

FIRST *Connections*

The Monthly Magazine of Nashville First Baptist Church

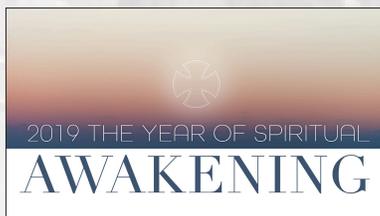


March 2019



Frank and to the Point

Dr. Frank R. Lewis, senior pastor



Transitions don't have to be difficult. When it comes to The Fellowship on Broadway and the vacancy created by Brandon Owen's call to another church,

we found ourselves blessed with new leadership already in place. We've asked Tim Wildsmith to be the primary preacher in Fellowship on Broadway as we move forward. Tim has already demonstrated a pastoral presence in that part of our church family by leading in prayer, extending a welcome to newcomers each week, and assisting in all levels of worship planning for the past several years. Pray for Tim as he completes his seminary studies, gives leadership to our student ministries, and assumes this new responsibility. I look forward to having a presence in that service on occasion, but it is good to know Tim can step into the lead teaching role with no hesitation.

Our time of prayer and fasting may be officially over now that Awaken Nashville is behind us, but many of you have tried the discipline of prayer and fasting for the first time, and you are not ready to stop. I'm encouraging our church family to consider a one-day fast each week for a time of prayer and intercession for the ministry of our church. We need revival. Our church is located right in the middle of one of America's most exciting cities. A church on fire in the heart of a great city will be a great church as her members seek the glory of God.

Would you join me in praying for the following things as you consider continuing the discipline of prayer and fasting?

- Pray that we will develop a hunger for God's Word and a hunger to share it with others.
- Pray that we will be intentional about having gospel conversations with the people God brings into our lives.
- Pray that we will have a genuine spirit of unity as we seek to minister in our mission fields.

- Pray that our Bible study groups will dig deeper into biblical truth and that lives will be transformed.
- Pray that all of our worship services will honor God and that His Spirit will draw the lost to salvation.
- Pray that we see an increase in souls saved and people being baptized.
- Pray that our leadership will have clarity as we seek to be faithful with the opportunities before us.
- Pray that a desire for personal purity, godliness, Christlikeness, and holiness will characterize our membership so that Satan does not gain a foothold in our church.

As I write, we're about three Sundays away from our historic vote as a church on the 6th and Broadway Expansion. By the time you read this, you will know the results of that vote. It is an exciting time for our church, but without a doubt it is also a time when our enemy, described in Scripture, is roaming about like a lion seeking whom he can devour. His methods include deception, doubt, fear, confusion, and slander. Stand firm and stand strong, Church! Pray for one another and pray for your leaders, including the ministers, deacons, Bible study leaders, committee leadership, and others who serve among us.

Finally, be present. On March 17, we begin a series of messages in Sunday morning worship on *The Words of Easter*. These words are woven into the narrative that remind us of our Savior's love for us. We worship better when you are with us! Hope to see you at your church this Sunday.

For the gospel,



Pills and Prayers for Guatemala

The Nashville Baptist Association (NBA) is partnering with churches in Guatemala City as part of the Guatemala/TBMB partnership. Nashville First Baptist is invited and excited to join that partnership! How?

First Baptist WMU is working with the NBA to collect 600 bottles each of daily adult, prenatal, and children's vitamins. These will be used as the NBA medical mission team returns to Guatemala April 27 – May 4 to work with local Baptist churches and doctors, providing free medical clinics to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Please purchase an extra bottle of vitamins when you buy your own, and deposit by April 15 in one of the "big bottles" located in various places around church.

Thank you for helping WMU and the NBA send pills and prayers all the way to Guatemala! For questions or more information, please contact Sharon Herrera, sendsjh@yahoo.com or 615.308.1588.

Attention, Parents of Grown Nashville FBC Children

- Are your children grown and have left the nest?
- Are your children married and have changed their names?
- Are they attending church elsewhere?

We are updating our church records and need your assistance. Many of our adult children have their own homes with new names and addresses. Please contact Lori Towns with updates on your family members. Thank you so much for helping us stay current and connected.

Contact: Lori.Towns@NashvilleFirst.org, 615.664.6001

Welcome To Our New Members!



Paul Hildebrand



Brian Bishop

March Anniversary

27: Lori Towns (2007) – 11 years

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

Charlotte Michel, Lily Bankston, and Lauren Taylor Smith skate the night away as part of DNOW 456.

Principal Melonye Lowe Leads Scales Elementary to National Award

by Drs. Sharon and Bill Chaney

Preparing for the Career

Three degree levels, three universities, three states, three principalships! The academic and career journey for Dr. Melonye Lowe has spiraled steadily toward a 2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Award for her Williamson County School. Earning undergraduate, master's, and advanced degrees from Tift College, Georgia State, and Tennessee State respectively, Dr. Melonye Lowe has served as an elementary and middle school teacher in Georgia, Louisiana, and Tennessee.

