



Were You There? by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

It's your story. And it has all the makings of great drama. Intrigue. Sudden reversals. Intimate interactions. Betrayals. Violence. Courtroom maneuvers. Help from unexpected places. Dire villains. A hero who passes through grave peril to glorious triumph.

It's your story. Because it's the story of Jesus. We are in Christ. So in all he said and did, Jesus included us. All of his life was on our behalf. So always, his story is our story.

But we also find ourselves in the people who interacted with him. We identify with his opponents and his followers, with the betrayers and the devoted, with the conflicted and the proud. From Mary to Pilate, from Judas who betrayed to Simon who carried his cross, from Peter who denied him to the centurion who confessed him, we were there.

The story of Passion Week is a story that touches our souls with poignancy. It reaches our hearts with conviction and comfort, with sorrow and rejoicing. Passion Week is the story we can't stop telling. The best became the worst and then became something even better. It catches up our whole lives, the whole world. Nothing is more important than this true story.

And I want to take you there. This Lent, we'll be studying the people of Passion Week. Day by day we will read about the

many characters and the lesser characters, seeing how each one fits as we follow the episodes of this great story. We'll learn to see through their eyes, and even pray through their prayers as we identify our lives through these characters. And discover anew how Jesus relates to us in truth, grace and love.

Beginning February 9, you will have an opportunity to sign up to be part of a home group study. On March 1, we'll receive our beautiful all-new Lent guides: *Were You There? Meeting the People of Passion Week*. We'll be able to sign up for daily email delivery. And each week at worship we will go in depth with one of the characters.

Annual Christmas Offering

The annual Christmas Offering for city ministry received more than \$51,000! The Christian Outreach Center and Gardere Community Christian School are thrilled with the astounding generosity which flows from the faith our members!

I always love being your pastor, but never more than in the season of Lent and Easter as we enter together the great drama of our redemption.

Gerrit



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Couples' Workshop	Feb 7 & 8
rEcess	Feb 7
Skeet Shooting/Chili Competition	Feb 8
Childhood Anxiety Seminar	Feb 9
BRSO Concert	Feb 13
Meet & Match Mixer	Feb 9 & 16
Congregational Meeting	Feb 16
JAM Family Worship	Feb 16
Lois Tverberg	Feb 17
FAS Crowd Lunch	Feb 18
Ladies' 40s/50s Gathering	Feb 18
Houston H.S. Mission Trip	Feb 22-26
Church Offices Closed	Feb 24-25
Ash Wednesday	Feb 26
Lent Mid-Week Worship Begins	Feb 26

UPCOMING MARCH EVENTS

Manners of the Heart Gala	Mar 6
Youth Gala	Mar 13

MARRIAGES:

January 25, 2020
Mary Frances Bratton to Colin O'Rourke

IN MEMORIAM:

January 16, 2020
Randall Goodwin

January 25, 2020
Francis Rinaudo, father of Brandie Henry

CHAPEL & SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The flowers are placed . . .

FEB 2 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Lenore Wamsley given by Kate and Ryan Castle.

FEB 9 . . . by Tommie and Pat O'Donoghue to honor the Lord who has blessed them with 55 years of marriage.

FEB 16 . . . celebrating the 90th birthday of Margery Fabré with flowers given in loving memory of her husband, Clifton Frank Fabré, and to all cherished members of the Larguier and Fabré families.

FEB 23 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of James Howard and Emogene S. Elliott by their family, Dr. and Mrs. Louis Cenac (Elizabeth Elliott) and Dr. Clifton O. Bingham III.

The flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. If you would like to donate flowers for a particular Sunday, please contact Kathy Mullins at 291.3095.

Childhood Anxiety: Let's Talk About It

Approximately 1 in 4 children is diagnosed with an anxiety disorder.



90% of childhood anxiety can be overcome with awareness and lifestyle changes.

All are invited to join us for a free parenting workshop, "Childhood Anxiety: Let's Talk About It" on February 9, 5-7 pm. Angelle High from Manners of the Heart will teach us how to calm our child's anxiety, which has become a childhood epidemic. Popcorn bar and refreshments provided in the Reception Room. Free programming and childcare for youth, childhood and nursery children. Kids choir also available. Drop off your kids to our trained team and then meet us in the Sanctuary to learn how to navigate childhood anxiety. Both a counselor and pediatrician will be available to answer questions.

Contact Audra Cato (audra@fpcbr.org) for more information. No registration needed. Invite a friend.

The Bible Through First Century Eyes

Lois Tverberg has been teaching and writing about the Jewish background of Christianity for the past twenty years. Her passion is to translate the Bible's ancient setting into fresh insights that deepen and strengthen Christian faith. Lois grew up with plenty of Sunday school knowledge, but it wasn't until after she had earned a Ph.D. in biology and was teaching as a college professor that her fascination for the Bible's original Jewish setting was ignited. She has since studied several times in Israel, taking courses in biblical Hebrew, Koine Greek and in the physical and cultural context of the Bible.

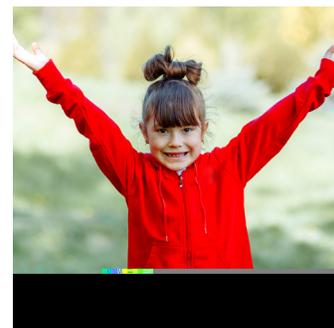


In her latest book, *Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus* (Baker, 2018), Lois equips readers to encounter the Scriptures more like first-century disciples. The book looks at big-picture ideas that are lost on modern Westerners, helping us bridge the cultural divide that separates us from Jesus' original Middle Eastern context.

