



THE MESSENGER

July 2026



"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Matthew 7:24

This July, we celebrate the freedom to gather, worship, and pray.

A LEGACY OF FAITH AND FREEDOM

America turns 250 this July 4th, and somewhere in that celebration is a story that belongs to us.

Long before First Baptist was founded in 1890, Baptists were among the strongest voices insisting that religious freedom be written into the bones of this nation. It was a conviction born of hard experience—Baptist preachers jailed in Virginia for preaching without licenses, congregations worshipping at risk, and believers who understood why government had no business coercing matters of conscience.

That witness helped shape the American experiment. Baptist minister John Leland, together with many Virginia Baptists, urged James Madison to secure protections for religious liberty in the Bill of Rights. Here in North Carolina, the 1776 Declaration of Rights affirmed that...

"all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own conscience."

That heritage has never been merely historical for us. In the 1975 revision of our church constitution, our community declared among its purposes "insuring individual liberty for each member of this body of believing Christians"—language that echoes in our constitution today and reflects the Baptist commitment to soul freedom across the centuries.

As America marks 250 years, the freedom to gather, worship, and pray remains both a gift to cherish and a calling to protect. We are grateful First Baptist continues to honor that legacy.

Upcoming Schedule

Sundays

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship

July Events

July 4 4th of July Pancake Breakfast
July 6-9 Vacation Bible School
July 11 Farm Share
July 12 VBS Celebration in Worship
July 19 "Remembering the Fire" in Worship
July 20 Illumination Carrigan Farms
July 26 Ice Cream Social
July 27 Illumination Lunch and Bowl

August Events

Aug 1 Farm Share
Aug 7 Girl Scout Sleepover
Aug 13 Holly Srs Community Lunch
Aug 22 Gaudete Ministries Concert
Aug 23 Ice Cream Social



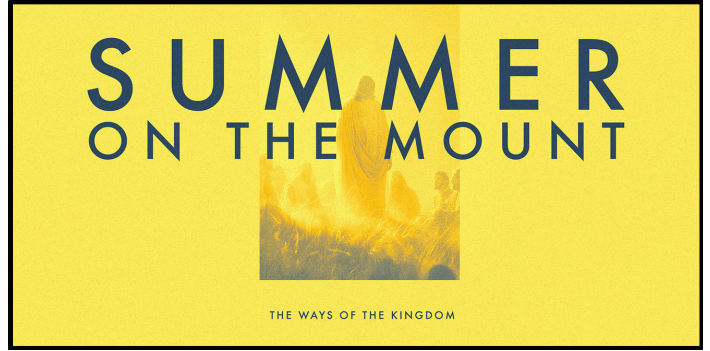
A VIEW FROM MAIN STREET

by Jeff Allen
Pastor
jeff@fbcmountholly.org

Ten years ago this month, our church building caught fire. The stories are still told – the smoke rising over Main Street, the long drive to a parking lot that suddenly looked unfamiliar. And yet, in the days and weeks that followed, this congregation discovered something no flame could touch: a freedom that does not live inside walls.

“The building may have been destroyed, but the church is the people — and the people of God belong to a Kingdom that cannot be shaken.”

That first Sunday in the Grand Hall, when First Baptist gathered to worship without its sanctuary, the truth became clear. The church is not the building. The church is the people. It was a conviction our Baptist ancestors had long insisted on — no walls of brick or steel define the freedom of a soul to worship God according to conscience.



On July 19, we will gather for a special service marking the tenth anniversary of the fire, sharing stories and giving thanks for how faithfully God carried us through. This will help us all carry our story forward to those who come after us.

This July, as America marks 250 years of freedom and we remember ten years since the fire, let us remember our Savior who frees us from every kind of bondage, and belong to a people who have always known that the church is not a place, but a beloved gathering of free and faithful souls.

4th of July

FREE PANCAKE BREAKFAST

ALL ARE WELCOME | **7:00 AM - 9:00 AM**
300 SOUTH MAIN STREET
FELLOWSHIP HALL

Ministry Spotlight
Circles - Men's Discipleship Groups

Discipleship happens best in the company of others, which is the heart behind Circles, our men's discipleship groups.

Throughout the year, the men of FBC have gathered to grow in faith and share life together. But Circles isn't only about what happens around the table. These men have rolled up their sleeves to serve our community, putting faith into action in Mount Holly. That spirit returns at the 4th of July Pancake Breakfast, when the Circles will host our neighbors for a morning of food and fellowship.

To the men of Circles: Thank you for the quiet, faithful work of showing up — for one another and our community. Discipleship is never a solo journey.

To the congregation: If you're a man looking to grow in faith and friendship, talk with a Circles leader about joining a group.



