

## FROM THE PASTOR

For the last 6 months we have ventured down the Covid road with uncertainty and patience. However, the previous weeks have seen active cases in the county drop from 285 to 116 as of today. While Covid-19 is still active and a threat to many, especially those with compromised immune systems, pre-existing conditions, and many elderly individuals, we are preparing a return to normal activities for those who are comfortable doing so. Therefore, beginning Sunday October 4, we will begin our full schedule of ministry opportunities: LifeGroups, Children’s Church, Wednesday Night Meals, Choir, and more.

As I shared with you on Sunday, the more challenging decision rests not on when we return, but rather how we will return. I am fully aware that for many in our church, a return to campus is out of the question. Whether it is due to your health or the health of someone you serve, we understand your inability to participate in person, so we will continue to offer digital alternatives to keep you connected. For those who have returned to other elements of normalcy such as school, daycare, work or other social engagements, let me challenge you to return to church. We have taken great strides in implementing sanitizing procedures and policies that limit cross contact. Not only does your church need you, but you and your family need the church. I know that it is always easier to sit on your couch and worship than to gather in person. Just realize that easiest is not always best. Your kids need to know that church is as much of a priority as school. So let me encourage you to get back and plug in.

On Sunday, I shared with you that since March, our staff, deacons and other leaders, have had numerous conversations concerning how this season has allowed us to evaluate what we do, why we do it and how we could improve and do it better. Out of those conversations and months of prayer, I want to present to you a unified plan for what we believe our schedule should look like moving forward. Ultimately, this decision will be yours to make. As was mentioned on Sunday, the first Town Hall meeting was Wednesday, September 16 with the second Town Hall meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 23. This will give a final opportunity for further questions and explanation. On Sunday, September 27 we will be asking you to vote on these adjustments. We desire a 3/4 super majority to support it. The vote will be by secret ballot during both services and anyone not comfortable attending the worship services will be able to drive up and complete a ballot on site during those service times. We desire every person to vote without reservation.

First, we believe that the church needs to permanently move to two morning worship services. Times will be as follows: 8:30 AM—First Service, 9:45 AM—Life Groups, 10:45 AM—Second Service. Last year I shared in my State of the Church address the issue of our attendance ceiling. Based on 13 years of data, Second Baptist is stuck in a pattern of growth and plateau, followed by decline. Year after year this pattern has continued. The only way to remove this ceiling to growth is to move toward two services on Sunday morning. The 80% rule states that a church will not grow far beyond 80% of its seating capacity. Many church growth experts are now recommending we move that number to 60% in a post-Covid time. Both services will be alike, along with provided nursery and Children’s Church. This will lift the ceiling, allowing people to have options of when to attend, appeal to those who are afraid or have anxiety of “large churches” and create an environment where a visiting family can easily find a seat without being escorted to the front of the church.

This decision is the foundational question. The answer to this question of whether we

remain in one service or move into two, will determine how we move forward as a church. The second adjustment has been the more challenging decision. We truly believe that for far too long we have attempted to do more in one day than is wise. Over the decades we have created new ministries but always added them on top of what was already offered. For instance, a family with young children in choir, will arrive at 4:30 PM and not arrive home until nearly 8:00 PM on Sunday. This is unrealistic and unhelpful. Another challenge is the amount of responsibility that rests upon our tech team and our limited pool of qualified volunteers. Our sound and video systems are complex and require significant training. To be honest, every church we know who has the systems we do, employs a full-time technician, who oversees the ministry. Our system is graciously ran by volunteers alone. With the increase demand of two Sunday morning services, our tech team will average 8 hours per week (3 Hours—Wednesday, 5—Hours Sunday) of onsite time, NOT including Sunday night.

Therefore, we believe the best decision is to shift from corporate worship on Sunday evening to corporate ministry. Our Student Ministry will move its weekly worship to Sunday evening at 5:00 PM. Children’s choir will continue meeting on Sunday evenings at 4:30 PM. Seasonal Discipleship groups, church fellowships and a new visitation/outreach will be available on Sunday evenings as well. This will allow more individuals to find a place to serve and help others in ministry. Make no mistake, a cancelling of corporate worship on Sunday evenings is not a cancelling of Sunday night ministry.

A significant aspect is that all Sunday evening activities will end at 6:00 PM, giving time for families to eat dinner together and prepare for a new week of school ahead. It will provide greater opportunities for fellow church members to head to a restaurant to eat together and build authentic relationships. We are also working to develop resources to provide you and your family with a “Family Devotion” plan based upon the morning sermon. We believe that family worship in your home is as important as Sunday worship at the church. The challenge for most people is time. Our prayer is that Sunday evenings become a time of spiritual and family encouragement that sets the stage for a Gospel focused week.

While this is a complex discussion, I ask that you begin to pray and join us in the coming days as we discuss these changes in greater detail. I can promise you that either way, Second Baptist will continue to Love Jesus and Love Others. We welcome honest dialogue that sharpens the minds and hearts for the Glory of God. I love you and continue to stand amazed every day at your love, devotion and support of God’s work at Second Baptist.

For His glory,  
Justin Hiens

## EDUCATION

As Pastor Justin shared on Sunday, we are returning to Life Groups starting Sunday, October 4! The exact time we meet is still to be determined, but one way or another, our classrooms will be open again on Sunday mornings for Bible study, prayer, and community! This fall we are studying the book of Isaiah. If your class has been meeting in person or virtually, then I hope you have enjoyed the study so far. If your class hasn’t met, I want to encourage you to grab a copy of the curriculum and study in preparation for October. Curriculum is available for each class in their regular classroom, so stop by and grab a copy this week.

