



140TH Church ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

"CELEBRATING CALVARY: 1884-2024"



OCTOBER 25TH 2024 | 6:00 PM

REV. DR. MARC A. LAVARIN, PASTOR
REV. FREDRICK A. DAVIS, PASTOR EMERITUS

1311 MOREHEAD AVENUE | DURHAM, NC 27707
WWW.FCBCDURHAM.ORG



Dear First Calvary Family,

GRACE AND PEACE BE WITH YOU FROM GOD OUR FATHER,
AND JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

On behalf of the congregation and leadership of First Calvary Baptist Church, it gives me great joy to welcome you to our 140th anniversary banquet! Our prayer is to honor and glorify God in our celebration.

I am honored and count it a privilege to be a part of this most historic celebration. From the humble beginnings of a bible study to a respected, multigenerational servant-hearted congregation, truly the Lord has been with us every step of the way. The rich history of FCBC is a true testimony to the faith that our founders had in God when they embarked on this faith journey in 1884. As I reflect upon the ministry of each preceding Pastor, I am inspired.

Through the decades, we've seen God's hand move in a mighty way. We've experienced hundreds of members from the church, City of Durham and surrounding communities being saved, restored, encouraged, and healed. I am excited for what God continues to do through First Calvary Baptist Church. It is a reminder for us to constantly be in the moment. We are literally living in answered prayer. Amazing things happen when we dream, when we pray, and when we believe!

As our church continues to serve and minister, we are focused on equipping each ministry within our church with the proper tools to do ministry with excellence. For 140 years, God has blessed us! How much can God trust us with? As we continue to empower people, enhance community and evangelize in love, and as we continue to experience the fruit of God's hand, we will make a difference for our Christ, in our city, through our church!

Because of Calvary,

Rev. Marc Antoine Lavarin, D.Min.

Pastor, First Calvary Baptist Church

1311 Morehead Avenue | Durham, NC 27707





OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF DURHAM



October 27, 2024

Marc Antoine Lavarin, Pastor
First Calvary Baptist Church
1311 Morehead Avenue
Durham, NC 27707

Dear Pastor Lavarin:

It is indeed my great honor and pleasure to acknowledge First Calvary Baptist Church on its 140th Church Anniversary on Sunday, October 27, 2024. This milestone is a significant indicator of your success derived from your dedication, hard work, and commitment to serving the community.

Congratulations to you and your congregation on this remarkable occasion. The Durham community has benefited greatly from the Christian influence this church has exerted over the years. Thank you for 140 years of longevity, faithful service, and commitment to God. I send my very best wishes for a successful anniversary celebration.

In Service and Gratitude,

Leonardo Williams
Mayor, City of Durham, NC

5:00 PM - 5:45 PM DOORS OPEN FOR LEGACY TOUR

Order of Program

"CELEBRATING CALVARY: 1884-2024"
140TH CHURCH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

PRESIDING
MELVIN "SKIP" ALSTON
CHAIR, GUILFORD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MUSICAL PRELUDE

WELCOME AND OCCASION

Rev. Dr. Marc A. Lavarin, Pastor
First Calvary Baptist Church

OPENING REMARKS

Commissioner Skip Alston

SCRIPTURE

Eunice Sanders
Trustee Chair

PRAYER

Rev. Betty Brown
Associate Minister

HISTORICAL REFLECTION

Rev. Dr. Vernon S. Thompson
5th Pastor, First Calvary Baptist Church

BLESSING OF FOOD

DINNER

MUSIC

Anniversary Quartet

HISTORICAL REFLECTION

Rev. Fredrick A Davis
Pastor Emeritus, First Calvary Baptist Church

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

Commissioner Skip Alston

MUSIC

Anniversary Quartet

SPEAKER

Rev. Dr. George Parks Jr.
Metropolitan Baptist Church
Largo, MD

CLOSING REMARKS

Rev. Dr. Marc A. Lavarin, Pastor

BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Marc A. Lavarin, Pastor

A portrait of Melvin "Skip" Alston, a Black man with a mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie. He is smiling slightly. The background is a warm, textured orange and yellow. To the right of the portrait is a yellow rectangular box with the text "ANNIVERSARY BANQUET PRESIDER" in dark red, serif, all-caps font.

