

FEBRUARY 2024

The

Epistle

First Baptist Church of Vienna, Va. | "Forward Focused"



From
Pastor
Walton's
Desk

*Grace and Peace from God
our Father!*

I want to begin by thanking each of you who committed to joining me in the F3 fast. The fast was designed to be a time to intentionally seek God through prayer, preparation and devotion. This 21-day journey has been challenging at times, but I am grateful for all that God has revealed during this time. We have been specific in identifying and raising up specific prayer needs this month, and God is already hearing our requests and meeting our needs. We've already had new ushers, new members of the sound media team come on board, and many of you have shared with me about how God is leading you to further engage in ministry here at First Baptist. We need each of you and I pray that you will commit to sharing your time, talent, and treasure so that we can do the work God is calling us to do.

In addition to fasting, we've devoted a lot of time preparing for ministry in 2024. Our Leaders and Workers Conference and Vision Sunday allowed me to share the vision that God has given me for this ministry in this sea-

PASTOR, continued on page 2

Celebrating Black History Month through the Gift of Music in our Worship and Arts Ministry

By Kwan McKnight

As we embark on another beautiful February, a month that holds special significance for us. Black History Month is not just a commemoration; it's a celebration of our rich heritage and the legacy of our ancestors. Among the many avenues through which we honor their memory, music stands out as a profound and soul-stirring expression of our culture.

This year, as we embrace the melodies and rhythms that have shaped our history, there's an added sense of excitement and joy. We are blessed to welcome new members into our Worship and Arts team, individuals who bring fresh perspectives and talents. Each new voice, every dancer, flag-bearer, and technologically gifted individual enriches our collective journey, making our musical offerings even more vibrant and meaningful.

In the tapestry of our musical ministry, every member is a vital thread,

MUSIC, continued on page 5



Familiar Faces with Changing Roles

We are pleased to announce that long-time church member, Kim Stinger, has taken the position of Executive Assistant to the Pastor. Kim was baptized as a child here and has been a member most of her life. She is also a Licensed Massage Therapist, Certified Doula, and owner of Knotts Out Massage. We are thrilled to have her as part of team!



Kim Stinger

Rev. Takara Chatman, one of our associate ministers, has taken on the new role of **Coordinator of Ministries**. Rev. Chatman will serve as the liaison between ministries and staff to help facilitate ministry planning and events.

Rev. Vernon Davis has also taken on a new role and will serve as the **Coordinator of Pastoral Care**. Rev. Davis will work closely with Pastor Walton and assist in ensuring that our members have pastoral support at times of need.

Stacey Seay is now **Pastoral Assistant/Outreach Coordinator**. She will continue in many of her roles as part of the FBCV staff, coordinate our mission and outreach projects, and work with our partners to ensure and expand our impact in the community.





First Baptist Church of Vienna invites you to join us for our

HBCU CONFERENCE

Forward Focus: Pioneering the Future
Saturday, February 17, 2024 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 Middle and High School Students
 Free, breakfast and lunch provided

PANEL DISCUSSIONS, LECTURES, WORKSHOPS – TOPICS INCLUDE:
 Financial Literacy | Mental Health Awareness | Personal Safety
 Entrepreneurship | Social Media Savvy | AI in College Careers

Registration Required: www.tinyurl.com/fbcvhbcu24

450 Orchard St. NW • Vienna VA 22180
 703-938-8525 | www.fbcv.org
 Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Senior Pastor

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son. These opportunities allowed me to really dive in to our 2024 theme, Forward Focused, and examine the ways in which our theme will influence how we do ministry in the coming year.

I look forward to our purposeful engagement in growing ourselves, growing one another and changing the world. I truly believe that as we move ahead in unity, there is no limit to what God can do through and for our ministry.

February is filled with opportunities that will educate and empower. In particular, I want to encourage everyone to register a middle or high school student in their life for our HBCU conference. Young people will leave this event with tools and information to help them ensure their future success.

Let's keep our eyes on the "prize of the high calling," remain steadfast, and Forward Focused!



