

FIRST *Connections*

The Monthly Magazine of Nashville First Baptist Church



November 2018



Frank and to the Point

Dr. Frank R. Lewis, senior pastor

Dear Church,

November is an extra busy time for us at Nashville First Baptist Church. We ordain new deacons, deal with budgets and calendars for the coming year, continue preparing for MOMENTUM, elect new leadership, make final preparations for Christmas, and prepare for one of the busiest seasons of the year, as we welcome many guests and prospects into our building. In addition to this, our **Tennessee Baptist Mission Board** meets for the annual Summit which is a time of worship and preaching. It includes reports from our missions and ministry departments that work in Tennessee and around the world to share the gospel. Regardless of whether it is the busyness of our church, or the reminder that we are a part of a larger missions family through our many associations and partnerships, I recall that the mission of the church is missions, and the mission of missions is the church.

November is a time when we give thanks, and this year I want to say a word of thanks for the mission and ministry support that you provide as we continue to share the gospel from the heart of our city. The Fellowship on Broadway has moved to the larger space provided by our Fellowship Hall, and it is reaching new people. Our Sanctuary Service continues to reach new people too. Every week, I get the chance to greet guests at our Pastor's Reception following worship. Many of these guests, much more than perhaps ever before, are people from out of town visiting Nashville. Some are believers who are very active in their churches. They many times comment on the friendliness of our church family, and share their appreciation for something they experienced in worship with us. Others find their way into our services like wide-eyed tourists. When they travel to the South, for some, going to church is almost a "tourist attraction," or so it seems. This is one of the reasons I will do my best to proclaim the gospel every Sunday. You never know who might be present, what their spiritual life is like, and how God might be at work in their hearts. Church, please pray that God will move in our worship services, all of our services, each and every Sunday, to call lost sinners to salvation. Without our prayers, we labor in vain.

I want you to know that your tangible support of your church is greatly needed, as well. It matters that you attend faithfully, participate enthusiastically, and support your church generously. At this writing, our finances have experienced a tighter squeeze than normal. We are about \$200,000.00 behind on our expected gifts this year. Our failure to meet our budget has a direct impact on our ability to support missions in the way that most of us believe God has led us. Please be aware of this, make it a matter of prayer, and if you can help your church by being a little more generous this month, please do so. I thank you in advance for all that you will do.

My friend Dr. Kelly Miller Smith, Jr., the senior pastor of First Baptist Church Capitol Hill, is joining me, along with members of his church and ours, for this year's Nashville Christmas Parade. Together, we will bear witness to the reconciling work of the gospel by marching together and lifting the songs of our Savior's birth. The Nashville Christmas parade is December 1. March with us, or help us provide hospitality on our patio that day. It will be a great event, and our parade float will declare the powerful message to our city that a Savior is born!

Let's pull together for the sake of the gospel!



ADVENT 2018

Service of Remembrance and Hope Sunday, November 25 | 5:00 p.m.

A time of worship for all supporting those who have experienced the death of a loved one

Christmas at First Sunday, December 2 | 5:00 p.m.

A service of preparation for the Christmas season featuring our Children's, Youth, and Sanctuary Choirs and The Sanctuary Orchestra

Christmas with Denver and the Mile High Orchestra Sunday, December 9 | 5:00 p.m.

A festive evening of music featuring special guests Denver and the Mile High Orchestra

Carol-Candlelight Celebration Sunday, December 16 | 5:00 p.m.

A service of celebration with The Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra

Christmas Eve Communion Monday, December 24

5:00 p.m. (Sanctuary) • 8:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)

A special time of worship featuring carols, candles, and communion

MOMENTUM

Sundays, January 6 – March 10 | 9:00 a.m.
MOMENTUM Launch Day | November 25

Seventy-eight percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck. Join us for Momentum!



Like Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, MOMENTUM can help you take control of your money, plan for your future, and transform your life. Younger households will benefit from this 10-week study, and households with lots of life experience will also discover better ways to face the tangible issues and choices in life.

