

The Informer

August 2020



 **farmville**
baptist church
132 N. Main Street
Farmville, VA 23901

A NOTE FROM TRACY

The deacons met on Thursday evening, July 23rd via Zoom. The bulk of the meeting focused on the continued use of our building, and how to proceed with the Pastoral Search Process.

First, everyone agreed that reopening the sanctuary for worship and Zooming the service for those who feel safer at home is working well. We encourage in-person worshippers to continue to wear masks, sanitize your hands, and maintain 6' of social distance. The social distancing is difficult, but it is essential for health and safety, so thank you for your continued diligence.

Second, the deacons also agreed to continue Bible Study via Zoom for now. This format is working well, and it reduces in-person exposure and sanitizing needs. If you haven't joined on Wednesday evenings yet, jump on this week for good study, good fellowship, and a meaningful time of prayer. Check your email each Wednesday for the link to join.

Finally, it is time to return to the Town Hall meetings that are the first part of the Pastoral Search Process. We will hold Town Meetings every 3-4 weeks beginning in August. In order to maximize the opportunity for everyone to have input in these important discussions, the Pastoral Search Committee will offer each Town Hall session twice: once on Sunday morning immediately following worship, and once on Wednesday evening immediately after Bible study. Using this format, we will offer more Town Hall meetings of shorter duration (30-45 minutes each) to accomplish our work. The Sunday morning sessions will be offered live and on Zoom, and the Wednesday evening sessions will be offered via Zoom only. If you do not have computer access, you can call in by phone to participate. The most important thing that we can all continue to do as we move forward is to pray. Pray that we will have open and discerning hearts as we cast a renewed vision and pray for whoever God is calling to come and serve as Farmville's next pastor.

Since we are not having Sunday School prior to worship, and since Town Hall meetings will occur after worship each month through the late summer and fall, the deacons discussed the possibility of an earlier start time for Sunday morning worship. They decided that this should be a congregational decision. Please use this link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NCSV65Q> to take a two question survey online, or mail the enclosed paper copy in this newsletter to the church office to vote.

If you have any questions about any of this, please reach out to your deacon or Pastor Tracy.

On the journey with you,

Tracy

In-Person & Virtual TOWN HALL MEETINGS



~ Town Hall Meeting Dates are as listed below ~

Sunday, August 23rd
Wednesday, August 26th

Sunday, September 13th
Wednesday, September 16th

Sunday, October 4th
Wednesday, October 7th

Sunday, October 25th
Wednesday, October 28th

Sunday, November 15th
Wednesday, November 18th

Sunday, December 6th
Wednesday, December 9th

***The meeting content each Sunday will be repeated on Wednesday, so we encourage you to join either Sunday or Wednesday, there is no need for you to attend both.
Each week's meeting will address a different topic.***

Sunday afternoon meetings are in-person and virtually directly following Worship Service
Wednesday evening meetings are ONLY virtually and directly following Bible Study

YOUR CHURCH : RE-START, RE-FRESH OR RE-LAUNCH?



Bill Wilson | July 23, 2020

Our current virus pandemic has forced all of us to face some harsh realities. One of the benefits of experiencing a seismic shift in our world is the ensuing time of introspection and the questioning of our assumptions. Most churches are realizing that the landscape of congregational life has dramatically changed and we must prepare for a very different world over the course of the coming decade.

This is not a new idea. Several years ago, I began to talk about resilience as a trait that I believed was indispensable for a 21st Century church. I found this quality in increasingly short supply among the churches I engaged. Many were, and are, fragile and vulnerable to any number of significant threats: economic, leadership, pandemic, theological, societal, etc.

Most were plateaued or declining in terms of attendance metrics, many had very shallow financial reserves, the majority were heavily skewed toward an aging congregation and had lost significant groups of middle age and younger members to neighboring churches, especially larger and more focused churches.

Cultivating resilience became a standard stump speech and strategy focus for me. Nearly always, heads would quickly nod in agreement with that thesis, but most churches balked at engaging in the sorts of major changes that would be required to move from simply surviving to genuinely thriving. Now, as we navigate the unknowns before us, I was struck by comments from my friend Seth Hix, who identified some general attitudes and expectation patterns that he sees emerging among churches and clergy. Perhaps identifying our expectations for the future can help us to thoughtfully engage our options.

Some want to RE-START their congregational life as soon as possible.

