

MAY 2020

The Epistle



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
450 Orchard St. N.W.,
Vienna, Virginia 22180
(703) 938-8525 • www.fbcv.org
Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Pastor

FIRST FORWARD... Philipians 3:13-15

Happy Anniversary Pastor Walton!

Jer. 3:15 "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."



From **Pastor Walton's Desk**

Dear First Family,

What a difference a year makes! Last year this time we were preparing as a congregation to celebrate five years as pastor and people with an "All White Affair." Man did we have a blast, well at least I did. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with laughter, fun, good food and even better fellowship. In fact, it was a fabulous weekend capped with a wonderful worship service on Sunday morning. Well, isn't it interesting that today marks our seventh Sunday of Cyber Worship and this month marks my sixth year of my call to First Baptist.

As I reflect on the past six years, I am clear that God has been good to us.

Pastor, continued on page 3

Ministry at First Baptist Continues

By Stacey Seay
Special for *The Epistle*

The Corona Virus has changed the way we work, shop, go to school and even worship. Rushing to the church for a meeting or worship service has been replaced with logging in on our computers for a CLA class, Bible study or streaming worship service. Though the world around us has drastically changed over the past several weeks, Pastor Walton's commitment to ensure that ministry and discipleship continue to remind us that our God has not changed. While First Baptist continues to offer hope and encouragement through our virtual ministry opportunities, it is important to note that our ministry continues to accept the charge to "Be the Church" by also doing our part to meet the needs of those struggling during this time.

Over the past month, we have been blessed to host two food giveaways at First. Thanks to partnerships with vendors and other organizations, we were able to provide food to over 300 families. The meal boxes we distributed included fresh pro-

Ministry, continued on page 3



**STAY CONNECTED
YOUTH EDITION**

DR. VERNON C. WALTON
SENIOR PASTOR

SUNDAY
9:00 A.M.
YOUTH CLA CLASS
ZOOM
TINYURL.COM/FBCVCLAYOUTH

MONDAY
6:00 P.M.
COOL KIDS HOUR
(GRADE 5 AND BELOW)
CHILDREN'S BIBLE STUDY & STORY TIME
ZOOM
TINYURL.COM/FBCVCOOLKIDS

MONDAY
7:00 P.M.
"QUAREN-TEENS"
(GRADES 6 -12)
SMALL GROUP
ZOOM
TINYURL.COM/FBCVYOUTHBIBLESTUDY

EVERY OTHER TUESDAY
7:00 P.M.
"PARENTING DURING A PANDEMIC"
WEBINAR SERIES
ZOOM
tinyurl.com/fbcvParenting

FRIDAY
FRIDAY SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGES
CHECK YOUR EMAIL OR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT FOR A WEEKLY CHALLENGE FROM MINISTER B.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF VIENNA**

Sing praises to the **LORD**,
you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.
PSALM 30:4, NRSV

Spend Your Fridays with Us!

Nowadays, it seems difficult at times to keep track of the day. The Worship and Arts Ministry, under the leadership of Kwan McKnight, are geared up to help you unwind with us as you kick off the weekend in the unusual times in which we currently find ourselves. Hopefully you were blessed on Good Friday with "Hymns about Him" or you joined us for our celebration of love during "Let's Stay Together" or joined the debate during "Was it Gospel or Not?" Each of these ministry opportunities are meant to provide a time to fellowship, unwind and enjoy some good music.

Have an idea for a future theme? Email your ideas to: mcknightk@fbcv.org and then tune in. You may be surprised to see your song or idea for a theme featured. Tune in each Friday at 6:00 p.m. to join us!
—Stacey Seay

"Being the Church" is Nothing to Hide...

Usually masks are used to shield or hide identity. In the COVID-19 era, we are using home-made masks to protect ourselves from spreading the virus through coughs or sneezes. First Baptist Church deaconesses were thoughtful and caring enough to use their time and talent to take on the important task of making much-needed masks for home health workers employed by I-CARE company owned and operated by First Baptist members Deacon Donna and Trustee Anthony Ivey.

