



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR

DO JUSTICE. LOVE KINDNESS. WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD.
—MICAH 6:8

MIXON'S MUSINGS

Dear Friends,

Though the ITT has finished its formal work, First Baptist Ann Arbor is still in a time of transition as we move into an altered schedule for the summer with fewer regular weekly activities and more special events. I hope you all will continue to be engaged in the life of the congregation even as you slow down a bit, vacation, and take on all that summer offers.

Part of the ongoing transition is that the Pastoral Search Committee is hard at work looking for new settled pastoral leadership. Another part is a change in key lay leadership. We are more than grateful for the thoughtful, caring grace Robbie Stapleton brought to the Moderator's role through a very challenging season and we are delighted that she will continue as chair of the Board of Education. Thanks to Mary Davis for stepping into the Moderator position for a second round.

You all received Mary's reflection encouraging us to be the church together in this next phase of the life of First Baptist. Xan and others remind us from time to time that we are not asked to volunteer to keep up the life of the church. We are the church, the Body of Christ, God's Beloved Community. The church only exists as we are the church together. We can consider what we need to do to keep the church lively and thriving, but in the end it's less what we do and more who we are.

As Mary notes, "Like a biological family, a chosen family can be both wonderful and messy." True, but as she concludes, "like a family...we can't exist without every person doing their part...our family can only be functional if we all

participate in being the church together.” I like her image of First Baptist as chosen family. It’s more than a volunteer organization, a social outlet. Church is something vital to our being. It is, at its best, our link to the Holy, to the One who made us and calls us into community. But not just any community. This is Beloved Community – community concerned for the well-being of all creation, for the health of our neighbors, for the growth of children and youth, for the plight of hungry and unhoused and uprooted and marginalized children of God, for healing and wholeness for siblings everywhere, for a bigger table with room for all.

I know this kind of being can be difficult, even daunting, to embrace and live into. But isn’t life like that? The life we’ve been given by grace and challenged to embody by the One who made us and calls us to be more than we ever imagined we might? Isn’t this what Jesus calls us to as disciples? Isn’t this the life the Spirit empowers us to manifest? Wonderful and messy, we are the church together. I think that’s a good thing. I hope you do, too.

Blessings on us all in this time of transition,

Pastor Rick



Interim Transition Team Completion—Reflections and Next Steps

On Sunday, June 1, we held our final ITT event, marking a significant milestone in our congregation’s journey of Transforming through Transition. Like all the events that preceded it, this gathering was well attended and demonstrated once more the dedication of our members in supporting this important process. It was an encouraging conclusion to a series of engagements have been both reflective and forward-looking.

Church Profile: A Visionary Document

As part of our ongoing efforts, we look forward to sharing the completed Church Profile later this month. This profile is a culmination of months of collective reflection and will serve as a critical resource for pastoral candidates. The document seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of our church’s

past, its current state, and our aspirations for the future. It embodies the spirit of our congregation and will be instrumental in guiding potential leaders as they discern their call to serve with us.

Closing the ITT Chapter

On June 4, we convened for our final wrap-up meeting, officially bringing the ITT process to a close. This meeting served as a time to reflect on the journey, celebrate the progress made, and prepare for the next phase of this transition. As we close this chapter, we do so with gratitude for the collective effort and commitment that made it possible.

Passing the Torch

With the completion of the ITT process, we now turn over the responsibility of guiding our congregation's next steps to the Pastoral Search Committee (PSC). This group will carry forward the work initiated by ITT, focusing on identifying and calling a new pastoral leader who aligns with our vision and values. We have every confidence in the committee's ability to steward this responsibility with the care and dedication that our congregation deserves.

Looking Ahead

As we transition to this new phase, we invite everyone to remain prayerful and supportive of the Pastoral Search Committee's efforts. This is a pivotal moment in our church's history, and the collective strength and faith of our congregation will continue to be our greatest asset. Thank you to everyone who has participated in and supported ITT. Your commitment has been invaluable, and I look forward to the exciting path that lies ahead!

