



Our Sabbatical Story Begins

Starting on Monday, May 29, I will be on official sabbatical from my duties as the Senior Pastor of FBCNN. I will return to worship on September 10, 2023 and my first Sunday back preaching will be September 17. I am deeply grateful to our Church Staff, Personnel Committee, Vision Team, Deacons, and our entire church family for making this sabbatical season possible. It is a season where I am trusting God to grow not only me, but our church as a whole in the way of the Spirit.

The idea of a sabbatical comes from the command to keep sabbath and from the metaphor of the field we find in Exodus 23:10-11:

Six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow so that the poor of your people may eat, and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard and with your olive orchard.

Exodus 23:10-11

Pastor Wayne Cordeiro explains the connection between the fallow year for a field and a sabbatical:

A sabbatical is like the seventh year. In the Old Testament, it was an extended season to allow the land to regain its potency and allow the soil to restore its nutrients and minerals.

There will likewise be seasons when a sabbatical, or an extended season of rest, becomes crucial to sustaining the shelf life of a minister or Christian leader. It replenishes nutrients to our souls and restores our hunger for life and ministry.

Wayne Cordeiro, *Leading on Empty*, 185.

This sabbatical season, then, is a time where I will invest my energy in regaining the potency and nutrients of my spiritual, creative, and leadership soil. Interestingly enough, many secular corporations are discovering the need and value of sabbaticals for their leaders and managers. The Sabbatical Project is but one organization whose focus is on encouraging sabbaticals for all kinds of people, in all types of industry, so that people find restoration, healing, and renewal.

For my sabbatical, I will focus on five words. These five words will define my purpose for the next 14 weeks: **Rest, Cease, Heal, Grow, Renew**. I will rest with God in solitude and silence at the Holy Cross Abbey in Berryville, VA on a couple of occasions this summer. I will rest from the burdens of pastoral leadership. I will cease all the activities of my role as pastor from answering email to preaching to leading meetings to doing pastoral care in order to better tune my ear to God's voice. I will heal in broken and hurt

places that come simply from leading in any church setting. I will grow through new and old connections, study at Regent's Park College at Oxford University, reading, and deep conversations with old and new friends. I will renew relationships with my family, my hunger for God, and my love for the gospel and how it is proclaimed to our culture. I will find renewal through the Holy Spirit in so many places and ways.

What can you do to support me and our church during this sabbatical season? I'm so glad you asked:

- Pray for Randy and his five words: **Rest, Cease, Heal, Grow, Renew**
- Pray for Alice, James, Samuel, and Elizabeth during this sabbatical season.
- Show up for worship services ready to praise, learn, and grow during our sabbatical season.
- Pray for the church staff, deacons, Vision Team and lay leadership.
- Give generously, Serve regularly.
- Welcome and include guests in the life of our church.
- Practice love, encouragement, and unity in all congregational interaction.

I know that a certain amount of anxiety occurs in a congregation when a pastor leaves for sabbatical. Let me assure you, our congregation is in excellent hands. Our ministerial and support staff are prepared for these days. They are ready for what they know is coming and they will pivot well when unexpected events occur. Believe me, after working with them particularly over the past 3 years, this staff knows how to pivot. They are extraordinarily gifted, and they will represent God's mission well with their effort and creativity. While I am gone, Pastor Juan Garcia will lead them well. Our staff are leaders and servants of the highest order.

Likewise, our lay leaders are ready and flexible for the times ahead. Lisa Mason, Vision Team Chair, Jim Lystlund, Deacon Chair, Chris Johnson, Stewardship Chair, Mark Woodard, Personnel Chair, our entire Vision Team, active deacon roster, and committee structure are prayerfully prepared for serving in the days ahead. I am sure they will welcome any of you who would like to step up and serve during the summer. We will need everyone! By the way, Vacation Bible School is July 24 – 28 so go ahead and sign up to help with Sharon Hertzler !