This approach to the future church seeks to resume life as we knew it, and to do so quickly. The underlying assumption is that when we restart what we were doing prior to March of 2020, people will return and resume the same ministry model that was in place prior to the pandemic. It's understandable and appropriate to long for the security of the familiar patterns that guided our life for decades. Regular in-person worship events, the liturgy, a fine facility that became synonymous with "doing church", dependable and predictable staff interactions, a warm and welcoming small group experience, regular events for our children, mission trips and fellowship meals all describe what we can't wait to restart and resume.

Unfortunately, it is beginning to dawn on us that what was may never fully return, and that we may have been over-estimating its effectiveness all along. For example, even in our limited formats, people are not flocking back to worship together. Most churches I talk with have experienced only about a quarter to a third of their previous attenders coming back to worship this summer. While many of the others are justifiably wary of any public gathering, I sense that there is a sizable group who are realizing that virtual worship CAN substitute in many ways for onsite worship. (Personally, I find it a very poor substitute, but many would not agree with me.) They also are finding that they simply don't miss the times together. As someone recently confided in me: *"There was always too much drama, too many conflicts, too much self-absorption for me. I'm not sure I'll be going back to that."* Another key lay leader in a church confessed: *"I now realize we were playing church, not really being church. I'm not interested in resuming that".*

This Re-Start expectation is based more on wishful thinking than honest evaluation.

Some plan to simply RE-FRESH their approach to ministry.

For these, the pandemic has been a painful but helpful opportunity to do some cleanup work and minor touchup work on their church structures and programming. Online education, fellowship and worship offerings have revealed the potential for broadening the reach and impact of what we assumed had to be done in person and/or on site. The pandemic has given us permission to experiment, and we have done so, but primarily in renovating what already existed. Worship, age-group ministries, small group offerings have been retrofitted to fit a virtual environment.

Again, the underlying message seems to be that while churches will certainly continue to offer virtual options in the future, our primary structures will revert back to pre-pandemic patterns as the main focus as soon as feasible. Like a home renovation that paints over old wallpaper and perhaps replaces a few fixtures, we expect this season of renovation to allow us to emerge from the pandemic looking better, but very similar to how we appeared pre-virus.

This may be an effective short-term strategy and may make us feel better about our capacity for adaptive change, but I suspect it may fail us long-term. In fact, if history holds, most of our technical changes will wither rather quickly and need to be refreshed again as soon as the next crisis hits our church(es).

The wise among us are talking about the need to RE-LAUNCH congregational life for the 2020-decade.

As I write these words, I have to confess that I do not actually know what I am saying. I just sense that a whole new thing is emerging, and that we will need to consider a "start over" if we are to find the resilience that we so desperately need. Few would argue that the American church of the last fifty years has not been compromised by the consumeristic, self-absorbed culture in which we exist. A watered-down faith, Americanized gospel, and lip service to humility and service as a way of life have made us irrelevant and weak.

Some are beginning to see the pandemic as an opportunity for major upheaval and a fresh start as God's people. This is a narrow and treacherous path, as it will threaten our foundational beliefs about how to do and be a church. It will find its inspiration in cultures where the Gospel witness has been subject to persecution, rather than being privy to power, prestige and popular support. See the Christians in China, the former Soviet Union, much of Africa, etc.

Those who choose to re-launch their church or ministry will certainly do so with a smaller, yet more focused group of congregants. Perhaps their biblical inspiration will be the pruning narratives of Jesus that promise more bountiful fruit on the other side of the pain of pruning away what does not produce fruit. Another might be the deeper soil in which the gospel can take root and find the resources to weather the harsh conditions above ground.

Most likely, every church will be a mix of all three of these possible futures. Ministers and lay leaders will find themselves managing intense conversations and painful deliberations among these factions. It will be slow, deliberate and uncomfortable work as we break up the hard ground on which we have built our church home for decades.

Hopefully, that broken ground will become the rich soil from which will spring a more relevant, viable and resilient church.



For the safety of students and teachers the FBC Preschool will NOT be opening for the fall semester. We ask that you pray for this ministry and outreach that has blessed our community for many years during this time. Updates and registration information will be posted to the FBC Preschool Facebook page as it becomes available (<https://www.facebook.com/FarmvilleBaptistPreschool/>).