Melonye and Alan will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary in June. Their son, Jonathan, is an aerospace engineer in Baltimore, MD, where he lives with his wife, Elisha, and their six children, ages 11 years to 10 months: Caleb, Esther, Anna, Elliot, Joshua, and Corrie.

In 1994, Melonye began her service with Williamson County Schools: first, as a classroom teacher at Pinewood and Kenrose Elementary Schools, then as assistant principal at Kenrose and Oak View Elementary Schools, next as principal at College Grove (2007 – 2010), Allendale (2010 – 2016), and Scales (2016 – present) Elementary Schools. In her role as principal, Dr. Lowe oversees every aspect of the education process, including hiring, supervising, and training teachers.

Scales Elementary School serves 820 students in a 620-capacity building. Currently, while instruction continues, the building is under construction to add 10 new classrooms, a new office suite, interior renovations of the library and cafeteria, and an HVAC replacement.

Applying for the National Award

Schools are nominated for the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award based on their overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Scales Elementary qualified for the honor on overall academic performance. Schools awarded the National Blue Ribbon designation for academic performance are in the top 5% of schools in the nation.

The Tennessee Department of Education nominated Scales Elementary for the prestigious award, and in January 2018 the U.S. Department of Education invited the school to apply for National Blue Ribbon status. Faculty and staff worked for several months examining the school's academic achievement, climate and culture, curriculum, community and



parent involvement, unique features that add value to the education of the students, extracurricular activities, and staff qualifications.

Throughout the application process, Principal Lowe organized the self-study committees, contributed to each committee's content, proofread for accuracy and content, and edited the application so that it spoke with one voice. After months of self-examination and writing, the application was completed and submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for their review.

Receiving a State Award

Once a Blue Ribbon application is submitted, schools must continue their high level of academic performance in order to qualify for the honor. No problem: During this time, Scales was named a 2018 Tennessee Reward School for progress and performance.

Receiving the National Award

In early October, Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, announced Scales Elementary as one of 300 public schools in the nation to receive the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award. Scales Elementary is one of four Tennessee schools so honored in 2018. The others are located in Arlington, Lakeland, and Murfreesboro.

On November 8, 2018, four members of the Scales Elementary faculty and staff traveled to Washington, D.C. to receive the award. Two teachers, the school bookkeeper (who has worked at the school since it opened in 1977), and Dr. Lowe accepted the award.

Reflecting on the Experience

"Since the award is one of the most prestigious for schools, there was no question about whether we would apply. We're pretty proud of this achievement, and enjoy sharing our story," says Principal Lowe. "Thinking about our journey to National Blue Ribbon has caused me to reflect on the ways God has directed my career to this point. I feel that God called me into education, and it has always been about the relationships that I make with students, staff, and parents. Every day is different, and as I go to work, it feels like stepping onto the mission field. Some might wonder what kind of mission work there is in an affluent suburban elementary school. You might be surprised at the many opportunities God gives me to minister and to share my personal faith journey. This award is a great achievement. As a school, we feel blessed to be recognized for the work we do, but without doubt, the best part to me is how God is opening new doors to touch more people. I'm excited to see what comes next!"



Pictured L. – R.: Sara Owens, Alysa Owens, Meredith Williams

Great Times at the Youth Project!

Members of our Youth Choir had a fabulous experience at this year's Youth Project held at Union University and West Jackson Baptist Church in Jackson, Tennessee. They made significant contributions to the worship and praise encounters expressed through the Grand Finale Worship Concert with students from all across the state of Tennessee. Our Visual fx group had the privilege of sharing their gifts and visual presentation enhancing the song *I Am Not Alone*, and Meredith Williams was also selected to sing a solo. We are grateful for these students and the great job they have done representing our church and leading others in the act of divine worship.

The Passion

Sunday, April 14 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary



There is nothing more significant in Christianity than the centrality of the cross and Christ's resurrection from the grave. Experience the depths of these realities as we share a powerful Holy Week message from God's Word through worship and music, featuring the Nashville First and Forest Hills Baptist combined choirs with the Nashville Praise Symphony. The

composer of *The Passion*, Greg Nelson, states "after reading *The Cross of Christ* by John Stott, I purposed to set music to the Scripture and story of Holy Week. What resulted is *The Passion*, a modern oratorio for multiple soloists, choir, organ, and orchestra. This is without question one of the most meaningful, creative endeavors of my entire life."

Make plans now to join us for this dynamic presentation proclaiming the Good News of our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!



Students, start your summer off right at

SUMMER CAMP 2019!

June 3 – 7 | Lee University (Cleveland, TN)

Discount deadline is March 31.

