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The church office will be closed on Thursday, January 1<sup>st</sup> in observance of the New Year's Holiday.



## The First Baptist Informer

Published Monthly by:

The First Baptist Church of Rockingham  
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*Address Service Requested*

January 1 - 31

## Church Staff

**Interim Pastor:** Rev. David Kessler  
**Accompanists:** Gloria Kessler/Crystal Coen  
**John Thompson, Admin/Finance Assistant**  
[john.fbcrrock@gmail.com](mailto:john.fbcrrock@gmail.com)

**Jan 1:** New Year's Day, (church office closed)  
**Jan 4:** Sunday School, 10:00 am  
**Jan 7:** Adult Bible Study, E100, 6:00 pm  
**Jan 11:** Breakfast and Winter Mission Study, S150, 9:00 am  
**Jan 11:** Sunday School, 10:00 am  
**Jan 14:** Adult Bible Study, E100, 6:00 pm  
**Jan 18:** Sunday School, 10:00 am  
**Jan 18:** Deacons Meeting, 12:15 pm  
**Jan 21:** Adult Bible Study, E100, 6:00 pm  
**Jan 25:** Sunday School, 10:00 am  
**Jan 28:** Adult Bible Study, E100, 6:00 pm



# The First Baptist Informer

## Rockingham, North Carolina

**"To know Christ and make Him known"**

Vol. XLIX(49) \* Number 1 \* Jan 1, 2026 – Jan 31, 2026

### Attendance Report

**Sunday, Dec 7, 2025**

Sunday School - 36  
Worship Service - 45

**Sunday, Dec 14, 2025**

Sunday School - 33  
Worship Service - 50

**Sunday, Dec 21, 2025**

Sunday School - 32  
Worship Service - 56

**Sunday, Dec 28, 2025**

Sunday School - 35  
Worship Service - 35

### Tithing Report General Fund

**Sunday  
Dec 7, 2025**

\$3,438.00

**Sunday  
Dec 14, 2025**

\$2,189.00

**Sunday  
Dec 21, 2025**

\$2,950.00

**Sunday  
Dec 28, 2025**

\$2,463.40



The question is - what is your plan for 2026? I pray that it will include this counsel from God: "Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." May each of you have a blessed New Year!



## From the Pastor's Desk

As we look back over 2025 to New Year's Day last year, I want to ask, "where were we, where are we now, and where are we going?" Then we need to ask ourselves the question - "Where do we want to go and where do we want to be this time next year (2027)?"

If we were somehow to know that we had only 24 hours to live, would the things we would be doing in those last hours be the very same things that we are doing right now?

I'm reminded of a response that the "methodical" John Wesley gave when asked, "If you knew today was your last day on earth, how would you live it? What would you do differently? In the book, *How to Finish the Christian Life: Following Jesus in the Second Half*, by Donald W. Sweeting and George Sweeting, Wesley's response is recorded as taken from his journals.

*"I would spend it exactly as I expect to spend it now. I would preach tonight in Gloucester.*

*I would get up early tomorrow and proceed to Tewkesbury,*

*where I would preach in the afternoon. Then I would go to the Martin's house in the evening, since they are expecting me. I would talk with Mr. Martin and pray with the family. Upon retiring to my room at ten o'clock, I would put myself in the Father's care, go to sleep, and wake up in glory."*

John Wesley lived in such a way that at any moment he would be able to die without regret. Living life that way also gave him the assurance to face death as one who went "forth to live."

Wesley believed a holy death was a natural extension of a holy life, encouraging followers to live every moment for God's glory. He urged people to remove obstacles to their spiritual life and serve God in all things, seeing life as a *precious gift*.

His reported last words reflected his core belief in God's constant presence as the ultimate comfort and strength, even in death. He preached his last sermon just days before he died and tried to sing the hymn, "I'll Praise My Maker While I've Breath," before passing away.

As recorded in the old Methodist hymnal,

*Help us to live as those who are prepared to die. And when our days here are accomplished, enable us to die as those who go forth to live, so that living or dying, our life may be in you, and that nothing in life or in death will be able to separate us from your great love in*

*Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

When our end comes, may we be able to say as the missionary William Borden said on his death bed en route to China in 1913 ~ **No Reserve. No Retreat. No Regrets.**

In the meantime, let us live each moment of every day in 2026 with total surrender to the will of God, not our will, but His, for a life of service through His church in such a way that it would bring honor and glory to Him and His Kingdom.

May God richly bless you and your families in 2026. Pastor David

*He who is the faithful witness to all these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon!" Amen! Come, Lord Jesus! (New Living Translation, Rev. 22:20).*



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1/3 Louise Ervin

1/16 Elaine Callicutt

1/13 Vivian Hilton

1/17 Mark Cockerton

1/15 Dicky Smith

1/29 Nic Ewing



1/2 John and Judy Thompson - 38 yrs  
1/25 Danny and Kathy Griffis - 50 yrs

## In Memory of

JC Lamm

Bill Featherston

Gene Barnes

Bill Featherston

Ellen Forester

Dicky and Jan Smith  
Ramona Davis

Fumiko Davis

Dave and Susan Davis

Kenn Bostic

Caregivers (Judy, Dee, Alberta, Joanne  
Cassandra Crump)

Randy Warren

Bill Featherston

Gene and Fumiko Davis

Vivian Hilton



*With Deepest Sympathy*

## In Honor of

Debbie Holloway

Janice Coen



## TITHES & OFFERINGS

*GIVE UNTO THE LORD*

Giving Summary	November 2025	December 2025
General Fund	15,908	11,040
Poinsettias	225	210
Memorials & Honor	6,880	565
NC Missions	220	0
SBC	0	0
Local Missions	0	0
Sundy School Literature	0	0
Lottie Moon	30	1,115
Senior Adults	0	0
Youth	97	0
Local Benevolence	0	0
VBS (One Perfect Gift)	0	0
Total Gifts	23,360	12,931
Budget req. to date	232,500	
Gifts to date		168,677
YTD req. under actual gifts		(63,823)
% giving to req.		73%



*The whole church watched with nervous anticipation as the visitors sat where the Martins have sat for 42 years.*

During the month of December, many of our church members used multiple gifts and talents to enhance our worship and fellowship here at First Baptist. Thank you so much to each of you who helped to make the Advent and Christmas seasons meaningful. We appreciate you.

When the Holy Ghost makes you delete the whole text and just reply with OK.

