



The Visitor

A newsletter for members and friends of First Baptist Church, Madison, Wisconsin

No. 12 December 8, 2022 Vol. 65

Christmas Greeting from Pastor Tim

Dear First Baptist Family,

During this special and sacred season, I wish to extend Christmas greetings and best wishes for the New Year. May this time be filled with hope, peace, love, and joy for you and your loved ones!

The year 2022 has been a year of change and a year of hope. The celebration of our 175th year as a congregation has provided us the opportunity to honor our past, celebrate our present, and look to the future with anticipation.

Thank you for your commitment to this community of faith. We could not do this important work together without your support—your gifts of time, talent, and money.

I am so grateful to be your pastor!

Blessings,

Pastor Tim

CHURCH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



Pledging Update from Your Church Leadership Council

Thank you to those who made a financial pledge to First Baptist Church for 2023! Your pledge is the primary source of funding for church operations. Pledges directly support staff compensation, music, Christian education, heat, lighting, telephones, worship supplies, custodial services, repairs, lawn

mowing, snow removal, and so much more. In the past we have also contributed 10% of our operating budget to other local non-profit organizations that are aligned with our church values.

To date we have received **49 pledges** for a total of **\$211,981 of the \$259,164 goal**. In 2022, there were **63 pledges** for a total of **\$250,519**. We are hoping that 2023 pledges will continue to come in during the month of December.

If you have not pledged yet and desire to do so, you can click the link below, or you can use the Pledge Form on the last page and mail it to the church office.

First Baptist Church
518 North Franklin Ave.
Madison, WI 53705

We hope that your holidays are spirit-filled,
Paul Chotlos, Bill Fiore, Mary Fiore, Curt Grinde,
Lynette Miller

[ctrl + click to PLEDGE](#)

CALENDAR of EVENTS

- NOV 27** ADVENT BEGINS
Join us for Worship on Sundays @ 10:30AM + Devotional Group on Thursdays @ 6:30PM
- DEC 24** CHRISTMAS EVE
5:30 PM Intergenerational candlelight service with lessons and advent hymns
- DEC 25** CHRISTMAS BRUNCH
10:30 AM Breakfast will be served in Fellowship Hall
- JAN 1** LESSONS & CAROLS
10:30 AM Join us for a special Christmastide service of Lessons & Carols

CHRISTMAS OFFERING



First Baptist Christmas Offering 2022

As we once again approach our celebration of the coming of Christ into our world and our lives your Board of Outreach has chosen the following recipients of our 2022 Christmas Offering.

Heart Room – Serves families who are experiencing homelessness or substantial risk of becoming homeless, or are in unsafe living situations but don't qualify for other Dane County housing programs. They are referred to Heart Room where they receive up to three years of rental assistance plus supportive services from the Road Home case managers and other agencies and volunteers who help them achieve their goals for a better life. This program, which was initiated by Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ in 2018, has been very successful in helping the families they have served to overcome multiple barriers to maintaining housing stability. We will allocate \$7,000 of our Christmas Offering to Heart Room. This will provide one year of housing stability for a family.

We will allocate the remainder of our Christmas Offering between the following two programs:

Play Every Day – This program of the Madison Schools Foundation provides equipment to enable and encourage children in our Madison schools to engage in physical activities during recess and physical education classes. It's proven that playing --- whether that's organized sports, physical education classes, or recess---has a positive impact on student's well-being. It is especially beneficial for children from low income families who are unable to afford such equipment.

Afghan Refugee Families – A number of First Baptist folks have formed a ministry team with volunteers from other churches to assist five refugee Afghan families with 25 children to resettle here in Madison. The ministry team visits with the families to identify needs and find solutions to their concerns, helps get their children started in schools, connects them to local services, provides financial assistance as needed for food, rent and transportation, encourages them to take steps to be able to live independently, and advocates for them when language and unfamiliar customs and procedures become barriers.

Giving to the Christmas Offering is an invitation, not an obligation.