ANNIVERSARY BANQUET PRESIDER

Melvin "Skip" Alston

Melvin "Skip" Alston is president and owner of the Alston Realty Group, Inc., a real estate firm in Greensboro, specializing in property management and real estate sales. He is also involved with other business ventures in the Greensboro community; including East Market Street Square, Inc., a commercial development company, and Alston & Alston LLC, a residential renovation and consulting firm.

He is no stranger to Durham, the Westend community nor First Calvary. He attended Durham High School and North Carolina Central University with a major in Business Administration. Skip is the proud son of Constance Alston and former First Calvary deacon, Raymond Alston Jr.

Currently serving his fifth four-year term as a member of the Guilford County Board of Commissioners, he was elected its first African American chair in 2003. Earlier this month, Governor Roy Cooper appointed Alston to the NC Real Estate Commission. He previously served on the commission from 2004-2012, including two years as board chair.

Alston is the co-founder and chair of the board of directors for the Sit-In Movement, Inc., a nonprofit corporation formed to purchase and renovate Greensboro's historic Woolworth Building into an international Civil Rights Center and Museum.

Skip Alston has been a long-term servant leader throughout the state and country. His accomplishments include Chair of the Greensboro ABC Board, Guilford County Commissioner Liaison on the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, First-Vice President, North Carolina State Conference of Branches of the NAACP, and National Board member of the National Action Network. He is a former member of the North Carolina Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission, recipient of the Order of Long Leaf Pine and Prince Hall Thirty-Third Degree Mason.

Alston resides in Greensboro with his wife, Gwendolyn, who is a licensed real estate broker and Vice President of The Alston Realty Group, Inc. They have two sons, DeSean Jahleel Alston and Ryan DeMarkus Alston. Skip is also the proud Papa of two granddaughters Nyla Alston and Ariella Alston. Alston is a faithful member for over 40 years at St. James Baptist Church in Greensboro.



ANNIVERSARY BANQUET SPEAKER

Reverend Dr. George L. Parks Jr.

Reverend Dr. George L. Parks Jr. is the seventh pastor in the 159-year history of Metropolitan Baptist Church of Washington, DC, now in Largo, Maryland. Born in Nashville, Tennessee, to Rev. George L. Parks Sr. and Mrs. Kay Ramona Parks, he and his family relocated to Dayton, Ohio, and later moved to Cleveland, Ohio.

Dr. Parks began his undergraduate studies at the American Baptist College in Nashville, Tennessee, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biblical and Pastoral Studies. Dr. Parks' thirst for spiritual growth led him to return to school and he earned his Master of Divinity degree from Howard University School of Divinity in Washington, DC. There he was awarded the highly regarded J.H. Jackson Award for Promise in Pastoral Excellence. In May 2016, he earned his Doctor of Ministry degree in Expository Preaching from Union University School of Theology and Missions in Jackson, Tennessee.

Dr. Parks attributes the formation of his spiritual journey to his father, Dr. George L. Parks Sr. He accepted his Call to preach on January 25, 1998 and preached his initial sermon on March 22, 1998, at the Sacrificial Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, where his father currently serves as Pastor.

God has given Dr. Parks a diversity of assignments throughout his ministerial career. He was licensed and ordained to preach in 1998 and 2007, respectively. He served as an Associate Minister and Youth Director at Watson Grove Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He also served as an Assistant Pastor at Meridian Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC. Dr. Parks pastored the Riverside Missionary Baptist Church for seven years and served as the Senior Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Little Rock and Conway, Arkansas, for eight years. On July 30, 2023, he began his current appointment to the Metropolitan Baptist Church pulpit.

Dr. Parks was inducted into the prestigious Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers at Morehouse College in 2020, and he serves as an adjunct professor at Philander Smith College. A proud member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., he is well known for his commitment to community outreach and service.

Dr. Parks is married to the former Joy Marie Dailey and they are the proud parents of George L. Parks III (Trey), Genesis, and twins Gabriel and Grayson.



Reverend Dr. Nathan E. Scovens

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE SPEAKER

Reverend Dr. Nathan Edward Scovens is the spirited, gifted and anointed Pastor and Teacher of Galilee Missionary Baptist Church. Dr. Scovens and his wife of 29 years, Wyvondalynn (Von) Gilchrist Scovens, are the proud parents of two amazing sons. They are extremely proud of Nathan II who is a graduate of East Carolina University and recently completed coursework at NC A&T for entry into Dental School. Their youngest son Joshua is an Honor Student at The United States Military Academy of West Point and a member of the D1 Black Knights Basketball Team.

