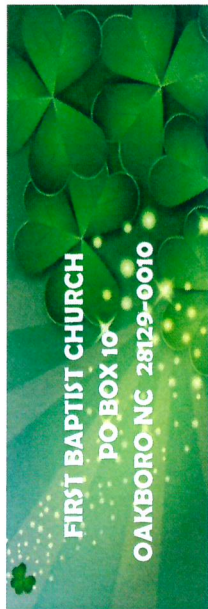


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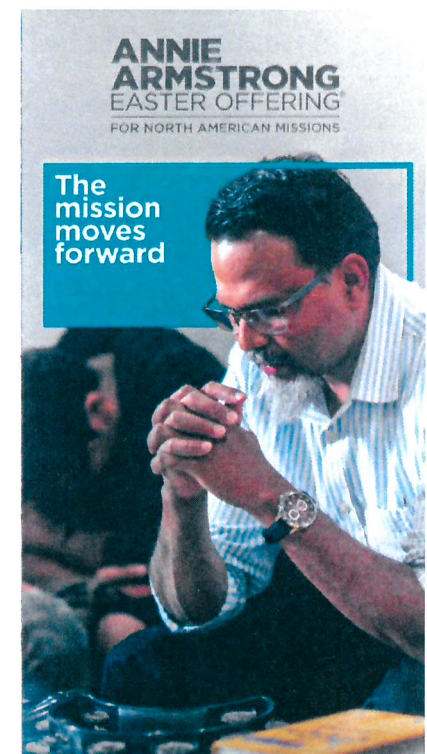
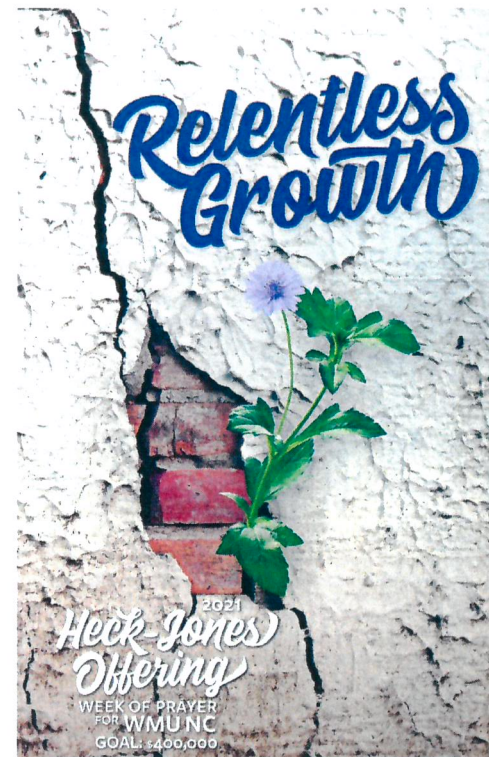


# FIRST BAPTIST OAKBORO

## The Communicator

VOL. XXXII No. 3

March 1, 2021



PO Box 10  
322 N Main Street  
Oakboro, NC 28129  
[www.fbcoakboro.org](http://www.fbcoakboro.org)

Rev. Jonathan Waitt, Pastor  
Office (704) 485-4313  
[pastorjwaitt@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjwaitt@gmail.com)  
(804) 896-4520





So, what's next?

Wait, how can we be talking about what's next when we're not even out of the season we are in? COVID is still very much upon us and dominating the landscape as far as the eye can see. It still frames out everything we do and how we do it. How can we be talking about what's next?

Because seasons change. And if we're not ready for it, we'll run a high risk of being caught unaware when the next season arrives.

So again, what's next?

For the last year we have been doing things differently. Some of those differences are going to become permanent. Some we are looking forward to reverting back to the better things we had to leave behind for a time (like congregational singing!). But signs are beginning to point to our ability to start meaningfully getting back to normal sooner rather than later. COVID infections are significantly down. The vaccine rollout is picking up speed. The vaccines have been found to not only prevent infection, but also transmission. Those three signs alone point to a return to some kind of normalcy waiting in the wings.

Here's the big question we have to answer as we begin to emerge into this new season: Just how much normalcy do we want? The knee-jerk response to that question is, "All of it." We just want things to be like they were before. But the truth is they'll never be fully that way again. It's no use wishing for something that won't ever be. Dying churches everywhere have done that, and it has not just initiated, but hastened their decline.

Plus, the world around us has changed in the last year. The curtain has been pulled back even more on who's really faithful and who's not, and those who are have begun to shift their opinion about the church from fairly ambivalent to more explicitly antagonistic. As a potent amalgamation of non-Christian worldviews continues to strengthen their hold on the national conscience, we are losing not just our influence, but even our place at the conversation table. If we try to do anything in the future the way it was done in even the very recent past, we're not just going to fail, we're going to fall completely to pieces.

