



## A Note From the Pastor

BY REV. TIM SCHAEFER

In these turbulent times, many of us are grappling with fear and anxiety over the harmful actions and dangerous rhetoric from our current presidential administration. It is certainly understandable to feel overwhelmed as we witness policies enacted that threaten the well-being of our neighbors and our communities. I want to remind you that our mission has not changed. We are called to love our neighbors and advocate for the common good and for the welfare of others.



But to do this effectively, we must also remember to care for ourselves. As the saying goes, "you cannot pour from an empty cup." We cannot help others heal if we are also hurting. So, let us take time to rest, reflect, and renew our spirits so that we can continue the work of building the Beloved Community. Let us encourage one another to engage in acts of self-care.

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## Board of Christian Education Update

BY DEB CHOTLOS FOR THE BOARD OF ED

- The **3rd Wednesday Potlucks** are temporarily discontinued and replaced by other fellowship opportunities and activities. See the Visitor and the Weekend Updates for future announcements.
- Caring for children, providing a safe environment, and encouraging children to ask questions about God and Jesus is an important mission. **If you enjoy working with children and feel called to the Children's Ministry**, the Board of Ed is looking for volunteers to help with childcare on Sunday mornings. The typical commitment is one Sunday per month. We are also looking for individuals to help with planning by serving on the Board of Education. If you are interested, please contact Deb Chotlos.
- **Graduations** are just around the corner. We will be honoring our graduates in May or early June. Please let the church office or Deb Chotlos know if anyone in your family will be graduating from high school or college this year.

## Board of Trustees Update

BY BILL HAUSLER FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### Key items from the January Trustees Meeting:

- Finalized details for a change in our cleaning service beginning in March.
- Discussed the loss of one tenant and the addition of another.
- Approved the purchase and installation of 13 remotely-controlled thermostats.
- Approved the job descriptions for Administrative Assistant and Rental Manager (splitting the responsibilities of the former Administrative Secretary position).
- Approved several updates to the Personnel Manual for non-pastoral staff.
- Approved re-keying the locks on the outside doors, 3rd floor classroom doors, and are evaluating the "fob" entry system.
- Reviewed financial reports and discussed other financial items including questions regarding the endowment.
- Discussed several personnel related items.

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## Investment Update

BY WYNN DAVIES FOR THE INVESTMENT & PLANNED GIVING COMMITTEE

Our Endowment Fund earned \$35,692 on its investments during 2024, more than making up for market losses in 2022. Previous earnings from the Endowment covered \$28,318 of 2024 budget expenses. Investments in 2024 from Marilyn Gibson's memorial gift to the Communion Fund earned \$27,098 during 2024. This will allow us to provide emergency food and shelter funds to those who need it.

Other investments not only have done "well", they have also done "good". These are funds that we have invested in "Community Development Financial Institutions" (CDFI's): non-profit institutions that take our investments and in turn invest them in projects and low interest loans that enable affordable housing and economic opportunities for low income and minority communities. For 2024, these include: Forward Community Investments, \$10,000 – serving needs throughout Wisconsin; Council of Churches Community Loan Fund, \$10,000 – who in turn invested its assets in a number of CDFIs operating in Wisconsin; and Self Help Federal Credit Union, \$58,679 – one of the largest CDFIs in the country.



## Financial Update

BY NANCY MOORE

### **December 2024 Budget Financials: Year-To-Date Actual**

Revenues --- \$357,257.51

Expenses --- \$337,740.92

Surplus (Deficit) --- \$19,516.59

The bookkeeper's full report is available upon request. Please email Nancy Moore at [bookkeeping@firstbaptistmadison.org](mailto:bookkeeping@firstbaptistmadison.org).

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## Know Your Rights Red Cards

BY DENNIS RAY FOR THE BOARD OF OUTREACH

First Baptist Church is communicating with organizations such as American Baptists of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Council of Churches, and the Dane Sanctuary Coalition for ideas on how to respond to immigration changes.

One important piece of advice we received is to help inform those who will be most impacted. First Baptist will be making available **Know Your Rights Red Cards**, which can be found in the Gathering Space.

First Baptist Church invites participation in an email Refugee/Immigrant Interest Group. If you are interested in joining, please contact Dennis Ray at [djay608@gmail.com](mailto:djay608@gmail.com).

## DEIB Taskforce Update

BY BETH GUNSHOR

The DEIB task force has been working hard to prepare a survey specifically for our church community. We celebrate the fact that First Baptist remains committed to the important work of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging and ask that every person involved in some way at FBC complete the survey.

Maybe you come every Sunday morning, maybe you attend a Bible study, maybe you attend once a year, maybe you've attended two services, or maybe you've attended for forty years--**we want to hear from all of you!**

**We are kicking off our survey in mid-February.** Specific dates and details will follow soon. If you have questions, please contact one of the DEIB task force members: Bryn Abramson, Beth Gunshor, Amanda Huff, Sara Kelm, Barry Kita, Jill Thomas, and Barry Trepczyk.



# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## Thank You for Your Generosity

BY WYNN DAVIES AND BARB HENNING FOR THE BOARD OF OUTREACH

### 2024 CHRISTMAS OFFERING

We are delighted to report that almost \$10,000 were donated to the 2024 Christmas offering! These funds were evenly split between meeting food needs of low-income households through Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin and meeting specialty health care needs of low-income households through the Specialty Care Free Clinic in Madison.

### DANE COUNTY JAIL MINISTRY WINTER CLOTHING COLLECTION A SUCCESS

First Baptist Church received a request from McFarland Lutheran Church Dane County Jail Ministry for winter clothing. This clothing was needed by men and women who had been incarcerated during summer and warmer months and subsequently released from jail in the fall and winter. Members and friends of FBC responded generously as did our neighbors in the Regent Neighborhood who were contacted via email.

## Green Team Update & Opportunities

BY BARB HENNING

The Green Team is thinking of Spring and Green education. *The Sustain Dane* January 2025 Newsletter published a list of interesting possibilities.

- "Walking All Around Dane County", is a program for folks that are interested in sustainability. The first walk is February 21, 3:30 - 4:30, at the UW-Madison Arboretum.
- Listed is a volunteer opportunity at The River Food Pantry. First Baptist Church folks are strong supporters of, and currently volunteer with other food pantries, such as, Allied Drive and Second Harvest. The River Food Pantry at 2021 Darwin Rd is found on the Northeast side of Madison, and may be convenient for some of our members.
- If you have interest in any of these opportunities or you see other volunteer or educational programs of interest, please contact Green Team members Lynette Miller or Barb Henning. We may be able to organize a group activity.
- Here are websites to review: <https://sustaindane.org> and <https://riverfoodpantry.org>

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Learning Opportunities

BY DEB CHOTLOS FOR THE BOARD OF ED

**IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, CONSIDER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- Spiritual Renewal Groups 1 and 2
- Hourglass Bible Study
- FBC@Prayer
- Other opportunities using outside resources will be available on the Weekend Update.

*Contact the office or Deb Chotlos for updates on these groups.*

## Winter Business Meeting

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 | 12:00 PM

### Fellowship Hall

**11:30 AM – Light lunch provided**

**12:00 PM – Meeting**

Members of the church may attend either in person or via ZOOM. Materials for the meeting were provided last week. Copies are available in the Gathering Space.

**PLEASE HAVE THE REPORT AVAILABLE FOR THE MEETING**

ZOOM: [tinyurl.com/2025WinterMeeting](https://tinyurl.com/2025WinterMeeting) (type or copy and paste link into browser)

ID: 889 6053 7377 | Passcode: 88690

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Spiritual Renewal Group 1

EVERY 1st & 3rd MONDAY | 7:00PM VIA ZOOM

The next book the group is reading is "The Mystics Would Like a Word: Six Women Who Met God and Found a Spirituality for Today".

Reading and discussion continues to the first Monday in March. At that time the group will decide to continue with this book or change to readings from "Good Enough".

*Contact Bill Hausler for the schedule or ZOOM information*



## Hourglass Bible Study

JANUARY – AUGUST 2025 | 4:00 PM VIA ZOOM

Jeremiah was not just a bullfrog!

The Hourglass Bible Study has undertaken the challenge of reading the book of Jeremiah, focusing both on the book's historical context and on its relevance to today's circumstances.

Join us as we explore, question, learn, and laugh together. Come enjoy our accepting and congenial group as you rummage around in the Biblical past and discover how it still is relevant today.

# BIRTHDAYS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## FEBRUARY 2025

5 NATHANIEL C	21 ROBERT N
6 LYNETTE M	22 KATIE D
7 BARB H	25 MARIANNE D
7 PAUL H JR	26 JOHN M
7 EVAN Z	27 SUZANNE V
8 DIANE B	
9 BARBARA E	
14 JUNGJA HL	
14 VANESSA K	
19 SUSAN D	



## MARCH 2025

1 SHEILA D	25 SUSAN C
2 MARNI B	26 CHRIS B
9 BESSIE W	30 ANNA D
11 BILL F	31 BETH G
12 MOLLY D	
12 JOAN T	
13 PAM M	
16 LESA R	
20 CARRIE S	
20 SALLY D	
22 WYNN D	

## Prayer Wall

### Our Church Family & Community Members:

Samantha, The Chotlos family; the Marty family; the Arneson family; Chevy Bulyar; Deidra; the Young family; Judy, her son Joshua, and family; Nancy E

### Our Homebound:

Ann P; Linda O; Sheila D; Susan H



**Please visit our Prayer Wall, where you will see prayer requests from and for our members, friends, and families.**

### Share your joys & concerns with us!

To submit a prayer request or view prayer requests submitted by others, scan the QR code or visit [firstbaptistmadison.org/prayer](https://firstbaptistmadison.org/prayer).

[GO TO WALL](#)