AUGUST 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 Happy Birthday Ellison Southall 10:00am-Church Council 10:15am-Circle the Church 11:00am-Worship Service	3 Happy Birthday Joyce Davis & Katie Trent	4 Happy Birthday Becky Kelly	5 Happy Birthday Janie Simpson 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Pastor Tracy 7:00pm : Bible Study via Zoom 8pm : Pastor Search Comm. Via Zoom with Pastor Tracy	6 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	7 Happy Birthday Mason Swawenberg 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	8 Happy Birthday Chuck Daniel
9 10:15am-Circle the Church 11:00am-Worship Service	10 Happy Birthday Janet Moore 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	11 Happy Birthday Violet Holman 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	12 Happy Birthday Debbie Duval 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman 7:00pm : Bible Study via Zoom	13 Happy Birthday Gary Atkins & Doris Weaver 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	14 Happy Birthday Eleanor Ross 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	15
16 10:15am-Circle the Church 11:00am-Worship Service	17 Happy Birthday Michelle Emanuelson 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	18 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	19 Happy Birthday Brenda Rawlings & L.D. Phaup 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman 7:00pm : Bible Study via Zoom	20 Happy Birthday Peggy Cave 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	21 Happy Birthday Debbie Daniel & David Klein 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	22
23 10:15am-Circle the Church 11:00am-Worship Service	24 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	25 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	26 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman 7:00pm : Bible Study via Zoom 8:00pm : Town Hall Meeting	27 Happy Birthday Lorraine Carter 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	28 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman	29
30 Happy Birthday Adam Southall 10:15am-Circle the Church 11:00am-Worship Service	31 Happy Birthday Jack Davis 12:15pm : Daily Devotional Via Zoom with Tracy Hartman					

Notes:

BAPTIST COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES

An update from Austin Williams, Campus Minister at Baptist Collegiate Ministries.

With the uncertainty of the Fall semester, they will not host weekly Thursday night dinners, instead they are asking for support in the following ways.

1. **PRAYER**—Keep their ministry and the students in our prayers throughout the semester as they adjust. Please pray for the incoming freshman, and for BCM to be able to reach them during this season.
2. **SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDIES**—If students return to campus, the ministry will shift to small group bible studies. During these small group Bible Studies they would like to provide some light refreshments. Churches are asked to sponsor these refreshments each week through monetary donations.
3. **CARE PACKAGES**—If students do not return to campus, the ministry is planning to put together BCM Care Packages for the students. These would be assembled and mailed out mid-fall to roughly 50 students. Care Packages would include snacks, a devotional, and BCM mementos. Churches are encouraged to sponsor these Care Packages through monetary donations and handwritten notes of encouragement.

Whether students are on campus or are learning virtually, BCM's mission and commitment to love and care for them spiritually remains the same. Thank you for your church's love and support for our ministry and for the students.

COVID-19 UPDATE

For the safety of our community and its members all Farmville Baptist Church events and building will remain closed. We have begun to re-gather in person for Worship Services ONLY, within our sanctuary, and we also continue to offer our Worship Services virtually via zoom. For specific guidelines and details on our re-gathering please visit the "On Sunday" page under the Ministry Menu on our church website (www.farmvillebaptist.org).

Our church office is open Tuesday through Thursday from 9:00am to 2:00pm. Although the church office is open, we encourage you to call or email with any needs before visiting to ensure the health and safety of everyone is achieved through proper social distancing and sanitation.

Throughout this time, please know we are working hard to virtually worship, stay connected, and complete mission outreach.

Please do not hesitate to reach out via email to either pastor@farmvillebaptist.org or office@farmvillebaptist.org with any needs, questions or requests.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Throughout the past few months while we have been unable to gather for monthly Children's nights, summer Vacation Bible School, and weekly Sunday School, Janett Southall, and the Children's Committee, have been mailing the children fun packages full of Worship bulletins, Sunday School lessons, and activities to complete at home.

They are currently in the process of planning a gathering to Natural Bridge State Park and Safari for later this year; so be on the look out for that announcement soon!

If you know of a family that we should include in our mailings and announcements please reach out to the church office.

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: We are planning to have our Annual Lakeside Worship Service and Picnic for late September 2020. We will worship lakeside on Wilck's Lake Island beginning at 10:30AM. To keep the environment safe and properly socially distant we invite families to pack and enjoy their own picnic lunch following Worship around the lake. We will release the exact date and more information once we get the final approval from the Town of Farmville.

