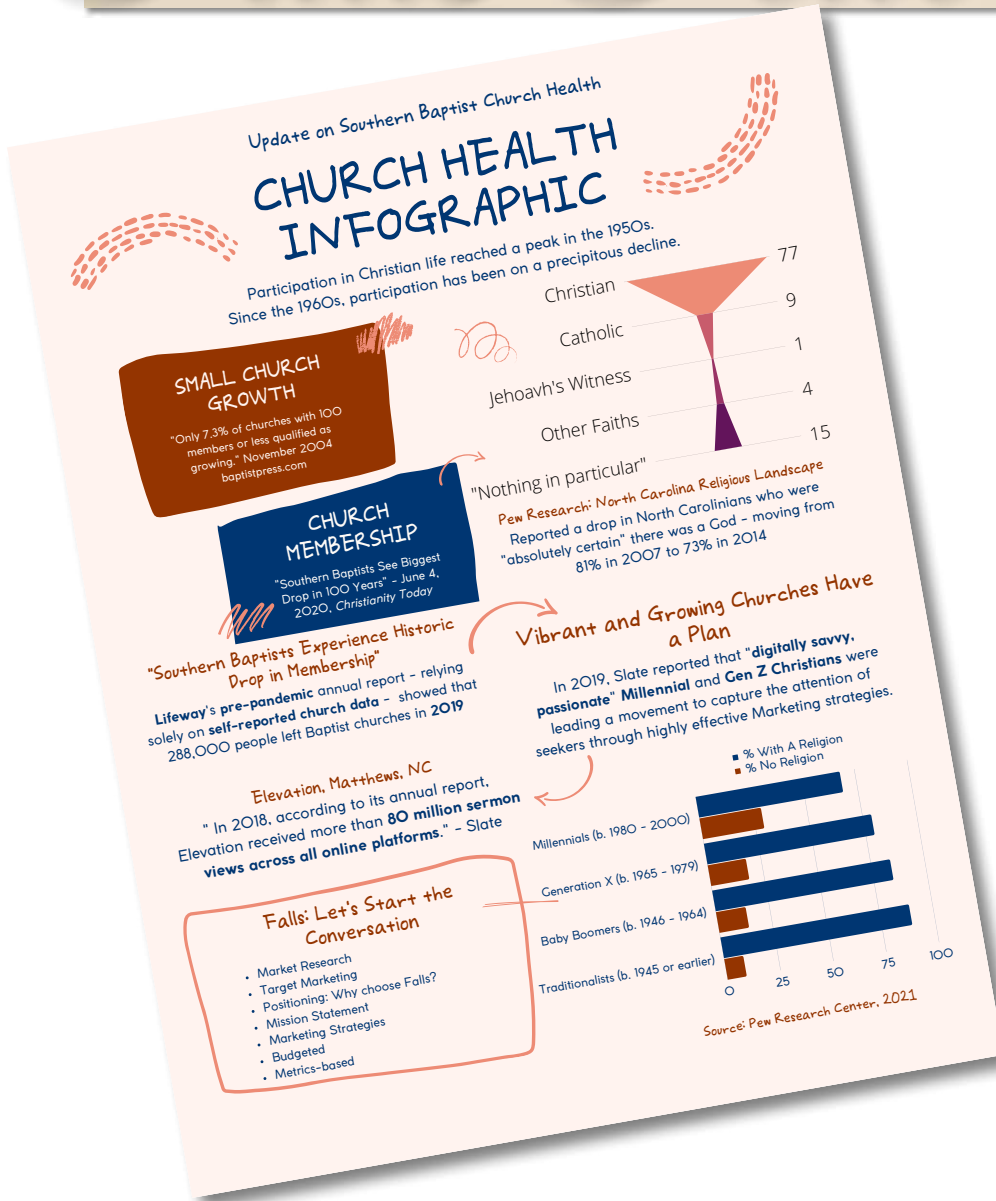
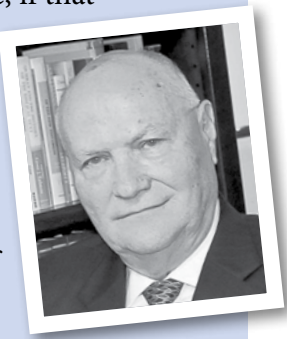


