

December 11, 2024

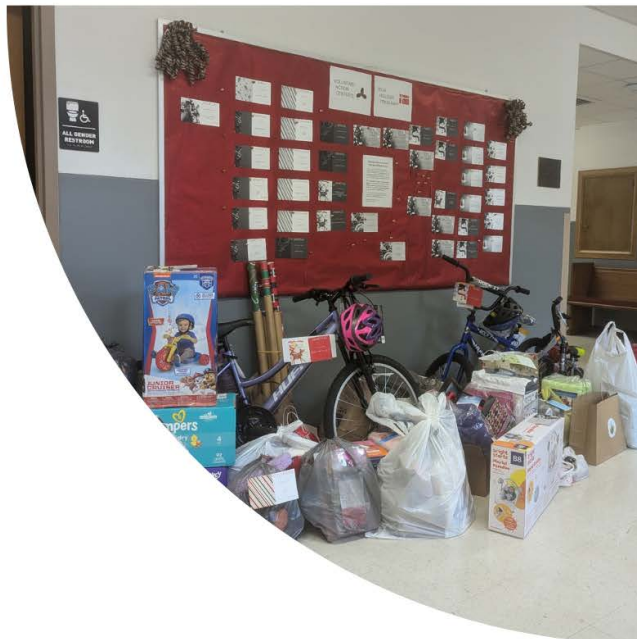


the SPIRE



Thank you for your generous support for Columbia families through the Voluntary Action Center's Annual Holiday Program.

Pictured are members of the Serving Team gathering all donated items to bring to VAC this year!





Announcement from the Senior Pastor Search Committee

The Senior Pastor Search Committee is pleased to announce that, following her visit with First Baptist over the weekend of December 6-8, Rev. Kristin McAtee has been called to be our next Senior Pastor! An overwhelming majority of the church voted in favor of calling Pastor Kristin and she enthusiastically accepted!

The search committee was thrilled to be able to present Pastor Kristin to the congregation. The committee feels that Pastor Kristin is the right pastor to come alongside First Baptist Church and our kin-dom building work. During her sermon on Sunday, Pastor Kristin spoke about her life as a braid being constantly woven with two consistent strands, herself and God, always present; and now with the strand that is First Baptist added to the braid. This is a great metaphor for who the committee found Pastor Kristin to be, someone who seeks to build strong relationships, forge community, and work together for the common good. Here is just a small highlight of what the search committee shared about Pastor Kristin and why they were confident in presenting her to the church for the role of Senior Pastor:

"Pastor Kristin is deeply relational and authentic. She is someone who would not just be a good pastor, but a good friend."

"Pastor Kristin's ministry and experience matches the DNA of FBC so well. Whether it is her experience working on staff at a "big steeple", downtown church, her passion for being a voice for progressive theology, or her creativity and intentionality in worship planning - she will easily fit in alongside the work we are already doing."



"She seeks to truly serve and help the marginalized around us. Examples include service to Native American communities, Burmese refugees resettled in Oklahoma, and mission work to aid Tsunami ravaged conservative Muslim communities in North Sumatra. She's always serving with an intentional expression of faith directing her to follow the Gospel message to build God's Kin-dom on Earth."

"I appreciate that Pastor Kristin is willing to tackle tough times and difficult conversations. Not to seek empty platitudes and false comforts; but to name and recognize despair as well as seek out genuine hope."

Pastor Search



Pastor Kristin's first day in the office will be January 21, 2025 and her first Sunday in the pulpit will be January 26. Pastor Greg will begin to transition out of his role as interim senior pastor. His last Sunday will be January 12. Please join us in thanking Greg and Priscilla for all that they have done for us during this interim period. We will have a guest preacher in the pulpit on January 19.

Thank you all for your prayers and support during this search process. More details will follow in the coming weeks with information about Pastor Kristin's transition and opportunities to get to know her and her family further. We are excited to welcome Pastor Kristen, her husband Brian, and daughter Danielle to the FBC Family!