Pastor Scovens is a courageous, dynamic, and visionary leader who hails from Baltimore, Maryland, grew up in one of the toughest communities of Charm City. Growing up in the inner city helped cultivate and mold him for a ministry defined by taking risks, defying the odds and overcoming obstacles. He began his Christian journey at an early age as he received his salvation at age nine and accepted the call to preach the gospel at age twelve.

Dr. Scovens has been serving as the fifth Pastor of the Galilee Missionary Baptist Church since April 1, 2007. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from Elizabeth City State University, NC, and a Masters and Doctorate degrees in Divinity from Jacksonville Theological Seminary, Jacksonville, FL. His experiences in ministry and divine favor have helped him to guide the church through a period of tremendous growth. Since his arrival, the church's membership has tripled and propelled Galilee to become one of the leading churches in the state of North Carolina and recognized by many throughout the United States of America.

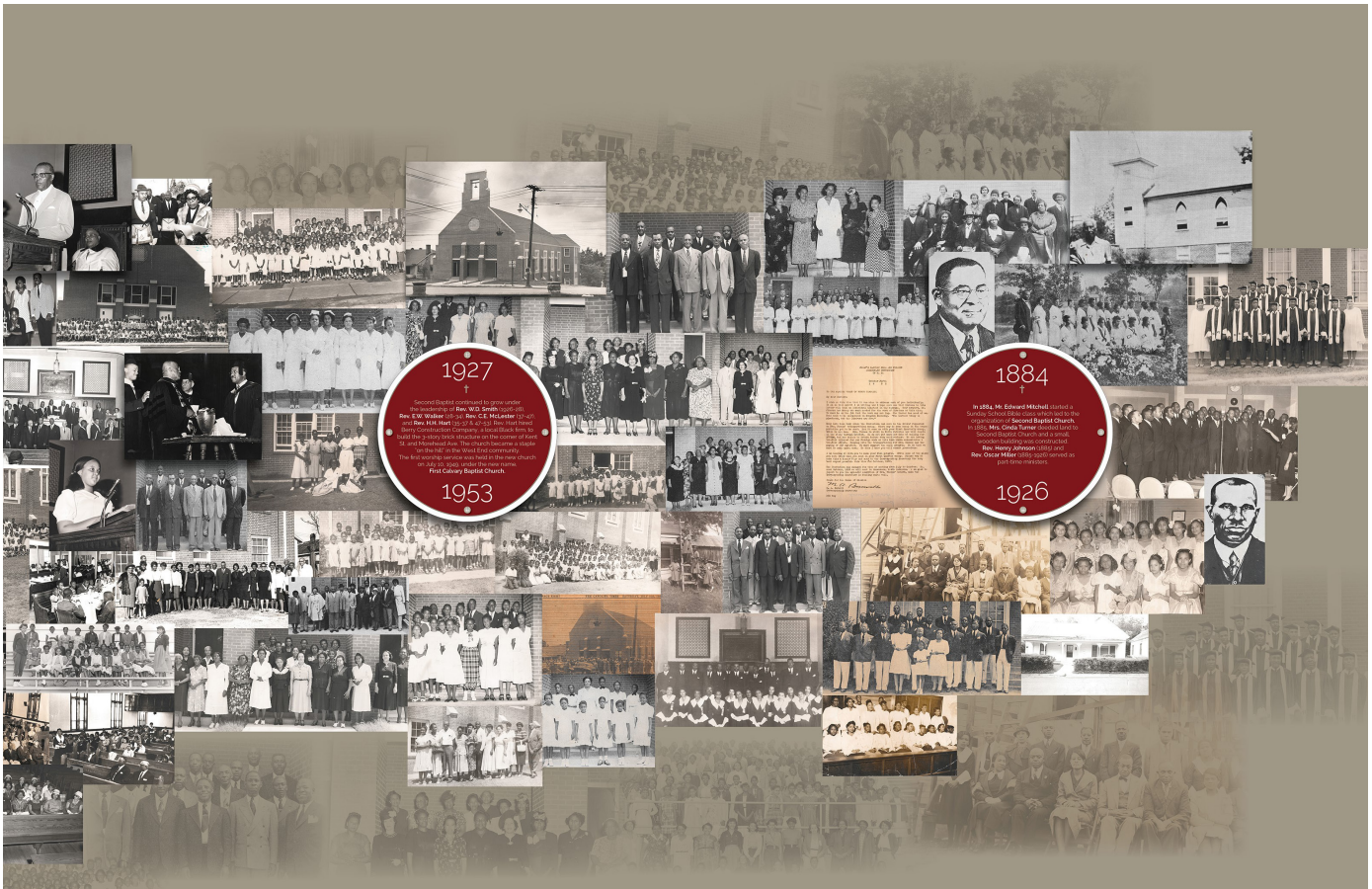
Even amid a national economic downturn, Galilee succeeded in building a new 32,000 square foot edifice and acquiring 28-acres of land. Moreover, Dr. Scovens led the charge in negotiating to build a new, attractive and vibrant CVS Pharmacy, creating one of the first commercial cornerstones of community re-development efforts for the MLK Jr. Galilee continued to thrive during the pandemic and served as a beacon of hope for the citizens of Winston-Salem and the triad.