So, what's next?

Well, for starters, in order to keep from being completely disoriented by the sheer pace of cultural transformation happening around us, we tighten our grip on what hasn't changed: The Gospel. The Gospel remains the same because the God it proclaims remains the same. Jesus Christ is the

same yesterday, today, and forever. We must make sure our understanding and hold on what's truly true is firmer than it has ever been. To this end, for the next few weeks we are going to be taking a fresh look together at the essential beliefs of the Christian worldview.

From there, we remember what our mission really is: to advance the Gospel. Starting next month, we spend a few weeks talking together about how to share Christ with someone who doesn't believe in Him—or, more challenging yet (and more likely as well), someone who doesn't believe in Him *anymore*. That's a whole 'nother deal.

The last thing we do is to prepare for doing all of that in the context of a culture that doesn't like us. That'll be a conversation for us to have this summer. I'll share more on that as we get closer to that point.

More than any of this, though, we continue planting Gospel seeds everywhere we can. We love our community well demonstrating in word and in deed that we are a church who is *for* our community. And we prepare for when the harvest comes. These have been long days, but we have been actively planting a lot of seeds. Our reputation as a church for the community is growing. Those seeds will eventually come to bear, and when they do, we've got to be ready in heart, mind, and spirit to gather the harvest they bring. We will gather them in, connect them to Christ, grow them in their faith, and send them right back out to reach someone else with the news of the Gospel.

That's what's next. I can't wait to experience it with you.

*Pastor Jonathan*



If you would like to place an Easter lily in the church in memory or in honor of someone this year, please sign up on the sheets on the bulletin boards – or contact Debbie Edwards or the office. More information on cost and deadline to order will be on the sign-up sheets.

**Attention, high school seniors:** Scholarship applications are available in the fellowship building entrance or through your high school guidance counselor. The deadline for these to be submitted is *April 15*.





## Winter Rain



It's been a wet, cold winter this year in Stanly County, has it not? As I write this, the sun is shining outside for the first time in what seems like 2 weeks. But the forecast tomorrow has more rain predicted... Oh well, enjoy it today I suppose.

Hopefully by time you read this article, the weather will

begin warming up, and we will see sunshine more consistently. This cold, winter rain reminds me that sometimes our lives and the life of our church isn't always pretty and full of sunshine. I think we all weather storms often, but sometimes they come with a higher degree of intensity and linger longer. This has been true of our church and our students lately. We will now wade through the challenges of having one less staff member; we've lost a lot of members to death and have had members lose loved ones and friends, our youth are in the middle of planning an alternative summer option that has not been done in anyone's recent memory, and that's not to mention the scary sicknesses that so many of our people have come down with due to COVID-19. It's so easy to think on these gloomy ordeals that we forget so many of God's promises.

If I may, I'd like to remind us, (myself included) of some of these. Take time to look up these passages to be refreshed on God's promises.

1. Genesis 9:8-17. This one seems humorous, but it rings true for us still. God promised never to destroy the world with rain and flood again (even though it might seem like it!). The bigger picture is that we see God's heart here, his heart for relationship with us. A relationship that requires our faithful obedience to him. One that we do not deserve, but still get. Even though God punished the world here, he didn't have to spare Noah and his family, his heart, though, made him want to.

2. Matthew 28: 16-20 The most famous account of the Great Commission. Jesus tells his followers to go and make disciples of all nations. But it's only possible with the 2 things he says about himself: I have all power on earth and in heaven, and I will be with you always. These things hold true for us today, too.

3. Ephesians 3:14-21 Paul encourages the saints in the Ephesian church that God can do amazing things through them. A great work that our relationship with him provides.

4. Revelation 21: 1-8 The biggest thing to look forward to is the culmination of events. Where God comes down and makes everything new again – no more death, no more sin, no tears. All evildoers are punished. Those who have a relationship with him get to see that realized. Eternity can finally begin.

Out of all these promises, there is one common theme among all of them. From Noah to Jesus' disciples, to Paul's teachings on God with us, to the end times

where the Father makes all things new – the theme of our faithfulness in relationship with God. Through all the storms that these characters went through, they were faithful, and God was, too. 2 Timothy 2:13 tells us that even if we are faithless, he is still faithful; that alone speaks volumes. But that's not the goal in storms of life. Our relationship with Christ depends wholly on faith alone, not of our good works.

So, as we seek to answer tough emotional questions in our own lives and in the near future of our church, will we endeavor to practice faithfulness, not doubt? Trust in God and not in our decision making or abilities? Leaning and Learning from Christ and not the influences of our society and culture? Not for our own glory, but for his so that none may boast when he blows open the doors of our church and lives to show us his immeasurable power, might, and glory.