Word from the Pastor



Word from Pastor Kristin

Dear Church Family,

It brings me great joy to write those words. From my first conversations with the Pastor Search Committee, I have felt a connection to First Baptist Church, Columbia. As God began to take me on this journey, I could not deny the warmth of your fellowship and the care and concern for me and for my family. Those feelings multiplied this weekend as we finally were able to meet face to face. You have welcomed me and created a space for me to walk alongside you. You have made my family feel loved and welcome. The call of God has never been so strong for me. I cannot wait to join you in January and begin our journey together.

Over the next few weeks, I will be packing and planning for our move to Columbia. We are busy painting and doing repairs, so the house is quite a mess. We haven't put up a tree and there are just a few presents waiting to be wrapped. I feel the frantic rush to celebrate and be joyful. It's a stark contrast to the lessons of Christ to trust in God and to find joy in each moment instead of worrying over the future.

In this season, I am trying to rest in the example of Mary. While the shepherds rushed to tell the story, Mary pondered all that was happening in her heart. In that stillness, she reflected on the work of God and what it all meant. As the excitement of this moment swirls around me, I am also pondering God's goodness to me and how God's work will be evident in our walk together.

May you find the peace of God in this season. Ponder with me God's good love to us.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Kristin

Word from the Pastor



Word from Pastor Greg

First Baptist,

Congratulations on the selection of Kristin McAtee as your new pastor. This marks an exciting new chapter for First Baptist, and I am confident that her leadership will guide you in continuing to grow in faith and service.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served as your interim pastor. This season with you has been a true blessing in our lives, and we will always treasure the memories of worshiping, learning, and serving together. As we prepare for this transition, I want to let you know that January 12, 2025, will be Priscilla's and my last Sunday with you. We look forward to celebrating that day with you as we give thanks for all that God has done and will continue to do through this wonderful congregation.

-Pastor Greg

CHRISTMAS EVE

Candlelight Service

11:00 pm in the Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 11:00 pm in the Sanctuary

With joy, we will celebrate the coming of Christ with carols, a retelling of the Christmas story, and the tradition of sharing the light with candles as we sing "Silent Night." Bring family and friends and join us as we worship in the Sanctuary at 11:00 pm.

Come early and support our young musicians as they play pre-service music starting at 10:30 pm.



Blue Christmas

A SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Blue Christmas

Thursday, December 19,
6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

We know that while the holiday season is full of cheer and expectation, many also hold grief and sadness. As a way to make space for difficult emotions during the holiday season, particularly grief around endings and anxiety around new beginnings, you are invited to a contemplative Blue Christmas service on December 19. Our service will provide space for silence, prayer, and lament.

Brunch Worship

Sunday, December 29
10:15 am in the Fellowship Hall

Join us for Brunch Worship on Sunday, December 29, at 10:15 am. Brunch Worship is an opportunity to connect with God and one another as we gather around tables to share engaging worship, a scrumptious meal, and meaningful conversation!

Brunch Worship is a communal endeavor, and you can contribute by bringing a potluck dish to share and by signing up to serve when you arrive. A few reminders, there will be no 9:15 or 11:15 am services.



BRUNCH WORSHIP

December 29





First Baptist Christmas Dinner Sunday, December 15 at 5pm

We invite you to join us for our Annual Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 15, at 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. The meat and beverages will be provided by the church, and excellent side dishes and desserts prepared by you and your First Baptist friends.

To help ensure we have a variety of food, we encourage you to bring a side dish if your last name begins A-M and a dessert if your last name begins with N-Z. Come feast and celebrate with us!



Help us stay green at the Fellowship Table!

We are so grateful for the ways the fellowship table has and continues to foster community at First Baptist. As we continue to reflect on ways to cut down on waste, we kindly ask all who are able to take mugs (or bring their own) and reusable plates to do so. We are adding a few mug drop-off locations around the church to make reusing mugs and plates easier, so be on the lookout on both the 2nd and 3rd floors for these new locations.

Additionally, our staff and volunteers are looking into other reusable cups for the future as we continue to be good stewards of God's creation. Thank you for your help in our sustainability efforts.

-Pastor Brittany

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