

the. *VISION*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE AUGUST 2020

Church Events

- Aug 2nd at 6pm—
Quarterly Ministry Meeting
Online, Phone or In Person
fbcshallotte.org/meeting to sign
up for online/phone access
- Aug 9th—True Love Waits
Purity Ceremony
- Aug 16th at 11am—
Gideon Speaker
- Aug 30th—Beach Baptism

WEEKLY EVENTS

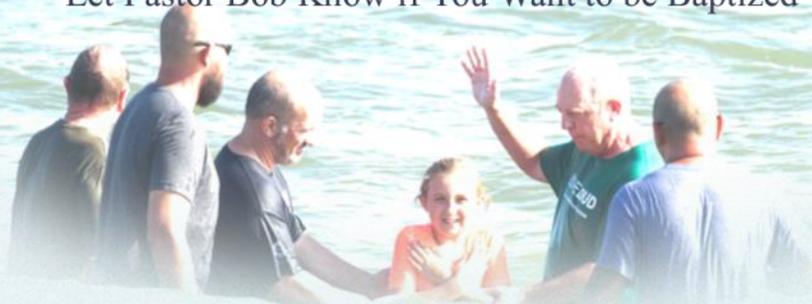
- Sundays at 11am
Worship—Online at
fbcshallotte.org/live or In Person
(RSVP at fbcshallotte.org/rsvp)
- Sundays at 6:45pm
Prayer Walking & Gathering
- Wednesdays at 6:30pm
Christians in the Chaos
Bible Study w/ Pastor Bob
Online at fbcshallotte.org/live
or In Person (no RSVP required)

Baptisms
at the Beach

AUG 30 | 5PM

**OCEAN ISLE BEACH
COMMUNITY CENTER**

Let Pastor Bob Know if You Want to be Baptized



Which One Are You?

Pastor Bob

For the last thirty years, the Barna Group has published research regarding the spiritual practices of Americans, Christianity in America, and trends related to the church. Their “State of the Church” research is always timely, beneficial, and informative.

On July 8 Barna issued its most recent State of the Church report with the unsettling title, “One in Three Practicing Christians Has Stopped Attending Church During COVID-19.” They define a “practicing Christian,” by the way, as someone who says their Christian faith is “very important” in their lives. And if Barna is right, Covid-19 is changing the attendance habits of Americans who, previously, had been faithful to in-person church attendance.

I know that statistics are not exactly riveting but hang in there. Barna’s stats reveal something we need to see. And as we go along, I want to ask you a question.

Their research was done right after most churches suspended services, and before any of those churches started returning to in-person worship. So the statistics do not account for any worshippers attending in person since churches reopened. But their research is informative. In the new digital church era, Barna researchers have identified **four types of churchgoers** in the Covid-19 era:

Type #1: Faithful to their pre-Covid church.

First, they noted the Christians who are streaming their pre-COVID-19 church online. These are the folks who are still “attending” church at the usual time, such as 11 AM, and sitting down with the church where they are members and participating in the live streaming experience. This group makes up 35% of practicing Christians that Barna surveyed.

Type #2: Changed churches. Roughly 14% of Christians have switched churches in the era of Covid-19. They are now streaming a different church online, other than the church they attended prior to the local church suspending services.

Type #3: Stopped “attending.” A whopping 32% of previously practicing Christians have stopped “attending” church altogether. This is where the title of the report comes from. Let that sink in—one-third of Christians who claimed to be “practicing” followers of Christ prior to the pandemic have dropped out of church during the pandemic.

Type #4: Church hopping. The fourth group are the creative ones. 18% of those surveyed are viewing multiple services online each week. It seems that church hopping is alive and well in cyberspace.

So, here’s a question—which one are you? Have you been faithful or stopped “attending”? Are you still participating in the streaming service with FBCS, church-hopping, or have you moved on to another church altogether?

Covid-19 has forever changed the church and the way we will practice our faith. That’s not all

COVID-19 ONLINE CHURCH ATTENDANCE AMONG PRACTICING CHRISTIANS



n=562 U.S. practicing Christians; April 28-May 11, 2020.

bad. It helps us see the soft spots and shore up our weaknesses. But the truth is that the move to online services reveals more about our personal faith and walk with Christ than it does the condition of our culture. And it reveals some changes and realignments we need to make as a church.

Consider this. Barna also learned some surprising generational patterns. In short, being online has nothing to do with whether tech-savvy people are more likely to “attend” a virtual church service. Just the opposite. When asked if they had attended church within the past four weeks, exactly half of practicing Christian Millennials (50%) say they have not. They are the group most likely to have dropped out, or not attended. Younger generations are more tech savvy, but that doesn’t necessarily translate into participation in virtual worship.

The truth is, in-person or online, it all comes down to the same thing—our commitment to Christ and His church. We will always make time for what matters most to us. We will always apply ourselves to what benefits us, to what inspires us or motivates us. In other words, our commitments and priorities show in what we make time for. Plain and simple.

In all fairness, Barna didn’t account for Christians who are simply viewing their church’s streaming service at a time other than Sunday morning. But doing that regularly is not necessarily better. It just reveals that Christians want church to be convenient to their schedule and are unwilling to make adjustments for worship. If that’s you, what does that expose about your values? And if you have children, what are you teaching them about your spiritual priorities?