In a matter of days of receiving notice of the national pandemic caused by COVID-19 Deaconess Armeata Basil mobilized a small brigade of sewing sisters—Deaconess Helen Bowers, HB McGowan and Deaconess Jeannie Taylor—who clipped, stretched and dusted off their sewing machines to sew masks using materials donated by Purcellville-based electrician, Brian Duchame of Unity Power Services.

The caregivers who are frontline workers indicated that they feel safer and are grateful for the masks they can wear for their daily work and personal use.
—Deacon-in-Training Donna Ivey





Attention Graduates

Please take a moment to email us and let us know if you are a 2020 high school or college graduate! We want to celebrate with you as you achieve this major milestone. Send an email to fb-cvoffice@fbcv.org to share the the news by May 15th. Thanks in advance.

College Connection

The College Connection Ministry extends Happy Birthday wishes to Dillon Williams, a junior at Allegany County College of Maryland, majoring in Wildlife and Fisheries/Biology.



The family of First Baptist member Katherine Harris

Esther Haggler and family for the loss of her husband, Joseph Haggler

LaVan and Phyllis Griffith and family for the loss his father, RaVey Brumfield

Ministry, continued from page 1

duce, juice, milk, meats and frozen and pantry goods. Families simply drove into the parking lot, opened their trunks and meal boxes were placed in cars by staff or volunteers. The drive-in distribution enabled us to distribute the food with minimal contact and to help ensure the safety of the those working at the event as well as the families we served.

Our Feed the Homeless Ministry also continues serving during this time of social isolation. The pandemic has forced us all to think quickly and creatively so we can continue to serve others in innovative ways. The Feed the Homeless Ministry used innovative thinking to provide meals last month by providing box lunches delivered by Jason's Deli. This enabled the ministry to fulfill our commitment to provide a meal, while limited exposure and following social distancing guidelines.

Most recently, First Baptist has partnered with the OKK Foundation and NOVA Equity Agenda Coalition to sponsor a mask drive. The goal of the drive is to raise \$5000 to cover the cost of 20,000 masks. The masks, once purchased, will be distributed to low-income minority communities. You can assist with this effort by visiting: <https://www.gofundme.com/fffacial-masks-for-minority-communities> and making a donation today.

Pastor, continued from page 1

As a result of His kindness shown towards us in the midst of the pandemic I'm going to give God praise. I remain humbled by the opportunity serve as the senior servant of this ministry. Sometimes as pastors you wonder whether or not you are having impact or how far your reach is. While I would have chosen another means, God has used this COVID 19 experience to show me the strength of our ministry.

The past seven weeks I have seen the best in our staff, joint leaders, ministry leaders and members. The manner in which you adapted to online methods of worship, giving and ministry facilitation has been incredible. I know that we are not a perfect church but we are a STRONG church with committed disciples of Jesus Christ. God has indeed brought the best out of us. I do not know what tomorrow holds. At this moment I am uncertain about what ministry really looks like post COVID but I do know that we are better and stronger because of what we've gone through.

In closing, allow me to say that I am extremely thankful to God for this God given assignment and I look forward to what God has in store for our future together. Without doubt, We are First Baptist Strong!



SPECIAL DATES

- National Day of Prayer, May 7
- Mother's Day, May 10
- Armed Forces Day, May 16
- Memorial Day, May 25
- Pentecost, May 31



STAY CONNECTED THROUGHOUT THE WEEK!

DR. VERNON C. WALTON
SENIOR PASTOR

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF VIENNA**

MONDAY - FRIDAY

12:00 NOON
DAILY PRAYER CALL
☎ CONFERENCE CALL: 605-313-5111
CODE: 291598

TUESDAY

12:00 NOON
BIBLE STUDY
☎ CONFERENCE CALL: 605-313-5111
CODE: 291598

WEDNESDAY

6:00 A.M.
FBCV MORNING MEDITATION
FACEBOOK LIVE
FIRSTBAPTISTVIENNA
PERISCOPE @VERNONCWALTON
☎ CONFERENCE CALL: 605-313-5111
CODE: 291598

7:00 P.M.
MID WEEK WORSHIP
LIVE STREAMING: www.fbcv.org/live
FACEBOOK LIVE FIRSTBAPTISTVIENNA

THURSDAY

7:00 P.M.
THE S.P.O.T.
ZOOM
<https://tinyurl.com/fbcvthespot>
MEETING PASSWORD: 076268

STAY CONNECTED SUNDAY MORNINGS!



