

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025

HBC ALIVE!

Harrisonburg Baptist Church's Newsletter



Welcome to Todd Martin!

PASTOR MATT WINTERS

On Sunday, July 20, the church voted to extend the call to Todd Martin to come on board as the next Director of Music and Worship at HBC. Todd comes with a strong background in music, both in education and in experience. He previously served as a director of music and worship at Verona United Methodist Church. I am excited to have Todd join our team and I believe he will be an awesome asset to the HBC family. You will have many opportunities to get to know Todd in the near future, and Sunday, August 3, will be his first with us.

I want to say thank you to the search committee for their diligent work in helping identify Todd as the best and right candidate for our church. This selection was grounded in prayer, and I'm grateful for the prayer ministry of that team and of the church in general. Prayer makes a complete difference and undergirds so much of the work we do. I invite you to continue that prayer ministry for the time to come. Not only will we make adjustments under Todd's ministry, but we are always being called to new paths of ministry. Please pray for the work of the Holy Spirit to do the work of God among us. Pray for courage to do what God invites us to do and pray for the wisdom to discern how God desires to use us. I look forward to this exciting new chapter in our story.

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Introducing

Todd Martin

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & WORSHIP

Todd was born in Front Royal, Virginia, and raised in the Shenandoah Valley. He earned his undergraduate degree in music from Berea College, where the motto—"God has made of one blood all peoples of the Earth"—continues to shape his life's calling. Long before college, Todd was already active in church music ministry. While launching his teaching career, he served as a music intern at Calvary Episcopal Church, later becoming Director of Music at Verona United Methodist Church.

He comes to Harrisonburg Baptist Church with a rich background in music education, marketing, and fundraising. Guided by his faith and a belief in the unifying power of music, Todd is passionate about using song to draw people together and closer to Christ. He and his wife share a love for ministry and music, and find joy in serving their community together. To Todd, music is more than a profession—it's a ministry and a mission.



Todd & Nortrivah Martin

Big Thank You to Gary & Erin!

With the election of Todd as the new Director of Music and Worship, we mark the final chapters of the shared ministry of Gary Ritcher and Erin Waddell.

Gary served for nine years and did an admirable job in leading the music ministry at HBC. He will be well missed and has been beloved. It's exciting to know that he and Kathy will remain a part of the HBC family.

We're also grateful for the three years of ministry Erin offered as praise team leader. She stepped into a gap and created beautiful music. We are proud of Erin and for her servant leadership. As with Gary, we're grateful that Erin will remain as a part of our worship team and a part of our church family.

We are so thankful for you and enriched by your presence in our lives!



Make a Joyful Noise!

Join the Open Choir at Harrisonburg Baptist Church—Wednesdays from 6:00–7:00 PM starting August 20.

We welcome all voice parts and ability levels to sing a rich blend of traditional, classical, contemporary music, spirituals, and more. No auditions—just bring your voice and your joy!

If you have any questions about joining the choir contact Todd Martin at todd@hbcalive.org.

We can't wait to sing with you!



Join the Praise Team!

Harrisonburg Baptist Church is welcoming new lead and backup vocalists—and we're especially looking for a drummer to join us for the upcoming season.

If you're passionate about worship and ready to make music with a purpose, we'd love to hear from you!

If you have any questions about joining the Praise Band, contact Todd Martin at todd@hbcalive.org.

You're invited to HBC's

Annual Picnic

***Join us at the Folsom's
River House for a delightful
afternoon of fellowship
and good food!***

What to Bring:

- ✓ 1-2 side dishes to share
- ✓ Your lawn chair or blanket

Fried chicken, drinks & paper products will be provided.



**Sunday, August 24
4-6pm**



Folsom's River House

Contact the office for directions

**Please sign up in the foyer or
by email to kim@hbcalive.org.**





Why Me Lord?

DUSTYN MILLER, DEACON

I have always enjoyed reading Guideposts. Unfortunately, it only comes bi-monthly compared to when it used to come on a monthly basis. The magazine is filled with many stories of hope and inspiration.

