

fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

September 2016 Volume 50-09

Re-Naming Baton Rouge

By Gerrit S. Dawson, Senior Pastor

In the summer of 2016, dramatic events threatened to define us. Looking at the pictures, people wanted to call us names. The grainy video showed a struggling Alton Sterling suddenly shot after someone called out, "Gun." Many wanted to name our city Racist. The image of a face-off between armed protesters and armor-suited police on Airline Highway on a hot July night made some want to name us Fascists. The brutal gunning down of police officers on a quiet Sunday morning made others want to call us City of Anarchy! The videos of flooded streets and water devoured homes evoked a name like Disaster Zone. If you just look at the pictures, you could simply conclude that Baton Rouge is a first rate Mess.

Those names, of course, miss the reality. Those assessments fail to see what is rising in our city even as flood waters are subsiding. There is a fierce determination to help one another. A resiliency that rests on hope that we will not let each other go. The clasp of hands that are black, white, brown and every shade in between as we lift each other up. We express open gratitude to God and an unashamed

calling upon him to help us. We are not a community of atheists or isolationists or racists. The deep Christian roots of our city still send forth sheltering branches full of green leaves: these are people who give their lives to help other people even as they know the joy of acknowledging a Creator who made them and a God to whom they are going.

But even more, the citizens who actively know they belong to Jesus have found a near boundless energy to give their lives in service to people in need. The Church loves the city where God has placed us. Do you not feel it? As you drive through our streets, you realize you love this town more, not less, in its distress. You feel more pride to be here than ever before. You want to restore streets and recreate dwellings. You want to get along. You have zero tolerance for looters, outside agitators and poachers. But you feel the arms of your heart stretch wide to all the rest of the crazy, quirky, zesty, good-humored people you find here. You want everyone to share in what an old word describes as the commonwealth.

So, yes, I think the summer of 2016 is a time for re-naming Baton Rouge. We will never be the same. But the first name I'd like to propose to define comes from a promise of God to his people in Isaiah 62: You shall be called A City Not Forsaken. The thousands of people pouring into our city to help us confirm what we citizens have discovered in the summer of 2016: we are not forsaken. The Lord is with us. Great things are ahead.

With such pride in your dedication to the work of Christ in the city, more than ever, I love to be your pastor,

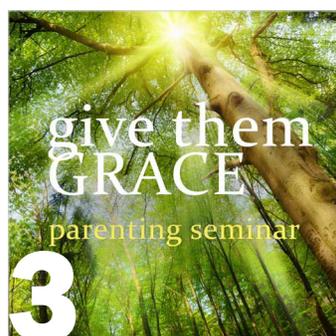
Gardere School Banquet

The Gardere Community Christian School is one of our highest priority city ministries. So we are pleased to let you know of their fundraising banquet Tuesday, September 27 at 6.30 pm at the Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel. This will be an inspiring evening of testimony and vision. Gerrit is hosting a table for FPC members. You can join him or host your own table of guests. Contact jaci@fpcbr.org.

Gerrit

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SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

rEcess	Sept 2
Labor Day - Office Closed	Sept 5
WiM Fall Studies Begin	Sept 7
Int'l Friendship Partners Training	Sept 18
Parenting Conference	Sept 24
Baton Rouge Concert Band	Sept 25
GCCS Banquet	Sept 27

UPCOMING DATES

Discover First Class Oct 2

IN MEMORIAM:

July 23, 2016
Bob McCracken, uncle of Laurie Adams

August 5, 2016
Henry Jackson, father of Crystal Jones

August 9, 2016
Donald Ray Beecham, brother-in-law of Alfred Shelton

August 23, 2016
Ken Paxton

August 24, 2016
Jewel Trahan

August 28, 2016
Joseph Landry III, son of Joseph Landry Jr.

BAPTISMS:

August 14, 2016
Harper Elizabeth Anders
Parents are Heather and Ryan Anders

Gavin Paul Gray
Parents are Sarah and Paul Gray

Peyton and Preston Maddin
Parents are Rachael and Josh Maddin

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

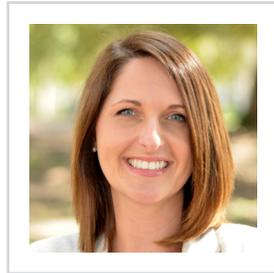
Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary to the glory of God ...

