



JANUARY 2026

The Epistle

First Baptist Church of Vienna, Va.

from the **PASTOR**

*Grace and Peace from God,
Our Father*

As we step into a new year, our hearts are full of thanksgiving for the many blessings God provided throughout 2025. From answered prayers to new opportunities for service, study, and fellowship, we have witnessed the faithfulness of our Lord in powerful and tangible ways. Every challenge met and every victory celebrated stands as a testament to His steadfast love and guiding presence among us.

As we look ahead to 2026, I am excited to share that our theme for the year is RESET2RESTORE, inspired by Ephesians 4:1–5:

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Written by the Apostle Paul, these words remind us that God’s call is both timeless and transformative—calling us to unity, humility, patience, and love as we pursue restoration not only in our personal lives, but also in our church, our community, and our world.

RESET2RESTORE is more than a theme—it is a journey.

This month, we are launching several key initiatives to help us live out this calling together:

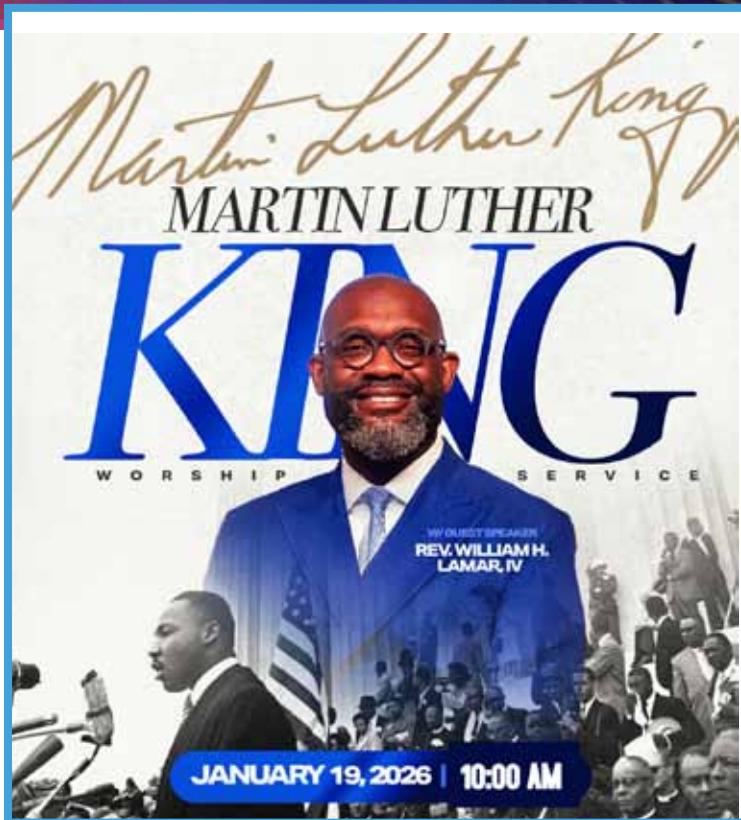
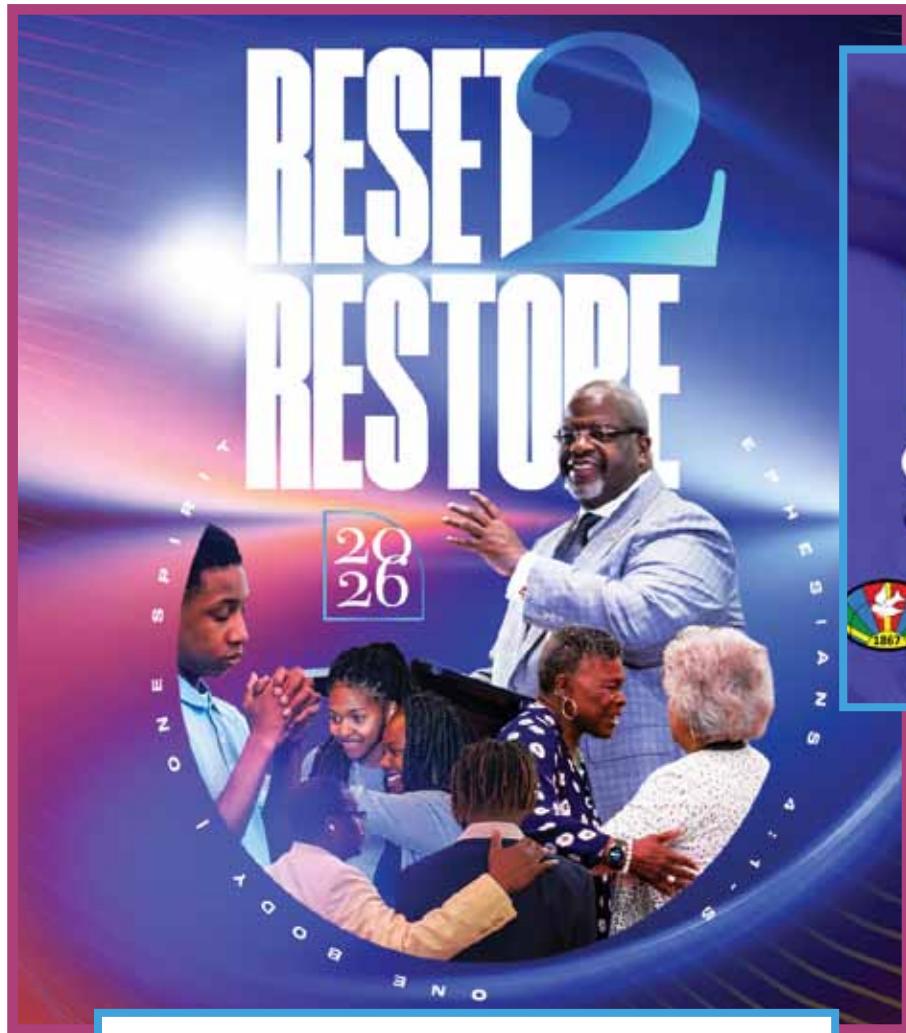
- The Restoration Fast will anchor our year with 21 days of intentional prayer, reflection, and spiritual renewal, inviting God to reset our hearts and restore our strength.

