

WEDNESDAYS@FIRST

March 11

Wednesdays@First activities continue this week with a special *Adults@First* activity. All are invited to attend this time of learning and fellowship with our siblings from Springfield Baptist Church. If you would like to fellowship around the supper tables in the Fellowship Hall, be sure to make a reservation. Supper lines open at 5:00pm. Make your reservations and view menus here: <https://firstbaptistgreenville.com/wednesdays-at-first/>

6:00pm *Adults@First* Opportunities
MidWeek Classic: Our Neighbor's Voice—Springfield Baptist Church (Fellowship Hall)

WORSHIP

March 15

Third Sunday in Lent

10:30am

Proclaimer: Carol McEntyre

Sermon Series: Rediscovering Jesus

Sermon: Rediscovering Jesus, Our Savior

Scripture: Luke 15:8-10

Anthem: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" — Wilberg

If you would like to place flowers in the Sanctuary for this or a future worship service, contact Kimberly Coates (kimberly.coates@firstbaptistgreenville.com or 864-233-2527 ext. 128). The next open dates are March 15 and 22.



From the Senior Minister

CAROL MCENTYRE

Like many of you, I have followed the disturbing reports surrounding the Epstein case. Behind each headline are women who were exploited and abused. Many have shown extraordinary courage in coming forward and seeking justice. Because powerful people across the political spectrum are named, full accountability may never come.

As I have reflected on these reports, I have found myself thinking less about the political implications and more about the spiritual and moral ones. I want to offer a pastoral reflection so that our perspective is not merely shaped by social media or the news cycle, but by our commitment to the ethics of God's kin-dom. This is not about one political party or one public figure, but about the condition of the human heart.

As Americans, we idolize wealth, power and fame. The Epstein files are filled with the names of people who seemed to have it all. It's sobering to realize that many who stood at the pinnacle of the "American Dream," possessing immense wealth, global influence and celebrity status, seemed to lack the most basic moral clarity and strength of character to refuse such atrocious evil as the abuse of vulnerable girls. (Moral clarity is knowing right from wrong; strength of character is having the internal coherence and depth to choose what is right and good.)

Beyond those who participated in the abuse were those who knew or suspected and remained silent. They may not have taken part, but they lacked the moral courage to intervene. (Moral courage is choosing to speak out or stand up for what is right, even if it might cost you something.) How many girls might have been spared if just a few more people around Epstein had chosen conviction over complicity?

I keep thinking about the warning in Mark 8:36: "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" The Epstein story is a modern-day parable of that teaching. When a culture idolizes (dare I say worships) external success while neglecting the inner life, where morality and character are formed, the result is moral bankruptcy — an impressive exterior that conceals a spiritually hollow, decaying interior life.

Money, power and influence carry built-in temptations. The ego naturally turns success into a story of personal greatness. Even if success came partly by luck (birth, family connections, good timing), it is easy to believe you deserve what you have more than others or that you are more capable or important. This can erode humility and empathy. Having wealth, authority or fame can also insulate you from criticism. People want to please you and ride the coattails of your privilege. When no one speaks the truth to you or holds you accountable, it can weaken your character; you can begin to believe you are beyond reproach, that normal rules or consequences don't apply to you.

Two by Two: Becoming a Prayer Partner for Our Costa Rica Mission Team

As our high school and college students prepare for their Mission Immersion to Costa Rica this June, we are reminded that meaningful mission work is never done alone. While a team may be the ones who travel, serve, and build relationships on the ground, they are supported by an entire community that walks alongside them in prayer, encouragement, and love.

One of the most impactful ways our congregation has offered support in years past is through our Prayer Partner ministry. This tradition provides a meaningful opportunity for both participants and church members to connect in a deeply personal way during our time away.

Each member of the mission team is paired with a Prayer Partner from our church family. Prayer Partners commit to praying for their participant each day of the trip, writing a short note for each day *in advance* and giving a *small* care package. These daily

letters are given to participants to read throughout the week while in Costa Rica.

Time and again, students and leaders share how powerful it is to open those notes at the end of a long day, to be reminded that someone back home is praying for them by name and walking with them in spirit. Likewise, many Prayer Partners have found that this commitment deepens their connection not only to the participant, but to the mission itself.

I invite you to prayerfully consider volunteering to serve as a Prayer Partner for one of our team members. Together, we can be the hands and feet of Christ in Costa Rica, not only through those who go, but through those who pray.