Firmly in His Hands,  
Bro. Sam

## FROM THE COUNSELOR’S DESK

I have been reading and studying Jeremiah in my personal time with the Lord this month, having been reminded how far the Israelites had drifted from following the Lord. Jeremiah 12:2 says, “You are near in their mouth and far from their heart.” Simply put, they had religion, not a relationship. They were going through the motions appearing to be righteous. Jesus quoted this text from Jeremiah as He called out the Pharisees for the same reason. Just the other day I was reminded of this reality when Kelli and I were watching the first movie in the Left Behind series. There is a scene in the movie where a Pastor is lamenting after he has found himself being left behind because he did not have a personal relationship with Jesus. Though he appeared to be righteous, displaying the outward manifestations of a fruitful life, he was “far in his heart.” The goal in writing this is not to cause you to doubt your salvation, but as I have been soberly reminded of the truth that there will be those who think they know Jesus but are far from Him, it grieves me to think there could be one or several who think they’re saved but their hearts are far from the Lord.” In evaluating where you are....let me ask you three questions to help you search your own heart from Don Whitney’s Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health:

1. Do you thirst for God just like you crave that cold glass of water on a hot summer day?
2. Is your life governed increasingly by God’s Word?
3. Do you still grieve over sin?

Because of Him,  
Bro. Russell

## YOUTH

Youth will continue to meet on Sundays at 5:00 PM for worship and message. The Back 2 School Blowout is this Sunday, September 20 out at the pavilion from 5:00-7:00 PM with a meal, worship, games and a lot of great prizes!

Most of our student Life Groups are beginning to set times for when they are going to resume meeting again. If you have not heard from your child’s leader let me know and we can put you in touch. I am in need of co-teacher for one of Life Group classes for our guys. If this is something you feel that the Lord is laying on your heart, please reach out to me. Please join us on Wednesdays at 6:00 PM for a discipleship class in the Upper Room that focuses on how to read, study and understand God’s word better. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. If you would like your college student on the prayer list, call the church office 885-5223 with their name, school and address.

Blessings,  
Bro. Brad

## CHILDREN

This is to let you know that Mission Friends, GA’s and RA’s have started back. These classes meet on Wednesdays at 6:00 PM and are for ages 3-grade 5. Looking forward to seeing everyone!

Jennifer Powers

## LADIES

I am so excited about our Women's Retreat this year! The dates are Friday, November 13 and Saturday, November 14. Jennifer Hand will be returning to lead us as we study how God can turn our graves into gardens. We will be staying at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park and the cost is \$100. A sign-up sheet will be at the Information Center and a \$25 deposit is due by October 18. I cannot wait to see what God has in store for us.

Cherry Hiens

## THANK YOU

Thank you to my church family for the cards, calls and most of all your prayers for the past 11 years+ for my baby brother, Dwight Baggett. Thank you for the memorial donation to The Seed Company in helping to spread the gospel. May God bless each seed that comes from this offering.

Jane Dugger & family

Richard's journey on earth has been completed. He is with the Lord now. It seems that just a thank you falls short when expressing the appreciation from our family. Every card received contains precious words. Every flower was beautiful. Friends filled our kitchen with delicious food and "Meals Seasoned with Love" served a great meal after the service. So, a huge "THANK YOU" and hearts filled with gratitude, appreciation and love to everyone. We love you all.

Patty Arnold & family

## SYMPATHY

Mary Nell Phipps and her family on the death of her daughter, Jan Ogden.

## DECISIONS



**Williams Allen Jones**  
By Letter



**Tyler Rivers**  
By Letter

## BIBLE READING PLAN

Mon.	September 14	Ezekiel 17 & Psalm 60-61
Tues.	September 15	Ezekiel 18 & Psalm 62-63
Wed.	September 16	Ezekiel 19 & Psalm 64-65
Thurs.	September 17	Ezekiel 20 & Psalm 66-67
Fri.	September 18	Ezekiel 21 & Psalm 68
Sat.	September 19	Ezekiel 22 & Psalm 69
Sun.	September 20	Ezekiel 23 & Psalm 70-71

## FINANCIALS

### Week of September 6, 2020

Budget Actual	\$	36,909.61
Budget Goal	\$	33,934.05
Journey of Faith	\$	1,075.00
Children's Home	\$	95.00
Golden State	\$	745.00
Lottie Moon	\$	300.00
Designated Offering	\$	3,912.12

### Year-To-Date

Budget Actual	\$	36,909.61
Budget Goal	\$	33,934.05
Journey of Faith	\$	1,075.00
Children's Home	\$	95.00
Golden State	\$	745.00
Lottie Moon	\$	300.00

Please note: When making your contributions online, please choose the option to use your routing number and account number, instead of using your debit card. The fees for debit card use are on the rise and we want to use as much of your contribution as possible for the Kingdom.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **DEACONS MEETING:** Sunday, September 20 at 6:00 PM in F-104
- **WOMEN ON MISSION:** Next meeting will be Monday, September 21 at 10:00 AM in F-104 (old choir room). Please enter from the outside classroom door.
- **MOBILE FOOD PANTRY:** Thursday, September 24 at 12:00 PM. **Volunteers are needed!**

## WATCH THE SERVICES

Stay connected by viewing our Sunday morning and evening services through these avenues:

Television: Sundays • 8:00 PM on CH 8 or 26

Radio: Sundays • 10:15 AM on FM 104.9

Facebook: Second Baptist Church-Union City Official

YouTube: Search Second Baptist UC (live Sunday AM)

SEPTEMBER 15, 2020



**SECOND BAPTIST**  
GATHER • GROW • GO • GIVE

831 Everett Boulevard  
Union City, TN 38261

Return Services Requested

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