

Evolving Roles

Without question, the worldwide coronavirus pandemic has had far-reaching impact on all facets of life, including the practice of ministry and worship. Nothing about church life and operations has gone untouched. As a result of the conversion to virtual worship and online Christian education, the suspension of traditional choral ministries, and the drastic reduction in in-person interactions within the church building, the roster of ministers and support staff employed by the church changed in 2020. There was no avoiding it.

The changes notably included:

- The retirement of longtime Associate Pastor of Music Dennis Adams
- The retirement of Children's Music Specialist Mary Merritt
- The retirement of Ministry Assistant Nancy Thomas
- Other reductions in the church office and among kitchen staff
- Choosing not to fill vacated positions within facilities services

Nevertheless, certain functions performed by those staff had to continue and had to be absorbed by remaining staff--and they were. In addition, the migration to online worship and virtual discipleship created a whole new avenue for ministry--a programming sector in need of oversight and leadership.

While all ministers and personnel saw their work change in 2020, three of our ministers agreed to expand their roles to assume certain key functions no longer performed by others--functions that will transcend the pandemic. Their salaries and wages for 2021 were adopted with these expanded responsibilities in mind and their position descriptions officially updated recently to codify the changes.

Rev. Susie Webb, who directs our congregation's children's ministries, has assumed responsibility for management oversight of the church property itself, working closely with lay leaders who already have a great deal of involvement in facilities upkeep. As a full-time staff member onsite day in and day out, she can keep tabs on facilities-related projects,



Ash Wednesday

We invite you to join us **today, February 17**, for two events observing Ash Wednesday...

Drive-up imposition of Ashes: From 12-1PM and 5-6PM, drive up to the driveway in front of the sanctuary entrance to receive the imposition of ashes and a member of our ministerial staff will come to your vehicle to place the ashes on either your forehead or the back of your hand. The ashes will be placed using a clean cotton swab and masks will be worn. After the ashes have been placed, the minister will pray a brief prayer with you. If you are unable to attend the drive through during either of the time slots, supplies and instructions will be made available as mentioned in the paragraph below.

Ash Wednesday Service: At 7PM, join us on [Facebook Live](#) for a unique worship experience. We will spend time in prayer, reflection, lament, and have a pastor-guided moment where you and your family observe the imposition of ashes together. We believe this experience will be deeply moving and meaningful for you and your family. The supplies needed for this service will be available for pick-up today outside of the main office entry.



interact with contractors already involved in ongoing work and watch over the building and grounds. We appreciate Susie Webb's willingness to serve as the newly titled **Associate Pastor--Children's Ministry and Facilities Management**.

When the State of Emergency was declared on March 12, 2020, First Baptist quickly reacted to suspend in-person worship and small group ministries and launch a fully virtual worship and Christian education program. Though we were already broadcasting worship services on Facebook Live before the pandemic, the production of ministry tailored for the digital platform has now become a primary objective--no longer a secondary or sideline venture--requiring dedicated, intentional ministerial leadership.

Rev. Ethan Brown, who joined the staff part-time in 2019 to lead ministry to young adults, became a natural choice to spearhead the intentional design, creation, and implementation of digital ministries, built from the ground up to take advantage of technology and online platforms to recast church programs in a new, 21st century way. As our now-titled **Associate Pastor--Young Adults and Digital Ministry**, Rev. Brown has ascended to a full-time role, working closely with the Senior Pastor and all other Associate Pastors to tailor worship, education and fellowship opportunities produced online and in digital formats to reach congregants well beyond the church walls.

With the retirement of longtime Associate Pastor of Music Dennis Adams in late 2020, Rev. Lesley Spitzer became the ranking paid minister within our church's music ministry. Lesley is known to attendees of the 11 AM (now 10:30 AM) worship service as the part-time director of our praise team *Transformed*. During the pandemic, and especially since the retirement of Dennis Adams, Lesley has coordinated all aspects of our worship services, working alongside the ministerial staff. Her role has included everything from scheduling soloists and hymn leaders, designing new worship experiences for digital platforms, and learning to troubleshoot sound and video issues that arise when holding in-person and digital worship at the same time. When our traditional music ministry programming resumes at some point in 2021, Lesley will work with our new adult choir director (the Personnel Committee hopes to form a search committee for this position in the Spring) to grow and enhance our entire music, worship, and arts ministry. Lesley possesses the professional background, the creative talent, and the God-inspired willingness to lead in developing new

