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A PUBLICATION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF INVERNESS

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November 2025

FOLLOWING GOD PRAYERFULLY AND PASSIONATELY!

“By His Grace”

As Christians, we know that we are commanded to be thankful. We even realize that the “Who” we are to thank is as important as the giving of thanks. However, sometimes we lack the attitude of gratitude. We can become overwhelmed or burdened to the point where we don't feel very grateful.

There is a passage in Colossians that has thanksgiving saturated within it:

Colossians 3:15-17 NASB

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

¹⁷ Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Did you notice that some form of the word “thanks” is in each verse? How is thanksgiving connected to the peace of Christ, the word of Christ, and the name of Christ? I am glad you asked.

Consider our walk with Jesus Christ as a gardener, cultivating the soil in preparation for the harvest. In Colossians 3:15, we have the first step: ***Pull the weeds with the Peace of Christ!*** The command is to submit to the umpire of Christ, allowing Him to guard our hearts and attitudes. If there is anything that does not glorify God, we are to get rid of it like pulling weeds.

Next, in Colossians 3:16, we are called to ***Plant the seeds with the Word of Christ!*** After removing what does not belong, we allow God’s Word to put in our lives what He desires. God does not just tell us what not to do; by His grace, He gives us what we need to replace the weeds. This is evident in our relationship with one another, as we help each other grow in Christ.

Finally, to get the harvest, we are to ***Produce the fruit in the Name of Christ!*** Colossians 3:17 shows us that both our actions and our words are to be under His authority. Because we are growing in the image of Christ, we remove what does not belong, plant what does, and then live for His glory by the fruit that comes.

This is a practical guideline to our sanctification, how we are to grow in Christ.

But why is thanksgiving spread through each of the three verses? Because thanksgiving is an issue of grace. When you are thankful (“grace” full), you are aware of the grace of God. You recognize that His grace got you where you are, is keeping you in Him, and will see you to the end. When you live by His amazing grace, being thankful is a natural result. You are thankful for what He has done, is doing, and will do. What a wonderful way to live!

One more thing before I close. I want to thank you for your love and support for me and my family. October is Pastor Appreciation Month, and I have felt very appreciated! Thank you! The cards, gifts, and kind words have meant so much to me. I am very blessed to be your pastor, and I sincerely love each of you. And you know the best part? It is because of His grace that I get to be here and get to know you. Because of His grace, we get to serve together and see lives changed and God glorified. Because of His grace, we have the gift of salvation and the hope of eternal life. There is no better way to live... thankfulness flows as we realize the power of His amazing grace!

We give thanks to the One who is good. He only gives good and perfect gifts. We can trust Him with our lives, depend upon Him in our walk, and anticipate living with Him for eternity. Jesus Christ is worthy of our praise!

By His Grace!

Pastor Byron

Contact Pastor Byron at byron@fbcinverness.com

First Baptist Church of Inverness
550 Pleasant Grove Road
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Worship Ministry



“Well... You gotta die.”

Years ago, I participated in our church’s evangelistic outreach ministry, FAITH. Our “key question” to people we visited was *“In your personal opinion, what do you understand it takes for a person to go to heaven?”* Answers varied widely, from the theologically deep to the clueless. But during a visit with a certain family, I believe the most insightful answer came from a seven year-old girl, who looked at a team member and said the following:

“Well... You gotta die.”

Before you chuckle at that, you might want to consider just how profound that answer is. Too often, we find ourselves trying to co-opt Jesus, to find a place for Him alongside our own personal philosophy and worldview. We want Jesus for the things He can do for us - heal us and our friends and family, provide for us, deal with our anxieties, even save us from Hell. We’re willing to grant Jesus some remuneration, like attending church, maybe serving a little. Otherwise, Jesus is little more than an apparatus to our daily lives, kept safely on a shelf with a glass door, *“Break in case of emergency”* written on the glass. In other words - we want to live our lives with as little disruption from Jesus as possible.

I do not think that Philosopher Blaise Pascal did humanity any favors when he posited the idea that *“there is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man”*. This tends to imply that we only need God to “fill the void”, therefore completing our lives, instead of becoming Savior and LORD of our lives, as is His desire.

