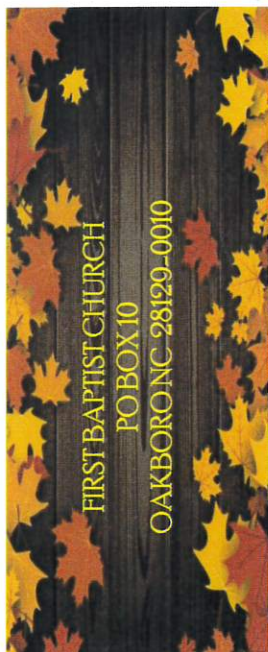


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FIRST BAPTIST
OAKBORO

The Communicator

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What does it mean to be a member of a church? That's a fairly specific question, so let's broaden things out just a bit. What does it mean to be a member of anything? It means you find your beliefs and the direction both that your life is going, but also that you want it to be going, falling so in line with a particular group or organization that you are willing to tie your life to it in some formalized fashion.

Perhaps an example will help. I suspect not a few of you are members of Sam's Club. As an organization, Sam's Club is committed to offering high quality goods at bargain prices. They accomplish this by selling things in bulk so that by the economic principle of economies of scale, consumers can save money on a whole range of products. Now, if you are a single individual or a couple without kids living at home or aren't involved in another organization that, say, holds community meals on a weekly basis for which you serve on a meal team (not that I have any particular experience with one of those), the direction of your life and the direction of Sam's Club, aren't likely to fall very closely into alliance with one another. That is, it doesn't make any sense for you to sign up for a membership. But if you do have, say, three growing boys, or are part of a group that hosts regular large-group meals, making yourself a member just might make sense.

In order to become a member of Sam's Club, there are several hurdles you have to clear. You have to fill out an application. As a part of this, the organization confirms you will be able to pay the bills you incur while shopping there. Then, you commit to paying a monthly (or annual) fee that consists of a not insignificant amount of money. That's all that is required of you. In return, you gain access to a warehouse filled with projects that are generally less expensive than you will find in a regular store. If you plan properly, the cost of your membership is more than made up for by the amount you save on basic household products in a given year.

Sam's also has multiple levels of membership. You can get a regular membership and enjoy the few perks that come along with it, but you can also upgrade to a premium membership. This costs more, but it also comes with more significant and convenient perks. The goal of Sam's Club, as an organization, is to constantly make sure they are making membership with them something that is seen as a sufficiently significantly beneficial and precious thing as to encourage more and more consumers to pursue a membership pathway with them. This comes by not simply offering good and convenient things for members, but by asking for a meaningful commitment from them.

The odds are good that if they did away with membership and allowed everyone to shop in their stores, while they might see an initial surge in revenue, in the long run it would decline, because while they certainly offer a value to their customers, they aren't always the most convenient place to shop. Instead, by insisting on a membership that requires members to have some real skin in the game, while they may decrease their total pool of potential shoppers, the shoppers they do attract will be more likely to shop consistently and spend more

money with them. After all, if I am paying for a membership, I want to make sure I'm getting my money's worth out of it.

While I know it makes some believers uncomfortable to look to the business world for any advice and counsel on how to do church well, I think there's some wisdom in what Sam's Club is doing in all of this. Church membership, if it is going to mean anything and be worth doing in the first place, has to matter. And, there's a difference between mattering to long-time believers or folks who have been a part of a particular church for decades and value their membership because their entire social network is tied up there, and mattering to new believers and folks who don't really have much of a background with the church. If membership in our church is going to be something that someone who is not already a member considers to be a sufficiently valuable thing to have to commit themselves formally to this particular body of believers, there are a couple of questions for which we need to have very good answers.

First, does membership in our church have a meaningfully positive impact on his life? Well, what are some ways we can guarantee this? How about by offering a social context in which a large group of wonderful people are willing and interested in being close and personal friends? In a day when loneliness is a quiet epidemic that is sometimes quite literally killing people, that's not a small deal. How about being a part of a community that is going to be intentionally committed to seeing you grow to become more fully who Jesus designed you to be (that is, who will be committed to loving you)? How about connecting you with a group of people who will serve you selflessly and will be present in some of your hardest moments in life? How about the assurance of accountability so that you are not facing the various struggles you have in life on your own? How about providing the opportunity to impact others such that your life will be enriched by enriching theirs? These are but a few ways we can be sure we are offering added value to the lives of people considering whether or not membership here is something worth their time.

There's another question to answer, though: Are we asking our members to make a sufficiently significant commitment to us such that they will consider their membership here a thing of value into which they want to invest more of themselves? There has been a movement in recent years of churches striving to make membership a fairly easy and light commitment so as not to discourage those who are interested in being a part of their body. Some churches have gotten rid of membership altogether. When something supposedly precious asks nothing of us, though, we tend to give it.

