



# The Torch

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CAPITOL HILL  
2022 – JANUARY VOLUME 63 NUMBER 4

## PASTOR'S PEN

During the month of January we remember the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The actual date of his birth is January 15, 1929. However, since the United States made it a federal holiday it is now observed on the third Monday of January, which this year will be January 17. First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill has always honored the life and legacy of Dr. King. There is no other single individual who has had a more significant role in the shaping and pressing for the rights of people of color.

Though there were many very significant speeches and sermons spoken by Dr. King, the most iconic one is the one often labeled the “I Have a Dream” speech (the original title of the speech is “Normalcy, Never Again”), delivered by him, August 28, 1963, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC. There is a line in that speech that states, ***“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”*** That was almost 60 years ago. And our nation has come a long way since then. We have had African Americans to serve at every branch of government, including President of the United States and, currently, Vice-President. Commercials, television shows, movies and pitch persons for various products feature people of color, often more than the token ones.

Blacks are called upon as experts in areas beyond entertainment, sports, and Black matters. We have experts in finance, healthcare, business, politics, foreign affairs, just to name a few. Many anchor news-broadcasts, and host game shows. We have come a long way since 1963.

But we are not “there” yet. We have not fully arrived and cannot claim to have fully accomplished what Martin Luther King was talking about. We are not there yet when we find that the rights which were fought for and won in the 60’s are being lost and stolen in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are not there yet when we see the open and vile things people say and do simply because of the differences in skin color. We are not there yet when people still respond to us based on negative stereotypes.

We are not there yet when we find Black and brown communities fighting among themselves over appointments and positions instead of looking at whole boards to see where there can be other ways to bring about diversity and inclusion. We are not there yet when we still have to step off the proverbial sidewalks of life, be treated as less than equals, allowing other communities to not have to encounter Blacks and black issues. We are not there yet when, in our conversations with each other, we change our volume to whisper the word “white”, when referring to the other community, out of concern they may hear us.

And because we are not there yet we still have to fight for, promote, enlist and encourage each other. We must support those who are black business owners (and expect them to remain accountable to our community as well). We should measure our public criticism of things about African Americans and find constructive ways to address them in private. We will get there. We are just not there yet. It is in our efforts to not let the world define who we are and how we are to be treated that we will be able to get there. Our minds must be transformed and renewed to make sure that day will someday arrive ([Romans 12:2](#)). We are not there yet, but we are on our way.

Kelly M. Smith Jr., Pastor

# DISCIPLESHIP MOMENT

## Prayer: An Invitation to Draw Nearer

*“Prayer is putting oneself in the HANDS OF GOD.” ~Mother Teresa*

Submitted by Rev. Joe Ella Darby, Assistant to the Pastor for Discipleship

Have you ever looked forward to a conversation with a dear friend, regardless of the time you last spoke with him or her? Have you ever left a conversation with someone having experienced connectedness, joy, belonging, and/or peace? Have had a conversation where you received sound wisdom and advice on how to handle a situation? Have you ever had a hard conversation with someone who challenged, disciplined, corrected, and/or spoke truth to you, and you were able to receive it because you trusted him or her?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, then you have a good understanding of the heart of prayer, even if you feel insecure about its practice. One may ask, so what is prayer? Prayer is simply a conversation, albeit this conversation implies two-way communication of speaking and listening. Prayer is an open invitation to talk, listen, and commune with God and others in shared intimacy (into-me-you-see). As we accept this invitation to draw nearer to God, in intentional prayer, we align our will with God’s will; thus, putting ourselves in God’s hand.

This invitation to pray is for everyone; however, learning to pray well (not meaning well for others to hear) and with power takes desire, intentionality, sacrificed time, and commitment. Even the disciples, as they saw Jesus pray in private and experienced his ministry in public, understood that learning to pray well was something they were willing to ask Jesus to teach them (Luke 11:1). We would do well to follow their wisdom and ask of Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray!” not just for ourselves, but for others, for our church and the universal Church, for our community, for our nation, and for our world.

One significant practice in learning how to pray with power is to pray the scriptures. The Bible is full of prayers spoken by everyday men and women, with real needs, just like you and me.

Hebrews 4:12NKJV tells us that, “God’s Word is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Praying God’s Word aligns us with God’s will as we discern God’s acceptable and perfect will for our lives and our personal ministry assignments (Romans 12:2).