- Our MLK Celebration will honor the prophetic legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., reaffirming our commitment to justice, service, and equality rooted in the gospel.

- The Forward Conference is intentionally designed to attract, develop, and prepare seasoned and emerging leaders—equipping co-laborers to take bold, faithful steps in leadership, ministry, and service.

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Wishing you
A VERY
**HAPPY
NEW YEAR**



PASTOR, continued from page 1

• Vision Sunday will align our hearts and minds with God's purpose for FBCV as we celebrate His direction and discern the road ahead together.

• And we will continue to offer rich opportunities for study—deepening not only our understanding of the Word of God, but also how we faithfully apply it to everyday life.

Beloved, 2026 is a year of resetting—letting go of what hinders us—and restoring—embracing the fullness of life and purpose God has ordained for us. I am excited to journey through this year with you, to grow together, to serve together, and to witness the incredible ways God will move among us.

May we enter this new year with hearts ready to walk worthy of our calling, embodying humility, patience, and love, and striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in all that we do.

Here's to a blessed 2026.

Let us RESET2RESTORE—
together.

With love and anticipation,
Pastor Walton

Thank You for Being the Hands and Heart of Ministry in 2025

As we reflect on all that God has done through First Baptist Church of Vienna in 2025, one word rises above the rest: gratitude. None of the mission and outreach work we accomplished this year would have been possible without the faithful investment of our members' time, talent, and treasure. Your commitment has made an immeasurable difference in the lives of individuals, families, and our broader community.

Because of your generosity and willingness to serve, FBCV continues to live out its legacy as a church committed to meeting people where they are and responding to the needs of the moment. Through our food giveaways and ongoing support to community partners such as the Lamb Center, the Remakery, and Embry Rucker Shelter, we met critical physical needs for our neighbors, including those experiencing housing insecurity. Through our partnership with five community schools, we offered encouragement, resources, and hope to students, families, and educators alike.

In a changing world, our church leaned into both faith and flexibility, honoring our past while embracing new possibilities. We reimagined several of our trademark ministry events so that we could continue serving without interruption. A powerful example was Christmas in July. Rather than allowing circumstances to limit our reach, we took this beloved outreach on the road, serving at multiple lo-

cations and extending its impact far beyond our walls. This adaptability reflects the strength of our legacy—a ministry rooted in purpose, not place.

