

FROM THE PASTOR

**Better Together #1:**

**We Are Compelled To Love God's Family**

Jesus said, A new command I give you: Love one another as I have loved you. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples (John 13.34-35)

This past Sunday we began "Better Together: 40 Days of Community." Our particular theme was "Compelled to Love God's Family." The life God intends for you and for me is not meant to be lived alone. We need each other in order to flourish and be strengthened by our differences, viewing every person as a highly valued child of God. God has designed life so that we might grow out of our selfishness and learn to place the needs of each other above our own, giving without any guarantee of getting anything back. We do not seek "a spirit of unity" but "unity in the Spirit," placing all of our concentration into opening our hearts to the Spirit and living together in the way of Jesus.

In our devotionals last week, Rick Warren reminded us that we are compelled to love one another as brothers and sisters in God's family because God loves us and commands that we love one another. In fact, loving one another is how we love God. How well we love others reveals how much we love God. Loving one another is a witness to the world that we belong to Christ. Jesus gave the world the right to judge the authenticity of our faith, not by the rules we keep or by how much we say we love Jesus, but by how much we love one another.

There are so many people who will never darken the doors of the church again not because they don't believe in God and not because they don't love Jesus but because of how they were treated in the church or how they saw others treated by the church or how they see people in the church treat each other. They know very well the standard of love taught by Jesus and they see people in the church act so mean and so selfishly, so unlike Jesus that they want nothing to do with the church.

Warren sums up how living a life of love works: God's love *for* us gives us the *reason* to love others. God's love *in* us gives us the *ability* to love others. God's love *through* us gives us the *way* to love others.

Love is what makes life worth living. Love is what matters most. Are we willing to put aside all other agendas and be known as a church compelled to love one another as brothers and sisters so that Fitzgerald will know that we belong to Christ?

**Prayers for Our People**

*We are praying for you and all that God will do for you.*

Let us pray for: Rachel Bishop, Denise Bowen, Carolyn Brown, Prentiss Brown, Lynn Bryant, Polly Davis, Brittini Ellington Deal, Wendy Dix, Caroline Kate Eckles, Joni Wiggins Fox, Trish Herlovich, Claudette Mahan, David Malcolm, Shirley Malcolm, Billy McEachern, Don Morris, June Morris, Mildred Pigg, Buddy Prescott, Troy Roberts, Kelly Sumner, Sarah Stevens, Farise Taylor, Lee Taylor, Katrina Vaughn, Brenda Wiggins, Donald Wiggins, Debra Weil, Drake Young

**Members in Care Facilities**

Pruitt Health (Ocilla): Drew Fountain

**Homebound Members – Fitzgerald**

June and Don Morris

**Homebound Members – Out of Town & State**

Lois Eppes – Middleburg, FL and Lois Freeman – Newnan, GA



**"Inside Out" Movie Devotional Continues**

Last Wednesday night we had 48 youth in attendance with some visitors. I am so thankful that you are

inviting your friends and making Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings a priority each week that you can. We will continue using the movie *Inside Out* to lead our discussions about our journey of faith. Our dates and location for the Winter Retreat should be announced soon. Our original dates and locations were found to have conflicts so we hope to make a final decision soon. Please make Sunday School and WNL a part of your weekly schedules! See You Soon!



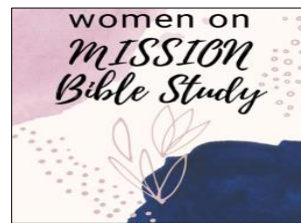
**BE IN THE CHOIR LOFT ON SUNDAY!**

I hope to see everyone in the choir loft this week for worship. The choir will sing *For God So Loved the World* as the special music. We will meet in the choir room at 10:45am to run through the anthem and warm up. We also hope to announce a date for our fall choral workshop SOON! I hope to see everyone this Sunday!



**Sanctuary Flowers**

The flowers in the Sanctuary this Sunday, September 17, 2023, are dedicated to the glory of God and placed in loving memory of David Cozart, Julian and Ethel Leverett by Brenda Cozart.



