



## A Note From the Pastor

BY REV. TIM SCHAEFER

This Advent and Christmas, guided by A Sanctified Art's series *What Do You Fear?*, we remember that Jesus was born into a world filled with fear and anxiety under the cruel and oppressive rule of Herod.

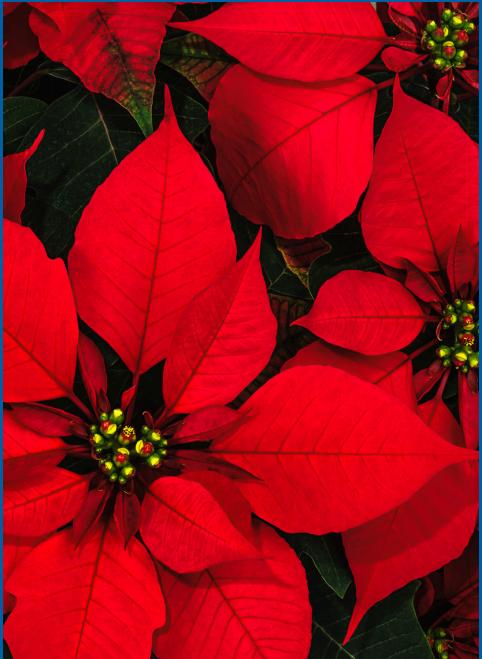
In many ways, our own political climate mirrors that tension. We carry real concerns for our nation, our communities, and our most vulnerable neighbors in this uncertain time.



In the midst of it all, we are invited to name our fears honestly and listen for God's still-speaking voice. Advent insists on hope—an active, courageous practice that chooses love, justice, and compassion, even when fear is the easier path.

So in this season, may we find strength and support within our church family as we live out our faith together, trusting that God is with us and that hope will take root.

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES



## Poinsettia Orders

Help us adorn the chancel with poinsettias for Christmas Eve! Plants will be available to take home after the Christmas Eve service.

The cost of each plant is \$16.00. Your order must be received by noon on Friday, December 12.

**Place your online order at the link below, or return a paper form to the church office.**

**[firstbaptistmadison.org/flowers](http://firstbaptistmadison.org/flowers)**

*Contact the church office for more information.*

## 2026 Stewardship Update

BY Paul Chotlos, Moderator



**HOPE IN ACTION**  
GIVING TOGETHER. GROWING TOGETHER.

### **Thank you for making a 2026 financial pledge!**

As of December 1st, we have received 38 financial pledges totaling \$185,836. This represents 77% of this year's goal of \$241,000.

How does the current total compare to last year? In 2025, we received 55 pledges totaling \$231,110.

If you plan to submit a pledge and have not year done so, we would appreciate hearing from you soon. We ask that you give out of your abundance and with a thankful heart.

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## October Trustee Updates

BY BILL HAUSLER FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Affirmed members of the Investment and Planned Giving (IP&G) Subcommittee: Wynn Davies (chair), Nancy Emmert, Chris Blythe, Bill Hausler, and new members Emma Huff (Trustee representative) and Janet Reinke.
- Approved IP&G's request to maintain sufficient funds in the BMO account for current needs, with remaining balances moved to a higher interest-bearing account.
- Accepted the resignation of Ted Reinke, our long-serving Organist/Accompanist and Bell Choir Director. An appreciation event is planned for January.
- Carl Johnson, part-time Rental Manager, resigned and has accepted full-time employment elsewhere.
- The Sound System appeal is now about halfway to its goal.
- Continued discussion of Focus on Energy's Empowering Faith Communities and possible additional sanctuary improvements.



## Financial Update

BY NANCY MOORE

### October 2025 Budget Financials: *Year-To-Date Actual*

Revenues --- \$274,152.84  
Expenses --- \$255,068.55  
Surplus (Deficit) --- \$19,084.29

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

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## Rev. Tim Schaefer

BY BILL BEAUDREAU FOR THE PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

We are delighted to celebrate the five-year anniversary of Pastor Tim's ministry at First Baptist Church. Tim (and John) joined our church family in November 2020, during the challenging days of the COVID pandemic.

His first service took place on the First Sunday of Advent—a meaningful and hope-filled beginning to his journey with us. Before moving to Wisconsin, Tim served as Youth Minister at Royal Lane Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, where he was ordained in early 2019. Over the past five years, his leadership, compassion, and dedication have enriched our congregation and community in countless ways.