We can help each other, but MOMENTUM will also help us reach out into the community. We can offer hope and encouragement to the people we are called to reach for the gospel. By offering this course churchwide, we are inviting the community to join us in a new way. Churches like ours who have followed this same journey have seen an increase in visitors and baptisms as a direct result.

Invite your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to join in.

Christmas Poinsettias

The Flower Service Group will place poinsettias in the church December 2 – 24. If you would like to place a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone, please complete an order form. Cost of each plant is \$10.

A listing of donations will be available with the December 9 Order of Worship. Order envelopes are available throughout the church and may be dropped by the Music Office. You may also purchase online or download a form at NashvilleFirst.org/Poinsettias. The deadline for participation is Sunday, November 25.

Contact: Laurie Hall, Laurie.Hall@NashvilleFirst.org, 615.664.6030

New Members



Welcome! Dianne Myatt

Birthdays

November Staff Birthdays

- 8: Myra Mathis
- 23: Kim Hester
- 27: Connie Powell

We Make It Easy to Give

For your ease, whether in town or out of town, you can contribute to the Lord's Work through Nashville First Baptist Church:

- Give online with your smart phone NashvilleFirst.org.
- Schedule an electronic contribution as frequently as you like using bank draft.
- Mail a check, or place it in your Bible study or worship offering.
- Contribute cash in your own sealed envelope.



On the Cover

Sanctuary Choir members recently presented "Saviour" at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Project composers invited them to present this modern Christian oratorio with full orchestra, a 185-voice choir, and soloists Larnelle Harris, Travis Cottrell, Wes Hampton (Gaither Vocal Band), Annie Dupre (Annie Moses Band), and Scott Lawrence (Veritas).

Who Teaches Our Students?

An Interview With the Rodriguezes

by Hallie Caddy



Meet Derek and Meredith Rodriguez. For those of you who don't know this couple, they are 7th and 8th grade small group leaders and youth choir sponsors here at Nashville First Baptist. What you may also not know is that these titles embody an extra act of service for the couple. Derek and Meredith have four children of their own, with the oldest currently in the 5th grade. Add a homeschooling career and a full-time outside job to the table, and you have one hectic schedule for this young pair. But that's typical for this family. Why? Because even when there seems to be a million moving parts in a single day, they have committed to loving and serving other students by sharing the gospel and love of Jesus, and enriching their lives with ways to carry that love every day.

A discussion with the Rodriguezes about their leadership roles offers an inside look at what it means to be a youth small group leader:

HC: What is your favorite thing about teaching 7th/8th graders?

MR: This time of transition is such a tender space that can be defined in many ways—from sweet and fun, to awkward and frustrating. From ages 12 – 14, we get to watch them discover their identities in some ways—from children into young adults.

DR: I like seeing the friendships tighten up as they bond over more real-life issues. Many of them already started friendships in younger grades, but they really start doing life together differently in 7th grade, and that increases each year in the youth group.

HC: What would you consider to be the biggest challenge?

MR: By 7th and 8th grade, we are competing for their attention against a lot of things. These are awesome students. We want them to connect with each other, and we want them to fall in love with fellowship and worship so that they do their part to be present (physically and mentally) as often as they can. That can be hard since they live in a world that discourages and distracts.

DR: The biggest challenge I find is getting them to open up and be vulnerable with each other. As they come into youth group, we try to encourage them to drive the responses, and we push them to dig deeper and share more.

“We want them to know they are loved. So very loved. And that nothing they ever do could make God love them any more—and nothing they ever do could make God love them any less. We pray for them by name. We share in their joys and in their heartaches. We love them, but not nearly as much as their Creator loves them.”

HC: What is one thing you want them to know or take away about Jesus/Christianity?

MR: We want them to know they are loved. So very loved. And that nothing they ever do could make God love them any more—and nothing they ever do could make God love them any less. We pray for them by name. We share in their joys and in their heartaches. We love them, but not nearly as much as their Creator loves them.