Recently, there was a story about a woman who had gone through some tough times and rejection. She would pose the question during her prayer time “Why me Lord?” She realized that even though this was a legitimate question to ask God, it seemed to focus her prayer time too much on herself rather than others. She then decided to spend more time praying for others with an attitude of gratitude while handing her burdens over to God. She also decided to pay it forward with notes of inspiration to others. What a difference it made in her life and her walk with Jesus.

God is a heavy lifter and can carry any burden or troubles that you may try to carry on your own. His Son, Jesus, carried that heavy cross on our behalf. In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

So today when I find myself burdened, I remember all that Jesus has done in my life and I give my burdens to Him.

Recognizing Katelyn’s 15 Years!

We are so thankful to Pastor Katelyn Belcher in her 15 years of service at HBC. She has poured into so many of our lives, and we’re thankful for the wonderful years under her leadership. She has led countless lives to Christ and to a deeper walk with God. We are so thankful for her.



On **Sunday, September 7**, we will have a time of recognition of Katelyn in the worship service as well as a small reception in the gazebo (weather permitting). We hope you will join us, and, if you have a chance to help us invite any of her graduated youth group members, we’d love to have them join us for this unique opportunity to celebrate Katelyn’s ministry.

First Friday Open Mic Night

OCTOBER 3, 7PM

Do you have a poem you’d like to share or a story you’d like to tell? Maybe you have a work of art you’d like to display or a song you’d like to sing? Let’s have an evening of fun and fellowship together as we head full steam into fall. More details to come but mark your calendars now to join us!



August Youth Events

AUG 3

9:15am Sunday School
No evening activities

AUG 10

9:15am Sunday School
4:30-8:30pm Summer Bible Study

AUG 13

6:00-8:15pm Clothes Closet

AUG 17

9:15am Sunday School
4:30-8:30pm Summer Bible Study

AUG 24

9:15am Sunday School
4pm River Baptisms & Picnic

AUG 31

9:15am Sunday School
4:30-8:30pm Summer Bible Study

Sept Youth Events

SEPT 7

9:15am Sunday School
5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

SEPT 10

6:00-8:15pm Clothes Closet

SEPT 14

9:15am Sunday School
5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

SEPT 21

9:15am Sunday School
5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

SEPT 28

9:15am Sunday School
5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

Passport Choices Camp 2025

REV. KATELYN BELCHER

The youth group had an incredible week at Passport Camp in July. This year, we decided to try Passport Choices Camp, which is located at Converse University in Spartanburg, South Carolina. This year's theme was Wide Open Spaces, and the theme verse was, "God stood me up in wide-open spaces; I stood there saved- surprised to be loved!" (Psalm 18:19A CEB; 18:19B MSG). Each day, our students learned about the theme of camp by a variety of experiences: morning devotion, morning celebration, Bible study, and worship. The students in our group were also placed into afternoon rotation groups based on their passions and interests. Our students were placed in Game Face, Missions, and Color Palette. They played many different sports and learned how to compete in ways that honors God in Game Face. Our students in missions served at a nursing home and grew in many ways during that experience. And three of our students were able to express themselves through art in Color Palette. They spent the week creating a piece that focused on a daily theme, and it was displayed and presented during the last night of worship.

The youth group also had a ton of fun at Passport's different parties and at our church group free night. After our first full day in South Carolina, our students competed with their Bible Study groups in the Field Day Rec Party. We attended the Cosmic Cow Neon Glow Dance Party on the second night. Our group really enjoyed dressing up for this theme dance and, while we did not officially win the costume contest, we still felt like winners for going all out on our costumes. On the third day, each church was given a free night, and we decided to eat dinner at Chickfila



and visit a trampoline park in Greenville. Everybody enjoyed exploring and playing at the jump park and they were even able to get out some frustrations with one another in a healthy way! On our last full day at camp, we had two of our students perform at the Variety Show. Ashlynn blew everyone away with her rendition of “Never Enough” sung acapella. And Esmyele taught the whole camp how to Dougie.