Lenten Journeys

During the season of Lent we remember the hopelessness and futility of life without Christ. Truly, "we are dust and to dust we shall return." Lent is often known as a time of fasting in which we give up something good to taste life's bitterness. Yet Lent is also a journey as we see Jesus demonstrate true faithfulness on the road to Jerusalem and the cross. This journey is one in which we are all invited into. It is only in this journey to the cross will we find the life and redemption of Easter. For the next six weeks of Lent, join our ministers each Wednesday at 7 PM as we discuss a spiritual practice for the week. Meeting on Zoom, we will spend 30 minutes learning a new practice and sharing our stories and experiences from the previous. Together we will explore what it means to be faithful and human during these times. Just follow the Zoom link below. I hope you will join us on the road.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94585114534?pwd=Tnc3QnFIV3pyL1BTRTdNejVrODVUUT09>

Meeting ID: 945 8511 4534

Passcode: 252385



Red Cross Blood Drive
March 3 1-6PM
Payne Fellowship Hall

Help the Red Cross help others by supporting in one of three ways:

1. Donate blood. You can sign up online by clicking [here](#) or calling 1-800-Red-Cross and let them know you would like to donate at First Baptist Church Newport News on March 3. All donors will receive a COVID antibody test and the results will be emailed to them within 2 days.
2. Be one of two volunteers needed from our church to sign in and register donors as they arrive. **We only need one more volunteer!** You can sign up to volunteer by clicking the link above or calling 1-800-Red-Cross.
3. Pray for those volunteering, donating, and receiving.

Their goal is to receive 30 successful collections. Let's help them reach that goal!

Contact the church office for more information.

worship experiences, as well as musical education programming, when we are again meeting more widely in person. We welcome her to the expanded (though still part-time) role of **Associate Pastor--Worship and Creative Arts**.

Virtually no staff member has seen their role unchanged in the past year. Others have also taken on new responsibilities or are now delivering their services, ministry, or work product in a manner differently than they did before the pandemic. For example, Rev. Michael Adams, Associate Pastor-Youth, has helped create much of the graphic design elements for our church during the pandemic, helped support digital content used in virtual Sunday services, produced online ministry for our church's youth and their families, and supported new events with his talents. In particular, the outside Christmas Carol Sing he and Lesley Spitzer designed in December was a deeply meaningful experience. Sharon Hertzler, Preschool and Children's Ministry Assistant, has assumed several administrative tasks formerly performed by no longer existent office staff members, and so on. All of our staff have served sacrificially and learned new skills for serving during this season and we are grateful for them.

However, Ethan Brown, Lesley Spitzer, and Susie Webb have seen their positions change or expand most significantly and in ways that will outlast the pandemic. Please join the Personnel Committee in recognizing the evolution of their positions and in acknowledging with appreciation their willingness to assume greater leadership roles in the wake of the challenges and changes brought on by the pandemic.

Mark Woodard, Personnel Chair
Diane Boyette
Carol Caldwell
Dave Patton
June Ray
Stan Saunders

Worship SCHEDULE

Weekly Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship online February 21 at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.! Randy Shepley will be preaching. If you have any technical difficulties watching the service on Facebook Live, please send us a direct message on Facebook so we can help troubleshoot the issue.

The following is a list of weekly events that can be accessed on the First Baptist Church of Newport News Facebook page, youth events that can be accessed on their Instagram page-@fbcnnyouth, and young adult events that meet using Zoom. The 8:30 and 10:30 Sunday worship services are uploaded to our each Monday, and can be accessed by clicking on the Resources tab.

Sundays:

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:30 a.m. Youth Sunday Bible Study
9:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Pre-K & Kindergarten S.S.
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
12:30 p.m. Hispanic Worship

Mondays:

7:00 p.m. Young Single Adults

Tuesdays:

7:30 p.m. Young Adult Couples

[FBCNN Facebook Live Videos](#)

If you missed Sunday's service and do not have a Facebook account, you can click [here for 8:30](#) or [here for 10:30](#) to watch it on our Vimeo page.



Virginia Peninsula Food Bank Mobile Food Pantry

In spite of the cold, wet weather, volunteers came out to serve those from our community in need of food assistance. FBCNN hosts the Virginia Peninsula Mobile Food Bank on the second Thursday of each month. If you would like to volunteer, you can sign up [here on their website](#). This is a wonderful way to serve others in our community. You can also use the link above to view the schedule for the mobile food pantry.

Staff Contact Info

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Walter Satchell, Associate Pastor Pastoral Care: wsatchell@fbcnn.org

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Susie Webb, Associate Pastor Children's Ministry and Facilities Management: swebb@fbcnn.org

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