intentional to read and meditate on it throughout the day. There are websites or the Bible app that will email you a devotional every morning. Choose to take the time to taste the sweetness of God’s Word. (Psalm 34:8)

*Be more conscious of God’s presence around you. Throughout the day, pause and deeply breathe in God’s mercy and grace, and breathe out all that worry you. Repeat as often and as many times as needed. (Acts 17:28a)

*Take a walk or a quick run. Ride a bike. Take a slower route home and listen to music that nurtures your soul. Sing aloud and appreciate the words of your favorite song. (Psalm 37:3-6)

*Throughout the day, keep a list or journal of things for which you can be grateful. When you arrive home for the evening, sit in your car for a few minutes, thanking God for your day and asking God to bless your night. Counting your blessings is a great exercise of self-care. (Psalm 28:7; 136:1)

MISSION AT YOUR DOORSTEP

'Thou shalt not kill' Exodus 20:13

Article submitted by Dr. Arrol N. Martin, *Assistant to the Pastor*

American Baptist Churches Condemns Mass Shootings

The American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) expresses heartfelt condolences to the victims and family members of those slain during a brazen act of racially motivated violence on May 14, 2022, in Buffalo, New York. We stand in solidarity with the people of Buffalo, while praying for comfort on the part of all those stricken by grief due to this massacre.

Thirteen people, ranging in age from 20 to 86, were shot. Ten of them died. Eleven victims were Black, two were white. The shooter, Payton S. Gendron, a white man in his late teens, drove three-and-a-half hours from his home in Conklin, New York, to zip code 14208. According to census data, the population there is 78% Black, representing the highest percentage of Black people in Upstate New York.

A manifesto authored by the shooter confirms his plan—he yearned to kill Black people.

Such racist ideology has long existed in America, and it fuels efforts on the part of some to instigate civil war between white people and people of color, as witnessed on June 17, 2015, when an admitted white supremacist slaughtered nine Black churchgoers at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal in Charleston, SC.

ABHMS believes that all people are made in the image of God and are entitled to peace, dignity, and safety—whether traveling to the store, attending worship, engaging in fellowship with friends and family, or simply enjoying life—without being subjected to acts of violence by white supremacists.

Written by: Dr. Jeffrey Haggray, Executive Director American Baptist Home Mission Societies, May 18, 2022.

Dr. Haggray's article points to the poison that has been a part of American history since the day the first slave ship arrived on the eastern shores of the United States. A war was fought to preserve the peculiar institution, was glorified by southern plantation owners, as people of colors natural position in the hierarchy of plantation life and a genteel society.

No matter one's philosophical position on race, God's law states clearly that no one has the right to take the life of another human being in an unlawful manner. Murder is against both natural law and God's law. Before the law was written, the ground cried out at the murder of Abel by his brother Cain.

The question is, how much longer must people of color be the victims of American hatred?

Deacons of the Week for June 2022		
Week of	Deacon	Phone#
5 th	Ronald McFarland Sr.	(615) 331-0564
12 th	Carole Boone	(615) 851-1527
19 th	Derek Howard	(615) 318-6469
26 th	Martin Currie	(615) 832-9662

Prayer Request/Sick & Shut-in List

In order to keep our prayer list current, please let the church office know if you (or someone you know) have changed address or if someone should be added to or removed from the prayer list.

Deacon Richard Dinkins
Sis. Jan Jones Carter
Major Alicia R. Bodie

Sis. Rose McDonald
111 N. Carolina Ave. #204
Lexington, NC 27292

Sis. Maggie Roper
Riverview Health and Rehab
1600 West Claiborne Ave.
Greenwood, MS 38930

Bro. Derrick McDaniel
Good Samaritan Health & Rehab
500 Hickory Hollow Terrace
Antioch, TN 37013