There is a story found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, collectively known as the story of the rich young ruler. *“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”* asks this man of Jesus. Jesus tells him to keep the Commandments of God. The rich young ruler responds that he has. Mark adds a detail - that Jesus, looking at him, loved him - then tells him *“One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”* But the rich young ruler was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

The rich young ruler, like us, wanted Jesus on his terms. Jesus demands the whole of us, body, mind, and spirit. He righteously commands us to walk in holiness. He in love demands that we offload anything that hinders our love of Him and others. His command to the rich young ruler to liquidate and divest all wealth is not a universal prescription; rather, it was the necessary surgery for the individual living a life of wealth and luxury in the midst of great suffering all around him. The greater point is that we must part ways with anything that stands between us and the will of our Master.

We must understand this plainly: If Jesus Christ is our Lord indeed, He is entitled to command us. If He cannot, He is not our Lord. In other words - you gotta die.

One of today’s biggest battlegrounds is a debate over human sexuality, whether what had heretofore been considered by society as perverse behavior is just different behavior, and those who would speak against it are merely bigoted and unenlightened. I can only speak here within a Kingdom context: The issue has never been homosexuality or heterosexuality, **it is holiness**. I have far too many temptations of my own to grapple with, than to obsess with the sins of others. But to those so afflicted I offer this: You are a person God loves and Christ died for, even in your sin and trespass. The nail-scarred hand of Christ reaches out to

Continued on Page 3

Birthdays

Wyatt Strong	11/1	Elizabeth Brown	11/10	Donna Bilotti	11/19
Journey Borozan	11/2	Suzi Gemmell	11/10	Mark Conley	11/22
Wayne Beck	11/3	Karen Kaiser	11/10	Nichole Dileo	11/22
Lisa Blonkenfeld	11/3	Elaine Kaiser	11/12	Elsie Ramos	11/22
Denny Dingler	11/3	Sharon Turner	11/12	Velma Janzer	11/24
Jennifer Cocuzzo	11/4	Toni Maynor	11/13	Mary Smalley	11/24
Josh Strong	11/4	Paul Blum	11/13	Tina Mansfield	11/27
Danny Tvenstrup	11/4	Joya Clark	11/15	Tom Miles	11/28
DeAnna Davis	11/5	Margaret Davis	11/15	Samarah Posadny	11/28
Bea Johnson	11/6	Hazel Clyde	11/15	Sunshine Hahn	11/29
Maggie Cerny	11/8	Sophia Morales	11/15		
Olive De Noma	11/9	Marjorie Pratt	11/15		
Ruth Hooper	11/9	Jana Morgan	11/19		

If you have a November birthday and your name does not show up on the Birthday List, it means we are missing some or all of your information. Please log into the Church Center App and update your information or contact Debbie Jolly at debbie@fbcinverness.com or by calling the church office at 352-726-1252 so that we may update your information. The computer system requires a month, day, and year to enter the date of birth. Thank you.

Harvest Offering

As we near the end of the year, the Finance Committee has been reviewing our current financial status as we prepare the proposed church budget for 2026. We have currently overspent our general fund revenues by \$86,800 as of September 30. Even after we froze certain expenditures and restricted purchases, we still have a major shortfall for 2025.

After praying about the situation, we believe we should examine our giving as individuals and families. The chart produced from our financial records shows the number of giving units (individuals and families) and how their year-to-date giving relates to the overall giving of the congregation.

We are asking everyone to pray and seek God's guidance as to what we can give over and above our normal giving for this special harvest offering for the month of November 2025.

Number of Giving Units	YTD 2025 Range
19	\$7,000 and above
20	\$4,000 to \$6,999
13	\$3,000 to \$3,999
20	\$2,000 to \$2,999
36	\$1,000 to \$1,999
26	\$500 to \$999
80	\$1 to \$499
214 Total Units	

Memorials & Honors

In Honor of Ron Morgan
For: Mailbox Bible Club
From: Ray & LaVerne Morrison

In Memory of Jane Nelson's Mother
For: Regular Offering
From: Larry & Sherry White

In Honor of Pastor Byron, Pastor John, Pastor Adam, & Pastor Matt
For: Mission Dignity Offering
From: Larry & Sherry White

Thank You Note

We would like to say a big “THANK YOU!” for your show of appreciation this past month. We are humbled to be able to serve alongside you, glorifying God in every way that we can – only by His grace! Your kind words, touches, gifts, and cards are greatly appreciated! God is surely good – All the time!

Pastor Byron & Kim
 Pastor John & Carolyn
 Pastor Adam & Tiffany
 Pastor Matt & Brittany

Welcome To The Family

New Church Members

Matt Duryea
 Thea Wuthnow
 Nica LaChance

Veteran's Day

Veteran's Day Concert—November 7th

You are invited Friday, November 7th at 7:00 pm to the Citrus Youth Educational Symphonic Orchestra's (CYESO) Veteran's Day concert in the First Baptist Inverness Sanctuary. Please join them as they honor our veterans. CYESO uses our church facility for their weekly practices.

