

THE

MESSENGER

**201 SOUTH BROADWAY
FOREST CITY, NC 28043
828-245-5411**

Worship Sunday, January 24!

8:45 (Gym) 10:00 (Gym) 11:00 (Sanctuary)
10:00 Sunday School

Sunday, January 31, 10:30 AM

Bobby Gantt's Retirement Service!

There will only be one service this day.

We will observe COVID-19 safe protocol which includes wearing a mask and social distancing. When the Sanctuary is filled, you will be directed to either the Loft, Ark, CGC Youth Commons Area and LEC, where you will enjoy a live broadcast of the service. We will offer a nursery during the service time. It will be staffed by a paid nursery staff. Greeters and signage will assist you with directions to these service areas.

You will not want to miss our special guest speaker, Todd Braswell, former Youth Pastor along with many special presentations.

Cards and notes expressing thanks:

We hope that you will prepare a card or note expressing your thanks or special memory to Preacher Bobby. These cards and notes will be presented to Bobby on that Sunday. So please get them to the church by the 24th of January. You may leave these at the church office or place them in an offering plate or basket at any of our services. **Please do not put any monetary gifts in the envelope with your letter or card.**

Greet and Good-bye Caravan:

At the close of the Retirement Service on the 31st, Bobby and his family will be unavailable to exchange good-byes with each of us at the end of the service. However, to keep Bobby, his family and you safe we are planning a motor caravan drive thru beginning at 2:00 pm until 4:00 pm. We will begin forming the caravan that will circle through the LEC Covered Drop-off. Bobby will be stationed there to greet each car that comes through. The caravan begins at the ROC (Old Forest City Elementary School). Please come down Arlington Street onto Old Caroleen Road and enter the lower driveway at the ROC. Drive in front of the school and then turn left onto Florence Street. Proceed up Florence Street and turn left onto Beaver Street. Enter the parking lot on your right and proceed to the LEC covered Drop-Off. You may greet Bobby from your vehicle there. A keepsake booklet of Bobby's 36 years of service has been prepared for each family that drives through. When you have said your good-byes, proceed as directed to Grace Street and turn left out of the parking lot and make a right turn onto Beaver Street at the stop sign. You can exit off Beaver Street to your right onto Broadway Street at two locations.

Please read the details of the letter giving more information about this event that you received last week. If you did not receive a letter please contact our Church Secretary, Teresa Skinner at 828-245-5411.

Thank you for your help with these plans, and if you have any questions about them please contact Pam McKeithan at 828-245-1098 or Butch Moore at 828-429-9352.

The Retirement Committee,
Butch & Karen Moore, Ken & Patti Hardin, Mack & Pam McKeithan

Church Staff

Dr. Bobby Gantt Pastor

Home Phone: 828-429-3893
pastor@florencechurch.net

Rev. Scott Haynes Minister of Music

Home Phone: 828-289-8362
music@florencechurch.net

Rev. Tonya Garrison Minister of Children & Christian Education

Home Phone: 828-380-9761
children@florencechurch.net

Rev. David Cox Minister of Youth & Instructional Technology

Home Phone: 828-748-2905
youth@florencechurch.net

Teresa Skinner Office Manager

Church Office: 828-245-5411
secretary@florencechurch.net

Tommy Wilson Custodian

Home Phone: 828-429-2639

Carrol Calhoun Custodial Assistant

HOMEBOUND MEMBER OF THE WEEK

Rose Bass
443 Forest Lake Road
Forest City, NC 28043-7599

IN SYMPATHY

The Tiny Jones Family

The John W. "Buddy" Bennett Family,
Father of John Mark and Stephen Bennett

IN THE HOSPITAL

Davis Poplin - Atrium Healthcare, Cleveland

Live Stream / 11:00 a.m. Service
www.florencechurch.net
Facebook.com/FlorenceForestCity

The flowers placed in the Sanctuary on Sunday January 17th, were placed in memory of Betty Hoyle whose date of birth was January 23rd.

PREACHER B'S BE-ATTITUDES

“An Attitude of Gratitude” was our topic on January 10 based on Philippians 1:3. “Together We Build” was our topic this past Sunday based on Philippians 1:4-5. The topic for this Sunday, January 24, which will be my last Sunday to preach before my retirement, is “Carry it to Completion.” The text is Philippians 1:6, “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

In addition to gratitude and the call to unite as a church family, there are a few more things I wish to say to you, the wonderful people called Florence. The main focus will be that we never retire on Jesus, and we never retire from service. In fact, I believe you have heard me say in sermons that retirement is really not a biblical concept.

Obviously there are times and seasons in our lives when we shift gears, but we never retire on our Lord and from serving God and others. There are times when churches need new ideas and fresh energy. There are times when all of us need new challenges, but God continues to call us to serve Him and others every single day.