Your Board of Christian Outreach: Cheryl Castillo, Barb Henning, Lynette Miller, and Wynn Davies

[ctrl + click to GIVE](#)

FBC'S BOARDS AND OTHER REPORTS

The Board of Christian Outreach

Report for November 2022

The board finalized plans for the Christmas Offering. Donations will go to three groups: Heart Room to help families find housing; Play Every Day, a program of the Madison Public Schools Foundation to provide physical education equipment and participation fees for schools; and funds for the Refugee and Immigration Ministry team to continue to help five Afghan refugee families.

Products from Porchlight will be sold before and after service on December 4.

The Green Team reported that recommendations from Focus on Energy was shared with the Board of Trustees. Focus on Energy toured the church building and made recommendations about lighting, programmable thermostats, kitchen refrigerators and destratification fans for the sanctuary.

The Refugee and Immigration Ministry reported that one of the ministry members helped four of the Afghan families move to the Northport Apartments. Two of the RIM members are teaching English to the 19 year old daughter, mother and toddler of the family living in the Allied Drive neighborhood.

The Board of Christian Outreach thanks you for your support and participation in FBC's efforts to meet its Mission - *to follow Jesus by doing justice, loving people, and advocating for equity.*

Peace and Blessings during the Christmas season.

– Lynette Miller, Chair

The Board of Trustees

Update from November 2022 Meeting

1. We met with representatives Lynette Miller, Barb Henning, and Wynn Davies from the “Green Team”. They presented information related to three ways to make our church “greener” :
 - a. changes to the building suggested by Focus on Energy (many of these had already been done or are in progress),
 - b. MG&E Green Power Tomorrow program aiming for 100% of our energy coming from wind and solar (we currently are 50% solar), and
 - c. an analysis of our MG&E electric use (this will be worked on by the Green Team in the near future.)
2. We received the quarterly report from our Investment and Planned Giving subcommittee from their October meeting as well as reviewed our monthly financial reports.
3. We reviewed and endorsed our current COVID mitigation policies for worship BUT also endorsed an area with limited beverage, food, and masking that could be held during fellowship time. We also

affirmed the Christmas morning brunch in Fellowship Hall.

4. The Personnel Committee of the Trustees will be working on an evaluation of the 3-month music staffing trial.
5. We discussed how to provide childcare during church events, as well as different models to provide for children's needs during worship.
6. We are proactively sending folks to a “Responding to Active Threats Workshop” as well as seeking input from local authorities.

– Bill Hausler, Chairperson, Board of Trustees

Flower Fund

Flowers are Back at FBC!



As you have noticed, flowers are back on the altar at FBC. The church will periodically provide fresh flowers, and we invite you to join us in that. You can either provide fresh flowers yourself or donate to the Flower fund. The information about how to donate is at the bottom of this article.

We will resume fresh floral arrangements in January. If you want to donate fresh flowers, please contact Linda Stamm by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday you'd like to find out if that Sunday is

available. You can either call, (608) 884-3708 (no ans. device), or email, lmccarro@wisc.edu. The flowers need to be delivered to the church by noon on Friday.

Special thanks to Vern Lowell and all the ushers for tending to the flowers. Their work is invaluable as we bring flowers back to FBC. Thanks to those who donate flowers or funds and to those who have a desire to donate but can't.

"Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land." Song of Songs 2:12

– Linda Stamm, Flowers Coordinator

ctrl + click, complete the information, select Fund, Flower Fund, amount, and submit.

[ctrl + click to GIVE](#)

THE GREEN CORNER

Hello FBC. Keep your eye on this corner of the monthly newsletter for updates from the Green Team.

Recently, after a tour of our facility, Madison Gas & Electric (MG&E) and Focus on Energy (FOE) made energy-related suggestions to update our building. They could see that many of our light fixtures have been updated to LED and recommended we continue in those efforts. It was also noted that some of the rooms in our building have programable thermostats and suggested we continue with that project to include programable thermostats in rooms as needed.