The Bible contains various types of prayers to include: Prayer of Praise and Adoration (I Chronicles 29:10-13); Prayer of Confession (Psalm 51); Prayer of Petition (Phil. 4:6; Eph. 6:18; Heb. 5:7); Prayer of Thanksgiving (Ezra 7:27-28; 1 Tim. 4:4-5; Col. 1:3-14); Prayer of Intercession (Luke 11:3-13); and Prayer of Remembrance (Neh. 1:5-11). I invite you to take time this month to begin sifting through a few of these scriptures listed above and turning them into prayers for yourself and our church family. Feel free to begin writing the prayers in your own words and journaling your thoughts. Here at The Hill, God has called us to a greater work of ministry, building on the legacy of those who have passed onto us the ministerial baton, and we need power and discernment as we forge ahead. As we seek to be faithful in doing God’s will, let us hear the reminder of Oswald Chamber, “Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work.” As we put our “hand to the plow” may we first bow our heads in prayer, laying the foundation for us to be in awe of how God will work in and through us.

Additional Prayer Resources:

[Lord, Teach Us To Pray](#) by Andrew Murray

[Face to Face: Praying the Scriptures for Intimate Worship](#) by Kenneth D. Boa

<https://www.wycliffe.org/prayer/how-to-pray-scripture-back-to-god>

# MISSION AT YOUR DOORSTEP

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Matthew 24:14 ESV*

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Arrol N. Martin, Assistant to the Pastor

2022 has arrived and we are blessed to see another New Year. Surprisingly there were no forecast of doom and gloom to greet us, as we anticipated the arrival of the New Year. The gospel writer of Matthew warns us that the end will come. However, even Jesus said to us, “But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” [Matthew 24:36 NIV](#). What does that say to us as the people of God? In the fourteenth verse of chapter 24, Jesus says that the gospel of the kingdom will be proclaim throughout the world as a testimony to all nations.

Today, with modern technology, the possibility to reach all the nations of the world has become an ever-increasing possibility. Satellites bombard the skies with the message of the risen Savior. Yet, we must ask the question of ourselves, what have we done to be a witness for the gospel of Jesus Christ?

For you to be a witness for Christ does not mean that you must become a missionary. Our mission as Christians is to live a Christ like life. That means following the footsteps of Jesus Christ and laying down one’s life that they may truly respond to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Each of us has been called to minister in the world based on the gift that God has blessed us with. In 2022, may we all live up to the call, to be witnesses for the Kingdom of God and of His Peace.

## Winter Coat Drive

I want to thank the members of FBCCH for your outpouring of love and support for our 2021 Coats for Kids, winter coat drive. Because of your generosity thirty children will have a coat to wear during the cold of winter, whenever that becomes a reality. Our neighbors that reside at Cumberland View Apartments are appreciative for your commitment to the truth and relevance of the gospel, “I was naked and you clothed me.” Many of you purchased multiple coats and I too must express my deepest appreciation to you. Continue in following where faith leads us in 2022.

Expressions of

*gratitude*

I would to thank all FBCCH for your cards, prayers, visits, and well-wishes during my illness. As I recuperate, I request God's continued blessings for us all.

Happy New Year!  
Conra Collier

## Deacons of the Week for January 2022

Week of	Deacon	Phone#
2nd	Carol Boone	(615) 851-1527
9 <sup>th</sup>	Adrienne Fancher	(615) 255-8033
16 <sup>th</sup>	Martin Currie	(615) 832-9662
23 <sup>rd</sup>	Beverly Brown	(615) 391-3737
30 <sup>th</sup>	Beverly Brown	(615) 391-3737



**JUSTICE**

**CORNER**

## “The Time is Now”

Submitted by Rev. Pamela S. Mitchell, M.Div.

(AuthoraCare Collective *Greensboro, NC*)

The unknown author of Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 NIV divinely and appropriately begins this text with saying that there are both times and seasons designated for everything in our lives. I’ve always been intrigued with these words and even the times we choose to reflect on them. This reflection specifically showcases my context as a Hospice chaplain. While the term has been used interchangeably with palliative care, hospice is very distinct. Hospice care begins after the treatment of a disease is stopped because it is clear that the person is not going to survive the illness. Hospice care is most often offered only when the person is expected to live 6 months or less.

