

# First Light

First Baptist Church - Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Vol. XLIX No. 04

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February 18, 2025

## FEBRUARY NOISY OFFERING

Sunday, February 23rd

The Morgan-Scott Project for Cooperative Christian Concerns (MSP) was founded in 1972 by leaders in the Methodist and Church of Christ congregations to serve the needs of the poor rural areas of those 2 counties. Through the years, other denominations, both locally and regionally, such as FBCOR and our local Ecumenical Storehouse have helped support their ministries. MSP is based in Deer Lodge, but their facility wasn't damaged by the tornado that struck their area recently. They are helping those in need any way they can; e.g. someone donated tarps that they've provided and helped cover damaged roofs to minimize further damage. Through their more than 30 years of existence they have demonstrated accountability and support for those in most need in their areas.



*Ash Wednesday Service March 5, at 6 PM  
in the church sanctuary.*

**FIRST LIGHT** (008286) is published weekly except Christmas and July 4 by First Baptist Church, Oak Ridge, TN. **Periodicals Postage Paid**, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to **FIRST LIGHT**, 1101 Oak Ridge Turnpike, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. Phone: (865) 483-4615/4657

# REFLECTIONS

*"Calling them like I see them"*

We're going to use this space to talk about what Walter ("Buddy" if you're cool like that) Shurden identifies as the Four Fragile Freedoms in his book *The Baptist Identity*. If you've ever wondered what it means to be Baptist, which many of you indicated that you do, then I highly recommend this book to you as an introduction. We're going to consider one of the freedoms per article. I don't know if I'll be able to manage 4 in a row, but I'll definitely publish them all this year, so keep reading.

The first freedom is what Shurden calls "Bible Freedom." Now, the Bible doesn't belong to Baptists, but we do have a fairly unique approach to reading the Bible. Bible Freedom is the historic principle that *every believer* has the freedom to read and interpret the Bible for themselves, which may sound fairly ordinary now. It wasn't 500 years ago!

Reading and even holding a book were privileges for the educated elite. Reading *the Bible* was a right reserved for clergy approved by the ecclesial powers approved by the Church. Even with the advent of the printing press and the firestorm of the Reformation, most believers were still illiterate and relied on things like creeds (brief statements of belief) or catechisms (memorizing church doctrine) to understand the will of God and the testimony of Scripture.

Baptists, by contrast, came to champion the cause of literacy and insisted that the Scriptures be put in the hands of all people, because each believer was a priest who related to God personally. (We'll touch on this idea in another article). The Bible was seen as too vital, too important to understanding how to follow Jesus, that it would be wrong to keep it from believers. Anyone remember a time where you got graded on whether or not you brought your own Bible to church?

Perhaps you see the danger here. If *everyone* is allowed to read the Bible for themselves, what's to stop someone from reading it poorly? That's the price of freedom. Freedom necessitates responsibility. Just because I'm free to drive on the roads doesn't mean I can go 85 mph down the Turnpike, even if that were legal. Why? Because I also have a responsibility to keep others safe, including those white-knuckling the dashboard of my car! Just because we are free to read the Bible doesn't mean that every interpretive idea we have is right or good. We have a responsibility to read the Bible *well*.

We can do that by educating ourselves on good technique (don't read verses in isolation, learn how to look up words in their original languages, don't try to make the Bible say what you want it to say), but for my money one of the best ways to safeguard against poor interpretation is to remain in community with fellow faithful believers. Read together, study together. Not because we are legally bound to, but because we are free to do so.


*Peace, Rory*

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## Thank You!

During our time of loss, we thank our church family for the love that has surrounded us during this difficult time. Mom was loved by so many and it sure shows in your actions and the support you have shown us. Thank you for the food, for the fellowship, the calls, the cards, and everything that you have done to show us love. We will miss her forever, but she is still alive in us and in this church. Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we navigate the grieving process.