Sis. Leslie Williams
2929 Old Franklin Rd
Nashville, TN 37013

BIRTHDAYS

JUNE

4 Imani Byrd
5 Kyndal Christian
6 Anaya Campbell
David Todd III
10 Yolanda McGriff Chatman
11 Breneatha Demonbreum
Courtney Greene
Weldon Kidd
15 Jamar Ritch
Samuel L. Robinson
Joy M. Sims
18 Desiree' Robertson
Da'Kari Shyes
19 Jewel Solomon Burks
20 Kerry Schrader
William Webb
23 Ryan Gentry
25 Leigh Lovett
Kena McDaniel
Kenya McDaniel
Taylor A. Slay
Sandra Weaver
28 Anita Greene
Harley Wood

JULY

1 Darrell Hayes Jr.
Ruth McGriff
D. J. Wootson
2 Nanette Lacey
Aaron Powell III
4 Torian Young
6 Herman E. Jackson
Simon E. Morrow
7 Rosetta Perry
8 Crystal Beasley
9 Arrol N. Martin
10 Lanny Bobb
Gary Rowe
11 Kelly M. Smith Jr.
12 Evelyn Fancher
Tanae McKnight
14 Isolina Franklin
15 Tamarah Daniel
Sheila Littleton
17 Maribeth Crutchfield-White
Mona Hayes
20 Keenan Robinson
22 Ryan O. King
23 John Alexander
25 Sue Smith
Erma Todd
Robert Wood II
27 James Collier
Ernest E. Dismuke
Benny Perry
Beverly A. Scott
28 Kya Robinson
30 Sheldon Greene
31 Harvey Doughty

AUGUST

1 Dorothy Jarrett
2 Geraldean Johnson
Carl E. Jones Jr.
Zuri Walker
3 Ilene White
4 Helen Anderson
Robin Battle
Ivan Davis Sr.
Delores Grimes
Catherine Lovett
Grayson Woods
5 Augustus Bankhead
6 Paiton Williams
Paris Williams
7 David Jones Jr.
8 Gwendolyn Harris
9 Mary O. Pleas
10 Shirley Bass
11 Joey Faught
12 Danielle Anderson
15 Sharon Gentry
Brian Jones
Paul Luter
Elisha Richardson
16 Pamela Wood
17 Doris Freeman Hull
Deborah Howse
18 Whitley Campbell
21 Sylvia Burton
22 Christopher B. Easley
Shanell McGoy
Randall Washington
24 Monica B. Carter
25 Terrance Hurd
27 Jane Fort