As we move together into this new year in the life of our church, would you join me in praying and studying the Scriptures for wisdom on this second question? What should our church meaningfully ask of our members in order to help them own and appreciate the value of their membership? If we want to be a church with whom anyone can connect as God has created us to be, this is an important question to answer together. Blessings to you as you seek to answer it.

Pastor Jonathan

OUR RECORD OF GIVING

Budget Goals – September	25,379.16
Budget Receipts – September	24,073.00
Budget Goals – YTD	25,379.16
Budget Receipts – YTD	24,073.00
Budget Variance	-1,306.16
<i>Special Offerings</i>	
Building Fund	1,000.00
NC Baptist Children's Homes	100.00
NC Missions Offering	125.00
Deacons	45.00
MOM Donation	100.00
Gathering Place	700.00
Church Rails	5,000.00
Kids' T-Shirts	95.00
Youth Lock-In	100.00

HOPE Fellowship Committee: We recently met to plan activities for the upcoming year. It was the consensus of the committee that our people are ready to participate in group activities again with luncheons, day trips, etc. We have scheduled a trip to Southern Supreme Fruit Cakes for a tour, shopping, and lunch on Monday, **December 5**, and lunch at Rosebriar Tuesday, **January 17, 2023**. Additional information will be provided as we approach these dates.



*"Dear Oakboro First Baptist,
Thank you for your financial assistance with our scholarship funding for our Summer Arts Camp at West Stanly High School and Stanly Community College. We had 37 applications this year, all from families that needed this support to be able to send their child. With your generosity, as well as Atrium, First Presbyterian, Will Huneycutt and a private donor, we were able to fully fund all applicants. We are so grateful for your support, ensuring that all youth could attend and increase their exposure to the visual arts, music, dance, and theatre.*

Many thanks,"

Renee VanHorn & the Board of Directors



In memory of Amy Boger, an anonymous donation was given toward the replacement of the church railings.

In loving memory of her mom Aline Tarlton, and her 100th birthday, Pamela Wellons made a donation to the Building Fund.

In honor of Rita Crisco, a contribution was given to Meals On a Mission by Kim Goodman.

Carve out a new tradition.

Give Blood!



**Blood Drive
First Baptist Church
of Oakboro**

Fellowship Hall - Behind the Main Building
322 N. Main Street
Oakboro, NC 28129

**Thursday, October 13th
2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.**

Please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: FBCOakboro to schedule an appointment

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.

We've got a treat for you this month! Come to give in October and get a \$5 gift card to a merchant of your choice. Enjoy some buttery popcorn or a refreshing drink with your next music screening on us. Terms apply. See rcblood.org/boo

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | redcrossblood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

©2018 The American National Red Cross

*Register to give
and invite others
to do the same!*

*If you'd like to
decorate a vehicle,
please sign up at
church.*

OAKBORO COMMUNITY
**TRUNK
OR
TREAT**

OAKBORO FAIRGROUNDS

**FOOD
TRUCKS**



**BRING
YOUR
TREAT
BAG**

CANDY



**OCT 6:00 -
30 7:30 PM**



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Together



As I'm writing this, we just got back from an amazing weekend out of town. The time was spent Friday and Saturday at a fantastic church health conference, and then I had the privilege of speaking at a previous ministry we served at.

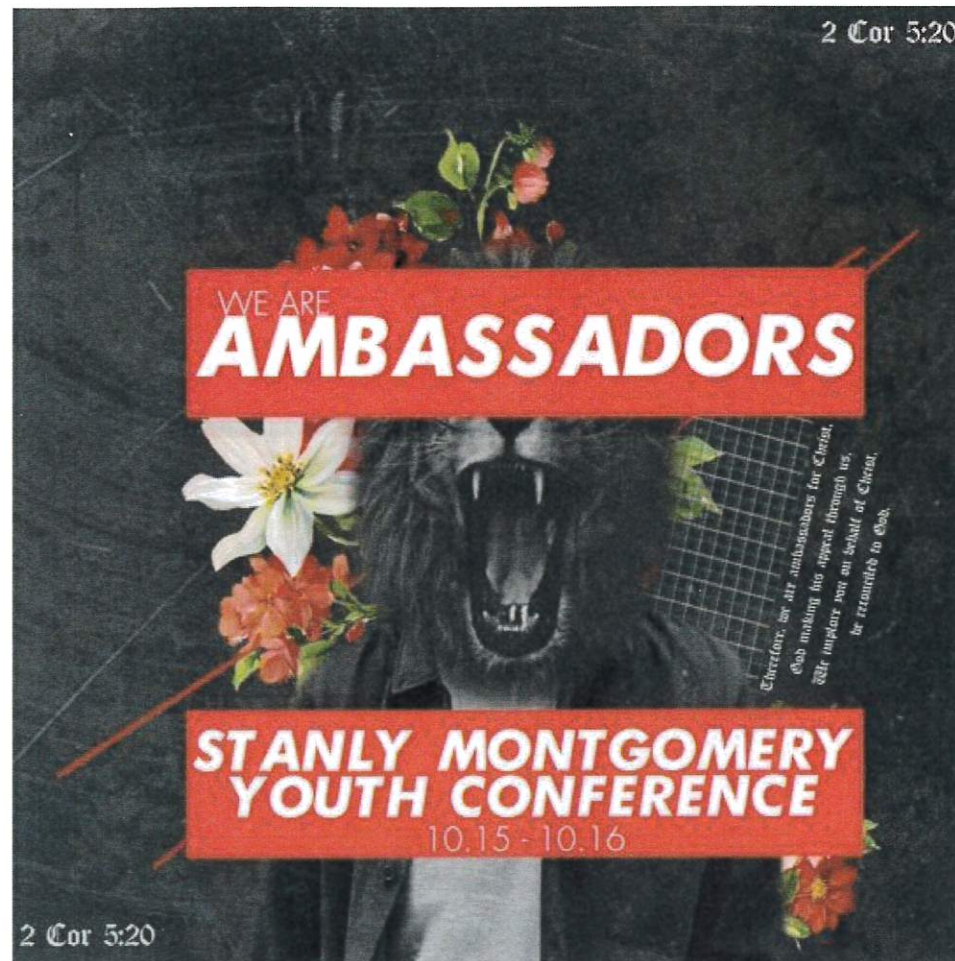
But it feels great to be back home with those we love. In fact, the highlight of the weekend was the fact that I got to attend this conference, not by myself, but with Pastor Jonathan, several other pastors and leaders from our area. Instead of just sitting through this conference alone, trying to determine what was relevant for our area of ministry, I got to bounce ideas off Jonathan and these other pastors on how to apply what we had heard. It was one of the most enriching times I've had in a while.

