

Encourager

Walker Baptist Church

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2026



1350 West Main Street, Franklin, TN 37064
615-794-7000
www.walkerbc.org

*"Let us not give up meeting together. . . but let us encourage one another---
and all the more as you see the day approaching." – Hebrews 10:25*

In case you missed it, I announced my retirement on July 26, effective August 30. It wasn't an easy decision to make, and truly a difficult one to announce. Throughout my entire tenure as your pastor, I've tried to center my ministry around several key points, and I'd like to share those with you now.



1. Faithfully preach the word of God. By the time August 30 arrives, I will have stood in the pulpit and delivered 489 sermons (including my time as interim and also filling in for Mitchell Karnes). Each time, I have asked God to give me the wisdom and understanding I need to accurately present the truth of Scripture, and to give everyone an opportunity to respond to the gospel message of Jesus Christ. Some Sundays I felt fully prepared, other Sundays, not so much. Each and every time, however, my goal was to present the word of God clearly and simply, in a way that made sense. You've figured out by now that I'm not a shouter or a screamer. My rule of thumb has always been to preach to you as I would like someone to preach to me. I don't want to be shouted at, and I don't want to leave more confused than when I sat down! Thank you for the privilege of carrying out my calling as a proclaimer of God's Word.

2. Disciple believers and protect the unity of the church. The role of a pastor is to shepherd the flock; to feed, to guide, and to protect. The core of the Great Commission is to make disciples. I've worked hard in our Wednesday night Bible studies to offer material that strengthens our faith, that deepens our walk with God, and enlarges our vision of what the church should be and do. I believe that our current Mission Statement: *Pray. Love. Serve.* has been just what we've needed to narrow our focus to the things that truly matter the most. Growing our relationship with God through prayer, worship, and discipleship. Growing our relationship with one another through Bible Study, worship, gatherings, and special events. Growing our relationship with the world through outreach, witnessing, community involvement, and ministry projects.

It hasn't always been easy, but it has always been meaningful. Truthfully, we suffered as a church during a difficult time between Mitchell's time as pastor and mine. We needed time to regroup as a church family, and through the work of the Holy Spirit, we came through. COVID presented challenges that no one was prepared for. Adjustments had to be made. We'd never heard of "social distancing" and hand sanitizer everywhere became a regular thing. How can you minister to one another when you can't even be in the same room? Yet God protected us! And then in August of 2024 we were forced to come together again as we dealt with the loss of Andy Wolverton, and once again, we learned that God's grace is sufficient.

Thank you for the joy of being your pastor for nearly nine years. Trust God. Remember what I just preached from Psalm 136. The God who created the heavens and who parted the Red Sea is the same God who is watching over all of us. He has a plan, and it includes Walker Baptist Church. *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* – Jeremiah 29:11

I love you,

Chuck



RETIREMENT ISN'T GOODBYE. IT'S A FOND FAREWELL AND A BUNDLE OF WISHES FOR A WONDERFUL FUTURE AHEAD. MAY THIS NEXT CHAPTER OF LIFE BRING YOU BOUNDLESS OPPORTUNITIES TO ENJOY WHAT YOU LOVE DOING MOST. WE'RE EXCITED FOR THE WELL-DESERVED ADVENTURES THAT AWAIT YOU! LOVE AND WALKER HUGS!

A CELEBRATION LUNCHEON WILL BE HELD AFTER WORSHIP ON AUGUST 30TH, PROVIDING AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE WALKER FAMILY TO OFFER THEIR CONGRATULATIONS. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED. SIGN-UP SHEETS WILL BE AVAILABLE AUGUST 16TH AND 23RD, OR CONTACT MARTI AT 615-403-9691 BY AUGUST 24TH.