Thank you all, again, for this amazing opportunity for renewal. My prayer is that as I am renewed by God's Spirit, our whole church will be renewed by God's power. I am confident this will be the case. Allow me to close with a portion of the text I will use Sunday in my last sermon in our *Favorites* series:

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17b-19

Gratefully,

Pastor Randy

End of School Year COOKOUT

Wednesday
June 7
5:30pm



Food, Inflatables, and Fun



Back Parking Lot & Ballfield

End of the School Year Celebration! June 7, 5:30 pm, Back Parking Lot

Join us for a cookout, games, and a lot of fun as we celebrate the end of another school year!

(Regular Wednesday night activities for children and youth will end tonight, May 24, and start up again in September.)



Graduate Recognition Sunday is Coming

Our college and high school graduates will be recognized during the 11:00am service on June 11. If you would like to be included in the slideshow, please email photo(s), name of school, honors, degree (if applicable), and future plans to nikki@fbcnn.org by **May 30**.

Upcoming Events

May 29 - Memorial Day, Church Office will be closed.

June 7 - End of School Year Celebration and Cookout (see article above)

June 11 - Graduate Recognition Sunday (see article)

July 24-28 - Stellar Vacation Bible School, contact Sharon Hertzler, shertzler@fbcnn.org, to find ways you can help us to "Shine Jesus' Light" at VBS this year!



A graphic for downloading an app. On the left is a smartphone displaying the app's interface with sections for "Live Streams", "Who are we?", and "Sermon Library". To the right of the phone, the text "Download Our App" is written in large white letters. Below that, it says "Stay connected with your church family!" and a yellow "Download Now" button. At the bottom left, it says "Available on the Apple, Android, Amazon, and Roku App Stores" and at the bottom right is a small blue logo with a white cross.

You can download our app on your phone, smart TV or Roku player. This will give you the opportunity to get push notifications (notifications that pop up on your phone) that will allow you to stay informed. In the event of bad weather, we will be able to notify everyone if we need to make changes to our Sunday morning services and Bible Study or Wednesday night activities. You can also watch past and present services, see upcoming events, and more. If you need assistance in downloading the app contact Ethan or a member of our Tech Team for help.

Weekly Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in person or online Sunday, May 28 at 8:30am & 11am! Randy Shepley will be leading us in worship.

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. Learn more about children's events on Facebook and youth events on their Instagram page-@fbcnnyouth. The 8:30 and 11 Sunday worship services are streamed directly to our [website](#), and can be accessed by clicking on Sermon Library in the Resources tab.

Sundays

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
- 9:45 a.m. Adult Bible Study
- 9:45 a.m. Children's Bible Study
- 9:45 a.m. Infant-Preschool Bible Study
- 9:45 a.m. Youth Bible Study
- 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- 11:00 a.m. Extended Session - infants through age 4
- 12:30 p.m. Hispanic Worship

Mondays

- 7:00 p.m. Young Single Adults

Wednesdays

- 5:30 p.m. Midweek Café
- 6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal
- 6:30 p.m. Adult Spiritual Formation Group
- 6:30 p.m. Youth Group Gathering and Worship
- 6:30 p.m. Children's Kmotion (Music, Missions, and Fun!)
- 7:30 p.m. Adult Choir Rehearsal

Thursdays

- 10:00 a.m. Swingin' Singers

Make a financial contribution to FBCNN today by clicking on the Donate link.

[DONATE](#)

Thanks to our FBCNN app, we are able to stream our services directly to our website! Click on the link below to watch the service from 8:30 and 11 this past Sunday. (Services are listed in chronological order with the most recent at the top.)

[May 21](#)

WAYS TO GIVE FINANCIALLY



IN PERSON



MOBILE APP



ONLINE



MAIL OR AUTOMATED
BANK DRAFT

- **Stock contributions:** If you wish to give stocks to First Baptist Church, please give the church's name to your broker to process the transaction. If you need more information, please contact Monica Garcia at monica@fbcnn.org or at the church office number.
- **Required Minimum Distributions (RMD):** If you are 70½ or older and have an IRA (Individual Retirement Account), you can make your Charitable Contribution to the Church via your Broker/Banker. The RMD must come directly to the Church from your Broker/Banker. Please contact your Broker/Banker for this option.

"Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." Psalm 37:4

Staff Contact Info

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