Thank You Interim Transition Team! The ITT has been working diligently, along with Rick, for many months to help us Transform through Transition. You have seen their work in the congregational events and will soon see the fruits of their labor in the Church Profile which will be presented in the next couple of weeks. Having seen a draft and previously worked on a document of this type in our last search, I can tell you that it is an impressive piece of work in which they have incorporated the responses and information we have given them. Many, many hours of work went into this effort.

Bravo to the whole team: Paula Burton (chair), Kat Becker, Bill Foster, Sue Ellen Glover, Xan Morgan, Robbie Stapleton, and David Suell! An extra shout out goes to Paula for her leadership as chair.

Mary Davis, Moderator

The Pastor Search Committee (PSC) met on Monday, June 9 with our regional representative from American Baptist Churches of MI, Rev. Nikita McCalister. We felt her loving embrace of us as a congregation and her support for this search process. She brought us a strong reminder of God's presence on this journey and deep affirmation of God's unique call to us as FBCA2. Rev. McCalister educated us on the current search process through the American Baptist Personnel system. We feel well informed about next steps and the resources available to us.

Following our time with Rev. McCalister the PSC had discussion of next steps. To that end, we will meet again on June 16 to complete the pastor job description, complete the job posting, and gather all the needed information to participate in the America Baptist personnel system.

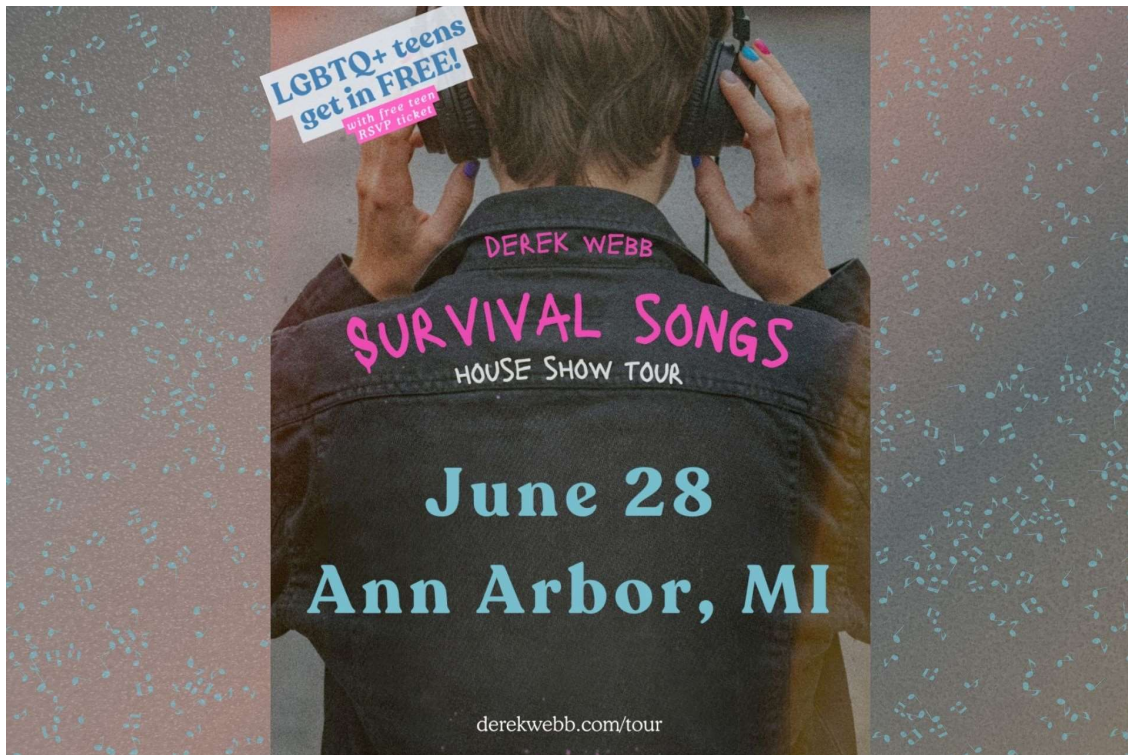
The PSC continues to be in thoughtful prayer together and individually for God's guidance as this journey unfolds. Thank you for joining us in prayer! We appreciate your support. You can reach the PSC at: psc@fbca2.org.