Sept 4 . . . In loving memory with thanksgiving for Van Andrew Wilson on his birthday weekend by his parents Claire and Steve.

Sept 11 . . . To the glory of God in loving memory of Jerry Johnson by his wife, LaNelle Johnson and their daughters, Debra Matthews, Joy Pennington and Jeri J. Cochran.

Sept 18 . . . Open Date

Sept 25 . . . To the glory of God and in loving memory of E. David Kendrick and Mr. & Mrs. L.S. Bridges by Bobbie Kendrick and family.



That I May Know Him

By Audra Cato, Director of Children's Ministries

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." 3 John 1: 14

May this be the goal of our hearts, that we may know him. It is good to know about our Triune God, but what I am addressing here is that we may know him *personally*. Our prayer for my own children and yours is that they run to Jesus before all things. We pray that each and every child will have a personal relationship with their Lord Jesus Christ so that they may seek to *know* him and to trust him. We are made in the image of God and created for a deep relationship with him. God wants us to be in two-way communication with him and to seek him daily and we want that for our children. We must understand though that we cannot change the hearts of our children or others for that matter. Only God can change hearts. He alone can save.

We must also ask God to work in our own hearts and strive to put God first, before all things. Let your children see that you are making every effort to make your relationship with God your top priority and the center of your life. Show children you actually can stop in the midst of busyness to pray. Let them hear you say, "Please give me a few minutes. I need to spend time with God." Model the behavior we are asking of our children and share the desire you have to seek God first, alongside of them.

So how do we actually do this and where do we start? Begin with prayer. Pray fervently and remember these four words...God is in control. He is sovereign and nothing frustrates his divine plan. Our Father in heaven loves you and forgives you when you end up feeling frustrated or defeated. Extend this grace to yourself given to you by the blood on the cross.

Second, in order for children to know God, children must also learn about the fear of the Lord. This can seem like a hard truth to teach children but there are encouraging ways to handle it. In order to teach children that they are both a friend of God and are to have a healthy fear of the Lord, we are to teach them a correct and balanced view of God. Let's start by looking at the immanence and transcendence of God. God is both a personal God that dwells within us (Immanence of God) and a sovereign God who is distinct above all things

(Transcendence of God). God lives within us through our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus and he is the Great I Am. Peter says in Ephesians 4: 6 "One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." Ed Welch handles this topic beautifully as he writes, "The fact that God sees every aspect of our lives may, at first, leave us afraid and eager to hide from God rather than in awe, wanting to embrace Him. But the fear of the Lord makes us aware both of God's holy purity and hatred of sin and His holy patience and forgiveness. When we remember both, we have no reason to run in fear, especially since there is no place to run beyond the gaze of God. Instead as we look at the Lord we see that He invites, cleanses and empowers us to grow in holiness."

Third, read the Bible with your children. There are plenty of ways to read God's word with our children. Expose your toddlers and preschoolers to the Bible by giving them a children's storybook Bible so they can play with it and look at its beautiful pictures. Allow your elementary students, tweens and teens to read to you and with you. Read the Bible in carpool, before or after dinner, before bed, in the morning or at breakfast. There is no master formula. Just open the Bible and spend 10-15 minutes in God's Word with your children. Though remember, we are not perfect. We will fail but this is not about being perfect and doing everything right. This is about knowing God and putting him first. Only Jesus is perfect. We are not and neither are our children. That is hard truth but truth indeed.

Lastly, obey him. Let us make ourselves known to God by being obedient and transparent. Teach your kids to not only obey you but to obey God. Tell your children that when we obey him we become more like him. This is a free gift that we receive through our Lord Jesus Christ. Confess not only to God but also to your children that you are a sinner, saved by grace and by no means perfect.

We have a very important mission on our hands. God has entrusted his children to us so that we may 'train them in the way they should go' (Proverbs 22: 6). We must equip our children with the truth of the Gospel and use every opportunity to point them to our Savior so that we may prepare them for their own personal walk with the Lord.

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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

their 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*.

Quick! Grab Your Sword! Grab Your Shield!

This fall there are dragons amiss! The Joyful Noise Children’s Choir will be exploring fear and dealing with difficult times. We will learn that God is our ever-present help in troubled times and each Sunday we will arm ourselves with Scripture and slay our everyday dragons. Please, come and join us beginning September 11 at 5 pm.