Veteran's Day Program—November 10th

Grace Christian School Students and Staff would like to invite the veterans of our church congregation and their families to a special program presented by the students honoring YOU! Please join us on Monday, November 10 at 10 AM in the Sanctuary for a time of recognition and honoring our veterans. We are pleased to welcome Dr. Thomas L. Marshall (USCG) as a special guest speaker.

Continued from Page 2

you in love, and commands me to love you too. While you draw breath, like me you have the means to set aside that which separates you from Christ. But we cannot call what God calls sin, not sin; and we certainly cannot take pride in it. I invite you to the altar with me. You lay your sins on it, and I shall lay mine. And together we can pursue the cross of Jesus as brothers and sisters.

Is Jesus Your Savior? If you answered “yes”, is Jesus your Lord?

The invitation of the cross is to come and die...

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.’” **Matthew 16:24-25**

Selah,
 Pastor John

Contact Pastor John at john@fbcinverness.com

Mission Team



Hello Church Family!

First and foremost, thank you to everyone that prayed, donated, helped out, or even came and purchased something at the Rummage for a Reason event in September! We raised over a thousand dollars for missions! It is a huge blessing to have such an amazing church step up and help like that when they can! Thank you so much again!

Coming up we have our mission trip to Atlanta Georgia in December! We have had so much excitement for it and I'm excited for everyone who has never been to get this awesome experience! We even have some youth joining this year and I couldn't praise God enough for the ability to show these young ones what it means to be on mission in real life! They've heard adults speak of missions before but now the youth get to experience it for themselves and that's truly a blessing from God! Please continue to pray for the group as the days get closer and that all arrangements are figured out accordingly so that the group gets up and back safe and that they enjoy their time on mission during those days.

Exciting news coming up! Pastor Byron is in the process of developing a mission opportunity in Spain! It will have a connection with Biblical Counseling and everything exciting the Lord is doing with that ministry! Please be praying for this opportunity as it continues to take shape and keep an eye out as more information will be coming available.

May God bless you all!
 ~Mission Team

Book Review

Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms, by Justin Whitmel Earley. Published by Zondervan Books; Grand Rapids, MI, 2021.

Raising children has always been and always will be work. Hard work. Good work. It is work because it takes a conscious effort on the part of the parents to raise their children. From the time they are born when they rely on you for literally everything that they need, to the time they begin to make their own decisions, to the time they move out on their own, and even to the time when they begin to start a family of their own, the parents work is never really done.

A major part of that work for the Christian home is raising your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (another way of saying care and council of the Lord). What does this mean? One of the major concerns raised by the reformers and puritans is importance of family worship and training. In the preface of the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, we read, "Truly, there is one root cause for the decay of religion today which we must mention and urge correction concerning. This is the neglect of worshipping God in families by those who have the responsibility to lead in doing this.

Perhaps the gross ignorance and instability of many, as well as the profaneness of others, can be blamed upon their parents and leaders, who have not trained them up in the way they should walk when they were young. Rather, they have neglected the many solemn commands that the Lord has given to them to catechize and teach children, so that their early years would be seasoned with the knowledge of the truth of God as revealed in the Scriptures. Furthermore, perhaps their neglect of prayer and leading in other duties of religion in their families, along with their being bad examples because of their nominal conversion, led others to neglecting and having contempt for piety and religion.

Many are convicted they should have family worship, but recognize that it is hard in this fast paced day. We are also competing against many others for the time, attention, and minds of our children. Recognizing this struggle, Justin Earley set out to try and help parents live their whole days intentionally. In this book he points out key moments in the day that can be utilized in forming parents, forming children, and forming the family unit by developing habits that are conducive to integrating godly principles, teaching opportunities, and worship practices. While not everyone will be able to adapt to his whole plan, many would benefit at least from bits and pieces in this book. While it may not be the best book on building a godly home (and certainly not the only one in a crowded marketplace of books), I certainly would recommend it as a tool to help refine the process in the Christian home.

In Christ,
Pastor Adam Wuthnow

Contact Pastor Adam at adam@fbcinverness.com

Thanksgiving Schedule



The Church will be closed on Wednesday, November 26th and Thursday, November 27th for the Thanksgiving Holiday. There will be no classes or activities those days.
Happy Thanksgiving!

