

# FIRST *Connections*

The Monthly Magazine of Nashville First Baptist Church

# EASTER

*at Nashville First Baptist Church*

**SUNDAY / APRIL 21**

April 2019



# Frank and to the Point

*Dr. Frank R. Lewis, senior pastor*

Nashville First Baptist has experienced a very blessed and busy first quarter in 2019.

- We had about 250 people participate in Awaken Nashville, a time of fasting and prayer for their neighbors in Middle Tennessee.
- We provided the opportunity for about half of our membership to complete Dave Ramsey's *Financial Peace University*.
- We declared our commitment to be a spiritual witness in downtown for years to come with a historic vote to build the Sixth and Broadway Expansion. This commitment gives a new look to our campus providing Bible study space for Preschool, Children, and Student Ministries, a new Music Ministry Center, a new home for the Fellowship on Broadway and other outreach intensive events, a new Fellowship Hall, and a coffee shop to continue welcoming people to our campus.
- We celebrated the decision to move forward with construction by circling the East Building before its demolition as a church family to thank God for His provision in the past, and to recommit ourselves to His future ministry as construction begins.

And in the midst of all of this busyness, our offerings have been strong and our attendance has been steady. Church family, thank you for your support, your prayers, and the countless ways you have been an encouragement to me and your church ministry staff. We love and appreciate you and look forward to navigating the excitement that is before us as a church family.

Once construction begins, it will be a process that is under the careful administration of R.C. Mathews Contractor. We are thankful for their partnership and I encourage you to pray daily for the safety of every worker who will be on our campus. Pray that they will also sense the spiritual nature of the work they are doing on our campus. They are not just building a building, are they!

2020 marks the 200th Anniversary of Nashville First Baptist Church! The 200 is a year-long emphasis on serving our community, strengthening our gospel partnerships, sharing the hope of Christ, and giving thanks to God. Guest speakers, music programs, mission projects, and more will make this year-long emphasis a time of outreach to our city. I believe that we have an opportunity as never before to make the message of Christ known as we give of ourselves to share the gospel humbly and with authenticity in every event associated with The 200. Please pray daily for your church and her testimony in the life of our growing and changing city. From time to time I quote Dr. William Francis Powell's infamous words, and they are certainly appropriate today as we find ourselves looking forward under the Lordship of Christ,

"The past is prologue, the present is unparalleled, and the future is as bright as our faith in God!"

Church, we move forward together to minister to one another and to embrace our responsibility to care for the souls of all who are finding their way to Nashville. May God grant us a holy discontent with lesser things until the spirit fires of renewal and revival are burning brightly.

For the Gospel,





# Reflections

by Lauryn Moody



This past Sunday night Randy, a frequent guest from Room in the Inn [RITI] called me over and told me proudly that he had to be out the door by 5 the next morning to get to his new job as a plumber's



helper a few blocks away. FBC is a convenient location for our guests who work downtown, but there are many other reasons these men like to come to FBC for a night of shelter. Another man named Bruce, recently diagnosed with lung cancer and unable to continue in his roofing job

because of his illness, told me that when he comes to FBC, he feels like we are glad to see him, a welcome he does not feel everywhere.

These “faceless” figures from the streets walk through our doors and experience the love of God in your smiles and friendly words, in the meals you serve, in the camaraderie of a shared football game, in a warm coat and gloves. These homeless guests need our human touch and one-on-one conversations as much as they need our food and our mattresses, clean underwear and socks. FBC, you have been Jesus to them, and I want to thank you for opening your hearts in a beautiful way. I have seen the Body of Christ at work, and my heart is full.

Thanks to our staff liaisons, Brandon Owen and Pastor Frank Lewis, for their service and example. Thanks to the rest of our ministry staff who have led the way and served unselfishly. Thanks to the Innkeeping team: Wilburn and Susan Honeycutt, Greg and Trish White, Cheryl White, Melinda Mathews, Kathy Wilcox, John and Debbie McHenry, and my husband Bill. Thanks to Israel Garcia and Michael Valentine for custodial support. Thanks to Diane Jordan, Todd Lake, and Joy Jordan-Lake for the incredible Christ Clothes Closet.