With love,  
The Bowers Family



### Discussion Group

**Movie:** On a Wing and a Prayer (2023) starring Dennis Quaid.

**Viewing:** Streaming on many pay-per-view platforms for free.

**Time & Place:** Friday, Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. at Joy Reedy's home - [109 Downing Drive, Oak Ridge](#)

**Questions:** Contact Mike Crowell, Brandon Weaver, or Joy Reedy.

## *Prayer Requests*

**IMMEDIATE:** Summer Miller (Bill & Johelen Stephenson's daughter). Chris Peterson's family. Roscoe Shipley. The Barker family. The Younkin family. Jody Walker. Duane Bounds (Tim Bounds' brother). Randy Glass (Paula sister). Bobby Bowers and family. Becky & Eric (friends of Jonathan & Sarah Ray). Ricky Phelps (Tim Bounds' nephew). Stoney Lowell (friend of Jodie Johnson). Jack Burgan (Jeff Burgan's dad). Larry Carter. Dave Bunton. Katie Emmerson (Ellin Ward's daughter). Debbie Pulliam (Carol O'Shaughnessy's sister). Heidi Rose Harris. Bruce Marshall. Sherry Bath (Gigi Naeve's friend). Mark Ebeler (friend of Carol O'Shaughnessy). Tammy Lee (Kay Smith's sister). Adrian Flory. Sandra Burns (Johelen Stephenson's cousin). Wanda Vines (friend of Sandy Davidson). Carolyn Maples (Brandon Weaver's aunt). Joyce Dippel (Jan Stoutland's sister). Robert Darnell (Diane Qualls' brother). Frances Darnell (Diane Qualls' mother). Richard Evans. Cheryl King (Diane William's sister-in-law). Ben Davidson (Tom Davidson's nephew).

## Before His Presence with Singing

We all are one in mission, we all are one in call.

I'm so glad that you and I are not exactly alike, and that you are not exactly like anyone else I know. I love the near certainty that if the two of us take up a task, we'd each approach that task differently.

Missions is a task we as Christians take on both individually and collectively. In what some scholars call "the real Lord's Prayer," the 17th chapter of John's gospel, Jesus prays for our unity. He prays,

*"Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."*

Rusty Edwards, who wrote this hymn, reminds us stanza after stanza that we are united, even in our diversity. It is in fact our diversity, the uniqueness of the individual, that gives our mission effort effectiveness. You can reach people I cannot, and I can reach people you cannot, and sometimes, our collaboration to reach out is the very essence of our success.

Our present day political climate in the United States is the antithesis of our oneness in mission. In politics, the middle ground becomes the battle ground. Our different approaches are sadly what divides us. In fact, our political goals would be far better served if this were not the case. If we could somehow embrace individuality and applaud the notion of coming to the same outcome by different routes, we'd know a lot more success.

But in successful mission efforts, inevitably, the commitment to endorsing varied approaches to the spread of the Gospel bodes success. In part, this is why the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth about our oneness amidst our diversity. We are all part of a body, each playing a critical and essential role, but serving the same whole. For a real, in-depth Bible study moment, consider this hymn alongside Paul's words in I Corinthians 12:12 and following.

We all are one in mission; we all are one in call,  
our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all.  
A single, great commission compels us from above  
to plan and work together that all may know Christ's love.

We all are called for service to witness in God's name.  
Our ministries are different; our purpose is the same:  
to touch the lives of others by God's surprising grace,  
so every folk and nation may feel God's warm embrace.

Now let us be united and let our song be heard.  
Now let us be a vessel for God's redeeming word.  
We all are one in mission; we all are one in call,  
our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all.—By Rusty Edwards

In Christ, **Tim**



We are in need of workers for  
Nursery & Children's Church!

Sign up sheets are in the Narthex.

## OAK RIDGE COMMUNITY BAND WINTER SHOWCASE CONCERT

Sunday, February 23, 3 p.m.  
at First Baptist Church.

Cost: FREE. Info: [www.orcb.org](http://www.orcb.org)

## MARCH FBCFBC

*A Woman of No Importance* by Sonia Purnell is the book for March's book club. This "woman of no importance" was Virginia Hall, a Baltimore socialite who talked her way into Special Operations Executive (SOE), the spy organization, during World War II. Join us at noon on Monday, March 3, as Linda Williamson leads the discussion of this book. Questions? Dianne May - (865) 414-9766. And remember that you are welcome to bring your lunch.

## NIGHTLIFE

Beginning the week of March 16, we will be hosting NightLife groups to make a 6 week journey together following *The Art of Neighboring*. Groups will meet once a week in the homes of host members for conversation and encouragement around the idea of becoming better neighbors in the actual places that we live as a way of following the teachings of Jesus Christ. If you would like to join a group, please sign up in the Narthex.