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA

HBCU

PAN HELLENIC

SUNDAY

2/18/2024
10:00 A.M. SERVICE

450 Orchard St. NW • Vienna VA 22180 | 703-938-8525 • www.fbcv.org
 Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Senior Pastor





Diann Weaver and family
for the loss of her sister,
Rose Mary Wilson

MUSIC, continued from page 1

contributing to the beauty and strength of the whole. As we celebrate the achievements, struggles, and triumphs of our ancestors, let us do so with a sense of purpose and commitment. Their spirits live on in the harmonies we create, the rhythms we dance to, and the flags we wave in joyful praise.

To those who have recently joined us, we extend a warm welcome. Your presence is a gift to our community, and we look forward to discovering the unique melodies your voices bring to our collective song. In the realm of worship, there is always a space carved out for your special gifts – be it in singing, dancing, flagging, or utilizing technology to enhance our musical experience.

Our ancestors, who endured hardships and forged a path for us, would undoubtedly take pride in the unity and creativity that permeates our Worship and Arts team. Together, let us continue to build upon this foundation, creating music that resonates not only within our walls but echoes through the corridors of history.

As we raise our voices and instruments in harmony, let the love and respect we hold for our ancestors flow through every note and movement. May our worship be a testament to the strength of our heritage and a source of inspiration for generations to come.

In the spirit of unity and creativity, let us march forward, celebrating our roots, embracing the present, and sowing seeds for a harmonious future.

Missions/ Outreach Moment

2024 is off to a great start thanks to the volunteers, both the regulars and those who stepped in, who braved the winter weather to ensure that we could get food to those in need. In most cases, we cannot cancel our food distributions because the food we giveaway will have been already purchased and bagged.

As a reminder, our monthly food distributions have moved to a new weekend. They will take place on the second Saturday of each month, with the packaging the Thursday before. We always need additional hands to assist in these efforts and are grateful for those who continue to give of their time.

Servant Leaders, if you haven't already done so, sign your ministry up to serve lunch at Embury Rucker Shelter or the Lamb Center. Contact the church office to find out which months are still available and to secure your space. If you don't currently serve with a ministry and would like to serve, please feel free to create your own group of 2-3 people and sign up for a slot. Pastor Walton would like for as many as possible to have the hands-on experience and see the impact we are making in our community first hand.

Our first community outreach of the year will be our Easter Extravaganza. We look forward to hosting the community, sharing the Good News and continuing our tradition of hosting live animals and our annual egg hunt. Keep your eyes open for opportunities to sign up to assist in the preparation and execution of this important community event.



FOOD GIVEAWAY

FRESH FOODS & PANTRY STAPLES



New Dates!
2nd Saturday

SATURDAY | 10 AM- 12 PM

****WHILE SUPPLIES LAST**

■ February 10th	■ April 13th
■ March 9th	■ May 11th
■ June 8th	

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

MINISTRY UPDATE

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! I hope this message finds you well and filled with the joy that comes from knowing His love.

As we embark on this exciting journey together, we are thrilled to share with you an upcoming event that promises not only to be entertaining but also spiritually enriching – the play “Escape the Tomb.” We believe it will be a unique and powerful experience that will strengthen our faith and draw us closer to God.

In the coming weeks, we will be announcing rehearsal dates for this play, and we encourage each one of you to be on the lookout. We believe that your participation in the rehearsals will not only contribute to the success of the event but will also provide a platform for personal growth and fellowship.

Our Youth and Young Adult Ministry is a vibrant community where we seek to foster spiritual growth, meaningful connections, and a deep love for Christ. We understand that engaging in ministry is not just a commitment; it’s an opportunity for personal transformation. Each one of you has unique gifts and talents, and we believe that God has a special plan for each individual in our ministry.

As we approach this season of ministry, I want to emphasize the importance of remaining engaged. Your involvement in various ministry activities, including “Escape the Tomb,” plays a crucial role in the spiritual development of our community. I encourage you to attend rehearsals, be open to trying new things, and actively seek ways to contribute your talents for the glory of God.

In our Young Adult Ministry, I am earnestly praying for growth – both in numbers and in spiritual depth. I believe that God is calling us to something greater, and I am excited about the potential within each one of you. Your dedication and willingness to engage in ministry will not only impact your life but will also be a blessing to others.

