



## Get Out! Now! by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor



Claustrophobia runs in our family. No room, no air, no way out: it makes us all crazy. Rhonda's Dad expresses it this way, "I sit on the aisle just in case I need to get out of there." At a solidly built 6' 6", if Dick had to get out, he would get out. And I'd be right behind him. I just don't want to be stuck and closed in.

Maybe that's why I love this Easter sermon so much, even though it's from 1,500 years ago. The preacher imagines Jesus the moment before his resurrection. He speaks to Adam and all the dead souls who've been longing for a Liberator. "Rise! Let us leave this place. I did not create you to be a prisoner in hell! Wake up, O sleeper and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

I just love that line: I did not create you to be a prisoner in hell. You were not meant for a claustrophobic doom! You were not designed to languish in bondage to sin, death and misery. Jesus declares, "Jail break! Get up! Get out of here. Now!"

That's the spiritual heart of the Easter message. Jesus is risen. He defeated

death so death doesn't have to defeat us. He took our sin so we don't have to live under it. In the risen Jesus, our destiny is life, forgiveness, and transformation. The Easter summons trumpets in our souls: Get up! Get out of there. Rise with Christ!"

Congratulations for your hard work pursuing your True Identity in Christ. All Lent you've delved deep into Scripture's teaching about who we really are. And I'm proud of all the comments I've read, all the questing questions I've heard, and all the growth I've seen. Soon, soon, we will celebrate together that Easter means, "My true identity is Risen with Christ!"

So how I look forward to celebrating the festive victory of our risen Liberator with you. What a joy to see these faces I have come to know and love so well on that great day. And what a thrill to be able to say together, "He is risen! He is risen indeed!" See you there!

### Shadows Before the Dawn

Of course, our Lenten journey passes first through the dark night of marking

Christ's Thursday betrayal and Friday crucifixion. More and more of us each year mark that holy night by entering the shadows with Jesus. We take communion remembering the first Lord's Supper. We hear the sacred story dramatically read. We see the candles extinguished and sit silently in the dark of Jesus' death. We follow him to the tomb and begin the long wait til Easter dawn. Once again we will meet at 7 pm. I've got some stirring paintings to show you that take us to the inner meaning in the outer tragedy. See you there!

### Presbytery

At the end of this month, we will be hosting the meeting of Gulf South Presbytery. That's the association of EPC churches in Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas with whom we are affiliated. I'm always so proud when we host anything, but especially when we receive the elders and pastors from around our region. I hope lots of you will step forward to greet, serve and welcome our guests. Yes, it is a matter of pride to

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Easter Sunday	Apr 1
Church Offices Closed	Apr 2
BRSO Concert	Apr 5
Security Training	Apr 7
Awana Lifeline Awards Ceremony	Apr 12
rEcess	Apr 13
Lunch on the Lawn	Apr 14
Bow Fishing Trip	Apr 19
Discover First Dinner	Apr 22
FPC Hosts Presbytery Meeting	Apr 27-28

UPCOMING EVENTS	
Confirmation Service	May 20

### MARRIAGES:

March 3, 2018  
Rachel Mixon married Todd Bowden

### IN MEMORIAM:

February 22, 2018  
Clarence Aull, Jr. - brother of Hots Aull

February 25, 2018  
June Ferrell - mother of Mike Ferrell

February 28, 2018  
Marie Lazar - mother of Peter Lazar

March 8, 2018  
Eva Rudh - mother of Mats Rudh

March 13, 2018  
Shirley Stirling

March 19, 2018  
Johnny Wheeler

### 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 . . .  
**APR 1 . . .** to the glory of God and in memory of Norman Saurage III, Maude and Norman Saurage, Sr., Alma Lee and Norman Saurage, Jr., and Flora and Gustave Spaht by their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.  
**APR 8 . . .** to the glory of God in loving memory of the parent's and grandparent's of Linda and Wayne Barker.  
**APR 15 . . .** to the glory of God in loving memory of our parents, Mr. and Mrs. James W. Leake and Dr. and Mrs. Julius H. Mullins, by Kathy and Julius Mullins.  
**APR 22 . . .** to the glory of God and in loving memory of Reverend Dellic Alphonse (Jack) Martin, father of Beverly Setliff, and Louella Eznack Setliff, mother of Richard Setliff, by Beverly and Richard Setliff.  
**APR 29 . . .** to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Lamar Boydston, Ms. Martha Wilbourne Nabers and Mr. Fred Foster Nabers, Jr. parents of Nan and Herb Boydston.

