



Introducing our Lenten Series

BY REV. TIM SCHAEFER

This Lent our sermon series, ***Lent Under Occupation***, invites us to walk with Jesus as he moves deliberately toward Jerusalem—and toward confrontation. Drawing on Working Preacher’s *Walking the Palm Sunday Path*, we’ll explore Jesus’ public, provocative vision of God’s reign in opposition to the world of empire shaped by domination and injustice.



Lent is a season when we “take stock of our lives, reconsider the world we inhabit, and prepare to re-encounter Jesus” in his pursuit of justice, peace, and deep love of neighbor. In 2026, the stakes feel especially high. This series will trace Jesus’ path through all four Gospels, attending to the sharp contrasts they draw between the reign of God and the unjust systems of this world. Palm Sunday, we’ll remember, was never safe—it was joy and peril intertwined.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

Winter Annual Business Meeting

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15 | 12:00 PM (HYBRID)

Early in February, a packet of meeting materials will be sent to your email, and printed copies will be available in the Gathering Space.

A light lunch will follow worship in Fellowship Hall. The meeting will begin at 12:00PM in the Choir/Community Room. A virtual option is also available via Zoom.

The purpose of the meeting is to receive reports, adopt the annual budget, approve a Nominating Committee, and conduct other necessary business. A quorum of 30 church members is required. Speakers will be asked to limit remarks to five minutes, and the meeting is expected to last about one hour.

Questions may be directed to Moderator Paul Chotlos.

January Trustees Update

BY BILL HAUSLER FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Key Items from the meeting:

- Zach Busch's interim status as Music Director was extended through the end of February.
- Beth Gunshor's resignation as Worship Coordinator was received. Thank you, Beth, for the great work as well as the sticky dots!
- Progress on the Focus on Energy projects and Sound System Update were slowed down over the holidays.
- The 2026 proposed budget was discussed.
- Bill Fiore will be the Trustee's representative to the nominating committee.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

Board of Education Update

BY DEB CHOTLOS FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

- The Board of Education has made a request to create a space in the back of the sanctuary to provide children with an activity area during worship. It will require removing 2-3 rows of pews under the balcony. The plan was recently approved by the Church Council and is now under consideration by the Board of Trustees.
- A neighborhood Easter Egg Hunt will take place on Saturday, April 4 from 2-3 p.m.
- Poetry and Popcorn, an event celebrating April's National Poetry Month, will be held at the church on Saturday, April 25 3-5 p.m.
- We will honor high school and college graduates in May. Please contact Deb Chotlos with names of 2026 graduates.
- The Board of Education has a goal of offering more meals and social events this year. Watch for updates in *the Visitor* and the *Weekend Update*. Our plans include a July picnic and a fun fall event.

Financial Update

BY NANCY MOORE, BOOKKEEPER

December 2025 Budget Financials - YTD Actual

Revenues --- \$344,781.35
 Expenses --- \$348,051.35
 Surplus (Deficit) -- (\$3,270.00)

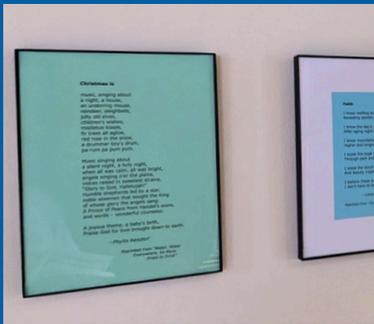
The bookkeeper's full report is available upon request. Please email Nancy Moore at bookkeeping@firstbaptistmadison.org.



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

POETRY WALL DISPLAY

BY BRENDA LEMPP FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION



Don't miss the Christmas poems on the Poetry Wall near the sanctuary entrance. Featured works include "Joy" and "The Christmas Letters" by Dr. Andrew Davison, "Hope" by Lenore Coberly, and "Christmas Is" by Phyllis Reisdorf. These selections will change to winter-themed poems soon.

The Poetry Wall honors mentors who have facilitated and participated in writing groups within our congregation, with authors and poems rotating seasonally.

Easter Offering Suggestions

BY WYNN DAVIES FOR THE BOARD OF OUTREACH

Each Easter, First Baptist receives a special offering to support nonprofit organizations serving people in need across our Madison community. This year, those needs are especially urgent. Homelessness and the lack of stable, affordable housing continue to grow. Affordable health care is increasingly out of reach for many families as federal assistance is reduced. Food insecurity is rising, placing heavy strain on local food pantries. Too often, children bear the greatest burden, losing opportunities that shape their future.

We invite your guidance on nonprofits you support as we select recipients for this year's Easter Offering. Please contact the church office.



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

It's Compost Time

BY BARB HENNING FOR THE GREEN TEAM

Green Box Compost of Madison reports that Epic Systems in Verona Wisconsin is, by far, their largest food scrap diverter. Their recent newsletter reports: ... "they divert nearly four tons of food scraps every week. With 12,000+ employees, Epic helps set the standard for what's possible for other campuses looking to compost successfully!" They also report on serving Willy Street Co-op's three locations which together diverted over a quarter of a million pounds of food scraps. Other groups Green Box partners with are: Exact Sciences, Whole Foods, UW Health, Monona Terrace, and local food pantries, including The River, Sunshine Place, Goodman, and Madison Area Food Pantry Garden. Other composting companies in Madison include Earth Stew Compost Services and Curbside Composter. Residential composting is available for families, and there are several ways households can participate (see website.)

From Green Box Recycling Newsletter online - <https://www.withgreenbox.com>

Small Group Updates

YOUNG ADULT GROUP

Young adults—come connect this winter! Check out upcoming gatherings and find community. Upcoming events can be found at 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.

Please contact Bill Hausler with any questions at hhausler@tds.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Frozen Assets Festival

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7 | 10:00 AM

The Young Adult group will meet along Lake Mendota for Madison's annual **Frozen Assets Festival** (conditions permitting).

FREE - Includes family-friendly activities on the ice and The Edgewater Plaza.

<https://www.cleanlakesalliance.org/frozen-assets/#Schedule>



Recognizing Ted Reinke

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8 | 10:30 AM



FBC will recognize the musical contributions to our church community of long-time friend and organist, Ted Reinke.

The service will feature special music, performed by Ted, and a time of recognition. An informal reception will follow the service during fellowship time!

For those unable to attend, cards for Ted may be mailed to the church office.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Young Adult Game Night

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 | 7:00 PM

You're invited to a Young Adults game night!

Bring your favorite board/card game and a snack or drink to share.

Meet in Room 104 at the church.



Jane Ahn's Presentation

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 | 12:00 PM

Join Jane Ahn in Fellowship Hall after worship as she presents the results of her environmental survey conducted last year.

Survey participants and anyone interested in the presentation are invited.

Contact a member of the Green Team if you have any questions.

BIRTHDAYS AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

FEBRUARY 2026

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



MARCH 2026

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

Prayer Wall

Our Church Family & Community Members:

Preethi; Barb Sorenson; Brenda L.; Dick Lovell; Fred Kamnetz; Curt Grinde; 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 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.