At least 300 of you have served approximately 300 of “them”—12 guests for 24 Sunday nights. It takes a lot of hands for this ministry to be effective. You’ve finished this season well, but we are not done! If you want to know more about being involved in our RITI ministry at a deeper level, please contact me at [laurynbmoody@gmail.com](mailto:laurynbmoody@gmail.com).

## Welcome to Our New Member!



Welcome!  
Mary-Carol McDonald

## Happy Birthday!

April 30: Michael Valentine

## Happy Anniversary!

April 1: Mary Bunn (2014) – 5 years  
Michael Valentine (2010) – 9 years

April 22: Sarah Galloway (2014) – 5 years  
Marilu White (2015) – 4 years

April 24: Israel Garcia (2006) – 13 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](http://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

*Celebrate Resurrection Sunday with us on April 21!*

# Playing in the Intersection

by Alan Lowe

Five years after moving to Music City, I watched the implosion of a midrise building at the corner of 6th Avenue North and Church Street. That demolition made room for the construction of 555 Church Street, a high-rise condominium that opened in 1999. It brought urban living back to downtown for the first time since 1964. That implosion set off the explosion of residential growth in Nashville's urban core. Developers tripped over each other, bringing architects, contractors, and cranes to town.

Over a year ago, Melonye and I watched the implosion of LifeWay's Centennial Tower. Sullivan Tower soon followed, taking with it the office where I worked for seven years. The former Baptist campus is now becoming Nashville Yards, a multi-use development which recently announced two additional towers across Church Street to meet the insatiable demand for downtown space.

Now home to an estimated one million people, Music City became Tennessee's largest city in 2017. By 2040, it is projected that we will have two million neighbors. Along with our three major interstates flooded daily, we now have an urban flair and diversity that was simply unimaginable when our family moved here in the early 1990s.

Several new boutique, lifestyle hotels have opened downtown, most with roof terraces and multiple dining concepts. Among them is one with an automotive theme—a chandelier in the lobby is made from bumpers, hoods, trunks, headlights, taillights, and hubcaps! Inspired by a fictitious, eccentric character, the hotel often displays a restored sixties Lincoln convertible. If that isn't enough, how about a sectioned, widened 20,000-pound 1956 Greyhound Scenicruiser bus lounge on the roof terrace?

It has been said that this generation has one defining characteristic: access—access to information and opportunities that our ancestors never even suspected. You name it, and it's available—much of it delivered to your inbox or doorstep. Most of the information and communication is effectively free. Call, text, or email anyone, anywhere, anytime. It makes us wonder if we will even need to speak to each other 20 years from now!

Another characteristic of our generation is diversity. I volunteered for several years with the pastoral care staff at Siloam Health. Often with interpreters, we would listen, pray, minister, counsel, and witness to patients, many of whom were immigrants or refugees. The American Immigration Council estimates about five percent of Tennessee's population are immigrants. Another four percent have at least one immigrant parent. Our office recently hired an architect from Europe.



Could Nashville be a modern-day Corinth? Corinth was a strategic commercial location in ancient Greece. One of the world's busiest intersections, Corinth was home to people from all over the world. The Holy Spirit created a fellowship of believers in Corinth, a fellowship made up of pagan and pious, pauper and plutocrat. No surprise that the Corinthian Church struggled. They had problems with pagan philosophy, inconsiderate intellectualism, lack of integrity, immorality, abuse of spiritual gifts, dissension between rich and poor, abuse of power and position, and a lack of love. Sound familiar? Embracing such a diverse community can be challenging for a church. As we heard growing up, "It's dangerous to play in the intersection!"

Years ago, a pastor shared that a church member once told him that he was a “model preacher.” He smiled and felt pretty good about himself—until he got home and his wife reminded him that a model is a miniature imitation of the real thing. Does First Baptist aspire to be a “model church”?

God never intended for Israel’s worship methods to be permanent, whether Tabernacle or Temple. They pointed to, indeed modeled, God’s presence, purpose, and plan for redemption. New Testament worship is both different and the same, but it’s still only a model—miniature imitation vs. real thing. Every form of worship runs the risk of becoming “a form of godliness but a denial of its power.”

Recently I heard on the Fish, one of Nashville’s Christian radio stations, “Social media is so much like high school. You get a lot of likes and think, ‘I’m so popular.’ Then it sets in, ‘What if I don’t live up to their expectations?’” One study concluded: 25% of the people you know like you, and will continue to like you no matter what; 50% could go either way, and 25% don’t like you and never will. That thought alone might explain Jesus’ ministry, betrayal, and crucifixion.