## Holy Week Worship



**Palm Sunday, March 25.** Our annual Palm Sunday festival is March 25, at 10 am with our procession around North Boulevard. A jam-packed combined worship service occurs after the procession. Egg hunts, pony rides, facepainting, a balloon artist and a fajita bar and quesadillas for the children will follow worship. Dress casual. Lunch is \$5 per person or \$20 max per family.

**Egg Hunt Details.** Children's Ministry will continue to provide the Easter eggs. Please bring an Easter basket for each child. The Easter Egg hunt will take place in our terraced garden and is for children up to 3rd Grade. Our Quest Kids (4th and 5th grade) get to help hide eggs during service! Please contact Jaime Carnaggio if your 4th or 5th grader would like to help hide eggs.



**Service of Shadows, Maundy Thursday, March 29.** On Thursday, March 29 at 7 pm, join us in the Sanctuary as we enter into the passion of Christ from the book of Matthew, recounting his arrest, trial and death through the Service of Shadows. We end the service in silence in the terraced garden where the stone is rolled over. Elementary children are welcome to this moving service. Childcare available for ages 5 and under due to the dramatic nature of the passion reading.



**Easter Sunday, April 1.** Join us as we celebrate the risen Lord at one of our three worship services: 6.30 am Sunrise in the terraced garden followed by light breakfast; 9 am Contemporary service in the Sanctuary and 11 am Classic Reformed service in the Sanctuary.

## Men's Ministry Bow Fishing Expedition



Men's Ministry is organizing a bow fishing expedition the evening of April 19. We'll travel to Woodland Plantation in West Point a La Hache, LA after work on

Thursday. Once there, we'll have an incredible dinner, bow fish after the sun goes down, and finish the night enjoying fellowship on the beautiful wrap-around porch. We'll feast on a big Southern breakfast on the morning of the 20 and then head back to BR. Sign up at [fpabr.org](http://fpabr.org) to join in on the fun!

## Returning Hearts Celebration: Volunteer by May 1.

Returning Hearts Celebration is a fun and spirit-filled annual event where children and their inmate fathers can begin to allow God's healing and reconciliation in their lives. A total of 600 volunteers are needed. You will be responsible for escorting the inmates and their children from one activity to the next. This unique mission opportunity partners you with Awana Lifeline and the prison staff.



Awana Lifeline cordially invites you to join us in honoring the 2018 recipient of the Robert Toney Service Award,

**Judge Robert Downing**

April 12, 2018 at 7 pm  
Dessert and Award Ceremony  
First Presbyterian Church

RSVP to 888.944.4292 or  
[awanalifeline@awana.org](mailto:awanalifeline@awana.org)  
by April 5

You become an integral part of the team that brings children and their fathers together for a day of celebration and sharing God's love for them. Won't you be a part of it? This year's Celebration is May 19 at Angola Prison. Please sign up to volunteer by May 1 online at [fpabr.org](http://fpabr.org). Contact Whitney Alexander for more information ([whitney@fpabr.org](mailto:whitney@fpabr.org)).

## What If the Unthinkable Happens Here? by Barry Phillips, ME

Increasingly we are exposed to violent things that happen at schools and churches across our nation. We read about them in newspapers. We hear about them on our radios. We see reports about them on television where we often actually see footage of the event or the immediate aftermath. Most often our initial response is that these kinds of things are 'unthinkable' and would never happen here.

Our church session has created a Security and Safety Committee that is tasked with the responsibility of enacting a plan to improve both procedures and facilities to better respond to emergencies related to weather, fire, civic unrest, and, yes, even violence on our campus and in our facilities. The committee is hard at work and has completed much of the plan. Now they've begun the really difficult task of asking hard questions about preventing and responding to those who would do us harm.

Part of that effort is to expose and educate as many of our church family as possible about this type of crime. And to ask how we might do everything we can to prevent such a thing from happening and, as remote as the possibility is, how we might best respond if it did.

On Saturday, April 7, from 10 am until 2 pm, Dr. William Aprill will help us begin to address the unthinkable.

Dr. Aprill is a licensed mental health professional with almost 20 years of experience across the continuum of clinical care. He presently maintains a private practice and consultancy specializing in post-traumatic interventions and several other disciplines. He is a former Deputy Sheriff (New Orleans Parish Criminal Sherriff's Office) and Special Deputy US Marshal (Eastern District of Louisiana). He is one of the leading criminologists in the nation. His seminars cover such things as the decision making of violent criminals, defensive incident aftermath, mindset development and defensive preparedness.