And let me be quick to add that God always provides. You have heard me say this from the pulpit many times over these 36 years. I can testify to this great truth, and you can as well that God always provides for His people. It might not be as we had hoped, prayed for or dreamed, but when we look back and reflect, we see the hand of God and how our great God always provides for His people. He will provide the Interim Pastor, and in time, He will provide the next pastor to shepherd and lead this wonderful congregation. God will provide and show the way forward for you and for me and my family.

So please join us Sunday, January 24, in person or via live stream as I share some final thoughts with you. I can't wait to worship with you, and thank you always for your faithfulness. Your prayers will be appreciated, and please always know of my prayers for you.

Perhaps you have gathered that the text for these last three sermons is Philippians, one of my favorite books in the Bible and a book that is positive, uplifting and encouraging. So I will leave you with one final word and one final verse.

“I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13

God's got this! He's got you and me in the palm of His hand. In fact, He's got the whole world in the palm of His hand. And He "...will carry us on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

See you Sunday!

Preacher B

SUNDAY, January 10, 2021

General Fund	\$18,663.29
Lightshine/Bldg Fund	\$3,551.50
Back Pack	\$433.00

GIFTS TO THE BUILDING FUND

IN MEMORY OF:

Bryce Arrowood

Phillip & Alpha White, Patsy Champion,
Tim & Linda Lovelace

Madge Bradley (Mother of Kay Brooks)

Joe & Barbara Freeman, Patsy Champion

Viola & J.R. Champion

Patsy Champion

Earleen Douglas

Joe & Barbara Freeman

Merlin Hines - (Father of Terry Hines)

Phillip & Alpha White, Carl & Cassandra Parton

Tiny Jones

Phillip & Alpha White, Joyce Buckaloo,
Elizabeth Davidson, Michael & Sandra Nanney,
Betty Lowrance, Patsy Champion, Joe & Chris Quinn,
Johnny & Sandra Mayse, Tim & Linda Lovelace,
Carl & Cassandra Parton, Faith, Hope & Friendship,

Patsy Searcy

Phillip & Alpha White, Jim & Sylvia Gardner,
Elizabeth Davidson, Patsy Champion

Eunice Tunnell - (Sister of Keith Melton)

Patsy Champion

Bobby Williams

Patsy Champion

Hey Florence Family,

I hope you are well. Ann and I received some great news over Christmas that I wanted to share with you. We were opening our gifts from the children when Katlyn and Nicholas gave everyone a bag. They instructed us to open it at the same time. To our surprise, it was a picture of them holding their positive pregnancy test. What a wonderful surprise! Our second grandchild is due in late August.

As we look forward, with great anticipation, to the new addition to our family, I wonder about our world situation. Will our baby come into a world still dealing with Covid-19 and divisiveness, or will it witness a nation healed from Covid-19 and a people who see the good in one another?

I want to be optimistic and pray that God has healed our land. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we find these words “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” I look forward to the day when everyone can safely join together again and worship as a church family: To hear the congregation, sing the great songs of worship and praise: To be able to fellowship around the tables on Wednesday night and to shake hands and hug one another.

I hope most of all that our new grandbaby can fully experience the love from the people of Florence that Ann and I have felt over the years. Have a great week,

Scott

JANUARY
Birthdays

01/24 Cathy Brown
 01/25 Jimmy Clay, Missy Flack, Kirk Fowler, Gina Greene,
 Lindsey Hardin, Tara Hayes
 01/26 Caleb Francis
 01/27 Kim Bridges, Rena Caffell
 01/28 Thad Harris
 01/29 Barry Campfield, Kathryn Holland, Tim Munsey
 01/30 Tanner Herndon, Glenda Melton, John Wharton, Jr

JANUARY
Anniversaries

01/29 Eddy & Doris Jones

Dear Florence,

I wanted to write and say thank you so much for supporting the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering! As you know we raised over \$40,000 to support the International Mission Board. This amount would support a missionary family on the field for an entire year. As many of you know we have partnered with an IMB missionary family who works in India. Your gifts to the LMCO will fully fund their family for an entire year. That means they can work and minister in India with their full focus being on reaching the lost with the gospel!

Not only did you generously give to the IMB missionaries through the LMCO but you also have been faithful to give to our Indian Partners at Hillsong Public School and Church. A few weeks ago we sent funds to purchase food for the thirty orphans who live at the school and to pay the electricity bill for the orphanage. We have committed to pay for food and electricity for the next year in partnership with this orphanage and ministry.

Florence, thank you for being so generous with your time, energy, and finances. Your gifts are impacting the kingdom of God here in Forest City and all around the globe. My prayer is that our church can continue to support local and international missions so that we can be a light in a dark world.

