

THE VISITOR

MARCH 2025



A Note From the Pastor

BY REV. TIM SCHAEFER

INTRODUCING OUR LENTEN THEME: REPENTING FROM CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Christian Nationalism has been in the headlines, and many of us have been wondering how Christians ought to respond. Throughout the season of Lent, we will explore what Christian Nationalism is and how we should respond—particularly as Baptists, who hold religious liberty as a core value.



The Wisconsin Council of Churches has developed Repenting from Christian Nationalism, a sermon series resource for Lent based on Year C of the Revised Common Lectionary, as a tool to begin these important conversations within congregations. This Lent, we'll utilize their preaching themes and liturgy, and throughout the season we'll share additional resources in our Weekend Update.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

Energy Saving Upgrades

BY PAUL CHOTLOS

In January, the church installed new Honeywell T6 Pro thermostats in all major heating areas. These advanced units are seven-day programmable and WiFi-controlled, allowing the Pastor and Building and Grounds team to adjust temperatures remotely via their cell phones. While the WiFi feature offers convenience, users can still manually adjust room temperatures using the touchscreen. However, after a few hours, the temperature will revert to its programmed setting. Other settings can only be changed with a code.

We hope the new thermostats will reduce energy costs and minimize fossil fuel usage. In 2024, we spent over \$6,000 on fuel, despite a mild winter. We purchased 19 thermostats at \$137 each, with a \$60 rebate per unit from Focus on Energy. The installation cost was \$2,324, bringing the total project cost to \$3,787 after the rebate. Generous donations from the Board of Outreach and individual donors, along with funds from the Capital Reserves, helped fund the project. Thank you to everyone who made this possible!

Board of Trustees Update

BY BILL HAUSLER FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Key items from the February Trustees Meeting:

- Discussed how FBC can prepare for, and relate to, an interaction with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) personnel, if needed.
- Provided updates on FBC's security entry system, which will require new fobs.
- Discussed on an automatic door opener for the parking lot main entrance. The Board of Outreach possibly can have as one item for the Easter offering. An updated bid so we know the full cost will be obtained. Additional funding will likely be needed (which we support!)
- The Investment and Planned Giving Subcommittee of the Trustees will consist of members: Wynn Davies (chair), Nancy Emmert, Chris Blythe, and Bill Hausler.
- Update on building: 1) Bathroom fans by the Fellowship Hall stage were replaced.
 2) Street and sewer work will be done by FBC this spring, which may require a change in our lateral service line.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

DEIB SURVEY REQUEST

BY BETH GUNSHOR AND JILL THOMAS

The DEIB task force (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) is inviting you to complete our survey.

We hope to encourage every person involved in some way at FBC to complete this survey. Maybe you come every Sunday morning, maybe you only attend a Bible study group, maybe you attend once a year, maybe you attended one service a couple years ago, or maybe you've attended for forty years—we want to hear from all of you!

Please contact us at deib@firstbaptistmadison.org to get the link for the survey or to request a paper copy. You may also contact one of the DEIB task force members:

Bryn Abramson, Beth Gunshor, Amanda Huff, Sara Kelm, Barry Kita, Jill Thomas, or

Barry Trepczyk The survey can be found HERE.



Financial Update

BY NANCY MOORE

January 2025 Budget Financials: *Year-To-Date Actual*

Revenues --- \$65,418.79 Expenses --- \$26,523.08 Surplus (Deficit) --- \$38,895.71

The bookkeeper's full report is available upon request. Please email Nancy Moore at bookkeeping@firstbaptistmadison.org.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

Green Team News

BY BARB HENNING

Sidewalk Ice

De-icing salts damage the soil, lakes and streams, plants, sidewalks and the paws of furry friends. In the soil it leads to reduced water infiltration and packed soil. It causes stunted plants. Try to clear your walks before they become icy. If you have ice, mix very little deicing salts with sand or an alternative product such as calcium chloride. Fish and bugs that live in freshwater streams can't survive with extra salty water. Water Treatment plants cannot filter out the extra salt, so it ends up in your tap water and even corrodes your pipes. — Wisconsin State Journal, "Garden Calendar," Week of Feb 16, Lisa Johnson

Recycle Your Whole Pizza Box – Even the Greasy Parts

Madison residents can now recycle entire pizza boxes, including the greasy parts. Previously, only clean parts of the box could be recycled, but now the entire box can go into the green cart. For full guidelines, visit **City of Madison**.