DR. VERNON C. WALTON
SENIOR PASTOR

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF VIENNA**

9:00 A.M.
CLA ADULT PRECEPTS CLASS
☎ CONFERENCE CALL: 301-715-8592
CODE: 537 476 511

9:00 A.M.
CLA ADULT PRECEPTS CLASS
ZOOM:
<https://tinyurl.com/fbcvCLA>
MEETING ID: 418543

9:00 A.M.
CLA YOUTH CLASS
ZOOM:
<https://tinyurl.com/fbcvCLAYouth>

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:00 A.M.
LIVE STREAMING:
www.fbcv.org/live
FACEBOOK LIVE
FIRSTBAPTISTVIENNA

Your **First Baptist Church Federal Credit Union** is open by appointment and available for normal business activities including deposits, withdrawals, new loans, loan payments and money management and counseling.

Telephone: 703-319-0724 (Please leave a detailed message and someone will contact you.)

Mail: P.O. Box 1905, Vienna Va. 22183

Stay safe and healthy and we look forward to seeing you again soon

—Submitted by Willie Boykin



A Prayer for Memorial Day

We remember, O Lord, all those people throughout the years who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country, for liberty, for us. Whenever we breathe the air of freedom or claim the right to justice or enjoy the privilege of worship, fill us with gratitude for those who selflessly gave the last full measure of devotion — their very lives — for our benefit.

May these brave men and women now know the joy of eternity and your presence. And may the families of the fallen receive comfort and peace amid their grief. Help us as we minister to their needs. Amen.

—Newsletternewsletter.com

FROM THE YOUTH MINISTER:

Lessons in a Pandemic

The harsh reality is that growth is born out of struggle. Many of us are living this truth in the age of pandemic. Resources seem limited, but even in this period of isolation, God can still produce a growth in you. Revisit those dreams, plans, and journal entries because God has not stopped God's work in this pandemic. God is an essential worker, and we are too.

During this period of social distancing, I have felt the constant pressure to grow. Like many people I found myself trying to make my relationship with Christ fit into a nice little box. I felt like I was a great Christian, but had no connection to God. I was hiding my worries and fears from God by just saying little church clichés I've heard my whole life. It wasn't until I realized God didn't need me to be the guy with all the answers, preacher, or perfect that I tapped into the ever-abounding grace of God. God doesn't call perfect people, but God's power is made perfect in weakness.

I would not be telling the truth if I said I did not fall victim to comparing myself to others. It seems like every corner you turn there is someone dropping a new book or announcing a new business, and it becomes easy to feel inadequate. I have to remind myself daily of a simple quote: "Growth is your competition with yourself to be better than yesterday." This quote has become my daily affirmation to myself and a reminder that my growth is not in business plans, new jobs, or new ideas, but my personal growth is in me asking myself the simple question, "Am I better today than yesterday?" I encourage everyone to give themselves the grace to grow. Your growth may not look like your classmate or friend's, but in this moment of social distancing, God is growing something in all of us.

Social Distancing may feel like a prison, but we are not distant from the presence of God. God is just a prayer away.—*Minister B*

Trust the Artist

We must offer ourselves to God like a clean, smooth canvas and not worry ourselves about what God may choose to paint on it, but at each moment, feel only the stroke of his brush—it is the same with a piece of stone. Each blow from the sculptor's chisel makes it feel as if it were being destroyed. All I know is that I must stay immobile in the hands of the sculptor. I have no idea what he is doing, but I know his work is the best possible.—*Newsletternewsletter.com*



Taking Care of Your Emotional Health

It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief and worry during a period such as the one we are going through. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family. Self-care during will help your long-term healing. Look out for these common signs of distress:

- Feelings of numbness, disbelief, anxiety or fear.
- Changes in appetite, energy, and activity levels.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and upsetting thoughts and images.
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems and skin rashes.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Anger or short temper.
- Increased use of food, alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

Take the following steps to cope with a disaster:

