



What makes the parables mysterious, or difficult, is that they challenge us to look into the hidden aspects of our own values, our own lives. They bring to the surface unasked questions, and they reveal the answers we have always known, but refuse to acknowledge.... Religion has been defined as designed to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. We do well to think of the parables of Jesus as doing the afflicting.

+ Amy-Jill Levine

Some believe that telling stories to change the world is like trying to break up concrete by throwing light bulbs against it. I've been present when someone threw light bulbs against concrete walls, and the walls cracked and fell.

+ Fred Craddock

The Lord of the Parables, Jorge Cocco Santángelo

First Baptist Church on Fifth, Winston-Salem

THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday, September 3, 2023 • 11:00 AM

PRELUDE: *Adoro Te*

Jacob Hill, Organ

E. Titcomb

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Emily Hull McGee

CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 63:1-4

Amy McClure

Leader: You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you;
I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you,
in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

**All: I have seen you in the sanctuary
and beheld your power and your glory.**

Leader: Because your love is better than life,
my lips will glorify you.

**All: I will praise you as long as I live,
and in your name I will lift up my hands.**

*HYMN 337: *Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*

LAUDA ANIMA

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 13:10-17

Kim Wilkinson

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM: *The Meditations of My Heart*

E. Hagenberg

Sanctuary Choir

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord. O Lord my Rock, O Lord my strength, O Lord my God and Redeemer.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Zack Jackson

(Please read in unison.)

**O God, who is our Rock and our Redeemer,
how we desire to bring
acceptable meditations before you,
to please you with the words of our mouths,
and to offer to you pure hearts.
But too often we fail in our good intentions.
In your compassion, forgive us.
Save us from hearts that have grown dull,
from ears that refuse to hear,
from eyes that fail to see the truth before us.
Teach us to see, hear, and proclaim
the story that is hidden in parables,
the story of a kingdom of forgiveness,
of steadfast love,
and of very good news. Amen.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Zack Jackson

Leader: The story of our redemption is this:
Christ died for us while we were sinners,
proving God's abundant love toward us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Such good news is the foundation
of the peace we experience in Christ;
and it is our joy to share that peace
with both friend and stranger:
May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

(Please share the peace of Christ with those around you.)

CALL TO PRAYER: *In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful*

J. Berthier

In the Lord I'll be ev-er thank-ful, in the Lord I will re-joice! Look to God, do not be a-
fraid; lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near; lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

David Williamson

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SERMON: "Tell Me a Story"

Emily Hull McGee

THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

HYMN OF RESPONSE 619: *Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine

ASSURANCE

God calls all to respond! Our church welcomes you to share a new desire to follow Jesus or to join our congregation as a member. As we sing, please come to the front and share your commitment with one of our ministers.

***PRAYER FOR THE GIFTS WE GIVE**

Chris Gambill

The giving of our material possessions, as well as our very lives, is an important part of active, vibrant worship. At the conclusion of the worship service you will find offering plates at the exit doors for those who would like to make a financial contribution to support the ministries of First Baptist Church. If you would like to give online, you will find additional information in this worship guide and at our website, firstonfifth.org.

THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Emily Hull McGee

***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*BENEDICTION

Emily Hull McGee

POSTLUDE: *Maestoso*

E. Titcomb

Jacob Hill, Organ

*Those who are able will please stand.

BENEVOLENCE OFFERING

At the conclusion of the worship service today you will be given an opportunity to contribute to the Benevolence Fund. This fund provides confidential financial assistance for individuals in times of crisis and is made possible by designated contributions. If you would like to contribute, please make your check payable to First Baptist Church, designated to the Benevolence Fund.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SERVING TODAY

Acolytes:

Audrey and Iris Mann

Deacon of the Week:

Chris Gambill and Kim Wilkinson

Children & Families Greeter:

Kim Wilkinson

Streaming and Sound Team:

Billy Choe, Martha Greene, Greg Ryder,
Judy Eustice, Jeff Burchette, Amber Myers

IF YOU ARE NEW, WELCOME!

If you are visiting with us today for the first time, we welcome you! Please fill out a Connection Card located in the back of the pews, and give it to a minister or drop into the offering plate after worship. This allows us to extend our hospitality and connect you deeply with our church. If you're visiting with young children, we welcome them in whatever way is best for your family! Creative resources for our little ones guide their experience of worship in the Sanctuary, and worship care for infants through pre-K is available in the nursery on the first floor. Masking is optional in the Sanctuary. The balcony continues to be reserved for those preferring an even greater distance. Extra masks and hand sanitizer are available at all three entrances to the sanctuary. We're glad you're here!

HOW WE SUSTAIN MINISTRY THROUGH FBC

Thank you for giving faithfully to God through the ministries of our church! Should you desire to give today to God's work of Love through First on Fifth, you can do so by placing your gift in the offering plates upon your exit from the room, or by scanning the QR code to give online. Because you will need to enter your personal financial information when registering online, we encourage you to set up your account on a secure network at home before using the app for the first time.



501 West Fifth Street, Winston-Salem NC 27101 | 336.722.2558 | firstonfifth.org

BOLD LOVE. BOUNDLESS COMPASSION.