June 2022 Readings and Sunday School Lessons

<u>DAY</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>SCRIPTURE</u>
God Foretells Destruction		
Wednesday, June 1 st	“Persecution Foretold”	Mark 13:1-13
Thursday, June 2 nd	“Keep Awake”	Mark 13:28-37
Friday, June 3 rd	“Rise Up, O God!”	Psalms 74:10-23
Saturday, June 4 th	“The Humiliation of Babylon”	Isaiah 47:1-9
Sunday, June 5 th	“No Security in Wickedness”	Isaiah 47:10-15
Adult: Nowhere to Run	Youth: Nowhere to Run, Nowhere to Hide	Children: Nothing is Hidden
God Foretells of Redemption		
Monday, June 6 th	“God’s Redemption Defies Human Wisdom”	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Tuesday, June 7 th	“Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption”	1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Wednesday, June 8 th	“God Sent Redemption to His People”	Psalms 111
Thursday, June 9 th	“Christ Brings Eternal Redemption”	Hebrews 9:11-14
Friday, June 10 th	“Pardon My Guilt, O Lord”	Psalms 25:1-11
Saturday, June 11 th	“Redeem Israel, O God”	Psalms 25:12-22
Sunday, June 12 th	“The Lord Will Have Compassion”	Isaiah 49:1-14
Adult: A Mission to Save	Youth: Hope for the World	Children: Hope for the Future
God’s Restored People Shall Prosper		
Monday, June 13 th	“God Puts Down and Lifts Up”	Psalms 75
Tuesday, June 14 th	“God Protects a Restored, Holy People”	Leviticus 26:3-13
Wednesday, June 15 th	“Blessing Upon God’s People”	Luke 6:20-26
Thursday, June 16 th	“God Has Turned Mourning into Dancing”	Psalms 30
Friday, June 17 th	“God Gives Good Gifts”	James 1:13-18
Saturday, June 18 th	“Blessings for Obedience”	Deuteronomy 28:9-14
Sunday, June 19 th	“Wait for the Lord”	Isaiah 49:18-23
Adult: All Things Put Right	Youth: Help Is on the Way	Children: Better Days Ahead
God Offers Deliverance		
Monday, June 20 th	“God Will Vindicate His Servant”	Isaiah 50:4-9
Tuesday, June 21 st	“Remember God’s Mighty Deeds”	Isaiah 51:9-16
Wednesday, June 22 nd	“God Defends Israel’s Cause”	Isaiah 51:17-23
Thursday, June 23 rd	“God Rescues Us from Peril”	2 Corinthians 1:7-14
Friday, June 24 th	“Jesus Rescues Us from Wrath”	1 Thessalonians 1:6-10
Saturday, June 25 th	“Deliverance Belongs to the Lord”	Psalms 3
Sunday, June 26 th	“God’s Deliverance Is Coming”	Isaiah 51:1-8
Adult: Back to Basics	Youth: Teaching Freedom	Children: Freedom!
The Creating Word Becomes Flesh		
Monday, June 27 th	“God Created the World through Wisdom”	Proverbs 8:22-31
Tuesday, June 28 th	“In Christ All Things Hold Together”	Colossians 1:13-17
Wednesday, June 29 th	“Christ, the Head of All Things”	Colossians 1:18-22
Thursday, June 30 th	“God’s Well-Ordered Creation”	Psalms 104:24-35
Friday, July 1 st	“The Son Reflects God’s Glory”	Hebrews 1:1-4
Saturday, July 2 nd	“Deliverance Belongs to the Lord”	Psalms 3
Sunday, July 3 rd	“The Word Becomes Flesh”	John 1:1-14

youth group hike

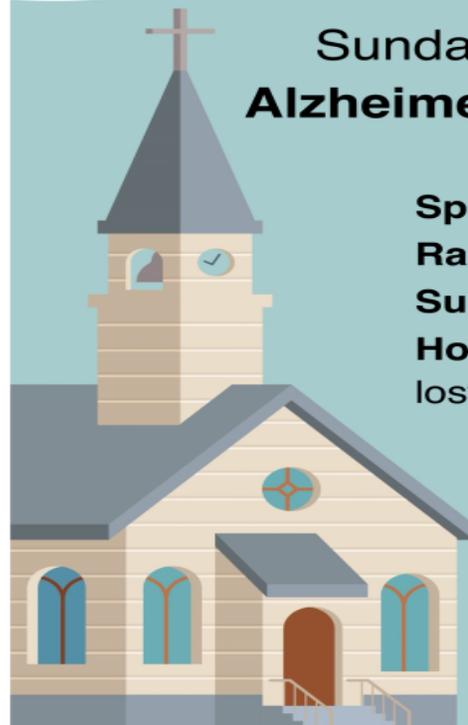
with
Elder Lockhart



Percy Warner Park
9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Memory Sunday

Sunday, June 26, 2022
Alzheimer's Awareness Day



Spread love and hope
Raise awareness
Support caregivers
Honor those we have
lost to Alzheimer's disease

Pam Cowley
Community Outreach and Engagement
pam.cowley@vumc.org

(615) 875-3175

Memory Sunday is an initiative of The National Brain Health Center for African Americans, a program of The Balm In Gilead.



MINISTRY OF STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT

Sermon Digests

April
17

“Does Easter Still Amaze Us?”

Pastor Kelly M. Smith Jr.

[‘Luke 24:1-12 \(NRSV\)’](#)

Submitted by: Kathy Harrell

As children, there are many holidays that amazed us! Now, with so many advances in our society, there are many celebrations that do not amaze us as they used to.