- **Take care of your body**—Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep. Avoid alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
- **Connect with others**—Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships, and build a strong support system.
- **Take breaks**—Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Try taking in deep breaths. Try to do activities you usually enjoy.
- **Stay informed**—When you feel that you are missing information, you may become more stressed or nervous. Watch, listen to, or read the news for updates from officials. Be aware that there may be rumors during a crisis, especially on social media. Always check your sources and turn to reliable sources of information like your local government authorities.
- **Avoid too much exposure to news**—Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly. Try to do enjoyable activities and return to normal life as much as possible and check for updates between breaks.
- **Seek help when needed**—If distress impacts activities of your daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, or doctor, or contact the SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's) helpline at 1-800-985-5990.

Source: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

—Submitted by Anita Morton from the CDC website

From the Doctor's Desk

The world is going through an unprecedented time. I know that you young folks, in particular, are having a hard time. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken away your ability to socialize in the manner to which you have become accustomed and I know that is difficult. As someone who is separated in age from my siblings by more than 4 and 7 years, I cannot imagine being in the house alone with only my parents 24 hours a day at any age from 15 to 18. However, we have no choice but to remain at home, physically separated from those that do not live with us.

Current best evidence shows that you, as an adolescent, could get coronavirus and be perfectly fine; or you could become mildly ill; or you could end up in the pediatric intensive care unit or you might even die. It's just that simple. And, if you do contract the virus and do not get sick, you could transfer it to someone else who gets very sick and possibly dies. So while I want you to live your best life, I need you to do that at home for as long as necessary to help flatten the curve of the illness.

Because I am not in your position, I can honestly say that I cannot begin to understand what you are feeling. Many of you are missing great field trips, proms and even graduations and the celebrations that comes along with them. I wish I could tell you that this is a short-term situation, but it is not. This may last into the fall, changing much of what you have planned for the next twelve months, however, you have the power to stop the spread of the disease and in turn, save lives.

I'm praying for you all and would like to thank you for the social distancing that you are doing. I'm working and I am asking you to stay home to help keep me and other healthcare workers healthy. I'll do my best to take care of my patients, if you do your part and take care of yourself and your families.

Be Well.

—Maia McCuiston, MD, FAAP
First Baptist Member

"The mere whisper of the Holy Spirit can drown out the thundering noise of an entire world."—David Jeremiah

Soliloquy

Have you ever experienced that moment when you received a card, email, phone call- unsolicited-which amazingly was just the message you needed for just that moment in your life? Well I have, many times.

Once, my dear friend and colleague, Sylvia Tobler, gifted me with a scroll she had made which contained a Soliloquy . (A Soliloquy is defined as " the act of speaking one's thoughts aloud when by oneself), whose message had sustained her during some rough times.

During my isolation days this Soliloquy strangely resurfaced, I believe, at just the right time to provide a message of reassurance and hope as we globally wrestle with a pandemic we never thought we would experience in our lifetime. Toby's gift to me, seems appropriate to share with our First Baptist family in the hope that it will help you keep faith and hope alive as you cope with this present-day reality.

SOLILOQUY by Bernard J. Patrick

I've heard it said that the world is a dismal place. But I know better.

For I have seen the dawn and walked in the splendor of a morning's sun. Blinked at the brilliance of the dew and beheld the gold and crimson of an autumn landscape.

I've heard it said the world is sad.

I can't agree...For I have heard the cheerful songs of feathered masters...heard the low laughter of the leaves and the ever-lasting chuckle of a mountain brook.

I've heard it said the world's a musty sordid thing.

It can 't be true...For I have seen the rain. Watched it bathe the earth, the very air and I have seen the sky, newly scrubbed and spotless, blue from end to end and I've watched the winter's snow drape tree and bush, to look like nature's freshly laundered linen hung to dry.

I've heard the world is evil.

But they are wrong...For I have known its people...watched them die to save a freedom, bleed to save a life...spend of themselves to stem disaster, of their wealth to ease distress...and I have watched them live, love and labor...watched them hope, dream, and pray side by side.

I have heard them say these things

But I would disagree...Because for every shadow, I have seen a hundred rays of light...for every plaintive note, I 've heard a symphony of joy. For every pennyweight of bad, I have found a ton of good...good in nature, in people, in the world.