Being a strong advocate for missions and reaching "beyond the walls", Dr. Scovens has widened the scope of Galilee's ministries to include a local, national and global impact. His altruistic spirit has become infectious in the ministry of GMBC as he preaches, teaches and unequivocally believes that we've been blessed to be a blessing.

In 2022 he launched **Global Galilee Virtual Church** and the **Mobile Galilee Church on Wheels** that takes the church to local communities for a pop-up worship experience and outreach. His vision is to reach the masses for Jesus Christ. Weekly, he is the host of the **"Galilee Experience"** Radio Show that allows him to connect with thousands on a weekly basis.

A large, vibrant collage of numerous small photographs depicting various church activities, including worship services, community events, and group portraits. A central circular graphic contains the text "2022" and "PRESENT". The collage is set against a background of a large, faded image of a church congregation. The central graphic is a dark circle with a white border, containing the year "2022" in a large, white, serif font, with a small cross symbol below it. Below the year, the word "PRESENT" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The collage itself is composed of many small, rectangular photographs of various sizes, showing people in different settings: some are in church pews, some are in a large hall, some are outdoors, and some are in a kitchen. The photos show people of various ages and ethnicities, many of whom are smiling and looking towards the camera. The overall tone of the collage is positive and celebratory.





Our Church History

1884

First Calvary Baptist Church was organized as Second Baptist Church. It was located on Cameron Street which is now Cornell Street. History records that Mr. Edward Mitchell spearheaded the organization of Second Baptist Church by starting a Sunday School Bible class about 100 yards westward of Cornell Street, in a rural county school.

1885

A year later, Mrs. Cinda Turner deeded land to members of Second Baptist Church. A small, wooden building was constructed on this land on what is now Cornell Street. Rev. Henry Johnson was the Pastor. History records that between 1885 and 1926, Rev. Oscar Miller served as Pastor and the building was enlarged to some extent under his pastorate.

1926

Rev. W.D. Smith became Pastor and launched the task of acquiring the current site for the church on the corner of Morehead and Kent Streets.

1926 - 1953

Three (3) additional ministers were called to Pastor the Second Baptist Church: Rev. EW Walker, Rev. H.H. Hart, and Rev. C.E. McLester. The church progressed exceedingly well under their leadership. Rev. H.H. Hart was called twice to pastor First Calvary. He served the church from 1935 - 1937 and again from 1947 - 1953. Rev. Hart's return to Pastor the church began a great era of progress. The building fund again became a priority. The Berry Construction Company, a local black firm, was hired to build a three-story brick structure that became a staple in the West End Community. In 1949, the name of the church was changed from Second Baptist church to First Calvary Baptist Church. Worship Service was held for the first time in the new brick building on Sunday, July 10, 1949.

1954

On June 19 of this year the church called Rev. A.L. Thompson as Pastor after the death of Dr. H.H. Hart in 1953. Rev. A.L. Thompson's installations service was held in the first week of October 1954. Under his leadership, the church mortgage was paid off. Additionally, he initiated a progressive building plan with the vision of construction building. It was at this time that the property adjacent to the 1311 Morehead Avenue structure was acquired. Pastor A.L. Thompson served First Calvary Baptist Church for 25 years, from 1954 - 1979. Because of his failing health, he resigned in June of 1979. During the few months, the Associate Pastor, Rev. W.J. Wilson, along with the church Deacons were responsible for services while various ministers were interviewed. On December 28th, 1979, Rev. V.S. Thompson of Statesville, North Carolina was called to Pastor the church. In January 1980, Rev. A.L. Thompson died from failing health and a memorial service in his honor was held on January 10th of that year.

