



Winter 2026

Newsletter

First Baptist Church of Midlothian



Pastor's Message

Grace and peace to you, beloved family,

As we prayerfully step into a new season, to celebrate the church's Anniversary, I believe God is declaring **"2026 Our Year of Elevation."**

Elevation does not simply mean going higher in position; it means growing deeper in faith, stronger in purpose, and broader in our witness for Christ.

Scripture reminds us in **Psalm 75:6-7 (KJV):** *"For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."* Our elevation ultimately comes from the LORD. As we remain faithful in worship, unity, love, service, and discipleship, God will lift us into the places prepared for us.

As the late Rev. Jesse L. Jackson famously encouraged, *"If my mind can conceive it, and my heart can believe it, then I can achieve it."* This reminder calls us to walk in faith, believing that God has placed gifts, vision, and purpose within each of us.

My prayer for each member of this congregation is that you pursue all that God has placed within you. Seek His will boldly. Develop the gifts He has entrusted to you. Step into opportunities to serve, lead, and grow. When each of us rises in faith and obedience, the entire church rises together.

Let us move forward in expectation, believing that God will elevate our vision, our ministry, and our impact in the community.

With faith and anticipation,

Rev. Pernell J. Johnson

Rev. Pernell J. Johnson, Pastor

Going Higher

Helpful quotes from Germany Kent, an African American award-winning print and broadcast journalist, producer, and author.

"Gratitude is one of the most powerful human emotions. Once expressed, it changes attitude, brightens outlook, and broadens our perspective."

"Convince yourself every day that you are worthy of a good life. Let go of stress, breathe. Stay positive, all is well."

"Kindness is universal. Sometimes being kind allows others to see the goodness in humanity through you. Always be kinder than necessary."

"Your strength doesn't come from winning. It comes from struggles and hardship. Everything that you go through prepares you for the next level."

"When God is ready for you to move, He will make your situation uncomfortable."

"Don't live the same day over and over again and call that a life. Life is about evolving mentally, spiritually, and emotionally."



Join Us for Worship and Religious Study

Sunday School – 9:45 AM

Sunday Worship Service – 11 AM

Bible Study – Wednesday, 7 PM via Zoom

Meeting ID: 826 0194 1303

Passcode: 13800

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Check out our updated website at: <https://fbc1846.org/>

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Women Studying the Bible



The Women's Ministry hosted a second Women's Bible Study of the year on Saturday, October 4, 2025, in the church fellowship hall. It will be facilitated by First Lady Johnson and focused on specific chapters in the book "Battlefield on the Mind" by Joyce Meyer. The ladies read passages from the book, engaged in lively discussion and enjoyed a light lunch. The next bible study will be on Saturday, April 18 in the church fellowship hall at 11:00 AM.



African American History Presented



On Saturday, October 18, 2025, Mid-Lothian Mines Day was celebrated. During this year's event, the Midlothian community offered an opportunity for individuals to learn about its African American history including the early coal mining days. Three tour groups arrived by trolley to hear the outdoor lectures given by Ms. Audrey Ross, Church Historian. Her talk focused on the historical markers highlighting the valuable history of two buildings, First Baptist Church of Midlothian and the Lifelong Learning Institute.

FBCM gift bags were shared with the trolley tour participants, along with lollipops for all the children.



Men's Day at FBCM



First Baptist Church of Midlothian observed Men's Day on Sunday, October 26, 2025, during the morning worship service. The theme for the day was "Men of Valor" and the supporting scripture was Psalm 1:1-2. Rev. Herbert Towns served as the guest preacher and delivered a powerful message titled "Keep on Stepping". The scripture for the message was taken from Psalms 37. Leon Coleman served as the worship leader for the service.



During this Men's Day program, three men were recognized for their outstanding service and dedication to the church and community. The 2025 honorees were Eugene Short, James Draper, and Deacon Anderson Edlow. Glenda Frisby accepted on behalf of Eugene Short. Information about the honorees was presented by Garnett Taylor, Tresa Draper and Casey Edlow.



Psalm 1

¹Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

²But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.



FBCM Celebrates Veteran's Day



On Sunday, November 9, 2025, First Baptist Church of Midlothian honored veterans during a special morning worship service led by FBCM veterans. Garnett Taylor, an Airforce and Army veteran, served as worship leader. The preached word for the morning was delivered by Rev. Dr. Evelyn Hall-Harris, Nurse Practitioner and retired Airforce Captain. Rev. Dr. Hall-Harris's sermon was entitled "In the Service" and the scripture used for the preached word was 2Timothy 2:3-4.