Dear Rev. Hartman and the FBC Family,

Words cannot adequately express how much we have appreciated the countless expressions of love and support to both B.A. and the family . The "drive-by" filled our hearts. The endless delicious food, the frequent calls and notes, and the ministry extended to us by our transition minister, when we have not yet met!.. Makes us feel loved and wrapped in the arms of The Holy Spirit. You all meant so much to Beverley Anne. Your kind gestures help ease the sadness.

Thank you,

David, Scott, Connie, Alex and Emmalee

ZOOM LOG-IN INFORMATION

If you haven't joined us on Zoom yet, here are the very simple instructions to get started.

If you are logging in via the **INTERNET** follow the below steps.

1. Go to zoom.us.
2. Click on the tab labeled "Join a Meeting".
3. Click the box that says "Meeting ID or Personal Link Name". Type in corresponding meeting ID for either Worship Service, Daily Devotions, or Wednesday Night Sunday School as listed below and click "Join".

If you are calling in via **PHONE**, you do not need to follow these steps; just simply dial +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 and enter the corresponding meeting ID for either Sunday Worship Service, Daily Devotions, or Wednesday Night Sunday School as listed below followed by #.

This information and more can also be found on our website at <http://www.farmvillebaptist.org/virtual-gatherings/>

**SUNDAY MORNING
WORSHIP SERVICE
AT 11:00 AM**

Meeting ID :
626 833 551
Password:
592659

**DAILY DEVOTIONS
(MONDAY—FRIDAY)
WITH TRACY AT
12:15 PM**

Meeting ID :
844 110 379

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT
SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS
WITH KEN COPELAND
AT 7:00 PM**

Meeting ID :
271 659 616
Password:
688863

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

If you are able to volunteer for our upcoming services please contact Sandy Yeatts or the church office at (434) 392—5041.

Circling the Church in Prayer

Although we are unable to gather together in person each Sunday, we still encourage you to spend each Sunday morning at 10:15am praying for our church.

During this time we pray for discernment—What is God's plan for our church? How will God use our church within our community now, and in the future?

God honors bold prayers and bold prayers honor God!

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

August 2	10:00am	Church Council Meeting In-Person & Virtually—Zoom Meeting ID : 626 833 551
August 2	11:00am	Worship Service Virtually via Zoom with Meeting ID : 626 833 551
August 5	7:00pm	Virtual Bible Study with Ken Copeland via Zoom—Meeting ID : 271 659 616
August 5	8:00pm	Virtual Pastor Search Committee Meeting via Zoom—Meeting ID : 271 659 616
August 9	11:00am	The Lord's Supper & Worship Service Virtually via Zoom with Meeting ID : 626 833 551
August 12	7:00pm	Virtual Bible Study with Ken Copeland via Zoom—Meeting ID : 271 659 616
August 16	11:00am	Worship Service Virtually via Zoom with Meeting ID : 626 833 551
August 19	7:00pm	Virtual Bible Study with Ken Copeland via Zoom—Meeting ID : 271 659 616
August 23	11:00am	Worship Service Virtually via Zoom with Meeting ID : 626 833 551
August 26	7:00pm	Virtual Bible Study with Ken Copeland via Zoom—Meeting ID : 271 659 616
August 30	11:00am	Worship Service Virtually via Zoom with Meeting ID : 626 833 551

Monthly Financial Report Through July 31, 2020	July Receipts —Undesignated—	\$10,693.00
	YTD Receipts —Undesignated—	\$77,661.00
	YTD Expenditures —Undesignated—	\$65,115.05
	YTD Receipts vs. Expenditures —Undesignated—	\$12,545.95
	YTD Receipts vs. Expenditures —Designated—	\$11,248.24

REMEMBER YOU CAN ALSO
STAY INFORMED BY
FOLLOWING OUR SOCIAL
MEDIA PAGES!

[www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/farmvillebaptist.org)

farmvillebaptist.org



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DEACON FAMILY MINISTRIES

Chuck Daniel	A—Bh	Jordan Whiley	Dr—E	Jack Davis	P—R
Jack Davis	Bi—Coo	Kathryn Copeland	F—L	Chuck Daniel	S—Tn
Janett Southall	Cop—Dq	Becky Kelly	M—O	George Carter	To—Z

LIFE DEACONS

Peggy Cave, Jack Davis, Jim Davis, Joyce Davis, Gene Watson, Cecil Yeatts