Please register on Realm Connect using this link: tinyurl.com/CostaRicaPrayerPartner

—Mary Carol Anderson, Minister of Youth & College

American Spiritual Ensemble in Worship March 22

The Music Ministry at First Baptist Greenville is excited to partner with Westminster Presbyterian Church to bring the renowned American Spiritual Ensemble to Greenville for a weekend residency, March 21-22. Founded by Dr. Everett McCorvey, the American Spiritual Ensemble is celebrated worldwide for preserving and performing the music of African American spirituals—songs born from the pain, hope and faith of enslaved people in the United States. The ensemble's powerful voices and moving artistry have captivated audiences across the U.S., Europe and South America.

The ASE will be the guest choir in our March 22 worship service. They will incorporate several of their selections into our worship service that day. On Saturday evening, March 21, they will present a concert at Westminster Presbyterian at 7:00pm. This free community concert will be held in the church sanctuary and is open to all. This rare Upstate appearance promises an unforgettable evening of

soulful music, cultural heritage, and world-class performance.

Free tickets are available now at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-american-spiritual-ensemble-tickets-1981046991881?aff=oddtcreator>

While admission to the concert is free, an offering will be gratefully accepted to defray the costs of the concert.

—Laura Ritter, Minister of Music



Palms and Easter Lilies

We are preparing for our Palm Sunday and Easter celebrations. To aid in our celebration, we will place palms in the Sanctuary on Palm Sunday, March 29, and an arrangement of lilies as both honorary and memorial gifts on Easter Sunday, April 5. All lily gifts will be published in the newsletter. If you are interested in providing an Easter lily gift, please visit Realm Connect and search events for Easter Lilies 2026; then

follow the instructions to submit your dedications. You may even pay online! If you would prefer, you may still mail the following information and your payment (checks payable to First Baptist Church) to me at church or drop it off in person. Orders and checks (\$30 each) should be received by Wednesday, March 25. If you would like to make a gift toward this arrangement, complete the online form or send the following information to my attention at the church (First Baptist Church, Attn: Kimberly Coates, 847 Cleveland Street, Greenville, SC 29601),

along with your contribution of \$30 per dedication:

Name:
Phone Number:
Email Address (if applicable):
Number of Gifts (\$30 each):
In honor of:
In memory of:

Please make checks payable to First Baptist Church.

Orders should be received by March 25.

—Kimberly Coates,
Music & Worship Ministry
Assistant

EASTER

An ENGAGING Start to the Year

On top of our normal Lunch & More gatherings, hikes and Roadrunners' events, our Engaged Aging team tried out a few ideas for ministry and fun. On Shrove Tuesday, 18 of our EA folks cooked, served and entertained many in our Children's Ministry with a pancake party! The hope was to create a meaningful space to help our kids learn about the beauty and importance of Lent. We flipped pancakes, blew breakers and had a blast in an evening of intergenerational fun.

We also saw a spill-over from the success of our Games & More Bridge and Mahjong Day as players and coaches decided to extend their community by meeting weekly each Wednesday morning in

February to play. Our EA team was also able to reschedule our Afternoon Tea Party, which was a fancy affair. Many thanks to all who donated time and delicate heirlooms to make the day possible.

We are also looking forward to our Painting Workshop on March 11, led by our own Edith McBee Hardaway. Tickets are \$20, and space is limited so sign up soon if you are interested. Engaged Aging offers vibrant opportunities to build community and deepen faith together. Our goal is to help our community embrace life, faith and connection with our church family and beyond. We hope you will consider joining us soon.

—Michael McEntyre, Minister of Engaged Aging

ENGAGED AGING

From the Senior Minister, continued from page 1

When anyone dominates and manipulates the vulnerable, as Epstein did, they are moving away from God's kin-dom and God's desire for the flourishing of every human being. God abhors abuse. Christ had "all authority, in heaven and on earth" as Matthew 28:18 notes, yet he used his power to serve. He ministered among the vulnerable and displayed greatness through sacrificial love on

the cross. He alone is worthy of our worship and the one whose life we should seek to imitate.