Our outreach efforts also allowed us to inspire and evangelize the wider community. Events such as the Easter Extravaganza and Trunk or Treat created welcoming spaces for families to experience joy, fellowship, and the love of Christ. This year, our Juneteenth Celebration expanded in meaningful ways, culminating in the historic milestone of leading our very first Juneteenth Parade—a visible expression of unity, justice, and hope.

Throughout our Season of Giving, we provided Thanksgiving baskets to more than 100 families, hosted a Thanksgiving dinner for over 100 community guests, including our unhoused neighbors, and shared Christmas joy through Christmas Blessing Boxes distributed to students at three schools and members of our community. These efforts remind us that when we move together as one body, our collective impact is powerful.

As we step into a new year guided by our theme, One Body, One Spirit, we do so with deep gratitude for what God has already done and great anticipation for what is yet to come. We are thankful that God has entrusted FBCV with a legacy of service, compassion, and community engagement—and we look forward to how God will continue to expand our reach in new and exciting ways. United in purpose and led by the Spirit, we are prepared to live fully into our calling and carry our legacy forward.

Thank you for your faithfulness.

Thank you for your flexibility.

Thank you for being FBCV.

As we look ahead, we do so

with confidence, courage, and faith. The same God who has guided FBCV through seasons of growth and change continues to call us forward. Our legacy is not only found in what we have already done, but in our willingness to keep saying yes—to new opportunities, new partnerships, and new ways of serving a world that is constantly changing.

We invite every member to take the next faithful step. Whether by serving, giving, praying, or inviting others to join the work, each of us has a role to play. When we move together—united in purpose and led by the Spirit—our collective witness becomes even stronger.

There is still work to be done, lives to be touched, and hope to be shared. With grateful hearts and willing hands, let us commit ourselves anew to God's vision for FBCV. Together, we will honor our legacy, expand our impact, and continue to be a light in our community and beyond—today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.



NEW YEAR, NEW MERCIES

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.”

— Lamentations 3:22–23

As we step into 2026, we celebrate a fresh start and a faithful God. May this new year be filled with His hope, peace, and purpose.

Resetting Sorrow

Weeping and joy are not opposites in the Christian life; they are woven together by God's design. Scripture tells us that "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). Joy is not the absence of sorrow, nor is grief a failure of faith—Jesus Himself wept (John 11:35). God uses both tears and joy to shape our hearts and draw us closer to Him.

We often remain in sorrow because we choose to worry instead of resting in God's promises, we dwell on fear and painful memories. Yet Christ invites us to "cast all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Our minds dwell on what was lost, what went wrong, and what might fail again. In doing so, we allow bitterness, distrust, and resentment to take root—forget-

ting that Christ calls us to cast our cares upon Him. Worry convinces us we are being vigilant, but it quietly steals the peace God freely offers.

Jesus tells us, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). Our hearts remember pain more easily than blessing. While suffering leaves deep impressions, God calls us not to live in former wounds but to bring them to Him. Jesus invites the weary to lay down their burdens and find rest (Matthew 11:28–30). The human heart remembers pain more readily than blessing. Trials leave scars, while moments of grace are sometimes overlooked. We hold tightly to our suffering as proof that our wounds were real, that our pain mattered. Yet when we cling to these memories, we prolong our suffering and resist the healing power of God.