For more information and to register:
NashvilleFirst.org/Camp2019

WELCOME Kenneth Varner

We are pleased to announce that Kenneth D. Varner joins our Music Ministry staff this month as worship and music associate/church organist. Ken has served the past nine years as organist and music associate at Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson, South Carolina. He also serves as staff accompanist at Anderson University, having taught previously as an adjunct professor in church music at North Greenville University in Tigerville, South Carolina.



Ken has extensive experience and years of service on staff at Bellevue Baptist in Memphis; First Baptist Orlando; as well as these South Carolina churches: First Baptist Spartanburg, First Baptist Simpsonville, Eastlan Baptist Church in Greenville, and First Baptist North Charleston. His past ministry includes overseeing church musicians, directing senior adult choirs, administration, and leading handbell choirs.

Mr. Varner is recognized as an outstanding organist—as an accompanist and as a soloist. He has served numerous state Baptist conventions, evangelism conferences, church music and leadership conferences (including serving as an instructor and organist for Church Music Week at Ridgecrest). He has served as accompanist for the Charleston Symphony and Charleston Choral Society. Mr. Varner has given solo organ concerts throughout the United States and Europe.

Ken has six solo organ books in publication, as well as one collection of duets for piano and organ published by Lillenas Music Publishing Company. His next piano and organ collection is scheduled for release in late spring 2019.

Ken earned his bachelor of music in organ performance from Furman University, Greenville, South Carolina, and his bachelor of arts in Education from the University of South Carolina, Columbia. He has completed further studies toward a master of arts in teaching music at Rollins College in Florida. Ken and his wife, Sharon, have three children and four grandchildren. Please help us make Ken and Sharon feel welcome as they join our Nashville First Baptist Family of Faith.



**New Program for Those
Who Want to Know More**

**Sunday, March 3
Following Worship**

Discover First is an opportunity for people to get to know the staff of Nashville First Baptist Church while learning about the Nashville First vision, mission, and ministries. On the first Sunday each month, our ministerial team will gather with guests in the Chapel immediately following worship.

**Week of Prayer for NAM / Annie Armstrong Offering
March 3 – 9**

**Women on Mission Prayer Luncheon
March 5 | 10:30 a.m. | Room 150**

**Daylight Saving Time Begins
March 10**



**First Adults to Second Harvest Food Bank
March 21**

**Business Meeting
March 27**



**RA Lock-In
March 1 – 2 | Room 150**

**Sleep Inn
March 30 – 31
Cost: \$50 per mom / GA | \$75 per mom / 2 GAs**

The GA Sleep Inn is a sleepover for girls grades 1 – 6 to experience with their mom or lady chaperone. For more information, and to register by March 17: NashvilleFirst.org/SleepInn



**CentriKid Camp
Preview & Pizza Party**

Sunday, March 3 | 11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. | Room 370

The CentriKid Preview and Pizza Party is for all 3rd – 6th graders and their families. This preview includes a free pizza lunch, an overview of camp, and a Q & A session.

LifeWay's CentriKid Camp is an action-packed overnight camp for 3rd – 6th graders. First Kids attend camp at Campbellsville University in Campbellsville, KY. Through this year's theme, ALL ACCESS, preteens will discover that the God of the universe wants to know them! The cost of camp is \$300 (\$50 deposit due April 7; balance due June 9). Scholarships are available.

Contact: Shannon Meadors, 615.664.6019,
Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org

**Teach VBS 2019: IN THE WILD!
June 17 – 21 | 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | all ages
Training | Sunday, May 5 | 12:00 noon**

At VBS 2019, toddlers to preteens will get up close and personal with elephants and egrets, polar bears and penguins, cockatoos and crocodiles! Along the journey, kids will grab their cameras, zoom in, and focus on Jesus! We need teachers and volunteers to lead the way in Bible study, crafts, music, snacks, nursery, admin, and rec. Please contact the Children's Ministry Office, and make plans to attend training.

Contact: Shannon Meadors, 615.664.6019,
Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org

Summer at First Kids!

Online registration is open for VBS, VBS Plus, Thrilling Thursdays, CentriKid Camp, and Music Arts Camp at NashvilleFirst.org/FirstKidsSummer.

Contact: Mary Bunn, Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org

COMING SUMMER 2019

**Generate Student Camp | June 3 – 7
VBS: In the Wild | June 17 – 21
Youth Choir Mission Tour | June 21 – 30
CentriKid Camp | July 8 – 12
Music Arts Camp | July 15 – 19**



NASHVILLE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

108 SEVENTH AVE SOUTH
NASHVILLE, TN 37203

FORWARD 200

Do you want to learn more?

“We’re going to develop this campus, so it can be a ministry tool that will help us reach a new generation for Christ,” says Dr. Frank R. Lewis, senior pastor.

For updates:

NashvilleFirst.org/Forward200