Our Board of Trustees' Building and Grounds met with the Green Team this week and brought us up to date on the progress of these efforts. The LED replacement project continues as old incandescent bulbs fail. Also, Building and Grounds has been working with contractors, getting estimates and deciding on the most cost-effective upgrades to thermostat.

These are not the only Green works in progress. The list continues: motion sensor lighting; turning off unused appliances, such as refrigerators; covering and insulating window air conditioners; regular evening building checks to turn off unused lighting; and regular heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) maintenance.

These items are in addition to getting 50% of our electricity from solar energy!

If you have other suggestions, please let the Board of Trustees know!

Many thanks to the Board of Trustees for your continued, behind-the-scenes efforts, to keep our beautiful and loved building in repair and green.

– Barb Henning for the Green Team: Lynette Miller, Wynn Davies, Gil Emmert, and Mary Ray

LECTIONARY READINGS

2022 – 2023 Lectionary Readings

As Pastor Tim pointed out, we have gone back to the current year's lectionary, which is Year A. Below is a link to a pdf, which you can download and keep so that you can refer to the week's specific readings.

You can also view and read the specific reading by going to <https://www.biblegateway.com/> where you can select the Bible version you wish to use as well as the reading. On link bar below, hold ctrl and click.

[LINK TO LECTIONARY YEAR A](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Blanca James, office@firstbaptistmadison.org.

LET'S CELEBRATE TOGETHER

Sunday, December 25 | 10:30 AM



All are invited to join us for a Christmas morning bunch in Fellowship Hall.

There will be no Sunday morning worship service on Christmas Day.

NEW ONLINE GIVING

We are Switching to easyTithe

Do you have recurring gifts set up for online giving? If you are currently enrolled in Vanco's recurring donations, please make sure you switch to easyTithe before the end of December. Our aim in this new method of giving is to help you give with ease. Your scheduled recurring gifts through Vanco already have been set to expire at the end of 2022. Please take a few moments this week to set **up your recurring payments on easyTithe for 2023.**

Should you have any questions about how to transfer your recurring gifts or you are having difficulty using easyTithe, please don't hesitate to call the church office or email us at office@firstbaptistmadison.org.

To get started, go to: <http://firstbaptistmadison.org/Donate/Recurring>

Or directly to: <https://tinyurl.com/FBCease>

Thanks for your help in contributing to the mission of First Baptist

Your First Baptist Staff

GOOD TO KNOW...

Spiritual Renewal Group 1 (Online) Update

This small group meets the first and third Monday of the month at 7 PM via Zoom.

We are continuing to read, reflect on, and discuss the Christian classic – Dark Night of the Soul by St. John of the Cross (translation by Edgar Allison Peers). This can be found in book form or online as a free PDF.

If this is something that might be of interest, we invite you to join us as we read Book 2, chapters 6-9 for December 5 and Book 2, Chapters 10-13 for December 19 via Zoom! Questions? Contact Bill Hausler, hhausler@tds.net.

The Triangle Thanks you!



The Triangle community and Katy Marty are very grateful for your donations of calendars, cards, and warm items for its residents. People were excitedly picking up items, especially the compression socks.

– Beth and Thomas Gunshor

Second Harvest Foodbank



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

Friday, December 16 from 8:30am - 11:30 pm
Friday, January 20, 2023 from 8:30 am - 11:30 pm
Friday, February 17, 2023 from 8:30 am - 11:30 am
Friday, March 17, 2023 from 8:30 am - 11:30 am

Contact the church office or Wynn Davies for more information.

FBC Youth Monthly Collection - JANUARY



For the month of January, FBC Youth are collecting items for [Porchlight](#).

Porchlight is an organization that strives to reduce homelessness in Dane County by collaborating with the community.