## Winter Clothing Collection

NOW THROUGH DECEMBER 31



The Madison Area Jail Ministry is requesting donations of gently used winter clothing items for those being released from the Dane County Jail.

### ITEMS NEEDED:

- **Winter hats, gloves, and boots**
- **Winter coats: men's, women's, and unisex (L - 4XL)**
- **Pants & Sweatshirts: men's and women's (M - 2XL)**

Please use the collection bin by the parking lot entrance. Donations must be received before December 31, 2025. For questions, contact Barb Henning.

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

## Green Cleanup Tips for the Holidays

BY BARB HENNING FOR THE GREEN TEAM

- At holiday gatherings, use washable plates, cups, silverware, tablecloths, and napkins to reduce waste. If disposable items are necessary, avoid paying extra for “compostable” products unless you can send them to a commercial composting facility.
- Save bows, gift boxes, and gift bags for reuse, and recycle any boxes that are no longer usable.
- Put unrecyclable wrapping paper you can’t reuse in the trash.
- Recycle plain paper greeting cards and envelopes, avoiding those with glitter, sequins, or batteries.
- After the holidays, place cut trees in a corner of your yard to give birds and rabbits winter shelter; in spring, chip the tree for mulch.

## Small Group Updates

### YOUNG ADULTS GROUP

**Young adults—come connect this winter!** Check out upcoming gatherings and find community. Upcoming events can be found at [firstbaptistmadison.org/events](http://firstbaptistmadison.org/events)

### SPIRITUAL RENEWAL GROUP

Meets via Zoom, 7PM, first and third Mondays of each month.

We are reading and discussing the book Everything Happens for a Reason – And Other Lies I've Loved by Kate Bowler.

**Modified Reading Schedule:** December 1: Preface and Chapters 1–3, December 15: Chapters 4–5, January 5: Chapters 6–7  
Please contact Bill Hausler with any questions at [hhausler@tds.net](mailto:hhausler@tds.net).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Christmas Caroling

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 | 9:00 AM

Celebrate the holiday season with a morning of Christmas Caroling and spreading good cheer to our homebound church family.

Meet in the Community Room for instructions, to organize carpools, and to warm up your voices before we head out.

No singing experience necessary.  
All are welcome and encouraged to join!



### Young Adult Christmas Party

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14 | 5:00 PM



Please bring a favorite holiday side dish/dessert and a white elephant gift.

Come decked out and hang out with us at our Christmas party! There will be cozy food, games, and a white elephant gift exchange.

To participate in the gift exchange, please bring a wrapped gift \$10 or less in value. It can be anything around the home, something you made, or something you bought—it's up to you!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Christmas Eve Service

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24 | 5:00 PM

This Christmas Eve, we celebrate hope and recognize that Good News is always louder than fear!

Join us for an intergenerational candlelight service, featuring the familiar stories of Christmas, special music, and your favorite Advent and Christmas carols.



### Reflections of Hope Worship Service

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28 | 10:30 AM

On this First Sunday after Christmas, we reflect on the places in our world where we find hope.

We'll explore what it means to hope in the midst of fearful and uncertain times through familiar Christmas lessons, seasonal songs, and special homilies from members of our congregation reflecting on this year's Advent/Christmas theme: *What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent.*

# BIRTHDAYS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## DECEMBER 2025

2 TYLER H	24 MARCIA F
4 KYLE A	24 GENEVA M
7 SUE L	28 KACIA F
8 KATHRYN R	28 WILLA V MC
13 RAINGE D	29 AMIRA C
15 RYAN B	30 LYDIA H
15 JEFF M	30 DIANNE H
17 ANNA C	30 CARL S
18 LINDA S	31 JOYCE L
21 JAMIE K	31 TROY Z
22 JULIE B	



## JANUARY 2026

1 CORAL B
4 ANN N
5 BRENDA L
9 JUDY S
23 PAUL C
23 MARY R
25 VIRGINIA E
26 AMANDA C
26 HERMAN T
29 DENNIS R
31 BRYN A

## Prayer Wall

### Our Church Family & Community Members:

Barry K.; Curt Grinde, Peter Valentine; Preethi's son Joel

### 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 community members.**

### 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](http://firstbaptistmadison.org/prayer).