But those who experienced that first Easter were shocked, confused, and amazed. They didn’t know what had happened, nor what it meant, but they were amazed. And that is what Easter should do for us. It should amaze us because it gives so much that is unexpected, and yet, that unexpected is sometimes all that we have!

Point 1 – It should amaze us that Jesus is in unexpected people.

We may think that Jesus would have wanted people in authority to be among the first to know of his resurrection. It was not the religious authorities, it was not Jesus’ chosen disciples, and it was Jesus’ closest followers to be the first to tell of his resurrection. It was those who were on the fringes, the most faithful, and the women who had followed Jesus from place to place. You cannot fall asleep at the wheel! Remember, a woman ignited the bus boycott, students at HBCU’s broke down the walls of segregation, and a woman who confronted the mayor on the steps of city hall that opened doors across Nashville.

What’s important is not to expect those in certain positions to do the right thing, but to expect those who truly love the Lord to do the right thing, in all things.

Point 2 – It should amaze us that Jesus is in unexpected places.

It is amazing that Jesus has a tendency not to stay in the places we try to keep Him. A big part of our challenge is that we try to entomb Jesus; we need Him to be in the places where we place Him. But Jesus is omnipresent, He is in places where we know nothing about. Consider - two years ago, many of us never knew what ‘Facebook Live’ or ‘YouTube’ was. But both were already in existence throughout the world and soon served as a lifeline to nurture our faith during the height of the pandemic.

Point 3- It should amaze us that Jesus is in unexpected possibilities.

It is amazing how He keeps possibilities open. The women went to the grave of Jesus so that they could have closure. Closure helps us to move on from things. But, because there is *no closure* in our relationship with Jesus, it helps us to manage all the other closures in our lives. Many of us are making it today because of the unexpected possibilities.

April
24

“The Resurrection Continues”

Rev. Joe Ella Darby

[‘John 20:24-31’ \(NRSV\)](#)

Submitted by: Beverly M. Brown

Context:

“Then saith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” (John 20:27-29).

Thomas statement was made directly to Jesus and is clear affirmation of the His deity. Had Thomas statement not been true, Jesus as a man of God would have surely rebuked Him. However, the Lord responded commending Thomas’ belief in this truth. Jesus then proclaimed that those who would believe, who had not seen what Thomas had would be blessed.

Rev. Darby shared with the congregation that the resurrection of Jesus is not always remembered. Resurrection has a tendency to fade after Resurrection Sunday. Thomas was at least willing to confess his doubt; whereas it was disappointing to Jesus to acknowledge that without touching his wounded areas – Thomas ‘s faith and belief that he really was resurrected brought sadness to and for Jesus Christ. Remembering that God/Christ Jesus also shows up in our lives when we are in doubt whether it is in relationships, marriages, sickness, and death.

God/Christ Jesus can still rescue us whether it be from gossip, cheating, racism, temptation(s), injustice, unfairness, sin, (both) large and small in human beings’ eyesight, etc. Because of Christ Jesus, sin lost it’s hold on humankind inclusive of the pandemic, failures, unexpected surgeries, etc. God/Christ Jesus still shows up, shows out, and gets His People through whatever life presents. God/Christ Jesus amazing grace has brought each of us to this time and place and He has looked beyond our faults and met our needs. He has met us where we are at this time and place in life and living. Finally, God/Christ Jesus wants us to lean forward into Him to get over or through the hump, and His grace is available and accessible to the world and society as a whole.

Amen, Amen, & Amen.

May
1

“Making Things Beautiful”
Pastor Kelly M. Smith Jr.
[Acts 3:1-11](#)

Submitted by: Deborah Luter

The text today comes from the book of Acts where the first recorded miracle that the apostles of Jesus had done after his death and resurrection. The scripture tells us there was an ugly situation at the gate called Beautiful. To be clear, the ugliness was not because this man who had been lame from birth was placed by the gates daily so he could beg for money. The ugliness was that:

- He lived in a time and place where his condition prevented him from being able to work.
- He was not allowed to even come into the Temple to worship and pray because of his condition.
- There were no viable programs to support and sustain him.

