



Interim Pastor Update

FBC TRANSITION TEAM

The Transition Team is delighted to announce that the Reverend Katya Ouchakov has accepted our offer to serve as FBC Interim Pastor.

Rev. Katya says she looks forward to working with our progressive congregation at First Baptist. She appreciates the fact “that First Baptist has either been actively involved in or supportive of many local justice-related causes over the years.” She firmly believes that transitional times are opportunities for lay leaders to step into leadership positions. She said, “Congregations are strongest when members care for one another, whether in times of crisis or simply over coffee after worship. I would expect to get to know the members at First Baptist, become familiar with their needs, and work collaboratively with the congregation to ensure that those needs are met. My hope would be to establish sustainable pastoral care practices that could continue after the call of a new settled pastor.” Rev. Katya has developed a variety of worship services including those affirming the LGBTQ+ community; expressing pride in our country but grieving the unjust politics that we are seeing; hymn sings, and Christmas Day Lessons and Carols. She has also developed Bible curricula for adults and youth.



FBC Welcomes Interim Pastor!

Welcome Katya!

The Transition Team is delighted to announce that the Reverend Katya Ouchakov has accepted our offer to serve as FBC Interim Pastor. We feel extremely blessed. In our opinion, Rev. Katya is an exceptional pastor, with the skills and experience to guide the congregation in the next stage of our transition time. The transition team is open to responding to questions about this new arrangement and will host a time for questions and discussion in the sanctuary after worship on October 11th. Rev. Katya has agreed to begin her service with the church on October 14. You might remember that Rev. Katya preached at our church last May. She is married and lives nearby in Fitchburg, Wisconsin. Katya's last name, Ouchakov, is pronounced "oo-SHAH-kawf."

Education, Training, and Ordination

Rev. Katya Ouchakov received a Master of Theology in New Testament from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN; a Master of Divinity from Yale University Divinity School in New Haven, CT; and a Bachelor of Arts (Magna Cum Laude) from Luther College in Decorah, IA, with a Psychology major and Spanish and Religion minors. She has received training in Clinical Pastoral Education, Interim Ministry and Healthy Congregations, and Effective Transitional Leadership. Rev. Katya has assisted with planning anti-racism training and attended LGBTQ+ 101 training presented by OutReach. She was ordained in the United Church of Christ (UCC) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA).

Professional Experience

With 20 years of experience in pastoral ministry in UCC, ELCA, and ecumenical settings, Rev. Katya has served as a solo, associate, and co-pastor, as well as a transitional minister. Ecumenical ministry is one of the most important touchstones of her ministry. In recent years, she has discerned a call to serve a variety of congregations in short-term interim ministries, sabbatical coverage, medical leave, and parental leave. Rev. Katya also continues her role as an overnight Associate Chaplain one day per week at Unity Point-Meriter Hospital, where she has served for 16 years. She also provides grief support for Gunderson Funeral & Cremation Care. For these reasons, her interim appointment with FBC will be 75% time.

Rev. Katya says she looks forward to working with our progressive congregation at First Baptist. She appreciates the fact "that First Baptist has either been actively involved in or supportive of many local justice-related causes over the years." She firmly believes that transitional times are opportunities for lay leaders to step into leadership positions. She said, "Congregations are strongest when members care for one another, whether in times of crisis or simply over coffee after worship. I would expect to get to know the members at First Baptist, become familiar with their needs, and work collaboratively with the congregation to ensure that those needs are met. My hope would be to establish sustainable pastoral care practices that could continue after the call of a new settled pastor." Rev. Katya has developed a variety of worship services including those affirming the LGBTQ+ community; expressing pride in our country but grieving the unjust politics that we are seeing; hymn sings, and Christmas Day Lessons and Carols. She has also developed Bible curricula for adults and youth.

Why First Baptist Supports JustDane and WISDOM

WYNN DAVIES FOR THE OUTREACH TEAM

First Baptist's Outreach Budget makes a financial contribution and encourages volunteers to support these two organizations that help people returning to our community from prison and also advocate for improvements in Wisconsin's criminal justice system.

- According to a 2026 report by the Wisconsin Policy Forum, Black residents account for roughly 5.9% of Wisconsin's overall population but represent nearly a quarter of all criminal complaint case filings.
- The state prison system is operating at more than 5,000 people over capacity, creeping closer to all-time record highs with over 23,600 adults locked up.
- State data highlights a steep, expensive shift toward an older inmate demographic. Total arrests for individuals aged 60 and older have spiked up by 24.8% since 2019, largely driven by substance abuse-related offenses, which heavily burdens prison healthcare infrastructure.
- The 2025–2027 state budget stripped away executive proposals designed to reform the system. Concurrently, the legislature passed multiple laws increasing criminal penalties, compounding the influx into a system already lacking physical space and experiencing staff shortages.