Hospice patients and families, with limited time and seasons, may perceive time slightly different from others who seemingly have more time to live, love, and leave a legacy. I’ve sat with families who have prayed for more time to apologize, forgive one another, have the hard conversations, and prepare for life without their loved one. Holding both these thoughts from previous conversations in tension with this particular text, I have to say, “The time is now”. Yes by now the vision board parties have concluded and the results from them are in plain view. For others, there have been promises and resolutions written sometimes with accountability partners to keep us on the right path. But have we submitted any of these visions and plans to God? Have we consulted the one who ensure we maintain the “New Year, New Us”?

A quick recap of verses 2-8 leaves much to question. What is God requiring us to finally birth or let go of completely this year? To this I say, now is the time to give complete the assignments using your mustard seed faith to kill the fear that has prevented this in times past. Now is the time to create partnerships and covenant collaborations to build projects and outreach opportunities for those in need of a new opportunity, second chance, or a way out of a bad situation. Now is the time to extend compassion and bear the burdens of those mourning the loss of loved ones to COVID and other illnesses, senseless acts of violence, and suicide. Now is season to be healed and to make space for healing in our land. It is ok to not be ok and to seek help from qualified professionals. Now is the time to reach out to strong friends and let them know they don’t have to keep doing things alone.

Release the stones of doubt that have been collected to tear down the hopes and dreams as business owners and entrepreneurs. Search and apply for funding; reserve the name and research start up expenses. Scatter and separate from the negativity that keeps a rift between families and instead safely gather to reconnect, reconcile, and embrace each other. Hate the fake news and lies told to keep our world constantly in a state of panic and unrest. Now is the season for more time in prayer and fasting.

Now is the time to mend things. Squash grudges, ill-will and walking in unforgiveness. Moving forward is heavy when insisting on carrying the weight of useless things we’ve refused to leave behind. Speak truth to power and in love. May our voices be heard during elections and advocating for the voiceless. This is the season to share the Good News to the hurting people who are both intentionally and unintentionally hurting people. Now is the time to remain silent when words are not good, lovely, or of a good report it.

This section closes with acknowledging a toil each of us has; and it’s been especially great individually and collectively since the beginning of 2020. There’s been the experience of truly being shut-in during times of shelter-in-place and the struggle to press on through unexpected periods of sickness and death during this pandemic. And in the midst of it all God still makes things beautiful in His time. 2020 was still filled with supernaturally beautiful and miraculous moments when God made ways out of no way. He set us all in His heart and knew our purpose and plans for us even before the foundations were laid.

So yes Beloved, *Now IS* the time for us to seek God’s perspective in all we do and to keep our praise in both good times and bad. This is the season to trust the process and follow the plan. Do it now while there’s still yet time!

# 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  
Sis. Rosa Mimms  
Major Alicia R. Bodie

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

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

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

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

## BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY	
1	Elizabeth Davis
2	Gabriel Bryson
5	Kelando Townsend
6	Tamia C. McKnight
	Diane Robertson
7	Timarion J. Smith
	Betty Wilson
9	Bobby Lovett
11	Marshawn Miller
13	Karen Brown
14	Kathy Harrell
	Ronald McFarland Sr.
15	Nina Lockhart
	Brooke McFarland
20	Jessica Powell
	Kathleen Wilkinson
	Sean Wood
21	M. Inez Crutchfield
22	Jason Robertson
	Diantay Powe Westbrook
24	Robert Greene
	Lueatrice Lovett
	Adrian Samuels
26	Evelyn Gaines-Guzman
	Carole McDaniel
27	James Lowe III
28	Noah Kirk
29	Hortense Jones
	Lance Molette
31	Virginia W. McClain
	Evan Smith-Erving

FEBRUARY	
2	Valinda Burks
	Geri Easley
3	Sabrina Daughtdrill
4	Wesley Curie
	Kourtlynn Greene
	Jeffrey Wood Sr.
6	Billie Calloway
7	Richard Ewing IV
	Constantine Fenderson
8	Benita Lynch
12	George Timothy Haynes II
14	Stephen Daniel
15	Ed Risby Jr.
	Lolita Slay
16	Johnny Allen
	Cornelia Cruson
	Gary Faulcon II
17	Hortensia McFarland
18	Tammye Hawkins
19	George Hill
21	Kendra Deas
22	Andreana Breveard
	Patricia Lane
23	Kenneth Cory
	Syelah Haskins
24	Christopher Beard
25	Myshia L. Deaderick
27	Christopher Demonbreum
28	Naomi Blair