Let’s approach this month with open hearts, ready to receive what God has in store for us individually and collectively. Be open to His leading, trust in His plan, and remember that you are an essential part of this ministry family.

In closing, let us remember the words of Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” May we walk confidently in the assurance of God’s promises as we navigate this exciting journey together.

Blessings and love,

Minister Kennard “KJ” Jones

FBCV Lost and Found Policy

Please contact the FBCV Church office if you have any information about a missing coat. It is a black, full-length Land’s End down coat, size XS, hung on the rack between the elevator and the Finance Room on Nov. 26.

FBCV is not responsible for lost and stolen items. Please keep track of your valuables and check the pews or other seating areas before leaving to ensure nothing is left behind.



Marriage Ministry

February—a month to celebrate black history, a month to celebrate love and a month to celebrate being able to see the second month of a new year. As we celebrate February, let’s remember God’s love for us. Each of us is loved deeply by God. Let’s share that love with our spouses, family and our community.

If you’re looking for something fun and romantic to do this Valentine’s Day, join us at the Salamander Resort for a Ballroom Dancing class on Saturday, Feb. 10 from 6 p.m.–6:45 p.m. The cost is \$50 per couple, not including tax and gratuity. Reservations are required. To schedule reservations, call 540-326-4060 (<https://salamanderresort.com/activities/event-calendar/ballroom-dance-class>).

If you’d like to receive email communication from the Marriage Ministry, please let us know via email (natm20@gmail.com). —Natalie M. Ruffin



ALTAR FLOWERS

Ceola Allen, Danny and Alfred Bunaugh, grand children and great- grandchildren in loving memory of their parents, grandparents and great-grand parents, George and Bertha Bunaugh.

—Compiled by Ceola Allen

College Connection

If you are a college student, have never shared your contact information, or your course list, please complete the College Connection Scholar Database Information by using the link: <https://forms.gle/btYM1SLSEpbj7SrJ7>

Spring Semester course list/syllabus is DUE.

Please submit your second semester course list to Ms. Arnitra at arnitrad@mac.com to ensure your eligibility for the spring incentive grants.

College Connection Check-In with Minister KJ

will be held on Thursday, Feb. 15 at 6:30 p.m. Zoom details will be sent in the College Connection GroupMe. We will cover the new incentive program, ministry events, and other opportunities serve and learn.

HBCU/Pan-Hellenic Weekend is here... Participate in our Panel

This month, FBCV will recognize and highlight the contributions of our Historically Black Colleges and Universities as well as Sororities and Fraternities. We need to hear from you. Join our panel moderated by Pastor Walton where we will be discussing Forward Focus: Pioneering the Future in careers, school, and the life of a college student. Don't worry, you don't have to be in a fraternity or sorority to participate nor do you need to attend an HBCU. Thank you to College Scholar Isaiah Bowman for agreeing to be a panelist.

Need Money for School? Check out this full list of money available to FUND your education. Please be sure to create an account and tailor the alerts to match your course of study, where you study, and all other variables that will contribute to additional funding for school.

Applications that are due in February, March and April:

FEBRARY DEADLINE:

<https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarship-directory/deadline/deadline-in-february>

MARCH DEADLINE:

<https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarship-directory/deadline/deadline-in-march>

APRIL DEADLINE:

<https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarship-directory/deadline/deadline-in-april>

Check the GroupMe

Do you have a question? Good news to share? Have a prayer request? Check the GroupMe or feel free to post in the GroupMe. This is the College Connection hub for all things College. Not sure, you are in the GroupMe? You can join using this link: https://groupme.com/join_group/90794491/kDQlsjbE

—Submitted by Arnitra Duckett



Pray for Our College Students

Money Matters: Building a Money Management Blueprint

How should I begin building my Money Management Blueprint

Start with a budget

If you're not sure how to budget, start by choosing a system that you'll stick with.

The 50/30/20 budget plan, which allocates 50% of your income for needs (Groceries.

