

JANUARY 2024

The

Epistle

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



From
**Pastor
Walton's
Desk**

I'm always excited at the start of a new year filled with new possibilities. As I reflect on God's grace and provision over the past year I am deeply appreciative, but at the same time, I can't help but get excited about all God will do in my life and in the life of our ministry here at First Baptist. Each of us have experienced our share of ups and downs, but, "We made it!"

I also believe that the start of a new year is the perfect time to identify strongholds and challenges we face and turn them over to the Lord. I recognize that it isn't always easy to let go of the things that have us bound, but I also know that no situation is too big for God. Our theme for 2024, "Forward Focused," reminds us to acknowledge, appreciate, and learn from our past. Yet we must look ahead to all that God is going to do as we move forward.

We will spend the month of January intentionally preparing our hearts and minds to do the work that God has called us to do and I invite you to join us in this journey. We will come together as a community of faith to take part in the F3 Forward Focused Fast. During the fast, it is my prayer that you will focus less on the things that you will commit to refraining from and focus on the things you will replace them with—prayer, reading God's Word,

PASTOR, continued on page 2

FBCV Missions Moments

By Stacey Seay
Special *The Epistle*

We cannot begin the year without taking a moment to say thank you. Thank you for all of your missions giving over the past year and especially for the tremendous response to Pastor Walton's call for our generosity giving. It is only because of your gifts that First Baptist is able to touch the lives of so many people in our community. We also want to thank every volunteer who gave of their time to ensure that our missions and outreach projects were a success. Whether you were packing food, wrapping gifts, driving the bus, serving food, sorting clothes, leading craft projects, or any other role, please know that because of your efforts we were able to share the love of Christ.

During our Season of Giving, we provided 300 Thanksgiving baskets and turkeys to families in need, we hosted about 200 guests for our Thanksgiving Dinner, hosted over 100 children and family members for Cocoa with Santa, and distributed nearly 400 Christmas Blessing Bags. The need in our com-

MISSIONS, continued on page 2

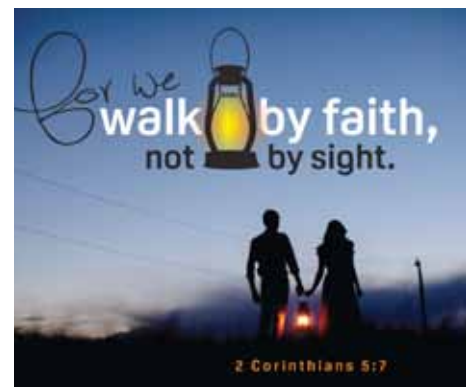
Embracing the New Year: A Call to Unity, Service and Celebration

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, it's a time of reflection, gratitude, and anticipation for the blessings and challenges that lie ahead. The New Year symbolizes new beginnings—a chance to start afresh, set new goals, and embrace new opportunities. It's a time when we pause to assess our journey, renew our faith, and set our sights on the future with hope and determination.

The Holy Scriptures offer guidance and assurance as we embark on this new chapter. In the Book of Isaiah 43:19 (NIV), the Lord declares, "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." This verse reminds us that God is continually working in our lives, bringing about

**MUSIC
MINISTRY**

MUSIC MINISTRY, continued on page 3



MISSIONS, *continued from page 1*

munity is great, but we were able to represent Christ through our time and generosity in this season.

As we embark on this new year, there is still much work for us to do. Pastor Walton will be sharing more about our churchwide missions goals at the Leaders and Workers Conference and again on Vision Sunday. Meanwhile, mark your calendars to serve on Martin Luther King Day. Immediately following our 11 a.m. annual King celebration on Jan. 15, we will host a community service project to help replenish the backpack food bags we distribute throughout the community. Then on Thursday, Jan. 18 we will sort food for our next distribution which will be held on Jan. 20. With God's grace, we are looking forward to another great year of impact in our local community.

PASTOR, *continued from page 1*

Bible Study—time with the Lord. I pray that you will use this sacred moment to allow God to speak to you so that you will be empowered to walk in your calling.