The morning devotion was given by Don Rainey, Army veteran, and the welcome was provided by Linda Coles, Army veteran. Following service, a historical display of FBCM veterans was made available in the fellowship hall by Audrey Ross, church historian. A light lunch was provided.

FBCM veterans, thank you for your service!



Women's Ministry Collects Food for the Community



During the months of October, November and December, the Women's Ministry collected and contributed food to the Chesterfield County Food Bank as one of their community service projects. With the assistance of Trustee Robert Harris and Garnett Taylor, two food deliveries were made by the Women's Ministry for the holidays.



Seniors Holiday Celebration



The Seniors Ministry and friends came together on December 2, 2025, for their annual seniors Christmas luncheon. This spirit filled holiday event was held at Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant. The room was filled with individuals wearing holiday attire, singing a favorite Christmas carol while enjoying a delightful family style meal and the amazing fellowship.



Book Club Holiday Gathering



The Women's Ministry Book Club celebrated the holiday season during its December breakfast meeting at Eggspectation Restaurant at Stoney Point. The club meets every other month on the second Saturday. In December the discussion focused on the book "107 Days" by former Vice President, Kamala Harris.



In February the club met at Joes Inn and discussed the book "The Secret Keeper of Main Street" by Trisha R. Thomas. The next Book Club meeting will on Saturday, April 12, and the book to be discussed is "Keeper of Lost Children" by Sadeqa Johnson.

Celebrating Advent 2026



During the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, FBCM observed Advent by sharing Advent information, reading scriptures, offering prayers, and lighting of the Advent candles. Advent comes from the Latin word meaning "coming." Jesus is coming and Advent is a season of preparation for His arrival. Lighting of candles during Advent represents Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. The 2025 Advent observances were led by the following FBCM families with their grandchildren: Jennifer Jones and family, Audrey Ross and family, Trustee Reggie Allen and Deaconess Kim Allen and family, and Rosemary Morton and family.



Thanks for Visiting Us!



Michael Jones, Virginia State Senator
Sunday, November 9, 2025

Welcome Our Newest FBCM Members



December 21, 2025
Joyce Childs and Robin Adu Gyamfi

Seniors Ministry Holiday Outing

On Tuesday, December 16 members of the Seniors Ministry toured the Virginia Governor's Mansion and the Jefferson Hotel to observe their spectacular holiday decorations. The group had lunch at the historic John Marshall Hotel.



The Male Choir at Christmas

A joy and tradition of Christmas a First Baptist is having the Men's Choir serve on the Sunday before Christmas.



Upcoming Golf Tournament

The FBCM Golf Tournament is back for 2026. After a one-year break, The Master's/Major Charles A. Ransom Memorial Golf Tournament will take place on **Tuesday, June 16 at Lake Chesdin Golf Course.**

You can support this event by becoming a patron by donating five dollars or more, or to sponsor a "hole" by contributing \$500 (Bronze), \$1000 (Silver) or \$1,500 (Gold). The Golf Committee also invites members of Greek Organizations to give a \$25 donation. All funds collected will go to the FBCM Capital Campaign.

The 2026 Golf Committee members are: Don Rainey, Chairperson, Deacon Willie Ransom, Sonny Draper, Gwen Byrd, Jennifer Jones, Tony Otey, Loretta Otey and Delores Taylor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Meet Your Church Officers for 2026

Deacon Board Chairperson: Deacon Anderson Edlow
Trustee Chairperson: Trustee Reginald Allen
Church Secretary: Lynell Johnson
Treasurer: Charlotte Harris
Assistant Treasurer: Deacon Frank Davenport
Financial Secretary: Anthony Otey
Assistant Financial Secretary: Gwendolyn Byrd
Finance Committee Members at Large: Gwendolyn Byrd, Eugene Short, Delores Taylor
Church Historian: Audrey M. Ross
Sexton: Gloria Armstead
Program Chairperson: Shirley L. Smith

FBCM Is Grateful for GOD's Blessings

The paving project in progress!



The parking lot paving was completed in November 2025!!



Senior's Ministry Meetings



All FBCM seniors are reminded that the Senior's Ministry resumes for 2026 in March. The meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month in the church fellowship hall. The next meeting will take place on April 7. The ministry provides seniors with a fantastic opportunity for fellowship, entertainment and valuable information that will have a positive impact on their lives. Trips are also planned during the year. All seniors are welcome to participate and bring a friend. A light lunch is provided monthly.

SENIORS

"Making one person smile can change the world – maybe not the whole world, but their world."
Proverbs 16:24 – "Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones."