David

The word Amen is becoming a hot topic on social media these days. Amen is sometimes pronounced differently by us, whether we use the long A sound or the short a sound, and the word means "so be it". For the most part we always close our prayers with the word as a final request and trust of our Father. There is a speaker at the Children's Pastors Conference I attend that always starts her prayers with Amen. She describes her reason as "inverted". Think about that a bit.... If we truly believe in the power of prayer, if we truly believe God hears us and responds to us, we are saying "So be it". So be it (Amen) Heavenly Father, as we cling to your goodness and mercy, with every breath we will praise you. May your grace and face shine upon us. Give us peace, joy, and hope in our daily walk. Heal those who are sick, touch those who do not know you, comfort those who are hurting, encourage those who are stuck, renew our spirits, let your light so shine in and through each of us. In Jesus name we pray. (Amen) So be it.

As you pray, maybe you want to start off with Amen too! Whatever our Father has in store, whatever His plan is for our life, our church, our community, "So be it"! Amen.

Tonya



Deacons' Corner

January 11, 2021

As we get closer to Bobby's retirement, let's pause and reflect on the many accomplishments during his 36 years of ministerial service at Florence. God has blessed us with these stellar statistics:

- Wrote our first Church Constitution and By-Laws in its 67 years of existence (these were revised in 2000) This helps us keep Florence true to her ministry.
- Incorporated Florence for the protection of our church & its members.
- With the split of the Southern Baptist Convention, allowed Florence folks to contribute to either SBC and/or the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.
- Made sure our preschoolers, children & youth were protected by requiring background checks on all who worked with any of these age groups
- Since 1986 has led us in more than 12 fund-raising campaigns over a 34-year period.
- Led us in building a new *Sanctuary Building*, a *Life Enrichment Center*, a *Christian Growth Center*, and the renovation of our *Adult Education Building*.
- Encouraged us to buy more than 30 properties surrounding our church so we would have adequate room for future needs.
- Encouraged us to create a Master Plan for the future of Florence.
- Involved us in the *Relay for Life* & over the years having given approximately \$100,000.00 to our community in an effort to fight cancer.
- Began offering a contemporary worship service called "*First Light*" in 2006 for those who were more comfortable with this type of worship & music.
- Led us to tithe from our building fund monies to a "10% *Building Churches*" program that assists other churches both locally, nationally, & internationally. Florence has sent more than 50 groups or individuals to help with disaster relief, building needs, evangelism, Vacation Bible School, etc. We have helped across the world in places like Brazil, the Ukraine, Canada, Senegal, Thailand, Slovakia, South Africa, Costa Rica, Liberia, Haiti, India etc., as well as in many churches across the United States.

Don't mistake this as just a nostalgic look back, but rather let's capture the energy and momentum that we have with Bobby's teachings and shepherding. Let's leverage the position that we are in for the continued advancement of God's kingdom through this local church, called Florence Baptist Church.

At any time, you have questions about the church contact one of our deacons or me at:

Butch Moore

Cell: 828-429-9352

Email: LCFARMS01@GMAIL.COM



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Florence Baptist Church
201 South Broadway Street
Forest City, NC 28043-3698

Phone: 828-245-5411
Fax: 828-245-5412
Church Office Hours:
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
www.florencechurch.net

Or Current Resident

Bible Studies for Life: Senior Adult

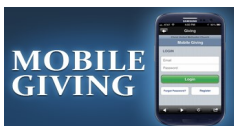
The Benefit of Spiritual Disciplines

1 Timothy 4:1-10

Most of us are in the habit of brushing our teeth and going to bed at a decent hour. Those are good habits to have. If you bite your nails like me or stay up too late, those are probably considered bad habits. One habit I bet many of us need to improve on is how often we read the Bible and talk to our Lord. Anything we do that helps us grow in our walk with Christ is definitely good and should discipline ourselves to do these things regularly and faithfully.

Live it out:

1. Commit. Commit to practicing spiritual disciplines.
2. Invest. Invest an additional thirty minutes each day to your quiet time and ask Christ to meet you there.
3. Disciple. Develop a relationship with a new or young believer and encourage his or her growth in Christ.



TEXT **florencebc**
to 73256
and give using
your smart phone!

Explore the Bible

Rejected

Luke 4:16-30

We all remember the scene from Forest Gump when he sweetly states, "Life is a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get". I do not know about you, but I select my piece carefully, always grabbing the orange or raspberry cream! Life is full of choices. Almost every decision is dictated by another decision made earlier. The color shoes I wear will depend on the outfit I decide on. Using a fork or a spoon depends if I choose eggs or cereal. Choosing Jesus is the first thing I do each day and that is an easy one. But not everyone will choose Him, and some will reject Him. That one decision impacts all future decisions. Your actions point to your true identity.

Apply the text:

- ◆ Jesus came to offer salvation.
- ◆ Explore what you believe about Jesus and help others to discover the truth about Jesus.
- ◆ Rejection of Jesus does not change His identity.