MARCH	
1	Dwight Lewis
	Jamal Robinson
3	DeJuan Foster
	Candice Nunn
4	Tondreona Chandler
5	Vernoris Johnson
	Gerald Schrader
6	Sebastian Daughtdrill
	Taura McKnight Cheatham
	Lynn Stewart
7	KeShona Chandler
	Keshona Cox
9	Susan Mosley Howard
10	Jonishay Acklin
	Taylor Gentry
11	Doris Dismuke
12	Mai Olive Lusk
13	Kyrah Cruson
14	Willie McGee
	Taylor McFarland
20	Sharanda Smith
22	Scotty Robinson
23	Kimberly Alexander
24	Miriam Currie
	Frankie Jackson
25	Lyndsey Bass Covington
	Retha Buchanan
26	Tequila Johnson
27	Esther Caudle
	James Chandler
29	David Ewing
	William Ewing Sr.
30	Erica Adderly
31	John T. Howse

## January 2022 Readings and Sunday School Lessons

<u>DAY</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>SCRIPTURE</u>
Saturday, January 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Justice, Vengeance, and Mercy</b> “Love One Another”	1 John 3:4-13
Sunday, January 2 <sup>nd</sup>		Genesis 4:1-3
<b>Adult:</b> Undeserved Mercy	<b>Youth:</b> Undeserved Mercy	<b>Children:</b> Justice for Two Brothers
Monday, January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Hagar and Ishmael Are Not Forgotten</b> “The Lord Blesses Hagar and Ishmael” “Hear My Prayer, O God” “The Pure in Heart Will See God” “Abraham and Ishmael Are Circumcised” “The Twelve Tribes of Ishmael” “Remember Me, O Lord” “God Hears Ishmael’s Voice”	Genesis 16:1-15
Tuesday, January 4 <sup>th</sup>		Psalm 5
Wednesday, January 5 <sup>th</sup>		Matthew 5:3-12
Thursday, January 6 <sup>th</sup>		Genesis 17:23-27
Friday, January 7 <sup>th</sup>		Genesis 25:12-18
Saturday, January 8 <sup>th</sup>		Psalm 106:1-5
Sunday, January 9 <sup>th</sup>		Genesis 21:8-21
<b>Adult:</b> Improbable Hope	<b>Youth:</b> Unlikely Hope	<b>Children:</b> Keeping Promises
Monday, January 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>The Laws of Justice and Mercy</b> “Serve God Alone” “Blessings for the Obedient” “Mercy Triumphs over Judgement” “Faith without Works Is Dead” “Seek the Advantage of Others” “Steadfast Love and Faithfulness” “Treat Others Justly”	Exodus 23:13-19
Tuesday, January 11 <sup>th</sup>		Exodus 23:20-33
Wednesday, January 12 <sup>th</sup>		James 2:1-13
Thursday, January 13 <sup>th</sup>		James 2:14-26
Friday, January 14 <sup>th</sup>		Corinthians 10:23-33
Saturday, January 15 <sup>th</sup>		Psalm 85
Sunday, January 16 <sup>th</sup>		Exodus 23:1-12
<b>Adult:</b> Unbiased Actions	<b>Youth:</b> Impartial Actions	<b>Children:</b> Justice for All
Monday, January 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Justice, Judges, and Priest</b> “True and False Witnesses” “Addressing Church Conflicts” “The Duty to Forgive” “Moses’ Court of Appeal” “Speak Truth and Act on It” “God Is an Impartial Judge” “Appoint Leaders to Administer Justice”	Deuteronomy 19:15-21
Tuesday, January 18 <sup>th</sup>		Matthew 18:15-20
Wednesday, January 19 <sup>th</sup>		Matthew 18:21-35
Thursday, January 20 <sup>th</sup>		Exodus 18:13-26
Friday, January 21 <sup>st</sup>		Ephesians 4:25-32
Saturday, January 22 <sup>nd</sup>		Deuteronomy 10:14-22
Sunday, January 23 <sup>rd</sup>		Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 17:8-13
<b>Adult:</b> Incorruptible Leaders	<b>Youth:</b> Just Leaders	<b>Children:</b> A Team for Justice
Monday, January 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Justice, Vengeance, and The Marginalized</b> “God Executes Justice for the Poor” “Remembering Our Marginalized Ancestors” “Woe to Those Who Mistreat Workers” “Justice for the Weak and Orphaned” “Jesus’ Compassion for the Helpless” “Do Not Oppress the Alien” “Justice for the Poor”	Psalm 140
Tuesday, January 25 <sup>th</sup>		Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Wednesday, January 26 <sup>th</sup>		James 5:1-11
Thursday, January 27 <sup>th</sup>		Psalm 82
Friday, January 28 <sup>th</sup>		Matthew 9:27-38
Saturday, January 29 <sup>th</sup>		Leviticus 19:32-37
Sunday, January 30 <sup>th</sup>		Deuteronomy 24:10-21
<b>Adult:</b> Countercultural Compassion	<b>Youth:</b> Counterculture	<b>Children:</b> Help People in Need
Monday, January 31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Nathan Condemns David</b> “David’s Sin with Bathsheba”	2 Samuel 11:1-13