Nursery Care Provided During Worship



AUG 2	Chris & Kelley Wheeler	SEPT 6	Jennifer & Kody Leonard
AUG 9	Jami & Avery Lunn	SEPT 13	Josh & Susanna Sulfridge
AUG 16	Rhonda Gatlin, Marlee Donoho	SEPT 20	Freda Joslin, Kate Lee
AUG 23	Laura Powell, Marie McElhannon	SEPT 27	Jennifer Leonard, Daianna Austin
AUG 30	Debra Mangrum, Austin Godwin		

If you are not able to keep your date, please try to trade with someone. If you need assistance please call or text Jennifer Leonard at 615-604-9457

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPER MENUS			
			
August 12	August 19	August 26	September 2
WELCOME BACK Grilled Hamburgers/ Hot Dogs French Fries Dessert	Sandwich Bar Chips Dessert	Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce Green Beans Salad Dessert	Beefy Nacho Bar w/ All the toppings Spanish Rice Refried Beans Dessert
September 9	September 16	September 23	September 30
Homestyle Chicken Casserole Mixed Vegetables Buttered Corn Salad Dessert	Oven BBQ Chicken Potato Salad Baked Beans Coleslaw Dessert	Sandwich Bar Chips Dessert	Pizza Pizza Pizza Salad Dessert
SUPPER PRICES: Adults \$7.00, Children Ages 5-12 \$5.00. Family limit (living in same household). \$30.00			

Greetings, Walker Baptist Church Family!

I recently spent our nation’s 250th birthday in North Dakota, where I was able to go to the opening of the presidential library for my favorite president (who spent a couple years of his life living in North Dakota,) Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt was, like all men, imperfect in many ways, but I have always admired his quintessentially American can-do attitude, his love of nature, and his bravery in the face of danger. Here is an excerpt from his most famous speech:

“It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.”

The Bible speaks many times about both the concept of avoiding criticism of others and of taking action with our lives. In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:3-5 NIV, Jesus says about criticism and judgement:

³ “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

We are then given a call to action rather than sitting in complacency in James 2:14-17 NIV:

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

May each of us work hard on ourselves for the Lord.



In Christ,

Troy Guttormson



**WALKER BAPTIST
CHURCH**
1350 W. MAIN ST.
FRANKLIN, TN.
(615) 794-7000

21st ANNUAL FISH FRY
SATURDAY, SEPT. 26, 2026 4pm – 7pm
“ALL YOU CAN EAT”
HAND-BREADED USA CATFISH FILETS
w/Homemade Hushpuppies, Slaw, White Beans & Beverage

ADULT TICKET: \$15.00 CHILD’S TICKET: \$8.00 (ages 5-10)
Ages “4” and under – FREE HOT DOGS & CHIPS w/Drink AVAILABLE FOR KIDS

PURCHASE TICKETS AT THE DOOR or
ONLINE @ walkerbc.org
DEADLINE FOR ONLINE PURCHASE IS THURSDAY, SEPT. 24TH

ALSO FEATURING:
“FAMOUS” CAKE AUCTION/BAKE SALE/LIVE MUSIC



*IN HONOR and REMEMBRANCE OF
RAYMOND EDWARD VAUGHN
April 6, 1938 — June 14, 2026
LONG-TIME FISH FRY VOLUNTEER
and WALKER BAPTIST MEMBER*



GREETERS

AUGUST

**Brenda & Larry
Darnell**

SEPTEMBER

**Jennifer & Doug
Leonard**



SUMMER ACTIVITIES AT WALKER



JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR THE
GOLDEN OFFERING FOR TENNESSEE MISSIONS

together

WE PRAY. WE GIVE. WE GO.

WALKER'S
GOAL
\$3000

WEEK OF PRAYER

SUNDAY: IGNITING SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

MONDAY: ENGAGING LOSTNESS

TUESDAY: CARING FOR THE VULNERABLE

WEDNESDAY: TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

THURSDAY: BUILDING THE KINGDOM

FRIDAY: HEALING BROKENNESS

SATURDAY: RESPONDING IN CRISIS

SUNDAY: REACHING THE NATIONS

GOLDENOFFERING.ORG



TMB

Tennessee Baptist
MISSION BOARD

WESTWARD ROAD
THE JOY TOUR
FREE CONCERT

AUG 9

6:00 PM

WALKER MEMORIAL
BAPTIST CHURCH
FRANKLIN, TN

STAFF

Chuck McElhannon

Senior Pastor

Wally Whidby

Youth Pastor

Troy Guttormson

Worship Pastor

CONTACT INFORMATION

Church Telephone

615-794-7000

Church

ask@walkerbc.org

Chuck

chuck@walkerbc.org

Wally

wally@walkerbc.org

Troy

troy@walkerbc.org

Compassion Corner

compassioncorner@walkerbc.org

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

We're excited to kick off a new season of She-Shed Ladies' Bible Study on Wednesday, August 12th!