FIRST BAPTIST
ON FIFTH

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tending: This Year at First on Fifth

The Christian life is a life of tending. Tending can have us stretching toward practices and places of our care, or holding fast to that which captures our focus and tendencies. Yet in a season of our common life when our attention is a most significant currency, when all that pulls at us causes us to distend from God or from hope, when our earth bears the scars of all we cannot sustain, and when our church's commitments will thrive with our continued nurture, a season of energy around "tending" will center us in the God who tends nothing less than our very souls.

September 10

Tending: To Hold and To Stretch | Matthew 13:10-17

September 17

Tending What's Different | Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

September 24

Tending What's Small | Matthew 13:31-33

October 1

Tending What's Priceless | Matthew 13:44-50

Startup Sunday Needs You! | September 10

It's time to begin again! We're delighted to begin our new church year alongside the new school year on Startup Sunday, September 10. That morning, we'll enjoy coffee and donuts in the Commons at 10:30, try a new Sunday School class, enjoy colorful displays around the building, and step together into the new year with our focus on "Tending." Before then, we need your help! Please send a digital image of you or your family and/or your pet out doing something you enjoy to olena@firstonfifth.org by September 6.

Adult Ministry Team Seeks Your Input

Thank you for your continued interest in the teaching and learning ministries of First on Fifth! Our Adult Ministry Team is excited to respond to our growing congregation and broadening interests. In order to best serve you, we ask that you complete the survey in the newsletter by September 10 about what would best meet your curiosities and capacities for this school year. Thank you for strengthening our ministry!

Seeking Donations | Crisis Control

The gifts for September are canned greens. Please drop off donations in the first floor bins. Thank you!

Last Call for Newly-Forming Coffee Team!

The Hospitality Ministry Team is creating a group to help facilitate our coffee time on Sunday mornings. Read more in the newsletter, and let us know of your interest by filling out the form or speaking to one of the team leaders: Cindi Goins and Linda Stewart.

Weekly Studies Begin Again

Tuesday Morning Devotional Classics

Baraca Room, Tuesdays, 7:30am, starting Sept 12

Curriculum: A study of *Thunder in the Soul: To Be Known by God*, by Abraham Joshua Heschel. This is a sampler of Heschel's many books and can be found on Amazon; see link in the newsletter.

Leader: David Williamson, david@firstonfifth.org

Older Adult Weekly Fellowship

Zoom, Thursdays, 10:00am, starting Sept 7

Curriculum: A study of *Spiritual Direction* by Henri Nouwen. Books are \$10 and can be ordered through Amy McClure.

Leader: Amy McClure, amy@firstonfifth.org

Join First on Fifth at Bookmarks | September 23

Join the Communications & Outreach Team for the Bookmarks Festival on Saturday, September 23, from 9AM-5PM, where we will host a booth and enjoy time with our neighbors. Sign up in the newsletter!

First Impressions | September 24, 9:15 AM

All new or prospective members to First Baptist are invited to join in our First Impressions class. First Impressions familiarizes newcomers with an in-depth look at First Baptist, including ways in which people can connect, get involved in ministry, and join the church. This First Impressions gathering will be held on September 24, from 9:15-10:30 AM in the Commons. Please RSVP to Zack at zack@firstonfifth.org by Thursday, September 24.

Joining Sunday | September 24

Our next Joining Sunday is planned for September 24 at the end of worship. This step for newcomers to become part of a beloved community can sometimes feel intimidating, and we make it a little less so by inviting folks who are at this place in their journey to make that step together. See Zack with questions!

THIS WEEK AT FIRST

SUNDAY, September 3

- 9:00 am Sunday Bible Study (*online*)
- 9:30 am Sunday Bible Study Adults and Children (*in person*)
- 10:30 am Coffee and Conversation (*Commons*)
- 11:00 am Worship (*Sanctuary & online*)

MONDAY, September 4

Labor Day Holiday: Church Office Closed

TUESDAY, September 5

- 10:00 am Care Notes Ministry (*Commons*)
- 8:00 pm Evening Prayer (*online*)

WEDNESDAY, September 6

- 10:30 am Staff meeting (*Commons*)
- 5:30 pm Handbell Rehearsal
- 6:30 pm Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, September 7

- 10:00 am Older Adult Book Study/Fellowship (*online*)
- 12:00 pm Communications/Outreach Ministry Team (*online*)
- 5:00 pm Ministry Funding Plan meeting (*online*)

FRIDAY, September 8

- 6:30 pm First Films: Big Eyes (*Kelly Auditorium*)

SATURDAY, September 9

SUNDAY, September 10

- 9:00 am Sunday Bible Study (*online*)
- 9:30 am Sunday Bible Study Adults and Children (*in person*)
- 10:30 am Coffee and Conversation (*Commons*)
- 11:00 am Worship (*Sanctuary & online*)
- 12:00 pm Prayer Partners Care Packages

CHURCH STAFF

Sally Barbour
Accounting Manager
sally@firstonfifth.org | Ext. 1103

Jacob Hill
Music Associate / Organist
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Zack Jackson
Pastoral Resident
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amy@firstonfifth.org | Ext. 1002

Rev. Emily Hull McGee
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Rev. David Williamson
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Olena Withrow
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olena@firstonfifth.org | Ext. 1000

John Young
Facilities Manager
john@firstonfifth.org | Ext. 1102

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday, 8:30am - 4:30pm
Friday, 8:30am - 12:30pm



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