# MINISTRY OF STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT

## Sermon Digests

### *“He Understood the Assignment”*

11<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Anniversary

November

Rev. Joe Ella Darby

14

[Nehemiah 1; 2:5, 8b](#)

*Submitted by: Adrienne Fancher*

Sometimes we are given an unspoken assignment: when a wife tells her husband that she had a hard day, he brings home flowers and dinner. He understood the assignment! Without walls and gates, Nehemiah’s people were vulnerable in Jerusalem. Even though he may not have known fully what to do, Nehemiah knew he had to do something.

**Point 1. God engages our hearts.** If God can grip our hearts, He can get our attention. What grabs your heart? In 2010, Rev. Smith answered the call to heal his childhood congregation. Nehemiah wept and prayed when he learned about his people. “Nehemiah” means comforted by God. Prayer was Nehemiah’s strategy for preparation. Nehemiah fasted and prayed for 4 months before asking the king for resources.

**Point 2. God prepares us.** Nehemiah cast the vision to the remnant of Jerusalem so that they could decide together to rebuild the wall. Preparation time is never lost time. In the movie, “The Karate Kid,” Myagi prepared Daniel to master karate through menial tasks. Have you had a time when you could not see the answer? Do you trust what God is doing in your life to prepare you?

**Point 3. God grants us favor.** God’s Favor can be defined as the tangible evidence that a person has the approval of the Lord. We celebrate having Favor. We think that if we have God’s Favor, we won’t have challenges – not true. Nehemiah received Favor to rebuild the wall, but he faced opposition. There are times that God will call you and give you the Favor to complete the assignment.

In 2009, FBCCH was able to move back into the church building, but the debt was nearly \$2 million and only the sanctuary could be occupied. Rev. Smith wanted FBCCH to be debt-free to be able to do ministry. In 2019, the congregation voted to spend \$500 thousand to complete the building renovation: to restore the building and our pride as a congregation. Because we were faithful to the vision, we did not have to go back into debt during a pandemic, plus we built a church in Tanzania. That’s what Favor for an assignment looks like!

Even without seeing the complete picture at the beginning, Pastor Smith stayed true to the assignment.

We thank Pastor Smith for understanding his assignment!

### *“Giving Grateful Praise”*

Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.

November

21

[Psalm 100](#)

*Submitted by: Kathy Harrell*

Praise is the central part of what we do in worship. The songs we sing or hear, and the prayers we lift up to the Lord include words of praise. Many churches even have ‘Praise Teams’. Yet, even with so much praise, there are times that *sincere* praise may be challenging for us because our world is filled with issues that cause us to have pause in our praise. The Psalmist helps us to understand reasons why we can still give grateful praise.

**Point 1. We give grateful praise out of obedience.**

The Psalmist uses the words: ‘shout, worship, come, know, enter, give, and praise. These are words that are directives or commands that we should obey in our praise. These are instructions on how to give praise, not suggestions. If we really listen to the words of our hymns, we find out the appropriate ways that we are to praise the Lord. Our songs and scriptures tell us to give shouts, clap or raise our hands, kneel, or stomp our feet. Our worship must reflect the lessons in our songs and scriptures on the many ways to give grateful praise to God.