Home, Health, & Heart

Home Heating

- Heating is the second leading cause of home fires.
 - Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from fireplaces, wood stoves, space heaters and radiators.
 - When you leave a room or go to bed, turn heaters off or unplug them. Plug space heaters directly into the outlet and never use an extension cord or power strip.
 - Make sure your heater has an automatic shut-off switch that turns it off if it tips over.
 - Have your furnace, chimney and chimney connector inspected by a professional each winter. Make repairs before cool weather sets in.

Heart Health Reminders

- **Living a heart healthy lifestyle** can help keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels normal — and lower your risk for heart disease and heart attack. If you're not sure you're at risk, now's a good time to talk with your doctor.

Tips To Show Your Heart Some Love

- **Stay active.** If possible, aim for 150 minutes of movement each week. Walking is a great start! Check with your doctor about which activities are right for you.
- **Get enough sleep.** Aim for 7–9 hours a night. A good night's rest can help reduce the risk of heart disease.
- **Eat a heart-healthy diet.** Choose lots of vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and whole grains — and try to limit salt.
- **Don't smoke.** If you smoke, it's never too late to quit.

The Medicare Team

A Man of Faith

BLACK LEONARDO - GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER



Okay, you probably recognize this name, but there's so much more to his story than just peanuts. George Washington Carver was born a slave in Missouri around 1864. Despite setbacks in his early education, Carver worked hard, eventually graduating from high school and becoming the first black student at Iowa State, earning two agricultural degrees. After graduation, he was invited by Booker T. Washington to be the director of agricultural research at the Tuskegee Institute—a post he held for 47 years.

Under his leadership, the department developed into a strong research center. Seeking to help poor farmers improve soil depleted by years of cotton growth, Carver proposed peanuts and sweet potatoes as crops that improved soil and offered a food source. When farmers were reluctant to plant these crops due to poor marketability, Carver set out to discover economically viable products to be made from them. Carver was also an early leader in promoting environmentalism, understanding the connection between a healthy creation and the people living in and among it.

Despite living in a time of high racial polarization, Carver was well respected worldwide, Time Magazine once dubbing him “the black Leonardo.” Powering such an impactful life was his faith in God, which he recognized as the mechanism for his scientific breakthroughs and the hope for overcoming prejudice and racism. Carver's contributions to the world could fill volumes. Even to this day, he remains a shining example of the words of Colossians 3:23, “*Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the LORD and not for men.*”

Caleb Mathis, <https://www.crossroads.net/media/authors/caleb-mathis>

Trivia Word Search

Test your knowledge of Winter, Black History, Women's History, and Easter.

Find the answers to the questions or statements below and then find the answer on the word search puzzle.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bessie Coleman was the first African American woman to earn a _____'s license. 2. Congressional Representative Shirley Chisholm was the first African American woman elected to Congress. She represented the New York City borough of _____. 3. Ella Fitzgerald is known as the "Queen of _____". 4. Thurgood Marshall was the first African American U.S. _____ Court Justice. 5. Colin Powell was the first African American U.S. Secretary of _____. 6. Richmond native and the tennis player Arthur Ashe was the first African American man to win the oldest and most prestigious tennis championship at _____, a district of London. 7. Oprah Winfrey was the first African American woman _____. 8. Amelia Earhart was the First Female Pilot to Fly Solo Across the _____ Ocean. 9. Hattie _____ was the First African American Woman to Win an Oscar: 10. Madam C. J. Walker was the First Female Self-Made _____ in the US. 11. _____ was the first to grant women the right to vote (1869). 12. Women in the U.S. could not independently get cards until 1974. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Harriet Tubman led over 300 people to freedom via the _____ Railroad. 14. Rosa Parks was known as the "mother of the civil rights movement" for her role in the _____ bus boycott. 15. What was the Jewish feast which was being celebrated the week Christ was crucified? Luke 22:1 16. When Jesus entered Jerusalem during what is known as His Triumphal Entry, what animal was He riding on? Matthew 21:1-7 17. How many times did Peter deny Christ after the abandoned the Lord? Luke 22:54-57 18. How many pieces of silver did Judas trade the life of Jesus for? Matthew 26:15 19. How did Judas identify Jesus to the soldiers? Matthew 26:47-49 20. Which country is known for having the coldest winters? 21. What do bears do during the winter? 22. Which fruit is traditionally associated with Christmas and winter holidays? 23. What is the name of the February full moon? 24. February 17, 2026, marks the start of which Islamic month of fasting? 25. What is the birthstone for March?
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Answers on page 10