### How will First Baptist effectively worship and minister in a city of two million people?

How will First Baptist effectively worship and minister in a city of two million people? Professionals. Eccentrics. Politicians. Middle class. Wealthy. Poor. Immigrants. Singles. How will we maintain connections in such a growing, diverse church? How will First Baptist reach those people who have zero history in church, zero connection to God? We are taking bold steps to be a part of Nashville’s dramatic future. By the time you read this, the East Building may be demolished to make room for the much-anticipated Forward 200 program. There, Music City! First Baptist has spoken! We are making room for you, all two million of you! And we are playing in your intersection.



## You know you want to help! Run with it!

The St. Jude Rock ‘n’ Roll Nashville Marathon is Saturday, April 27, and we need volunteers to:

- hand out flyers at Music City Center on April 25 and 26, prior to the marathon.
- host guests from 4 – 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 27.
- man stations at each restroom, at our entrances, and in our hallways; prep and clean those areas for Sunday worship.

With an RSVP, an overnight stay at church is provided for member volunteers. To help: [Lori.Towns@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Lori.Towns@NashvilleFirst.org)

ST. JUDE  
**Rock'n'Roll**  
MARATHON & 1/2  
NASHVILLE

April 27



# The Passion

Composed by Greg Nelson  
Orchestration and choral settings by David Hamilton

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

There is nothing more significant to 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 Forest Hills Baptist and Nashville First Baptist Sanctuary Choirs, The Nashville Praise Symphony, and Special Guest Soloists:



## Travis Cottrell

Travis Cottrell is a highly respected worship leader, songwriter, arranger, and author. He has won multiple Dove Awards and nominations, performed in Carnegie Hall, recorded at Abbey Road, led worship in churches and at conferences worldwide. Cottrell has used his unique blend of rich hymns and modern worship songs to create a unified atmosphere in worship. For the last 21 years, he has worked alongside Beth Moore as the event worship leader for Living Proof Ministries. Cottrell has seen God do immeasurably more than he could ever ask or imagine. He serves as worship pastor at Englewood Baptist Church in Jackson, Tennessee, where he lives with his wife Angela and their three children—Jack, Lily, and Levi.



## David Ask

Recording artist and author David Ask grew up in a small town in Minnesota but now lives in Hendersonville, Tennessee, with his beautiful wife and children. His latest project, *What a Perfect Day*, is a beautiful mix of sacred and musical theatre.



## Cindy Roberts

Cindy Roberts is a singer, a teacher, and a worship leader in Nashville, TN. She has led worship for churches and women's conferences all over the U.S. She performed and recorded with Walt Disney World's *Voices of Liberty*, and is currently a soloist and session singer in Nashville. Cindy and her husband Dave established Middle Tennessee Performing Arts Academy in 2011, where she acts as director and vocal instructor. Cindy is grateful beyond words for her husband and their beautiful children and grandchildren, who daily inspire her song.



## Rod Fletcher

Bass/baritone veteran of oratorio, opera, and musical theater, Rod Fletcher has performed with the Fred Waring Show, Montovani Orchestra, ReGeneration, Disney's *Voices of Liberty* (12 years), and the Grand Ole Opry (background singer for 22 years). He is also a Nashville session vocalist. Fletcher resides in Brentwood, Tennessee, with his wife Joy and daughter Jaclyn.



## David Hamilton, conductor

David Hamilton is an accomplished musician known for his versatility, artistic passion, and for his reputation as a premiere orchestral arranger, respected conductor, producer, pianist, and composer. His music spans a wide range of musical genres. Hamilton has conducted leading orchestras across the U.S. and at Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, and on scoring stages around the world. He is also blessed to serve as a lay leader in the music ministry at Brentwood Baptist Church. The quote by Saint Irenaeus "The Glory of God is man fully alive" holds deep meaning for David, and it rings true with the message of *The Passion*—God's redemption shining in our great need of grace.