Falls Fellowship



Post-Pandemic at Falls

I have been following the e-mails, articles, research, and notifications for conferences regarding what the church will look like after the pandemic, if that ever comes. Most of the people who are speaking on the subject with any degree of knowledge, not just venting their prejudices, agree most churches will not recover the numbers they had prior to the pandemic. Simply put, there will be fewer people attending church on a weekly basis.



We have already seen a decline in church attendance in recent years. The Gallup organization, the people famous for their polls, reported for the first time since they started polling church attendance in 1937 fewer than fifty percent of Americans say they belong to a church, synagogue, or mosque. We

See Post on page 2

Task Force Volunteers Needed

During our quarterly business meeting we took a bold step: we started a conversation. For many, this came as a relief. Your response was overwhelming and it was incredibly exciting to learn so many of you are ready to dive right in.

The best way to help get things

started is to volunteer for the task force Kevin talked about during Sunday's meeting.

Are you interested? This could be a fit for you if you're:

- Motivated to see Falls grow.
- Passionate about protecting our

See Task Force on page 3

Post cont' ...

went from seventy percent of Americans claiming church membership in the 1990s, to fifty percent in 2019 to ... the number keeps shrinking.

Falls Baptist Church is not immune to these societal trends. We suffered a decrease in our attendance when the pandemic came, though we were a small church before the pandemic. We had more than forty people in attendance last Sunday, the largest group we've had since the pandemic hit us.

Falls is caught up in this societal shift. We are not immune to the forces which are working against healthy churches. We will continue to see churches diminish in size and some will, inevitably, close their doors. I talked with the members of a small church in the mountains about their future. They have fought change for many years. Their community has shrunk because young people leave the community for jobs elsewhere. I suggested their future might be brighter if they would join a group of other churches to make one church. One dear lady said she was opposed to that and that she would be, if necessary, be the last person to turn the lights off and lock the doors.

Perhaps it's time for us to face a new reality: most churches will never regain what they have lost. If we haven't already embraced the reality that churches like those of our childhood are gone, COVID has pushed us to the edge. Arunhati Roy, an Asian Indian novelist, said of this year: "Historically, pandemics have forced people to break with the past and imagine the world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next."

If this pandemic is, as Roy said, a gateway to the next world, what will the "new world" for churches be like? As I've already said, many churches will not recover the numbers they had before the pandemic. That's hard to accept by people of my generation. "Old-timers" would like for people to be turned on by church and come in great numbers as they did when we were children. I remember services where people stood in the aisles because all seats were taken, where little babies who were asleep were placed on the platform because there was no room for sleeping babies in the pews. Some of you remember when it was like that at Falls. One of our former members told me he had a dream one night in which Falls Baptist Church was filled with people, standing room only. I told him that dream was probably about the past and not the future. Now we would all like to see this dream become a living reality for today. Perhaps the portal has closed to that reality, and we must embrace the task of being the church of Jesus Christ in this community in this "gateway between one world and the next." What does it mean at Falls for us to be the church in this "gateway between one world and the next?" I'll share with you some of my ideas in next month's newsletter.

— Tom Jenkins

New Additions to Church Library

Hey, have you been to the church library lately? Alan has ordered some wonderful new books. Check out the library and find some good books to read. The Amish books are a great place to start!

— Elizabeth Jackson

February Birthdays

13	Francine Leclercq
18	Mike Neal
23	Joan Barham
24	Woody Leonard
25	Zoe Davis
27	Mike Leclercq
27	Pat Nowak



Please pick up 2022 Offering Envelopes

Members should pick up their offering envelope boxes in the vestibule if you have not already done so. Please see Kevin Barham if you have any questions.

Task Force cont' ...

resources.

- Curious to learn more about a church marketing plan.