Human beings are both sinners and saints, capable of great evil and heroic good. We can choose to model our lives after Christ or take a different path. While we might not participate in such horrific evil as abusing young girls, the Epstein story presses important spiritual questions: Are we

neglecting our inner life in pursuit of success? Are we compromising to gain influence, money or accolades? When doing the right thing costs us something, do we still choose it? May we attend to our inner life and be formed into Christlikeness, becoming people marked by moral clarity, strength of character, and the courage to choose what is right and good, even when it costs us.

Upcoming Events

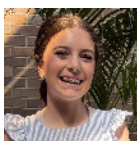
WATCH indicates worship experiences broadcast via Vimeo and Facebook Live.

- 3/11 7:00am Wednesday Morning Men's Bible Study (AYMC Terrace Level)
Wednesdays@First Activities
- 3/15 **WATCH** 10:30am Worship Service (Sanctuary) with Proclaimer Carol McEntyre
No Sunday Night Live for Youth
- 3/18 7:00am Wednesday Morning Men's Bible Study (AYMC Terrace Level)
Breathe Week — No Wednesdays@First Activities
- 3/22 **WATCH** 10:30am Worship Service (Sanctuary) with American Spiritual Ensemble
- 3/25 7:00am Wednesday Morning Men's Bible Study (AYMC Terrace Level)
Wednesdays@First Activities
- 3/29 **WATCH** 10:30am Palm Sunday Worship Service (Sanctuary) with Proclaimer Carol McEntyre
11:30am Children's Easter Egg Hunt
No Sunday Night Live for Youth
- 4/1 7:00am Wednesday Morning Men's Bible Study (AYMC Terrace Level)
6:00pm Maundy Thursday on Wednesday Service (Fellowship Hall)
- 4/3 6:00-7:00pm Good Friday Worship Service (Chapel)
- 4/5 7:00am Sunrise Easter Worship Service (FBG Gardens)

Yard Sale Donations

The Yard Sale Committee is accepting donations until April 9 on Thursdays between 10:00am and 2:00pm at the Practice Gym lobby entrance.

Introducing



...Melodie Grainger, who joined the church on Sunday, February 22. Melodie is an active member of our Youth Family.



...Pete & Cameron Dunlap, who became members during worship on March 1.



...Zac Davis who became a member on Sunday, March 1. Zac, currently a senior in high school, has been an active member of the Youth Family since 6th grade.

Wednesdays@First Schedule
(exceptions noted in Upcoming Events)

Youth@First

4:00-7:00pm Hang Time (AYMC Terrace Level)

Wednesday Night Supper & Prayer Time

5:00-6:00pm (Fellowship Hall)

FBG Kids

5:30-7:00pm Worship Care for Ages 3 & Under (C208, C214)

5:45-7:00pm K4 & K5 Making Space Block & Playtime (C302)

5:45-6:10pm 1st-5th Grade Choir (C303)

6:15-7:00pm Making Space Block (C300)

Adults@First

6:00-7:00pm *Adults@First*
MidWeek Classic: Our Neighbor's Voice: Conversation with Springfield Baptist Church (FellowshipHall)

7:00-8:30pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

Wednesday Night Supper Menu

Please make reservations by noon on Monday at <https://firstbaptistgreenville.com/wednesdays-at-first/>

3/11

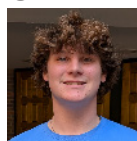
Adults: Stuffed Shells, Five Bean Salad, Italian Salad, Italian Bread, Fruit, Dessert
Children: Mac N Cheese, French Fries, Fruit, Dessert

Sympathy

...to Ben Barnhill in the death of his father, and Phyllis Flynn in the death of her brother Butch Barnhill.

...to Dickie and Susan Merritt in the death of Dickie's mother.

...to Patsy Gray in the death of her brother.



...Maddox Maguire also joined our church on Youth Sunday, March 1, and is a high school sophomore. Maddox was a part of our children's ministry before becoming part of our Youth Family.



...Jeremy & Elizabeth Gulley, along with their children Sarah, Lauren and Daniel, became members on Sunday March 1.


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Revenue Report

2/25/2026 YTD: \$498,482

2/28/2025 Actual: \$540,558

2/28/2026 Budget: \$513,167



Scan here to support the financial needs of First Baptist Greenville.

For After Hours Pastoral Care, please call the Church Office, 864-233-2527, leave a message by pressing the number "2" for "Pastoral Care"

or email pastoral.care@firstbaptistgreenville.com. One of our staff ministers will respond to your message.