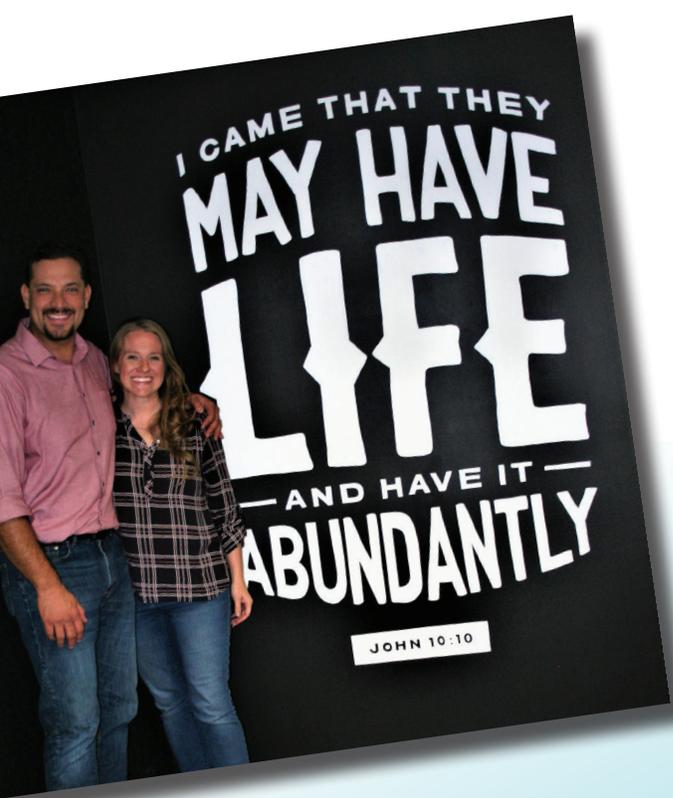
DR: Tim Wildsmith likes to say that “Life with Jesus is better than life without Jesus.” I think that’s spot on. We want it to become such a habit now for them to live with Jesus in their daily lives so that it’s hopefully always the case.

HC: Do you have a particular piece of Scripture that you would associate with mentoring this age group?

MR: Romans 12:1-2. Now, and in years to come, the world is going to try and stake claims over every part of these students’ lives. This is a crucial time for them to commit all of these things to God. They need to already know Whose they are when they find themselves trying to figure out who they are.

DR: John 10:10. It’s a favorite verse of mine, and it’s also painted on one of the walls in the youth room. What abundant life looks like for a Christian is very different than what the world would call “living in abundance,” and we want these students to know the difference.

“Tim Wildsmith likes to say that ‘Life with Jesus is better than life without Jesus.’ I think that’s spot on. We want it to become such a habit now for them to live with Jesus in their daily lives so that it’s hopefully always the case.”



Student Small Group Leaders

7th & 8th Grade Girls
Karen Bush
Meredith Rodriguez
Juliana Wilson

7th & 8th Grade Guys
Heath Bush
Derek Rodriguez
Kevin Smith
Ben Wilson

Meet Our 2019 Deacons



Lisa Bergen-Wilson



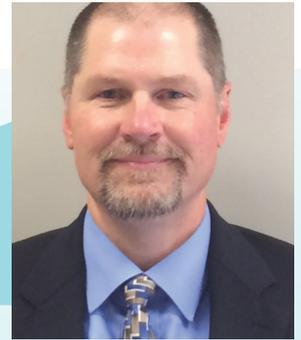
Russ Bradley



Chuck Cagle



David Clay



Steve Goins



Nick Holt



Don King



Kyle Meadors



Jeff Mobley



Kelly Moreland Jones



Lisa Pruitt



Scott Ruark



Nancy Ryals



Rob Waggener



Steve Walsh

The Basics of Truly Following Christ



The development of a Christian worldview is the only remedy for the attacks that deceive, and we have to be vigilant—on alert for those attacks. Join us as we continue in this series from 1, 2, and 3 John about doing a better job of abiding, and how to tune our hearts to a higher, nobler song.