L.J. Brazier
Toni Burton
Bill Foster
DJ Reed
Gretchen Sanewsky
Julie Smith
David Suell



9 More Volunteers Needed for Outreach Event. Let's have some fun and spread some love while we volunteer together at the Ann Arbor Summer Festival! On Sunday, June 22 from 5-7:00p, you're invited to join folks from FBCA2 to greet attendees at Top of the Park and offer guidance regarding compost, recycling, and landfill items to help reach the Festival Footprint goals! There will be a fun performance, Squonk: Brouhaha just before and at the end of our shift. All ages are welcome! [Sign up here!](#) Volunteers under the age of 10 yrs do not need to officially sign up but are invited to come with their families! We encourage all volunteers to wear one of our "Love over..." t-shirts. Let's spread the love! If you'd like to purchase a t-shirt, long-sleeve shirt, or sweatshirt you can do so [here](#). Youth and adult sizes are available. Church is happy to subsidize the cost when needed.

[Volunteer here!](#)



We're excited to host Derek Webb's Survival Songs concert here at First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor! Derek Webb is a veteran singer-songwriter known for his fearless honesty, razor-sharp lyrics, and genre-bending artistry. With a career spanning decades, from his early days with Caedmon's Call to a bold solo catalog, Webb has never shied away from tackling the hard questions. His latest project, *Survival Songs*, is no exception. Written and recorded in just one month, the new album is a powerful response to the urgent need for comfort, courage, and empowerment, especially for queer youth facing growing threats in today's world. As an artist, citizen, and dad of teens, Webb invites listeners to join him on tour and experience these powerful songs live: a soundtrack for survival in dangerous times. [Get your tickets here](https://derekwebb.com/tour) and spread the word!



Pizza in the Park! Join us Tuesday, July 22nd for a midsummer, intergenerational gathering of dinner and connection at County Farm Park from 5:30-7:30p. We'll have pizza, fruit, and drinks. Bring a lawn chair if you'd like! [Please take a moment to RSVP](#) so that we can prepare accordingly. Questions? Connect with [Xan Morgan](#) or a member of the Board of Christian Ed.



Board and Staff Retreat. We look forward to gathering on Wednesday, June 18th from 5:00-8:00p to connect, reflect, and plan with all FBCA2 board members and staff! Dinner and childcare will be provided. [Please RSVP](#) today if you haven't already!

CONGREGATIONAL NOTES

LJ Brazier has been leading the Adult Formation class on the Gospel of Mark for the last two months! The Board of Christian Education, along with our whole congregation, is grateful for their commitment to this invigorating, collaborative, challenging and rewarding experience. Thank you, LJ for all you do with and for First Baptist. We appreciate you.

ADULT FORMATION

Adult Formation. On June 15, we will have our second adult Formation sessions on worship. In the first we considered what worship is both traditionally and in the practice of First Baptist. Why do we do what we do in the service? What is the significance of each of the elements? In this second session we will look at music in worship, particularly the hymns and songs we sing.

Wednesday Bible Study has concluded for the season and will restart in the autumn



One Great Hour

O F S H A R I N G

One Great Hour of Sharing 2025. We continue to receive contributions during the month of June for the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) denominational offering. OGHS supports disaster relief, ministries to displaced persons, and development projects of the American Baptist Churches and its partners. A check can be written to FBC with OGHS in the memo line or cash can be put in one of the OGHS envelopes found in the pews. Please give generously.



PRAYER REQUESTS. Praying together is a core element of our life together. Each Sunday during worship (10:00a on our [Facebook page](#), [YouTube channel](#), and in person), we pray for those we know to pray for by name during the Prayers of the People. You are invited to share prayer requests/praises using [this form](#).

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE AND DEADLINE. The next newsletter will be Thursday, June 26. Deadline for submissions is Tuesday, June 24.
