

fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

August 2016 Volume 50-08

Can You Unleash the Power of 55?

By Gerrit S. Dawson, Senior Pastor

What can happen by making 55 our goal? What will God do through people whose passion is 55?

And what in the world am I talking about?

I'm talking about 8.55 and 10.55. I'm talking about church members who commit to arriving inside the sanctuary at least five minutes before the scheduled start. I believe it will transform our worship experience!

55 makes a much bigger difference than most of us ever realize.

Why does 55 matter? I'll give you three reasons:

1) Critical mass. If you've hosted a party, you know how grateful you are for the people who come early and get the festive atmosphere started. By contrast, have you ever gone to a party on time and found almost no one there? You wonder if you are in the right place. You worry that this event will be a dud. But if you arrive to laughter and conversation, you know it's going to be great. If you're a church member, you're no longer a guest: you're a host! And good hosts love to get the party started!

2) Engaging Worship. All this past June, we talked about the journey of worship. We noted how the worship hour is an in-

terconnected, carefully planned structure. Our engagement with God magnifies when we engage worship as people prepared, present and focused. If we arrive at 55, our very experience of worship will change: I guarantee it!

3) Visitors. Visitors to our church usually arrive early. They don't want to miss the start of things. A critical part of a welcoming atmosphere is having people greet them upon arrival. Not just at the door but in the sanctuary. Just by living out 55, and keeping an eye open for new folks, each one of us can grow our church.

There's power in 55. You and I can change our church for the better by committing to 55. In a few short weeks, readjusting our habits to arrive at 55 will become normal. And we will be contributing to the health and vitality of worship significantly.

I'm looking forward to a wonderful autumn of worship with you. We will be taking up the golden chapters of John 13-17, the story of Jesus' final night, uniquely told by the apostle John. My passion is to be with you in worship as we press deeper into Christ. And as ever, I love to be your pastor!

The Next Generation of Leadership

At a recent meeting, the session granted nearly \$60,000 in scholarships for six students to pursue seminary degrees. These six represent future ministers, counselors and missionaries. They all have close ties to our church. A vibrant church ignites hearts for full time ministry, and it's wonderful to see so many rising leaders.

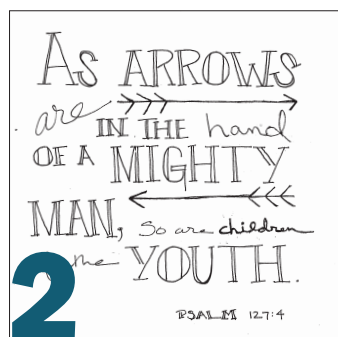
Our church supports our denomination's vision to grow the Kingdom of God through planting churches. We know that to plant churches, we have to specifically train pastors for this unique work. So, with great joy, the session awarded the first-ever Russ Stevenson Scholarship for EPC Church Planting Residency. The Rev. Will Johnson will be moving with his wife to Atlanta to begin training to plant a multi-ethnic EPC church. Supervised by two seasoned EPC pastors, our \$10,000 grant will help Will get started. Will is part of a growing trend of church planters who also work "regular" jobs to support their ministry. He will be working in web development as he also works in a church.

We believe in supporting new leaders whom God raises up. It's exciting to see the vibrancy of those who will lead in the future.

Gerrit

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AUGUST CALENDAR

Women's Micah Study	Aug 2
Meet & Match Sign Up	Aug 21
Officer Meetings	Aug 22
Meet & Match Sign Up	Aug 28

UPCOMING DATES

Small Groups Begin	Week of Sept 5
Women's Fall Study Begins	Sept 8
Discover First Class	Sept 18
BR Concert Band	Sept 25



Our Warrior Wants Strong Arrows

By Whitney Weiner, Director, Mother's Day Out

We had a fun-filled summer at MDO. This was our first year to offer summer camps to our MDO families. Children enjoyed week long camp sessions exploring *Commotion in the Ocean*, *Bugs and Insects* and then some *Fairy Tale Fun*. What a blast we had!