I also encourage you to join us for the Leaders and Workers Conference and be sure to join us for worship on Vision Sunday, these opportunities will allow you to hear directly from me about the vision God has given me for this ministry in this season. Beloved, this I know is true, God has placed you with all of your gifts here for a reason so join me as we journey together



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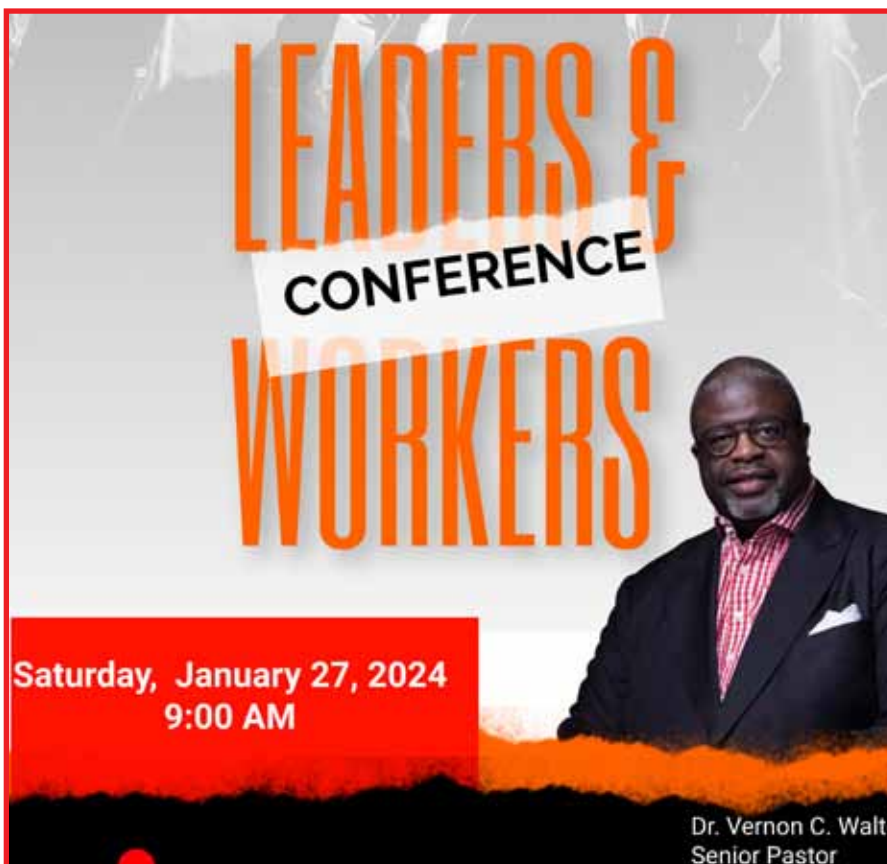
Martin LUTHER KING JR CELEBRATION

+ ANNUAL PRESENTATION OF SPIRIT OF KING AWARDS

15 JAN @ 11:00 AM

GUEST PREACHER: DR. ROBERT W. LEE, IV

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA
Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Senior Pastor
450 Orchard St. NW | Vienna, VA 22180
www.fbcv.org



LEADERS & WORKERS CONFERENCE

Saturday, January 27, 2024
9:00 AM

Dr. Vernon C. Walton
Senior Pastor

MUSIC MINISTRY, *cont. from page 1*
newness, and making a way even in the most challenging circumstances.

In Worship and Arts, we have much to look forward to in the coming year. We have a vision of growth, both in spirit and in membership. We're excited about the prospect of welcoming new members, extending the love and fellowship that defines our community.

Moreover, we anticipate the launch of new ministries and the revitalization of existing ones through fresh leadership. This presents an opportunity for everyone to contribute their talents, ideas, and passion in service to God and our community. If you feel called to take on a new role or lend your support to these initiatives, we warmly invite you to step forward and be part of this exciting journey.

One of the key areas where we seek enthusiastic participation is in our Worship and Arts ministry. Volunteers are needed for the media ministry, a crucial aspect of our worship experience that helps us connect and share the message with a broader audience. Additionally, we extend a special invitation to join our choir—a beautiful avenue to express your faith through music and fellowship.