You can find a list of ALL the items that Porchlight needs at this link <https://porchlightinc.org/donate-items/>.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our Church Family: Brenda L's brother, Cliff; Abdul & Liluma Q; Jim & Edith D; Susan H; Linda O; Curt G; Rhiannon T; Paul H; Sara S; Mary F; 희숙 HeeSook & 정심 Jeong Shim, JungJa L's mother & sister; Linda R; Doris E, Carla E's mother

Our Homebound: Sheila D; Pat & Harley Y; Linda O; Byron P; Martha F; Ruth E

Others: Those whose names and needs are unspoken.

(To add prayer requests, send your request to the office email, office@firstbaptistmadison.org.)

GIVING, OFFICE HOURS, AND VISITS

Ways You Can Give

There are several ways you can contribute to your pledge, offerings, memorials, and other gifts.

Information for ways to give can be found on page 7. (See blue, boxed information for ways you can give.)

Church Office Hours

Office: Monday – Friday – 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
518 N Franklin Ave, Madison WI 53705

Office Visits

You can schedule an appointment with Pastor Tim over Zoom or phone, at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8d7yhh>

OR call the church office (608) 233-1880 to schedule a time. However, please note:

The office will be closed Friday, December 23 noon. The office will be closed from Monday, December 26 through January 3.

- Pastor Tim will be on vacation December 27 through January 6.
- Blanca James will be on vacation December 27 through January 2.

WORSHIP SERVICES

In person – join us Sunday mornings at 10:30 am. Fellowship time after worship and Thursday evenings, 6:30 pm. Both in the Sanctuary.

Online

Livestream to Worship:

<http://live.firstbaptistmadison.org>

Livestream to YouTube:

<https://tinyurl.com/eubzz6mr>

Livestream to Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/FBCMAdison>

Zoom Fellowship Time - please call the office for link.

Our midweek worship takes place in-person and virtually on Zoom. It is less structured and more conversational. Use the Zoom Fellowship Time link above to join virtually.

BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER

2 Tyler H
4 Kyle A
7 Sue L
11 Linda C
15 Ryan B
15 Beverly D
18 Linda S
22 Julie B
23 Laurel F
24 Geneva M
30 Lydia H
30 Dianne H
31 Joyce L

JANUARY

1 Coral B
3 Jan A
4 Victor C
4 Ann N
5 Brenda L
9 Judy S
23 Paul C
23 Mary R
25 Virginia E
26 Amanda C
26 Herman T
27 Bert A
29 Dennis R

FBC'S COMMUNICATIONS

Weekend Update

- weekly e-digest, released each Friday, article submission deadline is Thursday, and 60 word limit. The purpose of this publication is to provide information and links to joining worship, special events, upcoming events, news from our ministry partners, advocacy and volunteer opportunities.

Worship Bulletins

- released every Sunday or for special services. The publication of the bulletins is strictly for use during worship services. Inserts may occasionally be permitted and must be worship related.

The Visitor

- monthly newsletter, released 1st week of each month, deadline is 1st of the month, 200-word limit. This monthly newsletter provides church news, summary of activities, future events, and updates.

Ways To Give

1



OFFERING BOXES

Place your cash or check gift in the black offering boxes located in the Gathering Space.

2



ONLINE

firstbaptistmadison.org/give



3



MOBILE

Text the word "GIVE" to (608) 610-1600

Or give through the Church App

firstbaptistmadison.org/app

4



MAIL

Mail your gift to:

First Baptist Church
518 N. Franklin Ave.
Madison, WI 53705



HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

— *Happy Holidays!* —

The church office will close
Dec. 23 @ noon and will
re-open January 3

In case of emergency or Pastoral care, please contact your Deacon or contact Bill Hausler (608) 231-2890.

FBC Bible Study and Other Groups

Men's Breakfast (Online) – **Via Zoom only** - bring your breakfast to your computer and connect with other men via Zoom; we meet at 8:30 a.m. **the first Wednesday of each month.**

Join Zoom Meeting: Please call the office for joining information.