One of the most special experiences from camp was our nightly church group devotion time. It allowed us to unpack the day, share important takeaways with one another, and then we ended our devotion in prayer. The campus at Converse University was beautiful, peaceful, and serene. The Passport camp staff and the staff at Converse were so friendly and encouraging. To say the least, we are planning to go back to Passport Choices next summer! At the end of our week of camp two of our students decided they were ready to devote their lives to Jesus and get baptized. Chris and Katelyn Belcher baptized Baya and Noah in their pool on Sunday after camp. We are so grateful to you, the people of Harrisonburg Baptist Church, for continuing to support our youth by allowing them to attend camp. You are truly making an impact on the lives of our teens!







Upcoming JOY Events

Our Senior Adult group now has a new name: JOY - as in Just Older Youth!

HYMN SING WITH STORIES

Thursday, August 7 at 2pm

Let's come together to sing and learn the stories behind some of our favorite hymns. This event will be in the sanctuary. Refreshments will be provided afterward by the JOY team.

BIRDSONG PLEASURE GARDEN

Thursday, September 4

This is a three-acre private nature center in Luray about 20 minutes from New Market. The Birdsong Pleasure Garden has flower and vegetable gardens, herbs, three small ponds and walking paths. Outdoor seating is available throughout the garden. More information will be available in the future.

JMU Block Party

AUGUST 23, 2PM

We're on the cusp of the college students returning. Harrisonburg City is hosting a JMU Block Party for freshmen on Saturday, August 23 at 2 pm. Come out to the church and help us welcome the students as they walk from campus to downtown. The marching band gathers about 1 pm. Please be advised that Main Street will be closed at that time, so access the church via Liberty St.

Pumpkin Needle Felting Class

SEPTEMBER 6, 11AM-1PM

Cost: \$30/person

Location: The Church

Signups will begin on Sunday, August 14. No experience necessary—everyone is welcome but PLEASE SIGN UP IN ADVANCE!!!



2026 Mission Trip

HBC has a history of mission trips, and we are looking to plan our next trip for the Summer of 2026. The dates are flexible, and we're looking to form a team. The current concept is to go to Welch, WV and work with partners to offer home rehabilitation in some form or other. We would also like to work on a food distribution through the Farm Ministry contacts we have. We have several partners in the area of Welch, WV, so we'll begin to sort through the plans as the team begins to populate. If you are interested in serving on a mission trip, please let Pastor Matt know. Look for more details to come in the weeks ahead.



Prayer Walking

PASTOR ELI WITHERS

“Everything in the world is about to be wrapped up, so take nothing for granted. Stay wide-awake in prayer.” 1 Peter 4.7 *The Message*

Among other things, according to her website, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun is an author, speaker, retreat leader, pastor, spiritual director, pilgrimage leader, and more. But my favorite part is that she says her “sweet spot is giving people tools to help them make space for God in their lives.” I love that. And that is my hope and my prayer for us at HBC. We have dabbled a bit in prayer walking this summer, but I believe we still have much to learn from this practice.

Calhoun defines prayer walking as “a way of physically walking with Jesus through places (hospitals, homes, businesses, churches, schools, playgrounds, housing projects, service agencies, counties, countries, etc.) that you are concerned about. From the vantage point of proximity, prayers for the kingdom are offered to God. The practice includes things like slowly and deliberately walking through places for the purpose of intentional and listening prayer; walking through your church, school grounds, place of work, etc. giving to God the people and activities that go on there; walking through neighborhoods and bringing each household to God one by one.

“Prayer walking is a way of saturating a particular place and people with prayer.”

