

## THE MESSENGER

# JANUARY 2026

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

We are in the early days of 2026. If you are like me, these are the sorts of days that lend themselves toward thinking about what to expect from the year ahead. Some folks like to make resolutions – taking up some new practice or laying aside a bad habit. Some folks make plans for significant life changes – retirements, moves, school applications. Some just hope to carry on.



The above words from II Corinthians 5, are an important reminder that if our identity is rooted in Christ, then we have been fundamentally changed – what Paul calls “new creation.” He further explains that everything old has passed away and everything has become new. These words sound good to us, and they certainly sounded good to those who heard/read them for the first time. These were a people who knew life under an oppressive regime. They were a small and not very powerful group of church folk.

Becoming new had to sound great to them. And it does for us too. All that baggage from before has passed away, everything has become new. Often, our trouble is that there is some of that baggage that we like. And so we resist the newness of our identity in Christ.

Perhaps in this new year, as we imagine what lies ahead, we would do well to reflect on the baggage that we want to leave behind and commit to practices that enable us to do so. Maybe a yearlong commitment seems like too much. Perhaps, we should start with today. (After all, Jesus once reminded us that “today’s trouble is enough for today.”) Then, we can do it again tomorrow.

# HYMN HIGHLIGHT

By Nenette Measels, Minister of Music and Worship

During this Christian season of Epiphany, I want to focus on Graham Kendrick (b. England, August 2, 1950), British Christian singer, prolific songwriter and worship leader. The son of a Baptist minister, he's written music for over thirty years (126 hymns, #156, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*), and to date has released 38 albums. He is best known for his songs "Shine, Jesus, Shine," "Knowing You," and "The Servant King." In 1987 he helped co-found the March for Jesus, which today is a global phenomenon in which Christians take their faith to the streets in a celebration of Christ. In 1995 Kendrick received a Dove Award for his international work, and he remains an active advocate for Compassion International, which is a Christian child sponsorship organization dedicated to the long-term development of children living in poverty around the world, and also is a contributor to CompassionArt, an organization with the aim of generating income from works of art to assist in the relief of suffering around the planet.

"Shine, Jesus, Shine" is regularly highly placed in hymn popularity polls. Fellow songwriter and former Kendrick bandmember, Stuart Townend has said, "I have no doubt that in 100 years the name of Kendrick will be alongside Watts and Wesley in the list of the UK's greatest hymnwriters".\*

## *Shine, Jesus, Shine*

Lord, the light of Your love is shining,  
in the midst of the darkness shining;  
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,  
set us free by the truth You now bring us;  
shine on me. Shine on me.

## **Chorus**

Shine, Jesus, shine,  
fill this land with the Father's glory;  
blaze, Spirit, blaze,  
set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow,  
flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
send forth Your Word,  
Lord, and let there be light.

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence,  
from the shadows into Your radiance;  
by the blood I may enter Your brightness;  
search me, try me, consume all my darkness;  
shine on me. Shine on me.

As we gaze on Your kingly brightness  
so our faces display Your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory;  
mirrored here, may our lives tell Your story;  
shine on me. shine on me.

[\\*Hymnary.org](http://Hymnary.org)

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

## Summary of Operational Budget Income & Expense through December 2025

### Items of Interest

- **Online Giving** is simple and convenient, and you do not have to set up a Realm account to give online. Visit: <https://onrealm.org/fbcjeff/give/now> to initiate an online gift today!
- **Designated Benevolence Fund total** (as of 12/31/2025) = \$35,990.32

	September	October	November	December
<b>Income</b>	\$23,162.03	\$42,232.87	\$52,496.78	\$33,983.58
<b>Expenses</b>	\$23,162.03	\$32,709.54	\$24,481.16	\$34,392.01
<b>Net</b>	(\$2,583.50)	\$9,523.33	\$28,015.62	(\$408.43)
<b>YTD</b>	\$87.65	\$9,610.98	\$37,626.50	\$37,218.17

## ATTENDANCE

SUNDAY	BIBLE STUDY	IN-PERSON WORSHIP
<b>December 7</b>	42	95
<b>December 14</b>	36	105
<b>December 21</b>	38	85
<b>December 24</b>	—	119
<b>December 28</b>	23	70