Housing. Basic utilities. Transportation. Insurance. Minimum loan payments. Childcare)

, 30% for wants (Typical wants include dinners out, gifts, travel and entertainment). and 20% for savings (something put away for the unexpected, the future and pay off debt) and debt repayment is a good place to start. If the 50/30/20 rules don't work for you, there are plenty of other types of budgets to choose from.

Track your spending

By tracking expenses, you can see exactly where your money is going. It may inspire you to stop spending so much in a certain category or adjust your spending habits so they better align with your goals.

Find ways to save

As you pay more attention to your finances, you'll likely find opportunities to save just by tweaking daily habits (how often you eat out, buy coffee and snacks on the go, etc.), to negotiating bills, to making long-term changes.

Ideally, over time, saving money will become part of your lifestyle. As you start saving money with coupons, freebies and DIY hacks.

Use designated accounts for spending and savings

One way to make money management easier is to keep money designated for bills and budgeted expenses separate from your emergency fund. This will reduce the temptation to dip into it for non-emergencies. Saving for a house, vacation or new car? Stash those funds in separate accounts so you can see progress toward each goal.

Make a plan to pay off debt

A strategic approach to debt repayment will help you reach the debt-free finish line faster. We recommend tackling your most expensive debt — the accounts with the highest interest rates — first, while making minimum payments on the rest. Then, work your way down through any lower-interest rate debt until it is all paid off. Consider using windfalls, such as a tax refund or bonus at work, to make a dent in balances.

Develop good credit habits

Your credit can determine whether you're able to get loans and the rates you pay on them, as well as many other aspects of your financial life. A credit check may be part of getting a cell phone plan, apartment or car insurance.

To stay on top of your score, focus on the two biggest factors that influence it: payment history and credit utilization (how much of your credit limits you're using). Aim to pay everything on time, because just one missed payment can hurt your score, and use less than 30% of your credit limits on each card and overall.

Invest in your financial future

Set money aside now, in a 401(k) or IRA, and let compound interest work its magic. The ultimate goal is long-term financial freedom and stability.

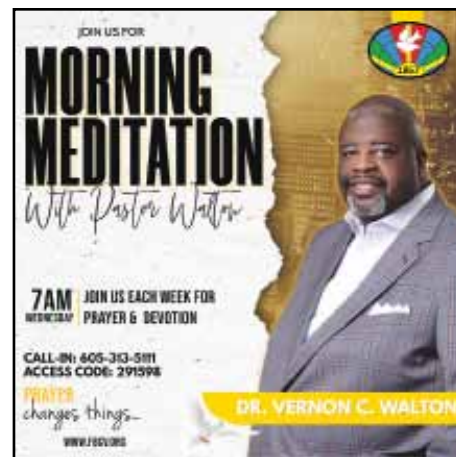
Be persistent

Despite good intentions, many people fall off the financial bandwagon. Sticking to a budget that's too restrictive can be suffocating. Navigating investment jargon can be confusing. But don't get discouraged.

You didn't get in the financial position you're in overnight, and you won't get out of it overnight, either. Give yourself time to learn and grow. With hard work and dedication, you can manage your money with confidence.

If you need help developing your money management blueprint, feel free to contact your First Baptist Church Federal Credit Union via email, regular mail, or phone.

—Submitted by Willie Boykin



FIRST BAPTISTCHURCH
450 Orchard St. N.W.,
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(703) 938-8525 • www.fbcv.org
Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Pastor

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	2 12:00 pm Prayer Call	3
4 Consecration Sunday Communion 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	5 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out	6 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	7 7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-Week Worship	8 10:00 am Food Packing 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	9 12:00 pm Prayer Call	10 Food Distribution
11 Legislative & Justice Sunday 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	12 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out	13 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	14 Ash Wednesday 7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship	15 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	16 12:00 pm Prayer Call	17 HBCU Conference
18 HBCU/Pan Hellenic Sunday 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	19 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out	20 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	21 7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-Week Worship	22 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	23 12:00 pm Prayer Call	24
25 HERITAGE SUNDAY 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	26 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out	27 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	28 7:00 am Prayer Call 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-Week Worship	29 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy		

“Brethren, I do not count myself to have [\[u\]](#)apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” - **Philippians 3:13-14**

**FORWARD
FOCUSED**