Being educated and having a heightened awareness are major steps toward increased security. It is the committee's hope that many of you will join us on April 7. Lunch is only \$5 and childcare will be provided. You must register for both at [fpcbr.org](http://fpcbr.org).

### Lunch on the Lawn

First Presbyterian Women's Circles invites you to Lunch on the Lawn. Join us in the terraced garden on Saturday, April 14 at 11 am for a gathering for all women of the church and their guests. We'll have great fellowship and a wonderful lunch in a beautiful setting.

This is the perfect opportunity for you to invite a guest. The cost is \$10 per person. Register at [fpcbr.org](http://fpcbr.org) or at the Connection Center. Childcare is available. Please pack a nut-free lunch for your child.

### Spring Family Ministry Outreach Project: Blessing Bags

This Spring, Family Ministry is calling to unite the children, students and adults of our church family to serve the needs of the homeless in our community through the creation and distribution of "Blessing Bags." A "Blessing Bag" is a collection of food, toiletry and printed resources gathered in a large, clear Ziploc bag. These bags are kept in your car so when you come across someone in need they can be easily distributed. We like to keep some at our church as well. Each area of Family Ministry will collect specific items from you, the congregation: So Loved Nursery Ministry-gallon sized Ziplock bags, Kingdom Kids-snacks (granola bars, crackers, cookies, etc.) and Middle and High School-bottles of water. Collections will begin on Sunday, April 15 and end on Sunday, May 6 with all church members being invited to a night on the grounds when we will assemble the bags. We will begin our evening at 4 pm with a Joyful Noise Kids Choir performance. Following the performance we will assemble the "Blessing Bags."



## SUNDAY WORSHIP

7.45 Chapel Communion  
9 am Contemporary  
11 am Classic Reformed

### APRIL SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Texts are subject to change.

APRIL 1  
Luke 24: 1-12

APRIL 8  
Luke 24: 36-49

APRIL 15  
To be determined

APRIL 22  
Revelation 1: 4-20

APRIL 29  
Revelation 2: 1-7

## PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON  
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER  
Associate Pastor of Missions

JOSH MADDIN  
Assistant Pastor of Student Ministry

BARRY PHILLIPS  
Ministry Executive

JIM SOLOMON  
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

DARIN TRAVIS  
Director for Discipleship,  
Men's Ministry & Young Adults



☎ PH: 225.387.0617  
FAX: 225.338.1010

💻 [fpcbr.org](http://fpcbr.org)

✉ 763 North Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Preschool  
225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center  
225.387.2287

[brchristiancounseling.com](http://brchristiancounseling.com)

### Discover First Dinner

The next Discover First Dinner is Sunday, April 22 from 4-7. This is an opportunity for you, in a smaller setting, to learn more about how you can be part of our mission and ministry.

For more information or to sign up, please contact Meagan Greene (454.2504 or [meagan@fpabr.org](mailto:meagan@fpabr.org)).



### Hosting the Presbytery

On April 27-28 we will host the pastors and elders of the Gulf South Presbytery. We expect over 160 guests over the weekend for fellowship, prayer, worship and important business that happens every presbytery. Though it's not as big as General Assembly, we will have significant hosting those days. Linda Glisson and Meagan Greene are heading up our efforts. Please contact them about how you can help greet, bake or lend a hand wherever needed. And plan to join us for Friday night worship. Linda: [lindaglisson@cox.net](mailto:lindaglisson@cox.net). Meagan: [meagan@fpabr.org](mailto:meagan@fpabr.org).

**FPC Podcast.** Visit the church website ([fpabr.org](http://fpabr.org). *podcast*) or the iTunes Store to download or update the First Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge app.



### We're Doing It Again!



Save the date for September 13, 2018; our kick off date for the FPC Habitat for Humanity 2018 build.

### Get Out! Now! *Continued from page 1*

me: nobody, but nobody hosts events like we do!

You'll enjoy the meeting too. My dear friend Dr. Dean Weaver will be speaking. He's the moderator of our General Assembly. We'll have a joyous celebration worship Friday night at 7. And, oh, you should hear these guys sing. The roof raises! I get to preach about Christ going up to heaven and we all share communion together. It's the best Friday fun you can have!