Drama



**Do you ENJOY speaking in front of others?
Or....are you the SHY ONE?
Either way, WE WANT YOU!**

Drama club meets one Sunday per month after service. We would like to have enough members to perform a drama once a month, SO COME JOIN US! Using short skits, our goal is to deliver a profound message that glorifies our Lord, and brings the congregation closer to Him. If you are interested, TEXT Donna Phillips 954-868-1150.

Ministry of Warmth



Greetings from the Ministry of Warmth!

Psalms 92:1 It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High. (NKJV)

Come and join us as we knit and crochet items for the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes and for local ministries, reaching others with God's love.

Some items we make are hats, hair scrunchies, headbands, bracelets, and washcloths. The hats can also be made using looms.

Also, we have the knitting needles, crochet hooks, looms, and yarn available. We thank God for His generous provision to our ministry.

We meet every Thursday afternoon 2:00—4:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. For more information or questions, please contact Willie Howe at 352-726-1252.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Biblical Counseling



The Erosion of Marriage

Have you thought that our country is going through a time of erosion of one of our most sacred institutions, marriage?

According to a government census in 2011, it reported that 7.6 million male/female couples were cohabitating without the benefit of marriage. The census also reported 514,735 cohabitating same-sex couples in 2010.

Why is the honored institution of marriage eroding? I suppose we could say that for many, cohabitation serves as a test drive for a relationship before committing to marriage. As marriage rates decrease over time, it appears to contribute to the rise in living together. As couples live together for longer periods, this can tend to delay or forego marriage. Long gone are the days when this practice was relatively rare and considered a sexual aberration just a few years ago. In today's world, it barely raises eyebrows anymore.

It seems like even in religious circles and the church, the barriers of sexual restraint have or are crumbling.

I pray that professing Christian pastors and laypersons do not suggest that the sexual regulations outlined in the Bible were merely “cultural” and the restrictions imposed in biblical times may be ignored in our contemporary times, “post-modern” world.

The truth taught in the New Testament regarding sexual conduct is not cultural. It is based upon moral principles divinely imposed by the Creator, metaphorically represented as the “Potter” who “has a right over the clay” (Romans 9:21). These biblical restrictions are to prevail in all societies, cultures, and for all time. When we argue that sexual immorality is nothing more than a culturally conditioned activity, we might as well say that idolatry, thievery, covetousness, extortion, drunkenness, and murder likewise depend upon the variations of culture (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:9-10).

In the New Testament, all sexual activity between people outside of a legitimate marriage relationship is designated as sexual immorality. The Greek word porneia is a generic term, and it includes sexual intercourse between unmarried people or married people with other partners outside their marriage. Porneia also embraces such actions as homosexuality, promiscuity, paedophilia, and prostitution; in a word, “any kind of illicit sexual intercourse.”

The apostle Paul clearly taught that to avoid sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman should have her own husband (1 Corinthians 7:2). If one cannot exercise self-control, his (or her) desire for sexual fulfillment, they should marry, not promiscuously indulge, driven by their own lust (1 Corinthians 7:9).

In Corinth, apostle Paul, bucking the “culture” of the Corinthians, warned: “The body is not for sexual immorality” (1 Corinthians 6:13). When an unmarried couple engages in such activities, the marriage bed is “defiled” and God will judge this immoral activity (Hebrews 13:4; cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). Jesus Christ taught that sexual immorality degrades and condemns a person (Matthew 15:19-20). There are consequences for living together, apart from a legitimate marital relationship.

God created marriage for a man and a woman. God’s plan was designed for maximum human happiness, the welfare of society, and the facilitation of one’s journey to heaven! Violations of God’s sacred marital code assault each of these goals.

Do you feel your marriage has diminished or eroded with time? Would you like assistance in addressing your concerns about your marriage? Please reach out to our biblical counseling services:

Jim and Paula Johnson, (904) 704-8260/(904) 860-0986/john525136@gmail.com,
Pastor Byron Brown (352) 726-1252/byron@fbcinverness.com

Time Change



Daylight Saving Time ends at 1:00 am on Sunday, November 2nd. Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour before going to bed on Saturday night, November 1st.

Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child



Thank you to everyone who participated in the OCC Packing Party! We appreciate everyone who packed boxes and gave donations to make the party possible! If you have packed shoeboxes at home, or are planning to pack shoeboxes at home, you may bring them to church now or drop them off during Collection Week.

Drop Off Week Schedule

Monday, November 17—Saturday, November 22: 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Sunday, November 23: 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Monday, November 24: 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Trip to the Operation Christmas Child Processing Center in Atlanta!