The conditions we are in have taught me some valuable lessons, and I have not been shy about sharing them. It has taught me that we are far too dependent on building-centered ministry, and we are ill-equipped to be the church in the event of another similar shut-down, particularly if it originates from persecution.

Visit Pastor Bob’s Blog:
BOBWEATHERS.NET



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New Door Buzzer Entry System

Did you know that we have a new secure buzz-in entry system at the front door?

What It Is: During regular operating hours, office hours, and church services, nothing will change. Office hours are 9AM-3PM Mon-Thurs, and closed Friday. The buzz-in system provides secure access at the front door of the church when a staff person is in the office working alone, or when personnel are in the office outside of our office hours. When the system is activated, the doors will remain locked but we can see, hear, and talk to someone

who needs access to the church before we let them in.

How It Works: Beside the main door, there is a panel that includes a door bell. When someone comes to the door, and finds the doors secured, they can push the button that notifies the office staff that someone is at the door. The office staff can see the person at the door, and can talk with them without having to approach the door.

Then, if needed, office staff can actually release the lock on the door without having to go to the door! Please note: When activated, the buzz-in system overrides normal key entry. The buzz in system secures all access when it is activated. However, it can be activated only if someone is in the offices. If you have a key to get in the church and find that the main door used for entrance is locked, but you are not able to unlock it with your key, please try the other set of doors.

Thank you to the Church Security Team and to the Building and Grounds Committee for this added feature to help keep your church staff safe!

...continued from Page 2
Which One Are You?

So, here's my question --What has this crisis revealed about the depth of your devotion to Christ, about your commitments and priorities? This is the time to be honest. Are you truly committed to following Christ, to studying the Bible and participating in worship, even when it is entirely up to you to make it happen?

Or is your brand of Christianity so tied to church attendance and consuming what the pastor and the staff and leaders provide that the slightest shift in place or platform causes you to drift away from church, perhaps permanently?

In other words, when it comes down to it, which one are you?

With Love in Christ,
Pastor Bob

Introducing Connection Groups: FBCS Loving One Another

Starting this month, we are all connected in Connection Groups!

The purpose of the Connection Groups is exactly what the name implies—to connect the members of FBCS to one another and to facilitate loving one another in Christ!

How does it work? Each member household will be organized alphabetically and added to a Connection Group. Each Group will have a leader(s). And each Group will be attached to the Deacon ministry.

Through the Connection Groups, you and your leaders will interact with group members, share prayer requests, help meet physical needs, celebrate together, serve alongside one another, and get to know new people! These groups are in addition to the loving care you have in your Sunday School class or in other ministries, and they will fortify our connections when we are not together for church events, meeting for Bible study, or gathering for corporate worship. In other words, you will never be disconnected from your family at FBCS!

What's next? You will get a letter from Pastor Bob telling you about your Group, and then you will hear from your Group Leader. Also, Pastor Bob will talk more about the Connection Groups during the Ministry Meeting Sunday, August 2 at 6pm.

So get involved, get connected, and love one another in Christ!

New To Our Family



Tom & Sharon Kenny
joined Jul 26

Maybe you have been worshiping with us online or in person, and you feel like God is leading you to become a member of FBCS. That's awesome and we want to hear from you! Due to our social distancing precautions, we have not been able to have our usual come-to-the-front time of response. But don't let that hinder you from making the decision! Complete the Next Steps form online or in person to let us know or call us in the church office. We want to help you take your next steps toward following Christ! Just let us know how we can help!



Love God.
Love One Another.
Love the World.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE

4486 Main Street
Shallotte, NC 28470

910.754.4048 fbcshallotte.org

Office Hours:

M-Th 9am—3pm

Sunday School online
Worship 8:30am & 11:00am

Read the Bible Beginning to End Reading Plan

1-Year Plan. It is important to understand the fullness of God's message to the churches, and a great way of doing this is reading the Old and New Testaments simultaneously. This plan, which can be completed in one calendar year, does just that. Readings from both Testaments are included from the beginning and although each reading does not contain both Testaments, the two are read effectively.

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|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/1 Psalms 57-59; Romans 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/14 Psalms 89-90; Romans 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/23 Psalms 113-115; 1 Corinthians 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/2 Psalms 60-62; Romans 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/15 Psalms 91-93; Romans 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/24 Psalms 116-118; 1 Corinthians 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/3 Psalms 63-65; Romans 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/16 Psalms 94-96 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/25 Psalms 119 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/4 Psalms 66-67; Romans 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/17 Psalms 97-99; Romans 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/26 Psalms 120; 1 Corinthians 8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/5 Psalms 68-69 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/18 Psalms 100-102; 1 Corinthians 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/27 Psalms 121-122; 1 Corinthians 9 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/6 Psalms 70-71; Romans 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/19 Psalms 103-104; 1 Corinthians 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/28 Psalms 123-125; 1 Corinthians 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/7 Psalms 72-73; Romans 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/20 Psalms 105-106; 1 Corinthians 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/29 Psalms 126-128 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/8 Psalms 74-76 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/21 Psalms 107-109; 1 Corinthians 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/30 Psalms 129-131; 1 Corinthians 11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/9 Psalms 77-78; Romans 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/22 Psalms 110-112; 1 Corinthians 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 8/31 Psalms 132-134 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/10 Psalms 79-80; Romans 11 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/11 Psalms 81-83 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/12 Psalms 84-86; Romans 12 | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8/13 Psalms 87-88; Romans 13 | | |