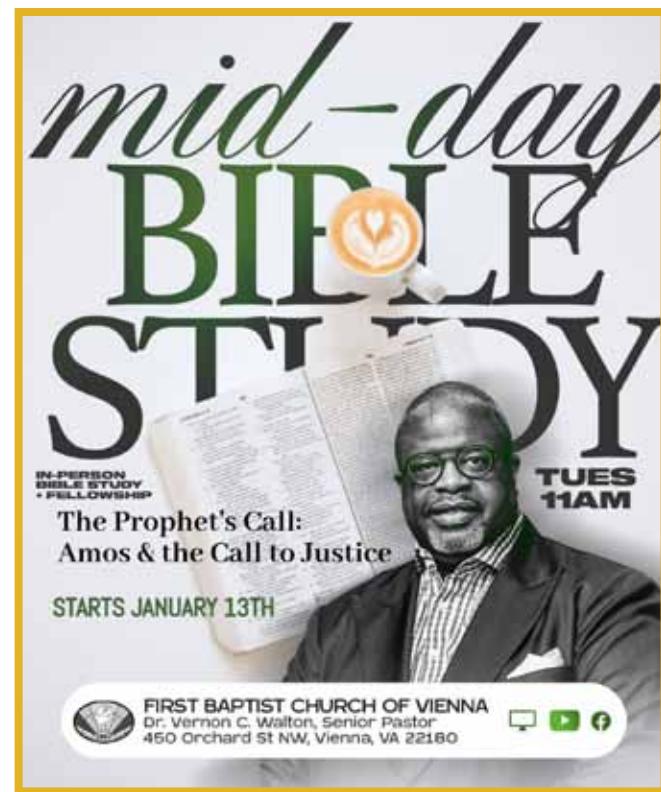
Christ invites us not to relive

our pain endlessly, but to bring it to the cross, where burdens are lifted and hearts are restored. God does not ask us to forget sorrow, but to surrender it. When pain is placed in His hands, it is redeemed. Tears become prayers (Psalm 56:8), and suffering produces endurance, character, and hope (Romans 5:3–4). Joy then rises—not as fleeting happiness, but as a deep assurance rooted in God's presence.

In Christ, we grieve yet hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). As we choose trust over fear, God resets our hearts, and joy becomes a steady peace anchored beyond circumstance (Isaiah 26:3).

As we enter 2026, let us remember those we have lost - not with sorrow alone, but with gratitude and joyful remembrance, trusting in the hope of Christ and the promise of resurrection that assures us we will meet again.

~Jacquelin Davis, Evangelism Ministry



YOUTH and YOUNG ADULTS Ministry Update

Hello and Blessings to Each of You

I pray this message finds you in good health, encouraged in spirit, and ready to embrace all that God has prepared for you in this new year. As we stand at the threshold of 2026, we do so with gratitude for where God has brought us and great expectation for where He is leading us.

It is truly an honor to serve and walk alongside each of you as part of the Youth and Young Adult Ministry of First Baptist Church of Vienna. My prayer for you in this new year is that you experience God in deeper, more personal ways — through strengthened faith, renewed purpose, meaningful relationships, and bold obedience to His call on your life.

As I reflect on the past year, I am thankful for the growth I've witnessed among you—not just in attendance or activity, but in maturity, resilience, and spiritual hunger. You have shown up, leaned in, asked hard questions, and trusted God even in uncertain seasons. That matters. Your presence, your voice, and your commitment continue to shape this ministry into a space where faith is lived out authentically and love is extended freely.

As we move forward into 2026, I believe this is a year to recommit ourselves to spiri-

tual growth, to reimagine what community can look like, and to boldly believe that God can do exceedingly and abundantly more than we could ever ask or imagine. There are exciting opportunities ahead for worship, learning, service, and fellowship, and I am prayerfully anticipating how God will use each of you to impact not only this ministry, but our church and community at large.

My encouragement to you is simple yet powerful: stay connected, stay open, and stay faithful. God is not finished with you. What He has begun in you, He is faithful to complete. Let us move into this year with

courage, unity, and an unshakable trust in God's plan.

Thank you for your dedication, your energy, and your willingness to grow together. I look forward to all that we will experience and accomplish as we continue this journey in faith—together.

May 2026 be a year marked by growth, joy, purpose, and the unmistakable presence of God in your life.

Wishing you a Happy, Healthy, and Blessed New Year!

With gratitude and expectation,

~Minister Kennard "KJ" Jones



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE Worship & Arts Director

As we step into January, I want to first say thank you. December was powerful. From our anniversary worship, to Christmas Sunday, to the creativity, sacrifice, and excellence shown across every area of the arts—God truly met us. “Carol of the Toys” was more than a production; it was worship expressed through creativity, unity, and joy. I am grateful for every voice, every rehearsal, every late night, and every “yes” to serve.

Now, January brings us into a new posture. This is not a restart—this is a realignment.