In addition to the infographic (on page one), I've also included links to several Christian marketing agencies. Some of these agencies are digital and some are print/direct mail.

<https://misgood.com/> - located in Raleigh

www.outreach.com/

<https://missionalmarketing.com/>

<https://marketingwithwisdom.com/>

www.luminatemarketing.com/

www.frontgatemediacom.com/

www.truthadvertising.org/

www.artistrylabs.com/

If you'd like to join the Task Force, please talk with Kevin, the pastor, me, or your deacon.

— Victoria Neal

symptoms have disappeared.

2. Maintain six-foot social distance except for family members living in the same household.

3. Use furnished hand sanitizer or wipes as you enter the church.

4. Pew Bibles and hymnals have been removed. Order of service and hymns will appear in your individual program bulletin.

5. Use your own face mask if you desire or disposable masks will be available for those wishing to use them.

6. Pews will be cleaned before and after each service.

7. Boxes to receive tithes and offerings are placed at the doors so we do not have to handle offering plates.

Some members fall into the category of having underlying conditions which make them uncomfortable to be in groups. We understand they may not be willing to attend now. Hopefully, this pandemic will soon pass and we can truly get back to normal worship services. During the month of February, Wednesday Bible study will be in the Fellowship Hall at 6 PM for supper and continue on Zoom at 7 PM for those who can not attend in person. If you plan on attending for supper please sign the sheet each week in the vestibule.

Mission Donations

We are still collecting non-perishable food during the month for Tri-Area Ministries, our local food bank. Please leave food in bags in the vestibule.

We will be collecting monetary donations for Baptist Childrens Home during February.



Worship Precautions During February

The church is taking several precautions to make attendance as safe as possible during this Covid-19 pandemic. Even though we are not aware of anyone in our congregation who has the virus, we are aware you could have the virus and be without symptoms. Therefore, we are requesting that all follow these guidelines:

1. If you are ill, please do not attend until all your

Deacons

Kevin Barham, Chairman	919-618-4214
Hubert Jenks, Vice Chairman	919-270-8765
Alan Watkins, Secretary	919-793-5548
Mike Harris	919-746-5697
Victoria Neal	919-880-1888
Bill Upton	910-358-7303

Mission Donations

Just wanted to share a post a friend had on her Facebook page regarding items for the food bank we may or may not have thought of. I know Cheryl Jenkins had mentioned the birthday cake mix and frosting before (awesome idea) and I certainly had never thought about cooking oil or coffee but now I will.

I know fresh items are not an option for our group nor are perishables of really any kind but hopefully they get to food banks through other avenues. Just some grist for the mill.

Be well. Stay safe. Stay warm.

— Naomi Tsujimura



Eric McCool

30m · 🌐

Sharing wisdom from a food bank volunteer:

1. Everyone donates Kraft Mac & Cheese in the box. But it needs milk & butter which is hard to get from food banks.
2. Boxed Milk is a treasure. Kids need it for cereal, which they get a lot of.
3. Everyone donates pasta sauce & spaghetti noodles.
4. Canned Foods should be Pop Tops OR donate Can Openers.
5. Oil is a luxury needed for Rice a Roni which they get a lot of.
6. Spices, Salt & Pepper are a real gift.
7. Tea bags & Coffee are caring gifts.
8. Sugar & Flour are treats.
9. Important are fresh produce donated by farmers & grocery stores.
10. Seeds are great in spring & summer because growing can be easy for some.
11. Rarely is there fresh meat.
12. Tuna & Crackers make a good lunch.
13. Hamburger Helper goes nowhere without ground beef.
14. They get lots of peanut butter and jelly but NEED sandwich bread.
15. Butter or Margarine are good.
16. Eggs are a commodity!
17. Cake mix & Frosting makes it possible to make a child's birthday cake.
18. Dishwashing Detergent is very expensive & is always appreciated.
19. Feminine hygiene products are a luxury & women will cry over them.
20. Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.

Bonus: CASH makes it possible for the Food Bank to buy what's missing and buy in bulk.



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www.facebook.com/fallsbaptistchurch