TELLING STORIES

by Tori Freeman
Minister of Youth and Children
tori@fbcmoutholly.org

When I was in my first year of teaching, Cole and I got married over Christmas break. My students loved that I had two names when I came back after the wedding. They loved "Freeman" because our motto in the classroom became "I am FREE 2 Be Me".

My students knew they were free to be themselves, welcomed each morning with open arms, and expected to embrace one another.

As I think about the freedom that we have in Jesus, I am reminded of the sacrifice that he made. Because of Jesus, I am free. I am free to worship God, and I am free to share that same love with others.

More importantly, I am free from sin. Freedom in Christ is not free. While we are promised an eternal life in Heaven, it came at quite the cost. Jesus loves us enough to lay down his life for us.. Jesus' death was not easy but his death gives us the chance to live without the fear of an unknown future .

// Because of Jesus,
I am free. //



July 6th-9th
9am-Noon

Vacation Bible School
July 6th-9th

We are excited to explore the nature of God during our time together at VBS!

Please pray for the children coming that they would hear the word of God!

PRESENTING...

GAUDETE MINISTRIES

David Masterson, Piano
Beth Allen-Gardner, Soprano
Cole Freeman, Violin

**AUGUST 22, 2026
2:00 PM**

First Baptist Church of Mount Holly
300 S Main Street
Mt. Holly, NC 28120

Join us for an afternoon of worship through word and music with the Gaudete Ministries, led by Rev. David Masterson, free of charge at 2pm on August 22nd!



MUSIC NOTES

by Cole Freeman
Minister of Music
cole@fbcmoutholly.org

The arts, and especially music, have long been seen as a way to express that which cannot be communicated through language alone. There is a freedom in music that surpasses what most people experience through the spoken word. An artist is free to create a work of art that expresses their individuality, but is constrained by certain shared boundaries.

In Western music for instance, we use only 12 notes (called the chromatic scale) to create nearly every single work of music that you might hear on the radio, in a concert hall, or even at church. Beethoven, Taylor Swift, and Fanny Crosby all used the same 12 notes, in different combinations, to create Fur Elise, Love Story, and Blessed Assurance.

Similarly, in Christ we are free to live our lives uniquely, but in 1 Corinthians, Paul reminds us that we are like parts of one physical body, each performing their own part to the service of the whole. We are constrained by God's commandments, which in turn give us the freedom to fulfill our unique role in the body of Christ.

"God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." (1 Cor. 12:24-27)

NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS



Help us help others...

Farm Share

July 11
August 1
8:00 AM

Church-wide Summer Fellowship

HOMEMADE ICE CREAM SOCIALS

All are invited to bring homemade churns of ice cream, cake, and/or cookies. Drinks will be provided

**JULY 26
AUGUST 23**

On the Front Lawn (weather permitting) or Fellowship Hall

6:00 PM

Thanks to our Deacons for organizing this time together!



May Finances Update

May Receipts	\$44,156
May Expenses	\$32,647
Receipts YTD	\$251,568
Actual Expenses YTD	\$213,138
Budgeted Expenses YTD	\$224,125
Annual Budget	\$537,901




Samaritan's Purse
OPERATION Christmas Child

July OCC Item School Supplies

These specific items only:

- Packs of notebook paper
- Regular #2 pencils
- Erasers
- Pencil Sharpeners

Kay MacIntosh: 980-253-7180
KayMacIntosh@hotmail.com



First Baptist Church
Jubilant Seniors

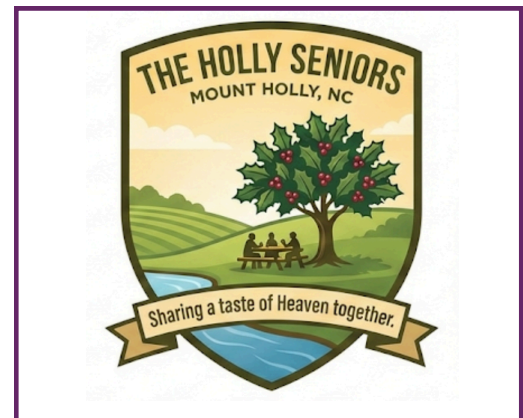
A joyful spirit in fellowship

FBCJST Event

Titanic: The Exhibit
Friday, July 24 - 10:15 AM

Registration ends July 12

Cost: \$36 per Jubilant Senior (Check Only)



THE HOLLY SENIORS
MOUNT HOLLY, NC

Sharing a taste of Heaven together.

Holly Seniors Community Lunch

Thursday, Aug 13 - 11:30 AM at FBCMH

Guest Speaker: Nancy Wrenn
Mt. Holly Historical Society
Registration Ends August 7

Email Randy McLean at isaiah41@duck.com



First Baptist Church of Mount Holly



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Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Friday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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