## Blessings, Nate

### *A Tribute to Dana*

*Dana, there are so many things that come to mind when we think of you...*

*Like all the kind and thoughtful acts of love you always say and do.*

*This church just wouldn't be the same had we not had your influence through the years.*

*You've been right here to lift us up during times of pain and tears.*

*You have such a compassionate heart that absolutely hurts whenever others' hearts are breaking.*

*And you have covered all the special events at church with your much appreciated picture taking.*

*Your leadership in the choir has been so beneficial as you have taught us how to read music and to sing;*

*And you have given us the confidence to feel as if we can sing most anything.*

*We can't even imagine all the miles you have put on your car*

*As you visit families, shut-ins, and nursing homes sometimes driving very far.*

*You were never too busy to help others with projects even though you probably didn't have the time*

*To take from your list of many things to do and yet you never seemed to mind.*

*Thank you for teaching us all, through your example, how to be enthusiastic as we serve the Lord.*

*Thank you for being the Christian Jesus has commanded us all to be in His Holy Word.*

*Tears have filled my eyes as I write these words because I know we are going to miss you so.*

*And I just wanted to take this opportunity to write this down so that you, too, would know*

*How very much you are loved by all of us and we wish you the very best in your retirement years;*

*And when you're not visiting family or friends, we want to see you right back here!*

*With all our love,*

*From Your Brothers and Sisters at First Baptist Oakboro*

*by Sylvia Poplin*





*“Dear First Baptist Church Oakboro family,*

*Thank you so much for all the wonderful 13 years of “Joy on this Journey.”*

*Thank you for all the expressions of love and friendship with cards, phone calls, and gifts.*

*Thank you for the service celebration on*

*February 14, with the expression of heartfelt words from Pastor Jonathan and then Dr. Watts from video and words of thankfulness by the Tucker and Young families and all the great music and the lovely red roses.*

*I will certainly cherish the photo book presented to me, and I appreciate the silver necklace with the design of the tree.*

*Jessica, Daniel and I look forward to one day returning and standing alongside you in Worship. Until then, we will keep you close in thought and prayers.*

*‘Until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.’ – Irish Blessing*

*‘Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.’ Amen. Ephesians 3:21-22*

*I have placed several volumes of photo albums in the Centennial Room along with a large notebook of ministry memoirs.*

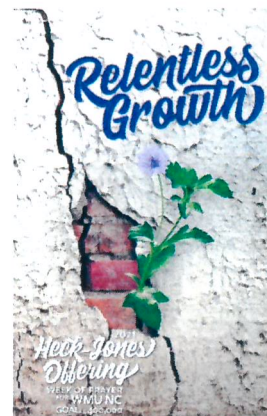


*God Bless You!”  
Dana B. Jenkins*



## OUR RECORD OF GIVING

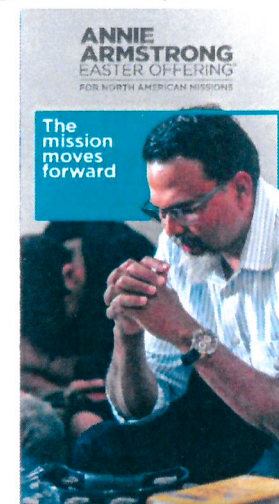
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Budget Receipts – February	28,670.00
Budget Goals – YTD	166,033.80
Budget Receipts – YTD	183,954.52
Budget Variance	+ 17,920.72
<b>Special Offerings</b>	
Building Fund	1,305.00
Love Offering for Dana	2,000.00
The Worship Choir	50.00
Meals on a Mission	80.00
Youth Ministry	105.00
Youth Camp Deposits	1,000.00
Children Ministry	40.00



In February, we should have highlighted the Heck-Jones offering to support our WMU. This slipped by us, so we want to give you the opportunity to donate toward this vital ministry both in our local church and throughout North Carolina.

March also marks the beginning of the emphasis on North American Missions through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The money received through this offering allows ministries to continue through the Southern Baptist Convention throughout the USA.

Prayerfully consider donating to both of these important offerings during March and April. Prayers guides and envelopes are available on the entrance tables for your use.







### *In Loving Memory*

*In memory of **Amy Boger**, a donation was made to the Building Fund by Scott & Melodie Marcus (omitted from February's newsletter).*

*In memory of **Nate Sisson's grandmother**, a contribution was given to the Youth & Children's Budget by Doug & Ann Burgess.*

*Donations were made to the Building Fund in memory of **Nate Sisson's grandmother** by Eddie & Linda Arrowood and Deborah Tucker.*

*A contribution was made to the Building Fund by Eddie & Linda Arrowood in memory of **Joyce Allmon**.*

*In memory of **Billy Taylor**, donations were given to the Building Fund by:*



*Eddie & Linda Arrowood  
Deborah Tucker  
Doris Hatley  
Mae Brooks  
Doris Beachum.*