WISDOM is a faith-based organization with 13 affiliates located throughout the state. While highly regarded for its advocacy for reforms on Wisconsin's criminal justice system, WISDOM also actively campaigns for immigrant rights, and environmental justice. Its local affiliate, MOSES, focuses on the Dane County Jail System and the large number of people in our community who are under probation and parole supervision.

JustDane describes its mission statement as follows: "JustDane helps transform individual lives and social systems to create a just and equitable community." First Baptist is a long-time supporter and participant in this organization from the days when it was a coalition of Madison churches called "Madison Urban Ministry. Its programs include:

- Just Bakery: A 12-week educational and vocational training program designed for individuals facing significant barriers to employment, such as justice involvement or homelessness. Their products are often available at First Baptist in the Christmas season.
- Healing House: An 8-bed medical recuperative care facility that provides 24/7 shelter, meals, and childcare assistance for families experiencing homelessness while a family member recuperates from surgery, childbirth, or hospitalization. First Baptist volunteers provide meals for its residents.
- Journey Home & Reentry Support: Focuses heavily on reducing recidivism by providing peer recovery coaching, legal aid, mentoring, and support networks to individuals navigating their return to the community after incarceration. Another area that depends on volunteers for their "Circles of Support."
- Community Advocacy: JustDane frequently hosts community experiences like Reentry Simulations to help the broader public understand the complex challenges faced by citizens newly released from prison.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS & UPDATES

Board of Outreach Report

1. The Board sponsored the visit of Kyle Williams, International Ministries Global Servant in SE Asia, who preached on Peacebuilding with the Persecuted on Sunday, September 13, and engaged in a discussion with congregation members after the service. Dennis and Mary provided housing. His visit was sponsored in part by International Ministries. Global Servants have to raise sufficient funds to support their ministries, so you are encouraged to donate to the World Mission Offering.

2. The Board led a discussion and conducted a survey on the 2027 outreach budget at the August 25 congregational dinner, with a follow-up on the results of the survey at the September 29 congregational dinner. The Board's proposed 2027 budget incorporating congregational feedback was also discussed at the September dinner.

3. The World Mission Offering and Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering were collected in September. Many thanks to Carolyn Cross for her testimony on the value of the RMMO gifts that she receives as the spouse of a former minister. Donations to those offerings can still be made.

4. Please contact any of the Board members if you have outreach ministry questions or suggestions, or email outreach@firstbaptistmadison.org. Email us if you would like to attend our next Zoom meeting on October 7 at 7 pm.

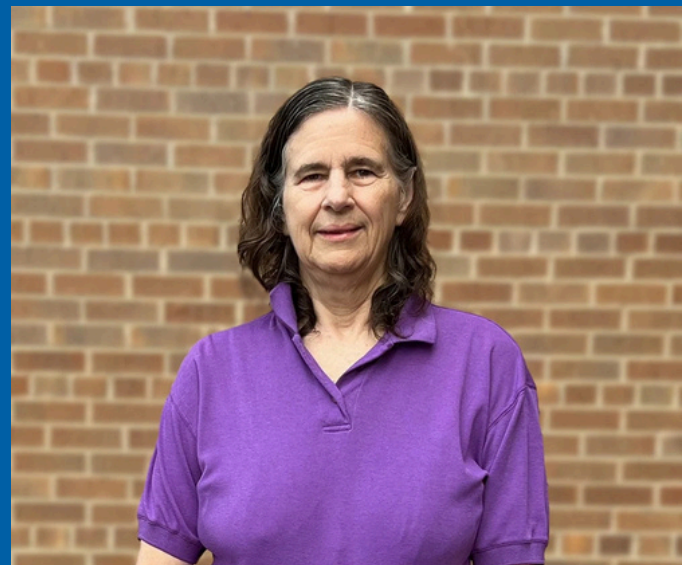
Financial Report: August

NANCY MOORE, BOOKKEEPER

Aug 2026 Budget Financials – YTD Actual

Revenues --- \$232,928.38
Expenses --- \$206,865.68
Surplus (Deficit) -- \$26,062.70

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



October Updates from the Board of Trustees

The new sanctuary air conditioning units and air conditioning coil are scheduled to be installed in late October or early November. We received a grant from Madison Gas and Electric for half of this sixty thousand dollar project. The new system will be much more energy efficient. Also, if we kept the old system, it would be prohibitively expensive to repair. For the church's share of the project, we will use funds that have been put aside in our Capital Reserves.