November 4
What We Know
1 John 5:13-21

November 11
The Truth Shall Set You Free
3 John 1-15

November 18
Win a Full Reward
2 John 1-13

November 4
Daylight Saving Time Ends
Deacon Ordination, Installation, & Meeting

November 4
NBA Toy Store Collection Begins

Each year the Nashville Baptist Association hosts a Christmas Toy Store for families living in the 37206 area of Nashville. Families that are invited to shop also hear the good news of Jesus! Please place your new, unwrapped gifts and stocking stuffers in the collection bin located by the weekday entrance, or deliver to Shannon Meadors by Friday, November 30. If you would like to volunteer at the store the week of December 3 at Shelby Avenue Baptist Church, please contact JoAnn Howard at 615.259.3034. Visit NashvilleBaptistAssociation.org for additional information.



November 4
Bring A Friend To First
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

This year's Fall Festival is a part of BFF Sunday! On November 4, the children's ministry invites you to "Bring a Friend to First," and stay for an afternoon of fun with outdoor games, bounce houses, a petting zoo, ponies, grilled hotdogs, and s'mores!

November 5
Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer

Join us in sincere prayer for the entire world.



November 11
Shoebbox Collection Begins

When you fill a shoebox with toys, school supplies, and hygiene items, these tangible expressions of God's love open doors for the greatest gift to be shared—Jesus. Shoebbox distribution at Nashville First

is underway. Boxes and brochures are available in the church foyer with complete directions on what to include in your box. Additionally, you may choose to visit SamaritansPurse.org/occ to complete a box online or print a "Follow Your Box" label to track your box around the world. Boxes will be collected through Sunday, November 18. Please place your boxes around the Christmas tree in the nursery suite foyer. Contact: Shannon Meadors, 615.664.6023, Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org

November 12 | 11:11 a.m.
Veterans Day Parade
Broadway in front of NFBC

Observe Veterans Day, and thank those who served our nation. Veterans and their guests are invited to brunch at 9:30 a.m.

November 14
CMA Awards/No Evening Activities
Saturday, December 1 | 7:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
The Nashville Christmas Parade Outreach

Thousands will attend Nashville's Christmas Parade or watch it on TV, and Nashville First will once again proclaim the birth of Jesus! In addition to our nativity-themed float, we will serve our community from the corner of 7th and Broadway, offering hot chocolate, candy canes, clean restrooms, and free parking.



Friday, November 9
Parents Night Out
6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. |
Babies – 6 Grade | \$30 per family

It's Thanksgiving at this month's PNO! Preschoolers to preteens will have a ball with smoked turkey sandwiches, crafts, games, and a movie complete with popcorn. Our babies and toddlers will also have dinner and enjoy lots of cuddles with stories, songs, and free play. Please register by Thursday, November 8. For more information, contact Mary Bunn at Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org.

For more information and to register:
NashvilleFirst.org/FallRetreat2018

Sunday, November 18
12:00 noon - 1:00 p.m. | Room 150
First Kids Thanksgiving Potluck

Bring a dish to share for a giant potluck meal as we give thanks on Sunday, November 18. For more information, contact Mary Bunn at Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org.



For more information and to register:
NashvilleFirst.org/FallRetreat2018



NASHVILLE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

108 SEVENTH AVE SOUTH
NASHVILLE, TN 37203

Twenty-five formerly homeless children in middle Tennessee now have a place to “lay their head.” NFBC member Lisa Bergen-Wilson, Sweet Sleep vice president of donor engagement; members Sam Talley and Frank Leebern; and Predators players Viktor Arvidsson, Austin Watson, and Dan Hamhuis built the beds here at NFBC. Others from the Predators Foundation and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee also helped. The much-needed beds were distributed to children through Safe Haven Family Shelter.