*In memory of **George Baggie**, the following made contributions to the Building Fund:*

*Doug & Ann Burgess  
Mae Brooks  
Brooks & Jane Barnhardt  
First Baptist Church, Oakboro*

*Donations were given to the Building Fund in memory of **Penny Tucker** by:*

*Mae Brooks  
Jim & Cheryl Cameron  
Brooks & Jane Barnhardt  
First Baptist Church, Oakboro*



*In memory of **Penny Tucker**, Doug & Ann Burgess made a donation to the Children and Youth Ministries.*

*In memory of **Catherine Charlton**, Kevin Barbee's mother, a contribution was given to the Meals on a Mission by Brooks & Jane Barnhardt.*



### *In Honor of . . .*

*A contribution was made to the Building Fund by Deborah Tucker in honor of **Jan Jackson's birthday**.*

*The Blessed Assurance Sunday School class made a contribution to the Building Fund in honor of **Bea Goodman**.*

*In honor of **Dana Jenkins**, donations were given to the Building Fund by*

*Eddie & Linda Arrowood  
Deborah Tucker  
Mary Nelms*



*A donation was given by Pamela Wellons in honor of **Dana Jenkins**.*

*In honor of **Dana Jenkins**, Doris Hatley presented a gift to The Worship Choir.*

*In honor of **Dana Jenkins**, a donation was given by Scott & Melodie Marcus.*

*While a number of people contributed to the love offering in honor of **Dana Jenkins's retirement**, it isn't possible to list each individual. Total amount received was \$2,000.*

### *Youth Fundraiser*

FBCO Men's Brotherhood will be providing and smoking Boston butts for the Youth Camp ministry.



Prices are \$30 for Boston butt, \$35 if you'd like a quart of homemade slaw added. Checks should be made payable to First Baptist, Oakboro.

To reserve yours, please sign up by contacting Nate Sisson or the church office by **March 21**. You also may mark an offering envelope and drop it into the plate. Payment is due upon order, and there are only 120 available, so reserve yours today. Pick-up will be on **March 27 at 4:00 p.m.** at the fellowship building drive-thru.







- March**
- 1 Vickie Yandle
  - 2 Katie Broadway
  - 4 Sheridan Meadors
  - Lynn Edwards
  - Nick Wadkins
  - 7 Mike Eudy
  - 10 Lydia Crisco
  - 11 Bill Yandle
  - Brett Smith
  - 15 Mary Ellen Nelms
  - 16 Louise Floyd
  - 18 Jenni Foxx
  - 20 Hunter Floyd
  - Emily Williams
  - 26 Devin Floyd
  - Kevin Floyd
  - 29 Frances Beatty
  - Chance Boger
  - 30 Felix Hinson
  - 31 Rachel Young

- April**
- 2 Kay Smith
  - 6 Rita Crisco

Please contact the office to report any changes that need to be made to the birthday calendar.

		Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>Monday-Thursday</b> <b>8:15-10:30 a.m.</b> <b>1:00-3:00 p.m.</b> Fellowship Building Open for Students-- Internet Access	<b>8:30 a.m.</b> Two or More Prayer		<b>6:30 p.m.</b> Bible Study for All Ages		<b>7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.</b> YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	
		<b>10:00 a.m.</b> Sunday School for ALL Students, College/Career, & Mixed Adults Sunday School via Zoom (Joy, Life, Genesis, Blessed Assurance)	<b>8:30 a.m.</b> Two or More Prayer		<b>6:30 p.m.</b> Bible Study for All Ages <b>Guest Speaker:</b> <b>Shelby Benton</b>		<b>7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.</b> YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	<b>Meals On a Mission</b> 
<b>Week of Prayer for Annie Armstrong Easter Offering &amp; North American Missions</b>								
		<b>10:00 a.m.</b> Live Sunday School Sunday School via Zoom	<b>8:30 a.m.</b> Two or More Prayer <b>7:00 p.m.</b> Gideons Meeting in Fellowship Building		<b>6:30 p.m.</b> Bible Study for All Ages <b>Happy ST. PATRICK'S DAY</b>		<b>7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.</b> YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	
		<b>10:00 a.m.</b> Live Sunday School (see above) Sunday School via Zoom (see above)	<b>8:30 a.m.</b> Two or More Prayer		<b>6:30 p.m.</b> Bible Study for All Ages		<b>7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.</b> YMCA - Fellowship Building Use	<b>4:00 p.m.</b> <b>Youth Camp Boston Butt Fundraiser Pick-Up</b>
		<b>10:00 a.m.</b> Live Sunday School (see above) Sunday School via Zoom (see above)						
		<b>Palm Sunday</b> 						

**Weekly Sunday Schedule**  
**9:00 a.m. Worship**  
**11:00 a.m. Worship**

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