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First Baptist Church of Midlothian 2026 Calendar

	Events by Month	Special Observances
J	1 – New Year’s Day (Wednesday) 20 – Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday (Monday)	
F	8 – 180 th Church Anniversary 14 – Booked for Brunch Discussion Meeting 16 – President’s Day 18 – Ash Wednesday/First Day of Lent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Black History Month ◆ American Heart Month
M	16-17 – Metro Revival 28 – 180 th Church Anniversary Brunch Gala 29 – Palm Sunday 29 – Sunday School Union 5 th Sunday Fellowship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Women’s History Month
A	3 – Good Friday 5 – Easter Sunday 11 – Booked for Brunch Discussion Meeting 18 – Women’s Bible Study, Time 11 AM	
M	10 – Mother’s Day 24 – Pentecost Sunday 25 – Memorial Day (Monday) 30 – Pre-Women’s Day Program 31 – Women’s Day 31 – Sunday School Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mental Health Awareness Month
J	14 – National Children’s Day 13– Booked for Brunch Discussion Meeting 16 - Master’s/Major Charles A. Ransom Memorial Golf Tournament 19 – Juneteenth 21 – Father’s Day 29 – Sunday School Union 5 th Sunday Fellowship	
J	4 – Independence Day (Saturday) 13-17 – Sunday School Union Institute 18 – Midlothian Community Reunion 19 – Homecoming 20 – ?? – Revival	
A	1 – 31 – New Shoes for Back-to-School Collection Drive 3-7 – Vacation Bible School 8 – Booked for Brunch Discussion Meeting 30 – Sunday School Union 5 th Sunday Fellowship	
S	7 – Labor Day 12 – Women’s Bible Study 13 – Grandparent’s Day 20 – Gospel Truth Choir Anniversary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ BGC Christian Faith Formation Month (Formerly Christian Education Month)
O	10 – Booked for Brunch Discussion Meeting 11 – Clergy Appreciation Day 12 – Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples’ Day (Monday) 25 – Men’s Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Cancer Awareness Month ◆ Clergy Appreciation Month ◆ Domestic Violence Awareness Month
N	3 – Election Day 11 – Veterans Day (Wednesday) 26 – Thanksgiving Day (Thursday) 29 – First Sunday of Advent 29 – Sunday School Union 5 th Sunday Fellowship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diabetes Awareness Month
D	6, 13, 20 – Advent Sundays 12 – Booked for Brunch Discussion Meeting 19 – BGC Virtual Youth Ministry Lock-In 25 – Christmas Day (Friday)	

Celebrating 180 Years ~~~~A Legacy of Grace – A Future of Faith



Special Election for the Redistricting Amendment

Early voting for Virginia's April 21 special election started in Chesterfield on Friday, March 6 at 9 a.m.

On the ballot is a proposed state constitutional amendment that would allow for congressional redistricting outside of the 10-year census reapportionment.

In-person early voting and absentee voting by-mail drop boxes for **Chesterfield voters** will be available at Central Library, 7051 Lucy Corr Blvd.:

Monday through Friday, March 6-April 17, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 11 and Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 12 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A second satellite early voting location in Chesterfield opens at North Courthouse Road Library, 325 Courthouse Road, on Friday, April 10 at 9 a.m.

In-person early voting and absentee voting by-mail drop boxes will be available at North Courthouse Road Library:

Monday through Friday, April 13-17, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 11 and Saturday, April 18 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 12 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Finally, absentee voting by-mail drop boxes will be available at the General Registrar's Office, 9848 Lori Road:

Monday through Friday, March 6-April 20, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday, April 11 and Saturday, April 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 12 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Absentee voting by-mail drop boxes will also be available at all regular polling places and the General Registrar's Office on Election Day, Tuesday, April 21 from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For more information about the special election, visit the registrar's webpage: <https://www.chesterfield.gov/registrar>.

Trivia Word Search Answers

1. PILOT	14. MONTGOMERY	
2. BROOKLYN	15. PASSOVER	
3. JAZZ	16. DONKEY	
4. SUPREME	17. THREE	
5. STATE	18. THIRTY	
6. WIMBLEDON	19. KISS	
7. BILLIONAIRE	20. RUSSIA	
8. ATLANTIC	21. HIBERNATE	
9. MCDANIEL	22. ORANGES	
10. MILLIONAIRE	23. SNOW MOON	
11. WYOMING	24. RAMADAN	
12. CREDIT	25. AQUAMARINE	
13. UNDERGROUND		