But Peter and John felt that something more, something different needed to happen. When they encountered the man, Peter looked him in his eyes, and told the man to look at him. He said “silver and gold we do not have. But what we do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus, get up and walk”. And the man got up and walked. It was a sight of beauty for the man to get up and walk, skip and dance. We see the beauty of God’s hand in creation. We must make beauty in the lives of those God has created as well.

Point 1- We can make things beautiful by seeing others through the eyes of Jesus

This was probably not the first time Peter and John had gone to the Temple to pray. This was not the first time this man was placed by the Temple Beautiful Gate. So what was different this time that they stopped to help this man? Something finally clicked in them that made them see this man not just as an eye sore but as a child of God.

Point 2- We can make things beautiful by giving that which has value to us. The man was hoping for money from Peter and John. But Peter said we don’t have any money. But we have something more valuable than money. We have JESUS. What Peter and John gave has lasting value.

Point 3- We can make things beautiful by removing stigmas. A stigma is a mark of disgrace on a person. We tend to put a permanent stain on a temporary situation. Sometimes it is hard to break the image that people have of us.

But Jesus has the capacity to make us beautiful. That is why we need to always strive to make things beautiful.

May
8

“A Mother’s Influence”
Pastor Kelly M. Smith Jr.
[John 2:1-11](#)

Submitted by: Adrienne Fancher

It had to be a tremendous challenge to be the mother of Jesus. Mary never abdicated her role; she remained a good mother to the Savior of the world. When mothers do their job well, it becomes an influence that can make or break a child.

Point 1. She was influential because she was chosen.

Mary was chosen by God to be the mother of the child who would be the Savior of all humanity. All mothers should understand that they are chosen by God: it is not by accident that children are born through you. No matter your economic situation, your family circumstance, or even your faith position – you are chosen by God for this task. Therefore, your influence is from the position that God gave you this responsibility because God believes in your positive influence. Know that God is with you!

Point 2. She was influential because people need joyful moments.

At the wedding, Mary used her influence on her son because she realized the importance of celebrating joyful moments. Joyful moments help us to balance the difficult moments of life. Mothers are often the sources of joyful moments for their families.

Point 3. She was influential because she knew her son.

This story claims to be the first demonstration of Jesus’ miraculous power. However, Mary had surely observed signs of Jesus’ power as He grew up. Even though Jesus protested that His Time had not come, Mary used her influence to get Jesus to do something to solve the problem without telling Him what to do. Jesus is still doing something in our lives today – when we trust Him and follow His Direction.

Mothers use their influence to help children become the people they are meant to be.

First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill

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www.firstbaptistcapitolhill.org

Kelly M. Smith Jr., Pastor

Our Mission

First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill is Building, Restoring, and Revitalizing lives through Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

Love God, Make Disciples, Serve Community

Looking for a Church Home?

If you are looking for a church home, we encourage you to come and visit us! There are several ways to become a member of FBCCH.

Baptism - when a person is willing to initially express a belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and is willing to live one's life according to His will. Baptism is the symbolic initiation into the Christian faith.

Christian Experience - when a person who has previously been a member of another church chooses to unite with FBCCH, believing this to be the place for one's spiritual nurturing. These people have already been baptized and have committed a faith relationship with Jesus Christ.

Watchcare - when a person wishes to have his or her membership with FBCCH while he or she is temporarily living in the city.

Associate - when a person who has a membership in another church wishes to have a membership in FBCCH.

Restoration - when a former member chooses to rejoin FBCCH.

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Scheduling Access to Church Buildings

To all groups needing entry and use of the church, sanctuary, and Ennix-Jones Center during the week, please call the church office at 615-255-8757 in advance of your event. This is to ensure personnel are available to allow entry and to have a record for security purposes. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Please send all electronic correspondence to: fbch13@gmail.com.