We are now "gearing up" for another MDO school year. We will welcome 20 new families to our program with a total of 76 families that our

MDO program will minister to this year. As we seek to educate the little hearts and minds of our children, I often think on this verse:

"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth." Psalm 127: 4.

What seeds will we at MDO help to plant in the lives of our children? What impact will we have not only in our children's lives but their family's too?

Children are like arrows and as a mighty warrior wants strong arrows, we too want to help develop strong, well-rounded children. Children that know God's great love for them and know our Lord and Savior. Children who are learning God's truth and word. Children who while exploring the world around them and interacting with friends and teachers at MDO are learning Godly values. Our children are at such a young, impressionable time in their lives. As we are preparing to "shoot and send" them on their next journey in life and into our world outside of church and MDO, we want to make sure to point them in the right direction.

We truly consider it a privilege to partner with parents to train-up our little ones. What a blessing it is to have parents share:

"MDO has become a second home and family for our little girl, and we couldn't be more pleased. We have watched her grow and change in such beautiful ways while in your care."

"MDO has been such a rock and a constant for our family. You have overwhelmed me and blessed our family. Thank you for loving my kids and my family."

AS ARROWS
are IN THE hand
OF A MIGHTY
MAN, So are children
of the YOUTH.

PSALM 127:4

IN MEMORIAM:

July 18, 2016
Jette Riffel

July 22, 2016
Sue Edrington

July 22, 2016
Rick Massengale

BAPTISMS:

July 24, 2016
Elliot Charles Malden
Parents are Emily and Jon Malden

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary to the glory of God ...

Aug 7 ... and in loving memory of Bailey Rachel Guidry by her family.

Aug 14 Open Date

Aug 21 ... and in loving memory of Nora Will Diehl and Joan Diehl Smith, grandmother and mother of Cathy Pugsley, by David, Cathy and Catherine Pugsley.

Aug 28 ... and in loving memory of Annslee Laura Phillips by Lauren Teague Phillips and N. LaRon Phillips.

Stewards of God's Grace By Jaime Carnaggio

Mothers of Little Ones Bible Study

As mothers, our primary mission field is our family. Some of the most important work we do happens within the walls of our home, where we have the great privilege of raising up a new generation of Christians to be bold ambassadors for Christ.

The Mothers of Little Ones (MoLo) Bible study aims to equip us in this mission through fellowship, study and prayer. This group of women is committed to pressing deeper into God's Word, exposing the gospel truths and applying the hope and promise of Scripture to our calling as mothers, wives and sisters-in-Christ. We allow God's Word to penetrate our hearts in real and tangible ways in order to grow deeper in Christ and further into communion with one another.

MoLo meets every Thursday morning from 9.30-11 am during the fall and spring. We kick off our fall study on Thursday, September 8 in

room 301 of the Education Building. We will explore how to be stewards of God's grace, the joy in suffering and how to stand firm in our faith in this timely in-depth study of 1 Peter. "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen." 1 Peter 5: 10-11

We love new faces! We would love to pray for you and learn alongside you! This study is not just for mothers of "little ones." It is for any woman who desires to push deeper into God's mighty Word and form relationships with other women who desire to do the same. Please contact Jaime Carnaggio (jaime@fpcbr.org) if you are interested!



Meet & Match Small Group Sign Up

August 21 and 28

Finding the best of everything on your own is the worst way to go about the Christian life. Why?

Because we need each other in order to grow as Christians. As one author puts it, “your walk with God is a community project.”

It’s because the Lord has built into us a need for community that First Presbyterian is making a strong push this fall for greater involvement in small groups. In particular, we are re-launching our home fellowship groups (remember the groups from Lent?). These groups begin meeting the week after Labor Day and are a great opportunity to get together with others to experience the truth of the gospel together.