Our first gathering of the year will be a momentous occasion as we commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Monday, Jan. 15. This day holds immense significance, reminding us of the values of unity, equality, and justice. To prepare for this meaningful event, rehearsals have been scheduled for Tuesday evening, Jan. 9, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, Jan. 13, at 10 a.m. Your presence and participation during these rehearsals are deeply appreciated as we unite in harmony to honor Dr. King's legacy through our music and worship.

Let's step into this new year with hearts open to new possibilities, hands ready to serve, and voices lifted in praise. Together, let us make this year one of growth, love, and purpose as we journey forward as a community of faith.

We eagerly await your presence and contribution to our shared journey. Join us as we embrace the blessings and opportunities of this new year.

—In His Service,
Kwan McKnight

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

MINISTRY UPDATE

Hello and blessings to each of you!

I trust this letter finds you in good health and high spirits as we embrace the dawn of a new year. As we bid farewell to the past and eagerly step into the future, I am filled with excitement and anticipation for the wonderful opportunities that lie ahead for our vibrant community.

First and foremost, I want to extend my heartfelt wishes to each and every member of the Youth and Young Adult Ministry at First Baptist Church of Vienna. May this New Year bring you abundant blessings, joy, and prosperity in every aspect of your lives. May it be a year of spiritual growth, meaningful connections, and unwavering faith.

Reflecting on the past year, I am grateful for the shared experiences, the moments of fellowship, and the spiritual guidance that the ministry has provided. It is through these collective efforts that our community has flourished, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose.

As we turn the page to a new chapter, I am particularly excited about the opportunities that await us. The potential for personal and communal growth, service to others, and deepening our relationship with God is boundless. Let us approach the coming months with open hearts and minds, ready to embrace the challenges and triumphs that will undoubtedly shape us into better individuals and a stronger community.

I am eager to participate in the upcoming events, programs, and initiatives that the Youth and Young Adult Ministry has planned for the year. The prospect of continued spiritual development, engaging activities, and opportunities for outreach fills me with enthusiasm. Together, let us make the most of these opportunities to strengthen our bonds and make a positive impact on the lives of those around us.

May the new year be a time of renewal, growth, and fulfillment for each member of our cherished community.

Wishing you a Happy and Blessed New Year!

Sincerely,
Minister Kennard "KJ" Jones



First Baptist Church of Vienna

MONTHLY DRIVE-THROUGH FOOD GIVEAWAY

FRESH PRODUCE / PANTRY STAPLES / MORE!

★★★★★
- FRESH - FREE - HEALTHY -

at: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF VIENNA

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 2024

OPENS 10 AM -12 PM
(While supplies last!)

450 ORCHARD ST. NW; VIENNA, VA / WWW.FBCV.ORG



Bible Quiz

In the book of Judges, the warrior Barak would go to battle only if a certain female leader went with him. Who was she?

- A. Rebekah
- B. Jael
- C. Michal
- D. Deborah

Answer: (See Judges 4:1-10.)

College Connection

*Happy New Year and Blessing
for a Great NEW Semester*

Submit your Spring Semester course list/syllabus. If your information has not changed for the new semester, please submit your second semester course list to Ms. Arnitra at arnitrad@mac.com to ensure your eligibility for the spring incentive grants. Be on the lookout to learn more about the incentive grant program this month.

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 going to the link: <https://forms.gle/btYM1SLSEpbj7SrJ7>

The January SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT is on CALVIN HARRIOTT. This coming summer, Calvin will be going on a mission trip to Tanzania in Africa through his campus ministry, Virginia Tech Chi Alpha and teaching at a school for learning English. Through teaching, Calvin and his ministry members will have the opportunity to share our faith. Calvin is seeking prayer for a successful trip, that God's presence will fall on Tanzania, and that the Gospel will be received with joy. Calvin would love to share more about his trip and seeks support from his FBCV family.

SCHOLARSHIPS. 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.

- **JANUARY DEADLINES:**

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

- **FEBRUARY DEADLINES:**

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

- **MARCH DEADLINES:**

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

Are you in the College ConnectionKnow?