Special Offering for Refugees

BY WYNN DAVIES

52 refugees (22 households) who were granted refugee status in Madison are facing an urgent crisis. The new administration in Washington has reneged on its promises and issued sudden stop-work orders to refugee resettlement agencies nationwide — including our local Jewish Social Services. These orders have suspended vital funding that supports refugees as they begin their new lives in our community, particularly during their critical first 90 days here.

How can you help?

In response to this urgent situation, the Board of Outreach has set up a special "Refugees in Crisis Fund" for you to contribute. To donate you can either: Give **Cash or Check** in an envelope labeled "Refugees in Crisis Fund" with your name and drop it in the offering box, church office. Or, with an **electronic payment** via credit card, bank transfer, Apple Pay, Google Pay, PayPal, or Venmo by visiting firstbaptistmadison.org/give. Select "Special Offering" and "Refugees in Crisis" from the dropdown menus.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

Next Statewide Election

2025 SPRING ELECTION - TUESDAY, APRIL 1



FOR INFORMATION ABOUT:

Register to Vote, Where Do I Vote?, Vote Absentee By Mail, What's On My Ballot?, and Track My Ballot go to https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/.

Spiritual Renewal - Group 1 Upate

BY BILL HAUSLER

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

We will be finishing the book "The Mystics Would Like a Word: Six Women Who Met God and Found a Spirituality for Today" at our next two discussions.

March 17 - Chapters 9 and 10 on Thérèse of Lisieux April 7 - Chapters 11 and 12 on Catherine of Siena

If this sounds interesting, please join us with the connecting info below! Questions? Contact Bill Hausler (608-225-2058, phone and text; hhausler.gitas.net email).

Join Zoom Meeting: https://tinyurl.com/y2y9vx7u Mtg. ID: 241 607 232 PW: 518608

If joining by telephone, 1 (312) 626-6799 enter the Mtg. ID and password.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Repenting from Christian Nationalism BEGINS SUNDAY, MARCH 9

Join us every Sunday at 10:30 AM for worship:

- 1st Sunday in Lent Repenting From Self-Reliance
- 2nd Sunday in Lent Repenting From Systemic Violence
- 3rd Sunday in Lent Repenting From Avoidance
- 4th Sunday in Lent Repenting From White Supremacy
- 5th Sunday in Lent Repenting From One Right Way
- Palm Sunday Repenting From Domination
- Easter Sunday Repenting From Empire

Women in Ministry Advocacy Month

MARCH 2025

March is the month of advocacy for women in ministry. Throughout the month, we'll be featuring ways the congregation can get involved in Baptist Women in Ministry (BWIM) Month of Advocacy in our weekly email newsletter, The Weekend Update.

Please also join us in worship as we celebrate women in ministry through preaching:

March 16 - Amanda Huff

Student Minister at First Baptist Church of Madison

March 23 - Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell

Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin

March 30 - Rev. Breanna Illéné

Director of Ecumenical Innovation and Justice Initiatives for the Wisconsin Council of Churches

UPCOMING EVENTS

Spring Potluck & BINGO

SATURDAY, MARCH 29 | 6:00 PM

Join the church family and friends in Fellowship Hall for an evening of food, fun, and fellowship. Bring a dish to share from your hometown or a family favorite. Enjoy learning more about one another and share delicious food. Afterwards, there will be an opportunity to play BINGO for laughable prizes.





Easter Egg Hunt SATURDAY, APRIL 12 | 1:00 PM

First Baptist Church will host an easter egg hunt for ages 1-10 on the front lawn of the church. In case of rain, we will move indoors to the upstairs classrooms.

Please bring your own basket or container for the egg hunt.-fun and games will follow. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Email Brenda at brenda.lempp@gmail.com to volunteer or donate for this event.

BIRTHDAYS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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



APRIL 2025

4 LAURA D
29 ROBBIE G
13 AARON H
29 CARMEN P
15 NORIKO K
30 BRENNA K
17 WAYNE B
18 GETA C
25 JUDY M
26 TANYA B
26 GLADYS C
26 STEVE B
26 DALE H
28 TIM C



Our Church Family & Community Members:

Curt Grinde; Melanie; Nancy E

Our Homebound:

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 <u>firstbaptistmadison.org/prayer</u>.

GO TO WALL