Our first evening will be a relaxed time of reconnecting after the summer, catching up and enjoying some fun icebreakers together. Whether you've been with us before or are joining for the first time, we'd love to have you!

Following our kickoff, we'll begin an encouraging study through the book of Habakkuk. This powerful study reminds us that even in seasons of uncertainty, God is present, faithful, and worthy of our trust. Together, we'll discover how to:

- Pray when you don't have the words—or even the desire—to pray.
- Trust God's character when life doesn't make sense.
- Rest in God's presence when anxiety threatens to steal your joy.
- Find hope in the truth that God is always good and always faithful, even when circumstances are difficult.

If you've ever wrestled with questions, uncertainty, or waiting on God, this study is for you. Come as you are, invite a friend, and join us as we grow in faith together.

We can't wait to see you on August 12th! *Jennifer*

Summer Missions Overview

VBS Missions Offering and Collection

\$200.10 for missions in the Philippines

Stuffed animals, and toys for family shelter

1968 Bottles of Water collected for Homeless (to date)

13 pints blood donated with potential to save 39 lives

~15 people served through Compassion Corner

Temporary housing and assistance provided to homeless family



SPECIFIC ITEMS NEEDED FOR COMPASSION CORNER

Condiments

Canned Fruit

Flour

Laundry Detergent

Bottled Water

Dry Cereals (sweet)

Beanie Weenies

Sugar

Paper Towels

August 2026

REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 am Sunday School
10:15 am Worship

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE Fellowship Dinner 5:15-6:00 Pre-School, Children, Youth 6:00-7:20 She-Shed 6:15-7:20 Adult Bible Study 6:25-7:20 Adult Choir 7:30-8:30						1
2 Team Meetings 4pm Ministry Update 5pm 	3	4	5 Larry Newell 	6	7  10:00-2:00	8
9 Guest Speaker: Terry Wilkerson Deacon's Meeting Westward Road 6:00	10	11 Sandy Godwin V. 	12 Regular evening activities resume	13	14 Penni Reitmeyer 	15 Anna Yocca 
16	17	18	19 Randy Hazelwood Mandi Tillotson 	20 Bill Hannah 	21  10:00-2:00	22 Keith Norwood 
23	24 Catherine Hannah Stephen Wheeler Kate Butler 	25	26	27 Hugh Williams 	28	29 Tina LaFever 
30 Chuck's Retirement Luncheon	31					

September 2026

REGULAR SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 am Sunday School
10:15 am Worship

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE Fellowship Dinner 5:15-6:00 Pre-School, Children, Youth 6:00-7:20 She-Shed 6:15-7:20 Adult Bible Study 6:25-7:20 Adult Choir 7:30-8:30		1	2  Eric Rielly	3	4  10:00-2:00 Linda Conrad 	5
6 Casey Laws Guest Speaker	7  OFFICE CLOSED	8	9	10	11	12 Elaura Guttormson Lily Stelter 
13 Doug Leonard Shirley Mize Victoria Khadartsev 	14	15  Twila Flowers	16	17	18  10:00-2:00	19 Gloria Lunn Wayne Mangrum 
20  Lois Ann Murphy	21	22	23  Beth Helm Kelley Wheeler	24  Jonathan Lee	25	26
27	28 Medora Guttormson 	29	30  Austin Donoho	GOLDEN OFFERING FOR TENNESSEE MISSIONS WALKER'S GOAL \$3000 WEEK OF PRAYER FOR TENNESSEE MISSIONS September 13-20, 2026 		