And I'm thankful I belong.

—Submitted by Shirley McCoy, Epistle Staff Writer

Two Retirement Rules of Thumb

(Part 2 of 2 articles)

As you plan for how much money you'll need in retirement, two popular rules of thumb can help to guide your planning: "The Multiply by 25 Rule" and "The 4 Percent Rule". These guidelines are often confused with one another, but they contain a critical difference. Here is an in-depth look at each of these so that you are clear on both.

"The 4 Percent Rule" is often confused with "The Multiply by 25 Rule". "The 4 Percent Rule", as its name implies, assumes a four percent return. However, "The 4 Percent Rule", more importantly, guides how much money you can withdraw annually once you have retired, without cutting into your investment principal. The guideline says you should withdraw four percent during your first year of retirement and continue withdrawing the same amount, adjusted for inflation, each year after that. For example, you retire with \$700,000 in your portfolio. In your first year of retirement, you withdraw \$28,000 ($\$700,000 \times 0.04$). The following year you withdraw the same amount, adjusted for inflation. Assuming three percent inflation, you should withdraw \$28,840. ($\$28,000 \times 1.03$). The \$28,840 figure might be more than four percent of your remaining portfolio, depending on how the markets fluctuated during your first year of retirement. Don't worry about that—you only need to calculate four percent once.

The Difference

"The Multiply by 25 Rule" estimates how much you'll need to have in your retirement portfolio when you're ready to retire. This is also the amount to which you would apply "The 4-percent Rule". "The 4 Percent Rule" estimates how much you should withdraw from this portfolio after you're retired.

If you want to discuss these rules of thumb feel free to contact your FBCV Federal Credit Union.

—Submitted by Willie Boykin

Working From Home? Keep Healthy and Productive with These Tips

Video chats, email chains, and phone calls, oh my! Working from home is uncharted territory for many, but has become a necessity in the past few weeks. Since working from home can be a challenge, here's a list of things you can do to make your working from home experience more refreshing, effective and fun!

1. Stick to your morning and evening routine: While it can be very tempting to take temporary work from home as a staycation, you should do your best to stick to your typical daily routines.

2. Do what makes you feel good: While working in your pajamas a couple of days a week can be nice while you're working at home, it definitely isn't good long-term. Working in pajamas can scramble your productivity, sleep patterns, and mental health. Wearing your designated work clothes—though it sounds silly—can keep your brain in work mode and you feel more put together.

3. Keep a dedicated office/desk space (and make sure it's NOT your bed): Keeping a home office (or desk space if you're hurting for space in an apartment) is crucial to keeping productive while working from home, so lounging in bed while working on your laptop might not be the best choice for your mental health and sleep schedule. Instead, working from a desk, table, or separate room can help keep your brain at ease.

4. Create a soothing environment: Whether you're soothed by candles or your favorite music, creating a soothing work environment is imperative while you're working from home; there's nothing worse than sitting down to work and being unsettled or uncomfortable. Take advantage of your time at home and surround yourself with whatever is going to make you feel the most productive and at ease.

5. Get some fresh air: Speaking of a comfortable work environment, draw the blinds, open the windows, and take a deep breath! Getting fresh air throughout your workday is incredibly important for keeping your brain on top of its game. Fresh air is also very important for keeping skin happy and healthy!

6. Schedule dance breaks into your day (and don't short-change yourself on time!): Scheduling and timing breaks are super important to keep yourself relaxed and in the zone. Without breaks, it's very easy to become overwhelmed with your tasks, so get up from your desk at least once every hour for a stroll around the house and go outside at least once a day. Dance breaks are encouraged!

7. After work, "go home" even if you are home: Close your laptop, change your clothes, and eat a good meal. Take time to get into relaxation mode: change into comfy clothes, get un-ready, rest in bed for a few minutes, stretch in your living room, and go for a quick walk around the block. Let your mind settle in just like you would with any other typical workday.

8. Most importantly, take time for yourself: Working from home can take a lot of your personal time, so it's as important as ever to make sure you're taking care of yourself. You deserve it.

—Submitted by Ann Marie Williams from www.cherie.com