We have signed an agreement with Peak Systems, based in Madison, to replace our sanctuary audio system. The new system will be digital and will vastly improve the sound quality in the sanctuary and on the live stream. It will be easier for volunteers to use, but also complex enough for the staging of concerts and other uses. It will include an ADA hearing assist system. The cost of the new system, \$48,925, was entirely funded by the congregation. We have been putting aside funds and asking for donations for almost five years, but we reached the goal. We hope to have the new equipment in place by Christmas.

During a preventative maintenance check, technicians found a problem with one of the boilers in our heating system. The problem has been fixed, and the boilers are ready to go for the heating season. The cost of the repairs was about five thousand dollars. We used funds set aside for repairs and maintenance from the church Operating Budget. We saved thousands of dollars by purchasing parts directly from the factory!

The church will be sponsoring an exhibit from Arts for All, a local nonprofit that sells art produced by local artists with special needs. For the display, we will use the area on the lower level on the way to Fellowship Hall. There are also plans being made to clean out the church art closet, selling or giving away some of the prints that we will likely never use, to members of the congregation and the community.

The Trustees worked collaboratively with the Board of Education to remove pews in the rear of the sanctuary to create a quiet area for use during worship services

Due to a demanding work schedule, Emma Huff has resigned as our co-chair. Todd Andrews will continue as chair of the Trustees.

Your church Trustees are Todd Andrews, Paul Chotlos, Kan Hua, Barry Kita and Susan Martin

UPCOMING EVENTS

YOUNG ADULTS GAME NIGHT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 | 07:00 PM

You're invited to a Young Adults game night in Room 104!

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



SECOND HARVEST

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16 | 08:15 AM

Join our team of volunteers in packaging care boxes for families experiencing food insecurity!



TRUNK OR TREAT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 | 05:00 - 07:00 PM

Don't miss it! Join us for the annual Trunk or Treat in the parking lot at FBC. All are welcome for this family-friendly neighborhood event.

Come in costume for "trick or treating" from decorated car trunks. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Contact Brenda L. to be a part of the fun! It will be "spooktacular"!



UPCOMING EVENTS (VIRTUAL)

MEN'S BREAKFAST

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH | 08:30 AM

Join us for this monthly virtual breakfast gathering. Bring your breakfast, log on, and join us for a time of fellowship and conversation on Zoom.



SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

FIRST AND THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH | 07:00-08:30 PM

We are reading the book "Meeting Jesus Again For The First Time" by Marcus Borg
October 5 - reading Chapter 1 - Meeting Jesus Again
October 19 - reading Chapter 2 - What Manner of Man - the Pre-Easter Jesus

Contact information for more information and/or Zoom link:
Bill Hausler: Cell - (608)225-2058, email = hhausler@tds.net



HOURLASS BIBLE STUDY

EVERY SUNDAY | 04:30 PM

Join the weekly meeting via Zoom to read, discuss, and reflect on scripture. It's an opportunity to work scripture into your everyday life and to benefit from the varied and honest reactions of others in the class.



MIDWEEK PRAYER

EVERY THURSDAY | 12:00 PM

All are welcome to join our virtual prayer meeting via Zoom. We gather each week for a brief devotional and time for prayer.



BIRTHDAYS

OCTOBER 2026

3 STUART B	17 BENITO L
4 JIM T	18 CAROLYN C
7 JULIA B	19 JANET R
7 JANET C	20 CHERYL J
7 ANGELA T	21 DAVID E
9 JOHN P	21 JASON M
11 BILL H	22 JODY L
14 SCOTT H	25 RICHARD B
16 GREG D	29 TED R

NOVEMBER 2026

1 OLIVE J	13 UNA T
1 JIM L	14 DEB C
3 SARAH B	17 BARBARA M
5 TIMOTHY T	20 MARK C
7 JEREMY A	20 JILL T
8 CARLA E	24 JAMIE S
10 MARY F	25 BROOKE S
10 TONYA T	28 CRAIG T
13 LAURA CLARK T	

The Camp Season Isn't Over Yet!

DEB CHOTLOS

Heading up north and looking for a fun fall activity?

Attend a one day event, at Camp Tamarack in Waupaca, on Oct 17th for UnbeLEAFable to enjoy a fall wagon ride, see the leaves changing color, taste the flavors of fall with a caramel apple bar, and be in God's creation.

For more information and to register online, go to <https://camptamarack.org/reservations-forms/>



**FIRST
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CHURCH**
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