**Point 2. We give grateful praise out of indebtedness.**

We are indebted to the Lord if for no other reason than the fact that He made us! Everything we are, everything we have, and everything we have the capacity to do, is because of this simple fact. We worship the Lord because we are grateful that He made us. Worship does not simply mean something that we do on Sunday mornings, it must mean that we have our whole lifetime to be devoted to God and to give Him praise.

**Point 3. We give grateful praise out of transcendence.**

Transcendence means ‘to go beyond’ or ‘to exceed’. In our scriptural context, we learn the importance of going beyond what seems to be the norm or the expected reasons why people praise. The text does not say to praise when things are going well, or to praise even if things are going badly in our lives. The purpose of our praise should go far beyond what may be happening in our lives, but it should be praise because God is God! Praise to God is not circumstantial. It does not matter what we are facing or what the problems around us look like. Give grateful praise to God for every breath we take and every step we make, for He alone is worthy to be praised.

**November 28**  
**“When God Doesn’t Do It”**  
**Minister Janiece Williams**  
1 Samuel 4:1-11  
 Submitted by: Beverly M. Brown

No matter how much one prays and reads the scripture, disappointment can and does still occur. Minister Williams cited several examples of hurt and not the preferred outcomes which have occurred in her life and living. In spite of the disappointments that God/Christ Jesus does not answer our prayers in our time, the congregation was asked to rely on the following three (3) blessings:

**1. Develop a theology of faith of how we understand God.**

White supremacist behaviors and actions were not a part of most persons prayers. The Israelites lost the battle. Humankind becomes frustrated in their losses whether it be a promotion, health, job, relationship, etc. The ark is symbolic of human beings looking beyond themselves. Society often looks at symbols rather than God and often negate their responsibility in the fight for salvation and a true relationship with Jesus Christ/God.

**2. Discern which battles to participate or fight for or in.**

Individuals are often encouraged to never quit. But, there are times when it is important to know when to change one’s strategies and to let go and try another approach to maintain one’s mental sanity. Prayer and wise counsel can facilitate a better outcome.

**3. Determine your space of rejuvenation.**

This could mean time alone, being with family, and being with friends that you know love you. Ensure this is a safe place and that may or may not be in one’s home physically or heart. God does do the unexpected inclusive of new employment, new fellowship, and provides a new place of protection because, He is our refuge. Resurrection is possible after defeat with and through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen, Amen, & Amen.

**December 5**  
**“We Need a Word”**  
**Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.**  
Luke 3:1-6  
 Submitted by: Deborah Luter

The Word of God is what gives us hope and faith in these difficult times. The purpose for the word of God is to bring us into the right relationship with God and with one another.

We live in a world that seeks to stifle the Word of God. It is stifled by worldly noise. It stifled by conflicts in our lives. It is stifled by dishonest and lying authority figures. It is stifled by ungodly ambitions and expectations. It is stifled by the lack of desire to be corrected.

But in spite of all this, we still need a word from the Lord.

**Point 1-We need a Word that comes in the midst of our political and social climate.**

When we look at the first few verses of Luke 3, we find a who’s who list of political and religious leaders of the day. These were the designated leaders of the people, yet God did not choose any of them to carry the word of God. God chose an unknown prophet, whose name was John, that we know as John the Baptist. John had no agenda but God’s agenda. John was called to speak truth to power. There needs to be those today who speak truth to power.

**Point 2-We need a Word that comes in the midst of our wilderness.**

Our text uses the word “desert”. The word wilderness seems to be a better fit. It gives the image of barrenness, and confusion, and vulnerability . It gives the impression that it is a place where we would rather avoid because it does not sustain or support life. Wilderness is the place where we cannot find answers to the realities around us.

**Point 3-We need a Word that comes in the midst of our personal disorder**

Verse 3 says “*He went into all the country around Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins*”. John was called in contrast to the political system of the day and into the wilderness away from normal life constraints to help people to straighten out their disorderly lives. We cannot blame all of our issues on others. Too often our issues are self-inflicted. But John’s message was to remind us that no matter how disorderly one’s life may be, there is a pathway that can help us find order.

When the ground is level then we will all see the salvation of God.



# First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill

625 Rosa L. Parks Boulevard at Nelson Merry Street | Nashville, TN 37203

[www.firstbaptistcapitolhill.org](http://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](mailto:fbch13@gmail.com).