If you are a child ages PreK through 5th grade, you are invited to join the Joyful Noise Children’s Choir program during the academic school year! We meet each Sunday from 5 to 6.30 pm for Bible study, rehearsal, dinner and playtime. The Joyful Noise Choirs typically sing for Stewardship Sunday, Live Nativity, Palm Sunday and Mother’s Day. Often, the children have the opportunity to participate in a musical as well!

Children in PreK and Kindergarten meet in the Kingdom Kids classroom located in the basement of the Sanctuary building. The 1st-5th graders meet in the Quest classroom which is also located in the basement of the Sanctuary building.

Our mission is three-fold: 1) To develop a heart of worship; 2) To develop a growing knowledge of Scripture; 3) To acquire a beginning knowledge of music education

If you are interested in joining us or volunteering with us, please contact Lauren Honea (lauren@fpcbr.org) or just show up for rehearsal! We would love to have your children worship with us. There is no fee and no audition. Your child may join us at any time!

Circles Resume This Month

Women’s Circles are resuming in September and will be studying *Discovering Jesus* by Gerrit Dawson. The books can be picked up at the Connection Center for \$10. In order to streamline helpful communication for you we will not put the days and times of the Circles in the newsletter. The chair of your Circle will personally let you know when and where your Circle meets each month. This way the details will always be correct and up to date just in case there needs to be a last minute change in location. If you are new to Circles and would like to know which one would be best for you we would love to help! Contact Elizabeth Parker for more information, elizabeth@fpcbr.org.



On Tuesday, September 27 Gardere Community Christian School will hold its Living the Vision Annual Fund Kickoff Dinner at the Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel. Please join us to learn all God is doing in our city through GCCS and how, together, we are going further into our world for Christ and his glory. Tickets are free, but you must visit gardereschool.com to RSVP. Invitations to the event can also be found at the Connection Center.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

7.45 am Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Communion
11 am Acoustic Communion

SEPTEMBER SERMON TEXTS

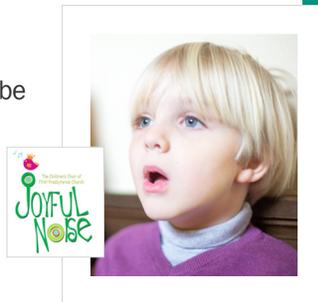
Texts and titles are subject to change.

September 4, 2016
“Arriving Along the Way”
John 14: 1-7

September 11, 2016
“You in Me!”
John 14: 15-27

September 18, 2016
“Abide in Me”
John 15: 1-8

September 25, 2016
“No Greater Love”
John 15: 9-17



PASTORAL STAFF

Gerrit S. Dawson
Senior Pastor
M. Whitney Alexander
Associate Pastor of Missions
Josh Maddin
Assistant Pastor of Student Ministry
Derek McCollum
Associate Pastor for Discipleship and Young Adults
Barry Phillips
Ministry Executive
Jim Solomon
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care and Prayer



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225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287

www.brchristiancounseling.com

October Buchanan Ministry Kick Off

The flooding may have delayed school starting, but many Buchanan volunteers are anxious to get back to school! We are coordinating our volunteer efforts at Buchanan Elementary to begin in October. Opportunities to sign up to serve as Reading Friends, Teacher Encouragers, Storytime Readers and Special Event helpers are coming soon. We are also looking for a few people that may want to help with coordination of volunteers. Please e-mail laura@fpcbr.org or call 225.278.1929 for more information.



That I May Know Him *continued from page 2*

There are three ways we can deepen our relationship with the Lord:

- 1) Spend time in God's word
- 2) Devote yourselves to prayer
- 3) Mediate on his truths daily

We all know the world is broken, but take heart God has overcome the world. We have many questions about how to raise our kids in today's world but we can have hope and courage because Jesus is the answer. Through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we can allow ourselves to listen for him when he is knocking on the door of our hearts. May we incline our hearts to the truth and together, stand firm in God's grace to us in Christ, even in a world of suffering. Remember the rainbow. The

glory of the Lord will be revealed through his covenant promises.

One way we can incline our hearts to the truth together is by looking to God's grace. We will have a wonderful opportunity to do this at our upcoming "Give Them Grace" Parenting Seminar. Join us on September 24 from 9-3 in our church Sanctuary.