Let’s saturate our very own spaces with prayer in the coming weeks. Begin by asking God for direction to help you know the places where he would most like you to spend your prayer walking time. Really consider what God might be calling you to do or just where God is leading you to take your prayers. In these weeks leading up to a brand new school year, you may want to prayer walk around playgrounds or schools praying for those who work, play, and study there. You may have a special summer event in your neighborhood coming up and want to spend some time in prayer for the friends and families who gather there. You may want to pray for the Holy Spirit to work in the lives of those attending this event—perhaps even leading you to those who are most lonely and in need of a listening ear. You could spend sometime walking around the communities and businesses in the shadow of our own Harrisonburg Baptist Church steeple and pray for them. Pray for thriving business and families who will be strengthened and drawn together in new and fresh ways. Pray that our church will always work to pay attention to the lives of those living and working all around us.

If you have been apart of one of our Prayer and Story Circles, share with your Prayer Circle about your own experience of Prayer Walking and what it has meant to your life of faith. Your group may even want to choose a play to prayer walk together. Above all, may we work to keep Christ first in our lives and to share Christ with all of those we share our spaces with day by day.



Stewardship Snapshot

Budget needs as of 6/30/25 \$ 322,062.00
Budget receipts as of 6/30/25 \$ 277,090.60

May & June Donations to Designated Funds

- Annie Armstrong Offering \$150.00
- Farm Ministry \$20.00
- Nasaruni Academy \$1,040.00
(In memory of Sandy Cude)
- Community Bag Lunch \$460.00
- Love Fund \$395.00

2026 Budget Planning

Committee chairpersons should have recently received 2026 budget request forms. If you have not received your form, please contact the church office as soon as possible. Your budget requests are due August 24.

Thank You

Thank you, church family for the meals, visits, cards and prayers. Your love and support mean a lot to Aaron, Leslie and me. Thank you, HBC.

~ The Downeys

Address Changes

Steve & Janet Smith
118 Cathedral Mountain Pass
Georgetown, TX 78633

PRAYER CONCERNS

HBC FAMILY

Gary Lohr
Joyce Deavers
Faye Bland
Dale Wright
Nancy Russell

NURSING CARE/HOMEBOUND

Bryan Acker
Chris Gamble
Dennis Greene
Wayne Hannah
Neil Showalter
Constance Via

EXTENDED FAMILY

Cynthia Shifflett
(Joyce Deavers' daughter)
Freddie Roach
(Joyce Deavers' brother-in-law)
Jack Wampler
(Sharon Wampler's grandson)
Bella (Angela Hayes' niece)
Bob Withers (Pastor Eli's Father)
Ronald Michael Houston
(Ron & Mary Smith's son)
Tom Dagenhart (Cathy Baugh's brother)

SYMPATHY

We grieve with
- Donna Downey and family the death of David Downey on 6/20/2025
- Kishia Tutt upon the death of her father

AUGUST 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 2pm JOY (Just Older Youth) Hymn Sing	8	9
10	11 6:30pm Leadership Team Mtg (B4)	12	13 6:15pm Youth Clothes Closet	14	15	16
17 Blessing of the Backpacks 2-6pm Kachin Church	18	19 6pm Wonder Women (B4)	20	21 6:30pm Preschool Orientation (FH)	22	23 2pm JMU Block Party
24 2026 Budget Requests Due SS Promotions 4pm River Baptisms & Picnic @ Riverbend	25	26	27	28 11:30am Brookdale	29	30
31				Staff Out of Office Katelyn: Aug 2-9 Susan: Aug 6-14 & Aug 28-Sept 3		

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 Pat Byrd
 1 Nancy Shomo
 4 Dana Mazingo
 5 Fred Gaines
 7 Ella Patton
 8 Tracy Weaver
 9 David Emswiler
 10 Pure Afolabi
 13 Harold Bailey
 15 Karen Burke
 17 Bill Sanger
 24 Sharon Nguimbi
 26 Nico Nguimbi
 27 Ethan Hartman
 27 Raleigh Hartman
 28 Matt Lohr
 28 Philip Northen
 29 Prunelle Pre
 31 Ashlynn Lilly

WEEKLY REOCCURRING EVENTS

SUNDAY

9:15am Sunday School
 10:30am Community Worship
 4:30pm Youth Bible Study
 @ the Belchers'