A SEASON OF CONSECRATION AND COMMITMENT

January is a month where we slow down, listen closely, and allow God to reset our hearts. As Worship & Arts, we are recommitting ourselves to pure worship, spiritual discipline, and excellence in presentation. Our goal is not perfection, but preparation—being ready vessels God can use at any moment.

This month, I’m asking every member (old or new) of this ministry to come in with:

- A submitted heart
- A teachable spirit
- A renewed commitment to rehearsals and call times
- And an expectation that God will move when we do things His way

BUILDING FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

God is positioning this ministry for growth in 2026—spiritually, creatively, and structurally. January is the groundwork month. We are setting culture, reinforcing standards, and clarifying vision so that when opportunities come, we are already prepared.

I am excited about what God is going to do, so that He can do something powerful through us.

THANK YOU

Let’s begin this year focused, unified, and expectant.

With purpose and gratitude,
Kwan McKnight
Worship & Arts Director

A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Church Family

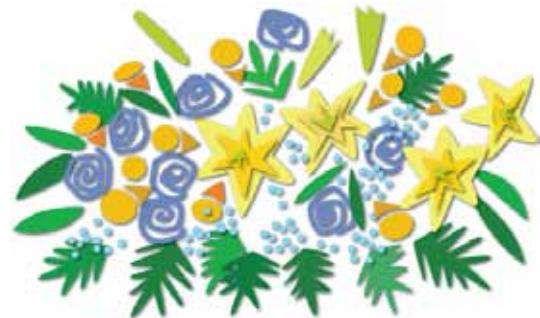
Thank you so much for your kindness and support during our time of bereavement. Your thoughtful words and care meant more to us than we can express, and they brought comfort when it was needed most. We are truly blessed and grateful for your compassion.

With sincere thanks,
Marcia & Rick Taylor.



The family of FBCV member,
Barbara Brooks

Dawn Tyson for the loss of her aunt,
Wilma F. Adams



Hoyt Carter in loving memory of his parents, Wyndell and Cora Carter

Dee Dee Carter and family to commemorate the birthday of their grandmother, Deaconess Hazel Carter for 114th birthday; and in loving memory of their father, Charles Carter, and their brother, Gordon Carter.

Compiled by Ceola Allen

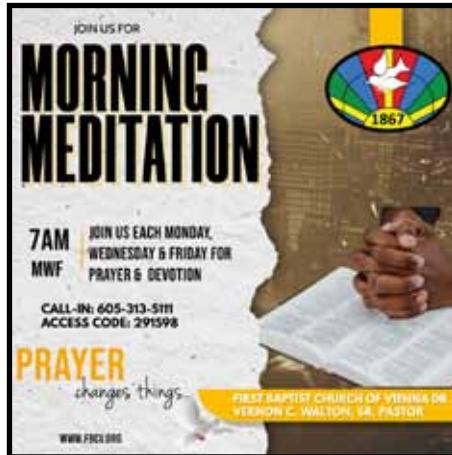
MINISTRY MEETING SCHEDULE

For more info call 703-938-8525

All are welcome. join a new ministry today!

Burden Bearers	M-5pm; T,Th, F-6pm; Su-7:30pm (Conference Call Line)
Feed the Homeless Ministry	4th Monday at 7pm (Virtual)
HANDS Health & Wellness	1st Tuesday at 7pm (Virtual)
Missionary	3rd Monday at 6:30pm (Hybrid)
Nursery	1st Monday at 7pm (Virtual)
Parking Lot	1st Sunday at 8:30am (In-Person)
Parent Nation	1st Thursday at 6:00 pm
Ushers	2nd Thursday Time? (Virtual)
Women's Ministry	3rd Tuesday at 6:30pm (Virtual)
Worship & Arts (rehearsals)	Tuesday Weekly at 7pm (In-Person)
Young Adults	2/6 and 3/6 at 6:30pm; 1st Thursday at 6:30pm (Virtual)
Youth Advisory Council	1st Tuesday at 6:30pm (Virtual)
Evangelism Ministry	1st Sat. at 10 am (in-person + conference call line)

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Dr. Vernon C. Walton,
Pastor

January

2026

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