## Greg Nelson, composer

Greg Nelson is a composer, producer, and author who has written or co-written several Christian songs and extended musical works for soloists, orchestra, and choir. Nelson spends his time writing, as well as encouraging and mentoring young creatives. He travels to Russia every year to teach songwriting at a worship conference and works with aspiring artists and producers, one-on-one, in studios there. Greg lives with his wife Pam in Franklin, Tennessee; they are active members of Judson Baptist Church in Nashville. They have two children and four grandchildren.

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

 **FIRST EVENTS****The Passion****April 14 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary**

Experience Holy Week through worship and music, featuring the Nashville First and Forest Hills Baptist combined choirs with the Nashville Praise Symphony.

**Good Friday | Church Offices Closed****April 19****Business Meeting****April 24****Marathon Outreach****April 27**

You know you want to help! Run with it!

Contact: [Lori.Towns@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Lori.Towns@NashvilleFirst.org)

**Discover First****New Program for Those Who Want to Know More  
Sunday, April 28 | Following Worship**

Discover First is an opportunity for you to get to know the staff of Nashville First Baptist Church and learn more about our history, vision, mission, and ministries. Our staff will gather with guests in the Chapel immediately following worship. Whether you're new to Nashville First or you've been here for awhile, we would love for you to join us at Discover First!

**The First Baby Shower****May 1 | 6:00 p.m. | Fellowship Hall**

During our Midweek Prayer Service on May 1, we will rejoice with our members who have added a little one to their family this past year and to those who are expecting! Our church family will get to shower them with love, happy wishes, gifts, and prayers. If you are a new or expecting parent, please register to attend this special evening with Mary Bunn, children's ministry assistant. Contact: Mary Bunn, [Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org)

**Committing This Day****Youth and Children's Choirs****Spring Music Presentation****May 5 | 5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary****First Kids Palm Sunday Potluck Brunch****April 14 | 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. | Room 150**

The Childhood Ministries Committee will host a special potluck brunch with activities to help families worship during Holy Week. All ages are invited to join us. Please bring a dish to share  
Contact: Shannon Meadors, 615.664.6019,  
[Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org).

**Register Now  
for CentriKid Camp!****July 8 – 12****Campbellsville University in Campbellsville, KY****Grades 3 – 6 | \$300**

CentriKid is an overnight camp for preteens in Grades 3 – 6 with awesome Bible study, kid-style worship, mega rec, and chosen tracks. Scholarships are available. Please contact the Children's Ministry Office with questions or to register. Contact: Shannon Meadors, [Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org), 615.664.6019

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

At VBS 2019, rising kindergartners to preteens that have completed 6th grade 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. Sign up today, and make plans to join us for the VBS leadership training and lunch on Sunday, May 5, at noon. Contact: Shannon Meadors, [Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Shannon.Meadors@NashvilleFirst.org)

**Summer at First Kids**

Create memories | Build friendships | Experience life with Jesus

Online registration is now open for all of our summer programs at [NashvilleFirst.org/FirstKidsSummer!](http://NashvilleFirst.org/FirstKidsSummer!)

- VBS and VBS Plus: June 17 – 21
- Thrilling Thursdays / Parents Day Out: June 27 & July 25
- CentriKid Camp: July 8 – 12
- Music Arts Camp and MAC Plus: July 15 – 19

Contact: Mary Bunn, [Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org)

**COMING SUMMER 2019****Generate Student Camp | June 3 – 5****[NashvilleFirst.org/Camp2019](http://NashvilleFirst.org/Camp2019)****Youth Choir Mission Tour | June 21 – June 30****Parents Night Out****April 12 | 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.****Ages 6 weeks – Grade 6****\$25 per family**

While mom and dad are away, the children get to play! At every PNO, preschoolers to preteens enjoy a pizza party, crafts, games, and a movie complete with popcorn. Babies and toddlers enjoy center play, cuddles, and stories. Please RSVP by noon Thursday, April 11. You may register at [NashvilleFirst.org/PNO](http://NashvilleFirst.org/PNO), or contact Mary Bunn, children's ministry assistant, at [Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org](mailto:Mary.Bunn@NashvilleFirst.org).



**NASHVILLE**  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

108 SEVENTH AVE SOUTH  
NASHVILLE, TN 37203

# FORWARD 200

## The 200 Celebration

On March 10, we adjourned to the Broadway patio for a prayer of thanksgiving and commitment, thanking God for 30 years of ministry in the East Building. We also prayed for our THE 200 Broadway addition!



Photos by Blair Wheeler