MONDAY

7am Men's Prayer Breakfast (Chick-fil-A)
 1pm Staff Meeting (Parlor)
 6:30pm Scouts

TUESDAY

11:00am CWS Kitchen Club (FH)

WEDNESDAY

10am Ladies' Prayer Group (B4)
 6pm Choir Practice (begins 8/20)

FRIDAY

Office Closed

SATURDAY

10:30am Community Bag Lunch

DEACON OF THE WEEK

Aug 3 — Randy Dail
 Aug 10 — Laura Fly
 Aug 17 — Nico Nguimbi
 Aug 24 — Donna Downey
 Aug 31 — Karen Folsom

COMMUNITY BAG LUNCH

Aug 2 — Emmanuel Episcopal
 Aug 9 — Heidi Ruiz
 Aug 16 — St Stephen's
 Aug 23 — Jeff Obenschain
 Aug 30 — Mike Clark

SEPTEMBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 OFFICE CLOSED HAPPY LABOR DAY	2	3	4 time TBD - JOY trip to Birdsong Pleasure Garden	5	6 11am Pumpkin Needle Felting Class
7 11:45am Reception for Pastor Katelyn	8	9 5:30pm Finance Cmte Mtg (B4)	10 6:15pm Youth Clothes Closet	11	12	13
14	15 6:30pm Deacon Mtg (B4)	16 6pm Wonder Women (B4)	17	18	19	20
21 2-6pm Kachin Church	22 Oct/Nov Newsletter Articles Due	23	24	25 11:30am Brookdale	26	27
28	29	30	Staff Out of Office Susan: Aug 28-Sept 3 Matt: Sept 15-21		SEPT BIRTHDAYS 1 Zoe Moser 1 Kathy Ritcher 2 Isaac Araya 4 V Kagey 5 Jeff Obenschain 8 Carson Lohr 8 Cindy Watkins 10 Gary Ritcher 10 Tracie Ward 11 Christian Hayes 12 Noelle Carroll 13 Faye Obenschain 15 Tuka Nguimbi 16 Rosemary Lonberger 20 Ruth Afolabi 20 Jim Pederson 22 Nathan Wampler 23 Mark Griffin 23 Connor Kopcinski 26 Luciani Paul 27 Ron Smith 28 Jane Shifflett 29 Sengko Phaga 30 Regina Ingram 30 Judy Miller 30 Jessica Winters	

WEEKLY REOCCURING EVENTS

SUNDAY

9:15am Sunday School
10:30am Community Worship
5:30pm Youth Bible Study

MONDAY

7am Men's Prayer Breakfast (Chick-fil-A)
10am Skyline Literacy (Rms 201-203)
1pm Staff Meeting (Parlor)
6:30pm Scouts

TUESDAY

10:30am Tuesday's Together (B4)

WEDNESDAY

10am Ladies' Prayer Group (B4)
6pm Choir Practice

THURSDAY

10am Skyline Literacy (Rms 201-203)

FRIDAY

Office Closed

SATURDAY

10:30am Community Bag Lunch

DEACON OF THE WEEK

Sept 7 — Mark Griffin
Sept 14 — Dustyn Miller
Sept 21 — Jeff Obenschain
Sept 28 — Cathy Lawrence

COMMUNITY BAG LUNCH

Sept 6 — Kathy Ritcher
Sept 13 — Sharon Miller
Sept 20 — Anne Wright
Sept 27 — Cindy Mandigo

HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

501 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

HBC ALIVE!

A publication of

HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

501 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

(540) 433-2456 www.hbcalive.org

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Matthew Winters, Senior Pastor

Rev. Eli Withers, Associate Pastor

Rev. Katelyn Belcher, Youth Pastor

Todd Martin, Director of Music & Worship

Rosemary Lonberger, Organist

Harold Bailey, Pianist

Susan Kiser, Financial Ministry Assistant

Kim Brubaker, Administrative Ministry Assistant

OCT/NOV NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

SEPT 22, 2025

Please submit articles to

Kim Brubaker at kim@hbcalive.org