1980

On the second Sunday of February 1980, Rev. V.S. Thompson began his pastoral duties. He initiated several changes and quite a bit of progress was made. Some of the changes he helped to develop included a new order of service, bonding of the treasurer, a requested audit of the annual budget and numerous other additions. Under the leadership of V.S. Thompson, the church celebrated its 100th Anniversary on October 27th, 1984. The banquet was held at the W.G. Pearson Cafeteria on the campus of NCCU. Rev. V.S. Thompson served as Pastor for five (5) years, resigning in January 1986.

1987

In January 1987, after a long search, Rev. Paul Jackson accepted the call to Pastor at First Calvary. Under his leadership, the church was successful in constructing the educational building with a connecting walkway to the main edifice. The building remained the vision of the church for many, many years and represented the fervent prayers of the body. Rev. Jackson eliminated all "fund raisers" except the twice a year church-wide sacrificial offerings, declaring that the church would be a "tithing" church. He originated the motto "An Exciting Church Excited About Its Mission." Rev. Jackson served for three (3) years, resigning in June 1991. Once again, Min. W.J. Wilson and the Deacons kept the church running smoothly, while various ministers were interviewed by the pulpit committee.

1991

In June 1991, the church extended a call to Pastor Fredrick A. Davis of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. At this time, he was a Pastor in Huntsville, Alabama. Pastor Davis began his Pastorate on Sunday, August 25th, 1991, and his installation service was held on Sunday, November 10, 1991. Under the energetic leadership of Pastor Davis, the church grew rapidly in all ministries. He continued to support the tithing and sacrificial programs as the primary sources of financing the work of the church.

Pastor Davis was instrumental in developing Calvary Ministries of the Westend Community, Inc. (now the West End Community Foundation). This non-profit organization is the result of a vision that began at the church as it sought to assist in providing a remedy for the many ills that plagued the community. Under his leadership, the organization renovated the old Lyon Park School, which is now the Community Family Life and Recreation Center at Lyon Park. There have been numerous ministers that have been licensed/ordained and have now become pastors under the leadership of Rev. Davis. In 2008, construction began at 1311 Morehead Avenue location to build a new church edifice and fellowship hall. The new building was dedicated on Sunday, January 24th, 2010. In October of 2022, Pastor Davis was voted the first Pastor Emeritus in the church's history. Pastor Davis retired on December 31ST, 2022.

2022 - Present

In January of 2022, Rev. Dr. Marc Antoine Lavarin, Sr. was elected as the eighth Pastor of First Calvary. His pastorate began on July 1ST, 2022, and he was installed on November 12th, 2022. Under his leadership, membership and giving have increased to record highs. As Pastor, Dr. Lavarin has focused his attentions on ministry development and community outreach. Pastor Lavarin launched ENCORE, a monthly young adult program, Calvary Festival, a community wide Easter festival, monthly mature adult Lunch & Learns, and an initiative to tithe a portion of the sacrificial giving offering to community organizations. Pastor Lavarin was the visionary for the creation of the Legacy Wall.

Excerpts from the history compiled by Mrs. Eva Merritt Pratt, an educator, missionary and faithful member of First Calvary Baptist Church.

Acknowledgments

**Thank you for your presence and support as we Celebrate 140 years of Calvary!
With deep appreciation, thanks to the amazing volunteers, without whom this
weekend celebration would not be possible.**

The Research Committee:

Brenda Harris-White, Lois Leggett, Denise Best, Maggie Jacobs, Rev. Betty Brown, Maggie Bryant, LaDawn Sanders, Portia Brown, Carter Cue, Rachel Griffin, Cherry Martin and Marcella Gartrell

The Documentation and Preservation Committee:

Marilyn Cash, Rochelle Jackson, Angela Sanders, Debra Taylor and Avera White

The Anniversary Banquet Committee:

Esther Leathers, Dr. Micara Sessoms, Connie Faulks, Wilhelmenia Thronton, Donna Mack, Jacqueline Potter Jones, Lovett Bean, Ava Haskins Brownlee, Jackie Smith Jones, Vega Swepson, Yvonne Upshur White and Teri Knighton

Decoration and Beautification Committee:

Wanda Cooper, Stephanie Gibbs, Cynthia Street, Valencia Swain and Brenda Harris-White