**Women on Mission**

**Bible Study**  
**Tuesday, September 19**  
10:00am  
Library

*My Dear Friends, Thank you for hosting Pat and me so graciously during Homecoming weekend. Being with you good folks reminded me why I loved you so much. My days in Fitzgerald forever changed my life. What a blessing to be among some of God's best people! Love, Gene & Pat Wilder*

Dear Church Members, Thank y'all so much for your kind thoughts and prayers during my recent surgery. Y'all have been so patient with me over the years during the times I have needed the prayers of the member of First Baptist Church! I love y'all! Sincerely, Gail Jinright



**GOODY BAGS AND GAMES**

Join us immediately following worship on **SEPTEMBER 24th** from 12-2PM in the gym for lunch, games, and goody bags. Children will be putting together goody bags for Called to Care Caseworkers. All

children are encouraged to bring a monetary donation to go towards gift cards to go with the goody bags! Please RSVP to plan for lunch!

\*There will be NO Children's Choir Wednesday September 20th.



We're starting a **Children's GROUP TEXT** with updates and reminders for all children's activities. Let me know if you want me to add you to the group! (229-425-2099)

**DON'T MISS OUT ON WEEKLY ACTIVITIES**

- **Children's Choir:** Every Wednesday at 5:30pm in the Children's Choir room above the Breezeway!
- **Mission Friends, GAs and RAs:** 6pm every Wednesday!
- **Sunday School:** 10am every Sunday!



**September Sunday Children's Church Volunteers**

- September 17th** - Melissa Cowan and Christa Garner
- September 24th** - Trista and Ryan Clemons

\*A new rotation is going out soon, please let me know if you want to be added to the rotation!

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- September 24th - Games and Goody Bags (Gym) 12-2PM
- October 25th - Halloween Nursing Home Parade 6PM
- October 29th - Fall Festival 4-6PM



**Guatemala Christmas Project**

Thank you all for contributing items for this ministry. Anyone that is still interested in contributing, please see the list of items needed on the collection boxes located in your Sunday school classrooms or in the Narthex. You may drop your items off at the church office or in the collection boxes. The deadline is Thursday, September 28.

**CHURCH CALENDAR**

**TUESDAY, SEPT 12**  
**Daily Scripture: Romans 13.8-14. Psalm 149**  
 10:00 AM.....Exercise Class (Mann Hall)  
 4:00 PM.....Staff Meeting

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT 13**  
**Daily Scripture: Matthew 18.15-20. Psalm 149**  
 5:30 PM.....Children's Choir\*  
 6:00 PM.....Mission Friends, GAs and RAs\*  
 6:00 PM.....Youth WNL (Youth Room)\*  
 6:00 PM.....Adult Vespers (Mann Hall)\*

**THURSDAY, SEPT 14**  
**Daily Scripture: Exodus 14.19-31, 15.1b-11, 20-21. Psalm 114**  
 10:00 AM.....Exercise Class (Mann Hall)

**FRIDAY, SEPT 15**  
**Daily Scripture: Romans 14.1-12. Psalm 114**

**SATURDAY, SEPT 16**  
**Daily Scripture: Matthew 18.21-35. Psalm 114**

**SUNDAY, SEPT 17**  
**SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST**  
 10:00 AM.....Sunday School\*  
 11:00 AM.....Worship Service (Sanctuary)\*  
 5:00 PM.....Women's Bible Study (Mann Hall)

**MONDAY, SEPT 18**  
**Daily Scripture: Exodus 14.19-31, 15.1b-11, 20-21. Psalm 114**

**TUESDAY, SEPT 19**  
**Daily Scripture: Romans 14.1-12. Psalm 114**  
 10:00 AM.....Women On Mission Bible Study (Library)  
 10:00 AM.....Exercise Class (Mann Hall)

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT 20**  
**Daily Scripture: Matthew 18.21-35. Psalm 114**  
 6:00 PM.....Mission Friends, GAs and RAs\*  
 6:00 PM.....Youth WNL (Youth Room)\*  
 6:00 PM.....Adult Vespers (Mann Hall)\*

**THURSDAY, SEPT 21**  
**Daily Scripture: Exodus 16.2-15. Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45**  
 10:00 AM.....Exercise Class (Mann Hall)