But as we're back in town now and continuing ministry here, I thought, 'We're doing the same thing right now at Oakboro!' What I mean is, in our student ministry right now, it takes an army, about 30-35 adults each month, to run all the things we have going on for our students. It reminds me of Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him- a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

We as a church are doing just this, but keep in mind, we're growing in the nursery, preschool classes, kids, and youth. Walk into the youth center on a Wednesday night, and you will find a spectacular madhouse of students all engaging with each other in relationships and discipleship. If you are a part of this threefold cord that we get to work together as, thank you. Find more ways to strengthen each other as we now look to make sure every one of our students has someone who can disciple them. If you are yet to join us in this work, your joining us makes our church stronger. When you have our back and we have yours, there's nothing our God can't do through us.

Thank you,
Nate



Follow our youth ministry on Instagram @fboyouth



- October**
- 2 Hope Gaston
Sandra Chance
 - 7 Scott Broadaway
Ann Eudy
 - 12 Gavin Hudson
Marisa Sisson
 - 15 Linda Arrowood
Jonathan Waits
Arabella Smith
 - 16 Graham Tucker
 - 17 Cheryl Cameron
 - 18 Gerald Lee
 - 19 Matthew Thompson
 - 21 Lorrie Hatley
 - 22 Wiley Little
 - 23 Bea Goodman
 - 25 Jewell Parker
Missy Wadkins
Angelina Smith
 - 26 Terrell Watts
 - 28 Eddie Arrowood
Zach Broadaway
 - 31 Drew Williams
- November**
- 1 Bud Smith
Michael Thompson
Robbie Foxx
 - 3 Cooper Hudson
Gray Crisco
Zoey Williams
Dale Blackwelder

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>322 N Main Street PO Box 10 Oakboro, NC 28129 www.fbcoakboro.org</p>						1
2	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	3	6:30 p.m. Deacons' Meeting	4	5:30 p.m. The Gathering Place 6:30 Missions Night for All Youth Bible Study 7:30 Worship Choir	5
6		7		8		
9	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	10	11	5:30 p.m. The Gathering Place 6:30 Bible Study for All Ages 7:30 Worship Choir	2:00-6:30 p.m. Carve out a new tradition Give Blood American Red Cross	13
14		15		16	<p>7:30 a.m. Gideons International Prayer Breakfast</p> <p>We Are Ambassadors Youth Conference</p>	
<p>HOMECOMING 16 with Rev. Dwight Mabey</p> <p>We Are Ambassadors Youth Conference</p>		8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	17	18	5:30 p.m. The Gathering Place 6:30 Bible Study for All Ages 7:30 Worship Choir	19
20		21		22		
23	8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	24	25	5:30 p.m. The Gathering Place 6:30 Bible Study for All Ages 7:30 Worship Choir	26	27
28		29		30		
<p>6:00-7:30 p.m. 30 OAKBORO COMMUNITY TRUNK TREAT OAKBORO FAIRGROUNDS FOOD TRUCKS BRING YOUR TREAT BAG CANDY</p>		8:30 a.m. Two or More Prayer	31	<p>Weekly Sunday Schedule 9:00 a.m. Sunday School (Live & Zoom) 10:00 a.m. Worship</p>		

Please call or email the office with any changes to the birthday calendar.

Upcoming Event: Men's BBQ - November 12