There is a College Connection GroupMe and that is how we stay in touch with all of our scholars. We encourage all Scholars to stay in the know. Send us a quick "Hi" so we know you are receiving our updates. Not sure, you are in the GroupMe? You can join using this link: https://groupme.com/join_group/90794491/kDQlsjbE

LAST CALL for FALL Semester 2023 Incentive Grants FUND PICK-UP.

Please contact Ms. Arnitra immediately if you have not yet picked up or arranged for pick-up of your fall 2023 semester incentive grant.

—Submitted by Arnitra Duckett



Pray for Our College Students

Marriage Ministry

Happy New Year! We hope that this new year will bring joy, closer relationships and unmeasurable peace. Please be on the lookout for information about our January Marriage Ministry meeting.

If you've never joined us for a meeting, we'd love to have you.

We ended 2023 with an outing to see the play, "Someway, Somehow" at First Baptist Church of Glenarden. It was a stunning and creative reenactment of the birth of Jesus Christ. We're grateful for all that were able

to join us and look forward to the next time.

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

—Natalie M. Ruffin



LOST AND FOUND AND FBCV 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.

Predictions for the New Year

Author Ronald Wilson, in *Stretching the Soul*, describes being certain that four things will occur in the days ahead.

- Trouble will come. Life is difficult. I must mourn as well as dance.
- In this long journey [of life], I'm not in control. God has reminded us of this.
- Many times I will fail.
- I will find forgiveness and get up and go on. God will wipe up the mess I've made of things, take me by the hand and set me back on the right path.

Praise God for his sure presence during the joys and challenges the new year brings! —*Newsletternewsletter.com*



Alees Coates-Richardson to commemorate the birthday of her husband, Saul Richardson.

—Compiled by Ceola Allen

OUR SOURCE OF LIGHT

January 6 marks the day of Epiphany, when the wise men (who were Gentiles) came to worship Jesus and bring him gifts. During the church-year season of Epiphany, we remember that God's Son is the Light of the whole world. Ponder the gifts of Epiphany with these two reflections, written centuries apart:

Your light, dear God, surpasses all other light, because all light comes from you. Your fire surpasses all fire, because your fire alone burns without destroying. The flames of your fire reach into the soul, consuming the sin and selfishness that lie there. But far from damaging the soul, your fire sets it ablaze with love. What moved you to enlighten me with your truth? The fire of your love was the reason. You loved me so much that you could not bear to see me confused and perplexed. Can I ever repay the burning love which you have given me? No, because I have nothing of my own to give. Yet you assure me that the love which you put into my soul is repayment enough. You desire only the joy of seeing me receiving your gift. What more perfect Father could there be! —*Catherine of Siena (c. 1347-1380)*

Epiphany beckons us to come to the light of Jesus Christ. Epiphany calls us to stare into that light until our inner darkness is fully expunged. Epiphany then sends us out into a dark and weary world as women and men with shining faces, until we say with the apostle Paul, "It is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" [see 2 Corinthians 4:6].—*Jason Gaboury, campus minister in New York City*



FIRST BAPTISTCHURCH

450 Orchard St. N.W.,
Vienna, Virginia 22180
(703) 938-8525 • www.fbcbv.org
Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Pastor

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	5	6
7 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	8	9	10	11 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	12	13
14 10:00 am CLA 12:00 am Worship	15 11:00 am MUK Day Worship & Community Service	16 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	17 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-Week Worship	18 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	19 12:00 pm Prayer Call	20 9:00 am Food Distribution
21 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship	22 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out	23 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	24 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-Week Worship	25 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Excellence Academy	26 12:00 pm Prayer Call	27 9:00 am Leaders & Workers Conference
28 Vision Sunday 8:00 am CLA 10:00 am Worship 10:00 am Youth Church	29 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:30 pm The Call Out	30 11:00 am Mid-day Bible Study 12:00 pm Prayer Call	31 12:00 pm Prayer Call 7:00 pm Mid-Week Worship			

"Brethren, I do not count myself to have **bl**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**