



September 3, 2024

Hello, Beloveds!

And welcome to September, my favorite month and favorite season of the year. We've got the return of college football, the crisp taste of fall in the air, and the sounds of CMK students echoing up and down the Chamblee First hallways. I love September.

This month also means we've celebrated 60 days together as a congregation and pastor. And friends, August 2024 did not disappoint. August afforded us some tremendous moments of celebration when it comes to building relationships, strengthening our worship, and completing our staffing roster. The congregation celebrated the baptisms of Caroline Blake Crowl, Bryce Bennett, and Ethan Bennett. We also welcomed Michael Bennett and Kalyn Kelly as our newest members through reaffirmation of faith. We spent four weeks Walking with the Word in the sanctuary on Sundays, and around our community on Thursday mornings. Nearly twenty walkers have prayed over two dozen neighbors throughout Huntley Hills and Sexton Woods. This Thursday, for our final walk, we'll walk the length of downtown Chamblee, praying over businesses, gathering spaces, neighbors, and city leaders. Thank you, Brad Sherrill, for co-leading these wonderful Walks with the Word.

Our Kids Ministry also had an exciting month! Our Family Sunday School hosted lessons on Setting Priorities as a Family, Making Sense of the Bible, Praying Together, and Serving Together as a Family. Thank you to Ann Hammond, Margaret Sanchez, and all the awesome families who came together for this experience. During Sunday services, our kids took adventure hikes around the sanctuary to meet the people who work and serve here. Over the four weeks, our kids met Mr. Bill Callaway, who has played the organ here for 27 years, Mr. Alexis Rodriguez, who has run our sound, AV, and media for 25 years, Mrs. Lauren Sangster, Mrs. Maggie Victorio-Mundie, and the members of the choir and band, who all lead us in worshipping God through singing, and finally, Ms. Becky Bennett, who sets our altar and communion table every week. Thank you to each Adventure Hike special guest for sharing with us how you've encountered God in your place of service, and for helping us appreciate what you do to help us all worship God more fully!

This coming week, we all will meet one more – NEW! – person who will help our kids and us grow in our faith: Mrs. Jordan Black, our new Director of Children’s Ministries! The children’s council will host a Meet and Greet Sunday at 9:30 am in the Children’s Ministry room (2nd floor) so everyone can meet Jordan and her family. She’ll then be in worship to greet the entire congregation, and share “3Things” you’ll want to know about her.

This coming Sunday, we will celebrate communion together, and begin our next worship series. In September, we will read through James, and wrestle with what it means and what it takes to live out our Faith in Action. As part of this series, we will practice our faith through volunteer efforts with Sleep In Heavenly Peace. On Sept 22, we will host A First Steps lunch for those who have recently started attending Chamblee First and are curious to know more. On Sept 29, we will host a Next Steps: Connections Event during the Sunday School hour to help us meet new people and connect with groups to help you build your relationship with Christ. And to illustrate Chamblee’s Faith in Action, in worship on the 29th, we will celebrate our long-standing partnership with El Salvador by welcoming missionary Brian Dubberly as our preacher.

Finally, at the end of the month, we’ll also welcome the final piece of our staffing puzzle: our new Director of Music Ministries, Mr. Zack Wright! Zack will begin his tenure here on September 23. Please keep Jordan, Zack, and both their families in your prayers. We cannot wait to see what God has in store as they join in ministry with us at Chamblee First UMC!

I continue to be so grateful for each of you and for the road we walk together with Jesus. Stay courageous, stay kind, and stay curious! See you Sunday!

Grace and peace,

Rev. Blair Boyd Zant