We're pleased to welcome back Lois Tverberg. In support of her new book, Lois will be speaking Monday night, February 17 at 6.30 pm in the Dunham Chapel. This is a great follow up to our stay-treat.

Let the Children Lead Worship!

"Where did fish come from? Or even the rocks? And who made those feet that you keep in your socks? Did life start by itself? Oh, don't be a loon! It started with someONE and you'll find out who soon!" On February 16 at 5 pm, join our children's choirs during our intimate Family Worship Night held in the FPC parlor. Jesus and Me! (JAM!) will bring to life the children's book "7 Days of Awesome" by Shawn Byous as they explore creation in art and song. Family Worship is a new endeavor where children lead us in a short worship service followed by refreshments. All are welcome to join and revel in our Creator and the awesome world he created for us to explore!



Meet & Match Lenten Small Groups Mixer

The season of Lent is an incredible opportunity for our church as we prepare for the celebration of Easter. As our hearts long for the joy we find on Easter morning, we long for Jesus' final triumphant return. Yet while we wait, we daily face the pain of this broken world. The Christian life, with all of its joyous longings and its painful shortcomings, is not meant to be lived alone; we are called to the blessing of community! This Lenten season we will feast on the Word of God by together using the devotional Gerrit wrote entitled, *Were You There? Meeting the People of Passion Week*.



To facilitate community, we encourage you to be a part of a Lenten small group. All over the Baton Rouge metro area, leaders will open their homes to discuss the devotional, pray together and enjoy the Lord's presence together. Come to the Reception Room immediately following the 9 and 11 am services on February 9 and 16 to find a group that offers a time and location that works well for you. Draw near to each other as we draw near to Jesus through the eyes of those who witnessed his triumphal entry, death and resurrection!

Skeet Shooting and Chili

Come join the men of FPC on Saturday, February 8 from 10 am to 2 pm for an incredible day of fellowship, food and fun. We'll have a 5-station skeet shooting course set up with two skeet throwers per station. The cost for the event is \$20 which covers skeet, 12-gauge shells and score cards. Please bring your own shotgun, ear and eye protection. (If you are bringing any other gauge of gun, you will need to provide your own ammunition.) If you don't have a gun or ear/eye protection, extras will be available.



After shooting, we'll have a chili competition. Many of you claim you can make a fantastic pot of chili; this is your chance to prove it! Bring your chili already cooked in a Crock-Pot for judges to name our winner and then enjoy your cooking

skills along with sides, dessert and drinks provided by the church. Prizes will be awarded for the best chili! Come for the chance to shoot skeet. Come to savor a good bowl of chili. Or simply come to enjoy the company of FPC men who love Jesus. This is going to be an event you won't want to miss!

To make this event a success, we'll need help. If you would like to help build the skeet shooting boxes, be a referee/safety delegate, skeet thrower loader/puller or simply be available to serve chili/food, please let us know. We also need to borrow some skeet throwers. Currently we have 3 machines, but will need 7 more.

Register online at fpcbr.org.

Sing Aloud His Righteousness! by Chris Phillips, Director of Worship



We have only been with you for a few weeks. Yet, we already feel like part of this wonderful Church. The friendly handshakes and "Welcome to First Presbyterian!" introductions are appreciated. I believe that the Lord in his gracious, sovereign providence has brought us together. I am asking the Lord to build his Kingdom through us. I look forward to leading you to "pour forth the fame of God's abundant goodness and sing aloud of his righteousness" (Psalm 145: 7).

Mid-Week Lenten Communion Worship

Ash Wednesday, February 26, starts our weekly Lent services. Break from your work week and come worship with us at noon each Wednesday. Light lunch follows for \$5.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

7.45 Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Reformed

FEBRUARY SERMON TEXTS

Texts are subject to change.

FEBRUARY 2, 2020
Philippians 4: 4-9

FEBRUARY 9, 2020
Ephesians 4: 1-3; Colossians 3: 12-15

FEBRUARY 16, 2020
1 Timothy 6: 6-10, 17-19

FEBRUARY 23, 2020
Ephesians 4: 25, 29-31; 5: 4, 18-21

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS
Ministry Executive

JIM SOLOMON
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

DARIN TRAVIS
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Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287
brchristiancounseling.com

FAS Crowd Lunch at Roux 61

In addition to our church-wide activities, First Presbyterian offers a variety of groups and events that specifically address the interests of our senior members. The FAS (Fun After Sixty) Crowd meets monthly. The focus is social but we love a good meal so we meet at a local restaurant. Couples and singles are invited to attend. Our next FAS Crowd lunch is Tuesday, February 18 at 11.30 am at Roux 61. Contact Laura Shaw to RSVP (laura@fpabr.org or 620.0222).



Couples' Therapy: February 7 & 8

Lost some of that loving feeling? Looking to get more connected? Closer? Want to stop the bickering and the same-old-arguments? Trouble communicating?

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center is offering a couples' workshop February 7&8 based on Dr. Sue Johnson's book, "Hold Me Tight" and Emotionally Focused Therapy. Emotionally Focused Therapy is a research-proven therapy which shows significant improvements to relationships in 90% of couples who participate. Details and registration are online at brchristiancounseling.com.

Congregational Meeting

The session has called for the annual congregational meeting to be held in the Sanctuary at 10.15 am Sunday, February 16. We will hear important updates on weekly security, Women's Ministry, building renovations and our 2020 budget. We will also elect the at-large members of the nominating committee. This is a great opportunity to get the inside scoop on the ministry and mission of our church.

SIAC Seminary Grants

The Session Income Allocation Committee is accepting applications from February 16 to March 16 for financial grants for individuals interested in pursuing full time Christian ministry. Please contact Jaci if you have questions (jaci@fpabr.org or 620.0221).