Hourglass Bible Study (Online) – Continuing this Sunday. We will continue to read two of Paul's letters: Galatians and Romans. We'll work together to understand how these letters speak to us today by studying the historical context in which the letters were written to specific congregations about their specific problems.

Join Zoom Meeting: Please call the office for joining information.

Bible Study Group (Online) – This group is led by Rev. Bob Martens (retired ABC pastor). The focus is on the lectionary texts for the following Sunday. It meets for about **one to one and a half hours on Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m.**

Join Zoom Meeting: Please call the office for joining information.

FBC @ Prayer (Online) – Pastor Schaefer will lead in prayer. This prayer group lifts up joys and concerns of the congregation. It meets for **half hour on Thursdays at Noon.**

Join Zoom Meeting: Please call the office for joining information.

UPDATE - Spiritual Renewal Group 1 (Online) – This small group meets the **first and third Monday of the month at 7 PM** via Zoom. We are continuing to read, reflect on, and discuss the Christian classic – Dark Night of the Soul by St. John of the Cross (translation by Edgar Allison Peers). This can be found in book form or online as a free PDF.

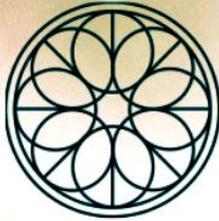
If this is something that might be of interest, we invite you to join us as we read Book 2, chapters 6-9 for December 5 and Book 2, Chapters 10-13 for December 19 via Zoom! Questions? Contact Bill Hausler, hhausler@tds.net.

Join Zoom Meeting: Please call the office for joining information.

Spiritual Renewal Group 2 (Online) – The group plans to continue to meet the **second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 4:00 PM.** Books are picked to help them grow through a spiritual journey. They have become a support group as well and endeavors to not share with the general public and no one is wrong. They do not discuss church business during meetings.

Join Zoom Meeting: Please call the office for joining information.

2023 Pledge Form – Complete and return to the office.



**FIRST
BAPTIST
CHURCH**
OF MADISON



2023 COMMITMENT FORM

I/we pledge our gifts & resources for the mission of our church community.

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

If this pledge is a joint or family pledge, the additional family members to whom this pledge should apply includes:

I/we commit to payments in the amount of: \$ _____

I/we commit to payments every (check one): Week Month Quarter Year

Payment method* (check one): ACH Debit/CC Cash/Check IRA/Trust

FOR A TOTAL YEARLY PLEDGE OF \$ _____

Check any that apply:

- I/we would like to receive monthly offering envelopes.
- I/we would like more information about Planned Giving.
- I/we would like to set up automatic payments. Please contact me/us to help.
- I/we would like more information about IRA/Trust Fund transfers.
- I/we would like more information about supporting First Baptist Church when shopping with Amazon.
- Other: _____

Signature _____

Welcome to Worship at First Baptist Church

We extend a special greeting to visitors and hope that you will find meaning and fellowship in our church. If you are searching for a church home and would appreciate a call or visit, please contact the office.

Our Mission

The Mission of First Baptist Church is to follow Jesus by doing justice, loving people, and advocating for equity.

Our Purpose

The purpose of First Baptist Church of Madison is to invite all people, regardless of race, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or marital status, to unite as full participants in this Christian fellowship.

Our Shared Beliefs

God loves all people unconditionally and seeks a personal relationship with every person.
God offers forgiveness and hope to heal our lives and make us whole.
Jesus shows us who God is and who we can become.
God is present, speaking to us through prayer, our sacred scriptures, other people, and creation.

Our Core Values

Inclusive Community ♦ Soul Freedom ♦ Spiritual Growth ♦ Mission
Beyond these shared values and beliefs, a great diversity of personal faith, beliefs, and values is found and treasured within our community.
We expect no conformity to any creed.

First Baptist Church Madison

518 North Franklin Avenue, Madison, WI 53705-3699

Telephone: (608) 233-1880 | **E-mail:** fbcoffice@firstbaptistmadison.org

Office Hours | Building Access

Monday through Friday 9:00 am – 3:00 pm