## DEACONS & MINISTER OF THE WEEK

- January 4:** Susan Garber/Jim Wilson/Chad Hartsock  
**January 11:** Peggy Dalton/Karen Smith/Nenette Measels  
**January 18:** Carolyn Blevins/Betty Watkins/Major Treadway  
**January 25:** Jean Love/Jim Wilson/Chad Hartsock

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

By Bethany Davenport, Chair, Children and Youth Committee

First Jeff Kids had a busy Advent season! We kicked off December with Hanging of the Green and making Advent wreaths. We gathered for our annual white elephant party at the home of the Treadways. We enjoyed our family Christmas service mid-month followed by cookies and cocoa. Our Music Makers sang beautifully in the service on December 14th. Advent is always a special time at First Baptist and is made more special by the participation of our families and children! Thank you to the Children's Team, leaders, volunteers, parents, and everyone who makes these events possible!



This year there is a new feature in the Prayers of the People series from CBF, it is Blessings for Every Season. This is where we get our Missionary of the Week and the CBF Scripture of the Week. From time to time I will share these with you.

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## A Blessing for the In-betweens

Blessed are you who mourn life's transitions.

Blessed are you who yearn for the things that used to be.

Blessed are you who feel torn between relief and sorrow at a moment of leaving.

Blessed are you when the person you thought you'd become, the things you thought you'd do, are no longer possible.

Blessed are you who are waiting for closure.

Blessed are you when you feel neither here nor there, when you're not sure if you fit in anywhere at all.

Blessed are you when you are too tired to embrace change and process what you've lost.

Blessed are you when you feel unequipped to start something new.

Blessed are you when the path is no longer clear, and you feel you've lost your way.

Blessed are you when you feel like the world is moving against you.

Blessed are you when life keeps rolling along, with people leaving or moving on or dying, but you're still here, wondering why. Why am I still here when so many others don't get to be? What is my purpose?

To all those experiencing life's in-betweens, know that the One who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Within the grief of these liminal spaces, God is there.

In the stillness of the in-between, neither here nor there, the One who has brought light in the darkness and joy in the morning whispers to you, saying:

The One who created you has not abandoned you.

You are not finished.

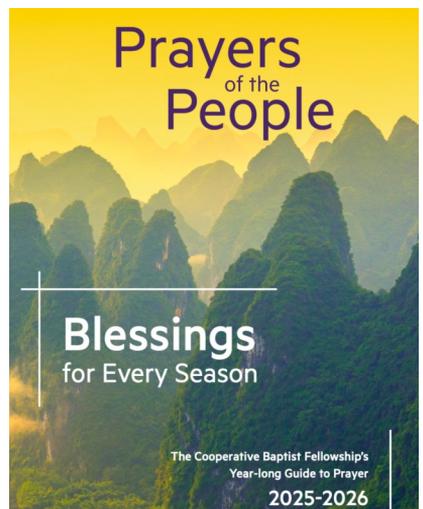
There is still work to be done.

There is still more beauty to behold,  
more joy and grief to experience,  
more love to give and receive.

You are still unfolding, ever-creating,  
ever-becoming the person

God made you to be.

You are not alone.





*Church Ministries  
Meeting  
Sunday  
January 18, 2026*

**In the Fellowship Hall immediately  
following the Worship service  
Lunch will be provided**

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**SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES**

9:30am Sunday Bible Studies

10:45am Worship Service

**CONTACT INFO**

(865) 475-3826; (865) 262-9026 (Fax)

**Church Office Hours:**

Monday-Thursday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Find us at [www.fbcjeff.org](http://www.fbcjeff.org) or follow us online on *Facebook* and *YouTube*

**STAFF**

Angie France

Cyndi Harrell ([charrell@fbcjeff.org](mailto:charrell@fbcjeff.org))

Chad Hartsock ([chartsock@fbcjeff.org](mailto:chartsock@fbcjeff.org))

Nenette Measels ([nmeasels@fbcjeff.org](mailto:nmeasels@fbcjeff.org))

Cameron Rowlett

Melanie Simpson

Karen Treadway ([ktreadway@fbcjeff.org](mailto:ktreadway@fbcjeff.org))

Major Treadway ([major@fbcjeff.org](mailto:major@fbcjeff.org))

Organist

Ministry Assistant

Minister for Students

Minister of Music and Worship

Video Editor

Pianist

Administrative Coordinator

Senior Pastor

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