We’re hosting two major small group events—

Meet & Match events (m&ms!)—and they will take place in the reception room during the Sunday mornings of August 21 and 28. These events will simply let you find a group based on the criteria that matters most to you. All of our groups will be represented, allowing those unattached to mingle, meet and match up with those that represent the best fit. It’s like speed dating for small groups!

The majority of our groups will then get together weekly (between Labor Day and Thanksgiving) and study the Bible passage that was preached the previous week. With the content already delivered and discussion questions provided, we think getting together will be both easy and flexible.

Our goal is to have 500 people connected in a small group. That’s an ambitious goal, but I think it’s doable. Will you consider being one of those people? I hope so.

Please Join Us By Valerie Gastinel

God’s Mission to Love the Internationals Among Us

We have unprecedented opportunities right here in Baton Rouge to reach out in welcoming and loving the internationals that have flooded our campuses and city. More than half of them come from regions of the world that have no access to the gospel. Imagine the privilege of being the first person to share the unconditional love of Jesus Christ with them. Most of them will never enter an American’s home, will never know a Christian or will never hear the gospel. Most feel isolated and lonely.

We can change that through simple acts of hospitality and building bridges of friendship, trust and mutual respect. We can engage with them in an intentional way in their search for truth, hope and purpose. We can make a difference through prayer.

The International Friendship Partners (IFP) team is launching a friendship building initiative to match internationals with members of our church. Will you prayerfully consider being a “Friendship Partner” to an international? Or being involved through prayer or hospitality?

What’s involved in being a Friendship Partner? It’s a six month commitment to cultivate a genuine friendship with a matched international; meeting at least once a month and maintaining weekly contact with your international friend. Each Friendship Partner will be asked to complete training materials before being matched.

The IFP leadership team promises to come alongside, encourage and give you whatever support you need as you engage in building a friendship with an international. You will be part of a team effort. We will support each other in prayer.

Hospitality is the golden bridge to connect with internationals. We hope to offer many opportunities to host or help host a small group of internationals for a one-time function, e.g. a welcome party, an enrichment class, a potluck supper, a swim party, a game night, an afternoon tea, etc.

Contact Valerie Gastinel (vgastinel@yahoo.com or 241.1386) for more information. Or register to be involved at fpcbr.org.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

7.45 am Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Communion
11 am Acoustic Communion
(Acoustic Communion will not meet Aug. 7)

AUGUST SERMON TEXTS

Texts and titles are subject to change.

August 7, 2016

“My Hope Is In You”

Psalm 39

August 14, 2016

“Just As You are Doing”

1 Thessalonians 5: 9-24

August 21, 2016

“Taking a Towel”

John 13: 1-17

August 28, 2016

“When It Falls Apart, Love!”

John 13: 21-38

PASTORAL STAFF

Gerrit S. Dawson

Senior Pastor

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Associate Pastor of Missions

Derek McCollum

Associate Pastor for Discipleship
and Young Adults

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Parenting Conference September 24

Every way we try to make our kids “good” is simply an extension of Old Testament Law—a set of standards that is not only unable to save our children, but also powerless to change them. Rules are not the answer. What they need is grace.

Authors of “Give Them Grace,” mother-daughter team Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson, contend this and more.



First Presbyterian Church is pleased to have Elyse and Jessica join us for a one-day parenting seminar on September 24 from 9-3 where we will hear the perspective on parenting which shows us how to receive the gospel afresh and give grace in abundance to our children. Register at fpcbr.org. \$10 per person includes the conference, lunch and a copy of “Give Them Grace.”

Fall Promotion Sunday

On Sunday, August 14, Children’s Ministry will promote our kids to the next grade/class level. The following Sunday, we will kick off the new semester of children’s Sunday School. During each new lesson we will dig into the life of Jesus. In this chronological one year program kids will walk in Jesus’ footsteps from his birth to his resurrection and ascension. This is an excellent time to have your children join us in Sunday School!



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