**FRIDAY, SEPT 22**  
**Daily Scripture: Philippians 1.21-30. Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45**

**SATURDAY, SEPT 23**  
**Daily Scripture: Matthew 20.1-16. Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45**

**SUNDAY, SEPT 24**  
**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY OF PENTECOST**  
 9:15 AM.....Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal\*  
 10:00 AM.....Sunday School\*  
 11:00 AM.....Worship Service (Sanctuary)\*  
 12:00-2:00 PM.....Children's Goody Bags & Games Day (Gym)  
 5:00 PM.....Women's Bible Study (Mann Hall)

**MONDAY, SEPT 25**  
**Daily Scripture: Exodus 16.2-15. Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45**  
 4:15 PM.....Staff Meeting

**TUESDAY, SEPT 26**  
**Daily Scripture: Philippians 1.21-30. Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45**  
 10:00 AM.....Exercise Class (Mann Hall)

**WEDNESDAY, SEPT 27**  
**Daily Scripture: Matthew 20.1-16. Psalm 105.1-6, 37-45**  
 5:30 PM.....Children's Choir\*  
 6:00 PM.....Mission Friends, GAs and RAs\*  
 6:00 PM.....Youth WNL (Youth Room)\*  
 6:00 PM.....Adult Vespers (Burch Hall)\*

**THURSDAY, SEPT 28**  
**Daily Scripture: Exodus 17.1-7. Psalm 78.1-4, 12-16**  
 10:00 AM.....Exercise Class (Mann Hall)

**FRIDAY, SEPT 29**  
**Daily Scripture: Philippians 2.1-13. Psalm 78.1-4, 12-16**

**SATURDAY, SEPT 30**  
**Daily Scripture: Matthew 21.23-32. Psalm 78.1-4, 12-16**

\*Nursery Staff available for these events.  
**Church Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday, closed all day Friday  
 8:30am-12:15pm (12:15-1:30 closed for lunch & office errands) 1:30pm-5pm

**Our Stewardship Review**  
**Budget Report through 9/3/23 – 9/9/23**

Weekly Budget Required.....	\$12,574.13
Weekly Budget Received for 9/3/23 – 9/9/23.....	\$14,505.00
Monthly Budget Required.....	\$54,487.90
MTD Budget Received.....	\$28,141.00
YTD Budget Requirement.....	\$449,525.10
YTD Budget Giving Received.....	\$463,391.75
YTD Budget Expenses.....	\$433,873.87
Prayer Garden Budget Requirement.....	\$38,000.00
Prayer Garden Budget Giving Received.....	\$41,858.00
Special Gifts (Non-Budget) for the week of 9/3/23 – 9/9/23.....	\$1,062.50



**First Baptist Church**  
 OF FITZGERALD, GA.

*First Baptist Church is a loving and caring Christian community seeking to extend the open hand of God's grace to meet physical and spiritual needs through worship, education, ministry, fellowship, and spiritual nurturing.*

**Church Staff**

Pastor..... Greg Pope  
 Minister of Music & Youth..... Blane Jacobs  
 Administrative Assistant..... Dana Luckie  
 Director of Children's Activities..... Carly Harper  
 Custodian..... Jeffrey Morgan  
 Housekeeping..... Antoinette Hill  
 Church Organist..... Barbara Jacobs  
 Church Pianist..... Susan Spivey  
 Nursery Staff..... Dana Luckie, Megan McLeod, and Candy Herod

Contact us at 229-423-4367 or by email at fbc@fbcfitz.com. You can also check out church information and activities on our website [www.fbcfitz.com](http://www.fbcfitz.com).



**First Baptist Church**  
 P. O. Box 367  
 (402 S. Merrimac Drive)  
 Fitzgerald, GA 31750  
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**Wednesday Vespers 6pm**  
**Sunday School 10am**  
**Worship Service 11am Sanctuary**  
*Better Together: 40 Days of Community*  
**September 6 – October 15**

- September 17 *Commissioned to Reach Out Together*
- September 24 *Chosen to Fellowship Together*
- October 1 *Connected to Grow Together*
- October 8 *Called to Serve Together*
- October 15 *Created to Worship Together*

**Wednesday Night Vespers**  
**6:00 pm Mann Hall**

- Sept 13 Nancy Brinson: 8 Days of Hope (Mann Hall)
- Sept 20 Sheila Solomon: Lifehouse Ministries (Mann Hall)
- Sept 27 What Does It Mean to be the Church? Session One (Burch Hall)