Itinerary:

We will leave Thursday afternoon, December 11 to travel to Atlanta.

Our volunteer days at the OCC Center are Friday, December 12 and Saturday, December 13. We will return late on Saturday evening, December 13.

New this year:

We are asking participating adults to contribute a \$100 donation per person to help cover the expense of hotel rooms and fuel.

Scholarships will be provided to the youth and are available to the adults if needed.

Please contact Pastor Byron at byron@fbcinverness.com if you have any questions.

You will need to volunteer for both days. Please scan the QR code below to go to the Event page on the church center app. Use the 2 links on that page to sign up for both days.



Citrus County Blessings



First Baptist Inverness congregation is truly appreciated for your attention in supplying peanut butter and jelly for God's Citrus County School Children !!! In the past couple of months, we have received not only a great supply of P.B. & J. in the Blessings basket by the Coffee Station as you enter the sanctuary, but some extremely

generous donations that will take care of much loved P.B. & J. by the children at Pleasant Grove Elementary and two smaller schools. Your First Baptist Packing Team, as well as the entire Citrus County Blessings Program send many "Thank Yous" for your faithful participation. Any questions, please contact Marilyn Jordan at 352-726-1658.

Women's Ministry



Four Corner Sisters
a ministry of First Baptist Church, Inverness

November is the month set aside for us to express our thanks to God for all the blessings of the year. We get to express gratitude to Him for giving us life – abundant life – through Christ. Take a moment each day of November to thank Him for a different blessing, make a gratitude journal, or join a friend in a prayer of thanksgiving. How many blessings can you list?

Women's Ministry has been very active during October. Many people are to be thanked for all that you did to make the Mom and her Knight date such a huge success. You blessed many!

The retreat at Lake Yale was a blessing to the 17 women and girls who reflected on the Sweet Tea and Jesus theme. Our speaker changed it a bit to be "Sweet T and Jesus" concentrating on Trust and Truth. There was such a sweet fellowship as we bonded together. Plans are being made for next year with September 25-27, 2026, as our weekend. Save the date!

There are multiple events coming up of which you will want to participate. The Celebration luncheon is November 15 at 11:30 AM. If you would like to hostess a table, please contact Jana at 580-467-6106 or Tiffany at 316-217-5480. This is the second annual luncheon where many holidays are celebrated. This year's theme is Precious Moments. The cost is \$5 per person and open to girls ages first grade and older. (Scholarships are available upon request.) Childcare is also available upon request. Register online or in the lobby by November 9. At this event, we will be accepting donations for our benevolence fund, which supports our church members during the holiday season. Come Celebrate our Precious Moments!

December is the month for giving. God gave His son to be born. Jesus gave His life to bring us salvation and so much more. We also have the opportunity to give. Angel Tree will be providing gifts to children of those incarcerated in the name of the parent. Children's names will be available so that you can purchase a gift to be presented at a party hosted by our church.

Embrace Grace is honored to host a baby shower for our brave mama on December 14. You will have the opportunity to bless her with a gift from her wish list or bring a box of diapers to show your love and support. More details will follow for both Angel Tree and Baby Shower so watch all church publications.

Bethlehem Revisited Trip



Bethlehem Revisited has been performed at First Church, Coral Springs, for over 30 years! It is the city of Bethlehem, including the Roman soldiers, over 20 shops, the crowded inn, and the stable where a baby was born! As you wander among the interactive shops, you may learn how to play the shofar, how to salt a fish, even how to

swaddle a baby! You will see the angels and shepherds welcoming the baby Jesus.

We will be taking a group to visit this amazing experience on Friday, December 12, leaving at approximately 10 a.m. We will check into the hotel, go to dinner, then on to Bethlehem!

We will leave for home the next morning.

The plan is to carpool, so we will need people willing to drive. Cost will be for the hotel, dinner, and sharing fuel expenses. The event itself is free (donations accepted).

For more information or to reserve your spot, please TEXT Donna Phillips at 954-868-1150.

Mailbox Bible Club



The Mailbox Bible Club continues to seek God's plan for our ministry. Our student enrollment is maintaining at 200 and we have several locations that are rapidly increasing their participation.

We mailed 370 lessons in September and awarded 16 certificates to students who completed a series of lessons. Three students have told us that they have prayed to receive Christ this month.

We are continuing to see our student numbers increase in several prison units. This is usually a result of several of our students getting together for Bible study and then they continue to refer new students.

Our praise report for this month is that we have four new volunteers to help in this ministry. God has answered our prayers and we are very thankful.

Please continue to pray for our ministry.