## COPING WITH GRIEF

Coping With Grief is the topic of a 2-part series led by Dr. Richard Dew to be held at 3 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall on March 16 and 23, 2025. Everyone is welcome.

# MARCH 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 10:00 AM -12:00 PM [Adult Basketball]
2 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM First Christian Church/2nd Floor 11:00 AM Worship & Communion 2:00 PM [Pickleball/gym] <b>2:00 PM Finance Mtg./RM.105</b> 5:30 PM Feast (Youth) 6:00 PM First Christian/2nd Floor	3 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] 12:30 PM FBCFBC/Library 6:30 PM -9:00 PM [ORPhOrchestra]/FH) 6:30 PM -9:00 PM [Scouts129/gym] <b>7:00 PM Trustee Mtg./RM. 105</b>	4 11:00 AM Staff Mtg. 1:00 PM Pastor Study Time 5:00 PM -7:45 PM [Basketball/Abernathy] 5:30 PM -7:00 PM [ARC Mtg./RM. 105]	5 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] 1:30 PM -3:30 PM [Fiber Friends/Parlor] 5:00 PM -7:00 PM [Pickleball/gym] <b>6:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service/sanct.</b> 7:15 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	6 1:30 PM Agape Help Center 4:30 PM -6:30 PM [Basketball] 5:30 PM [ORCband /FH] 6:00 PM -7:00 PM Chancel Bells 6:30 PM [Pickleball/gym]	7 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym]	8 10:00 AM -12:00 PM [Adult Basketball] <b>5:00 PM Scout Lock-in/gym</b>
9 <b>8:00 AM Scout Lock-in</b> 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM First Christian Church/2nd Floor 11:00 AM Worship Service 2:00 PM [Pickleball/gym] <b>2:00 PM Church Council Mtg./RM.105</b> <b>3:00 PM Deacons Mtg./RM.105</b> <b>4:00 PM Personnel Mtg./RM. 105</b> 5:30 PM Feast (Youth) 6:00 PM First Christian/2nd Floor	10 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] 6:30 PM -9:00 PM [ORPhOrchestra]/FH) 6:30 PM -9:00 PM [Scouts129/gym]	11 11:00 AM Staff Mtg. 1:00 PM Pastor Study Time 5:00 PM -7:45 PM [Basketball/Abernathy]	12 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] 1:30 PM -3:30 PM [Fiber Friends/Parlor] 5:00 PM -7:00 PM [Pickleball/gym] 5:00 PM -11:00 PM M.Griffin organ rehearsal/sanct. 6:00 PM Prayer Meeting & Bible Study/FH 7:15 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	13 1:30 PM Agape Help Center 4:30 PM -6:30 PM [Basketball] 5:30 PM [ORCband /FH] 6:00 PM -7:00 PM Chancel Bells 6:30 PM [Pickleball/gym]	14 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] <b>12:00 PM Fellowship Table</b>	15 10:00 AM -12:00 PM [Adult Basketball]
16 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM First Christian Church/2nd Floor 11:00 AM Worship Service 2:00 PM [Pickleball/gym] <b>3:00 PM Coping with Grief- Dr. Dew/FH</b> 5:30 PM Feast (Youth) 6:00 PM First Christian/2nd Floor  <b>NightLife</b>	17 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] 2:00 PM Library Team Mtg. 6:30 PM -9:00 PM [ORPhOrchestra]/FH) 6:30 PM -9:00 PM [Scouts129/gym]	18 11:00 AM Staff Mtg. 1:00 PM Pastor Study Time 5:00 PM -7:45 PM [Basketball/Abernathy]	19 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] 1:30 PM -3:30 PM [Fiber Friends/Parlor] 5:00 PM -7:00 PM [Pickleball/gym] 5:00 PM -11:00 PM M.Griffin organ rehearsal/sanct. 6:00 PM Prayer Meeting & Bible Study/FH 7:15 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal	20 1:30 PM Agape Help Center 4:30 PM -6:30 PM [Basketball] 5:30 PM [ORCband /FH] 6:00 PM -7:00 PM Chancel Bells 6:30 PM [Pickleball/gym]	21 9:00 AM -11:00 AM [Pickleball/gym] <b>6:30 PM Movie Discussion Group @ J. Reedy's</b>	22 10:00 AM -12:00 PM [Adult Basketball]
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