Special Appreciation

Melvin "Skip" Alston

Rev. Fredrick A. Davis

Fredrick Davis II

Let's Eat Soul Food

FCBC Staff & Official Leadership Team

Margie Scott

Eunice Sanders

Helen S. Forte

Margie Scott

Jill Potter

Rev. Dr. Vernon S. Thompson

Dr. Ira Q. Smith

Dolli Bradford

Natashia Privette, Privmadia Creative

Jason Prince, Media by Prince

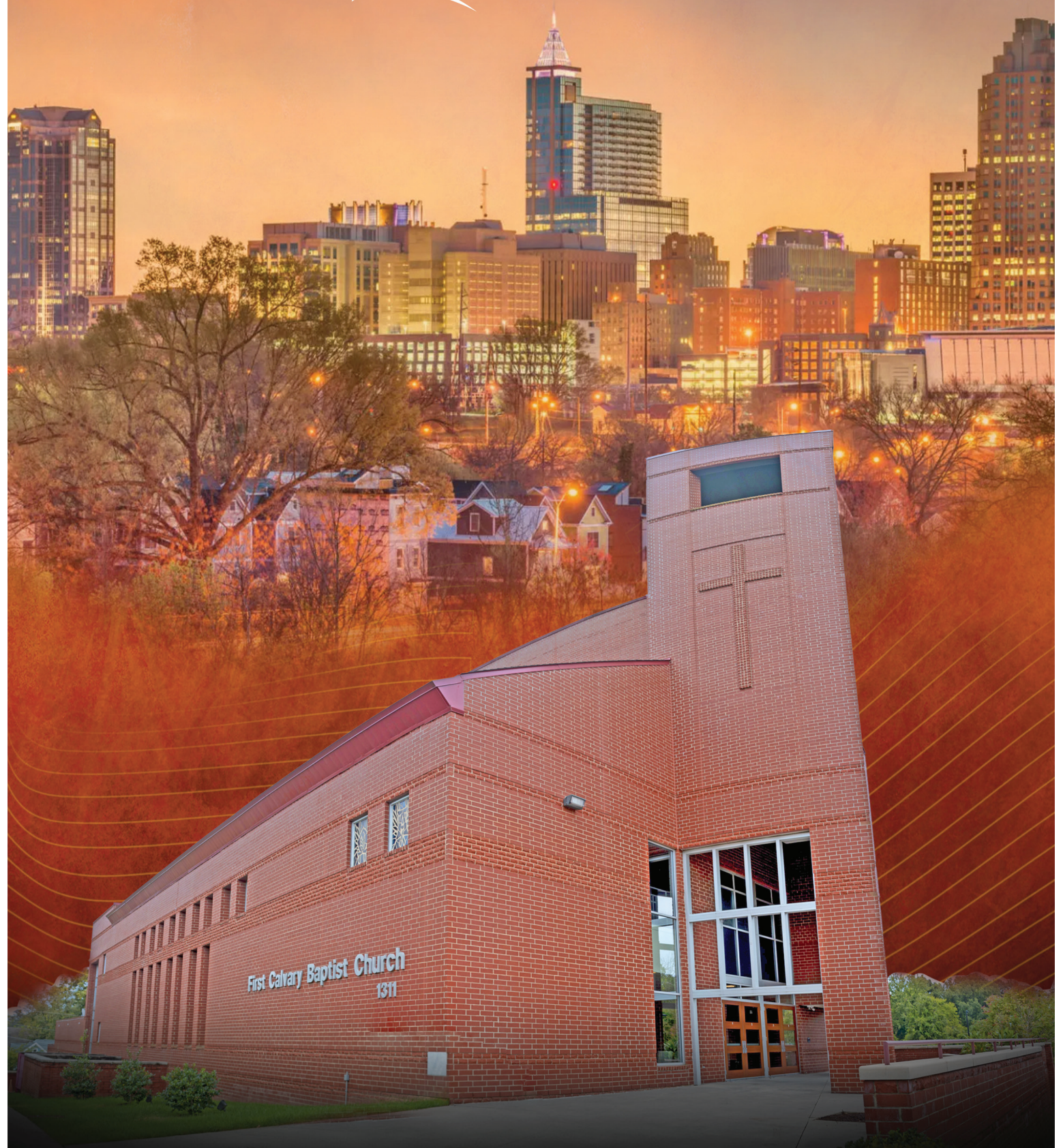
Loren Friedman, Friedman Fine Arts

Elaine Barnes

Marie Shaw Simmons

Mary Gilmer

The numerous volunteers who worked behind the scenes!



FOR OUR CHRIST, IN OUR CITY, THROUGH OUR CHURCH