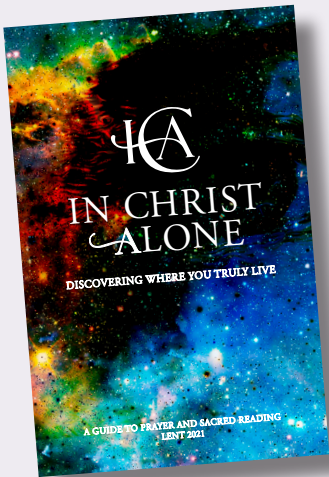




You're Weird! by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Not like everybody else. Unique in the world. Different than most.

After all, what Muslim says "I live in Mohammed?" What practicing Buddhist says, "I spoke with Siddhartha this morning?" What existentialist says "I am in organic union with Camus?" What atheist says "I have a mystical link to Richard Dawkins?" But you say all those things about Jesus! We Christians are "in Christ." We speak with the historical founder of our faith personally and presently. His Spirit links us to Jesus and to each other the way parts of a human body are linked to the whole. That's weird—if you're on the outside looking in. But such wonder is normal for those who have been joined to Jesus.



This Lent, we're going to explore what it means that our truest home is Jesus himself. We're going to pursue the mystery of what Paul meant by being "in Christ." We'll see how living in Christ and from Christ lights up everything in our lives. John Calvin called it a "mystical union" and declared it to be of highest importance to our faith.

Honestly, engaging in this study will change your life. Like discovering priceless treasure you hadn't known you possessed. Like tapping into an endless supply of energy. Like coming home. Like finally living in Reality. We'll be drawing from more than 85 Scriptures as well as the writings of experienced spiritual masters such as James Stewart and Andrew Murray. We're questing for the very heart of Christian experience. We're going to claim our distinctive faith. Yep, we're weird. Gloriously, joyfully so!

The week of February 14, your elders, deacons and pastors will be bringing your Lent books to your house! It's a quick, safe drop off. But we wanted to be sure, in these COVID times, that every member gets a copy before February 21 when the daily readings begin. You can get extra copies at church and also sign up for daily emails. Smaller, well-distanced 6 week home groups will also begin. We hope participating with others will help to reknit our congregation after so long apart.

I'm so eager to join you on this journey deeper into Christ our true home!

Assistant Pastor Search

We have begun the search for a pastor for children, youth and families.



Gerrit

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BRCCC Couples' Workshop	FEB 5 & 6
Men's Skeet Shoot	FEB 6
Congregational Meeting	FEB 7
Foto Sisters Lead Worship	FEB 14
Church Office Closed	FEB 15 & 16
Mardi Gras	FEB 16
Ash Wednesday Noon Worship	FEB 17
First Sunday of Lent	FEB 21
H.S. Seniors Class with Gerrit	FEB 28

IN MEMORIAM

- January 1, 2021
Robert Brooks Van Horn, Jr.
Husband of Karen Van Horn
- January 4, 2021
Robert Weimer, Sr.
Father of Kelli Bankston & Brandli Greer
- January 17, 2021
Bill Zartman
Father of Alison Johannessen,
Craig Zartman and Eric Zartman
- January 21, 2021
Ron Richard
- January 26, 2021
Steve Carter

BAPTISMS

- January 10, 2021
Peyton and Olivia Cruice
Parents are Katelynn and Justin Cruice

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers are placed . . .

FEB 7 . . . To the glory of God and in loving memory of Dr. R. Brooks Van Horn, Jr. by his mother and family.

FEB 14 . . . 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.

FEB 21 . . . Open date.

FEB 28 . . . Open date.



Music Is Evocative

by Chris Phillips, Director of Worship

Victor Hugo once wrote: “*Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent.*”

Every culture, past or present, has expressed itself musically. There are no exceptions. Music is a powerful cultural force. The anecdotal experiences of individuals anywhere in the world testify to it. Neuroscience validates it. Music activates places in us that might remain inactive otherwise—places where ideas, emotions and truths dwell.

Sometimes, when we make music in the Lord’s house, an interesting dilemma presents itself. It is an ancient dilemma. Early in the 5th century, Augustine wrote in *The Confessions*:

. . . I realize that when they are sung these sacred words stir my mind to greater religious fervor and kindle in me a more ardent form of piety than they would if they were not sung; and I also know that there are particular modes in song and the voice, corresponding to my various emotions and able to stimulate them because of some mysterious relationship between the two. But I ought not to allow my mind to be paralyzed by the gratification of my senses, which often leads it astray. For the senses are not content to take second place. . . . (Book 10, Chapter 33, The Confessions)

During moments of musical worship, Augustine sometimes wondered if the beautiful music was moving him rather than the truths the music was conveying. I think it is good to give this some thought. Now, the point is not that we should try to avoid enjoying the beauty of music or being moved by it. Music, by God’s design, is evocative.

The issue is a matter of sequence and motivation. So, when we come together, dear church, let us not wait for the swelling wave of the music to move us. Rather, let us make the waves by singing Truth—combining words, melodies, voices and instruments in ways that reverberate with eternal significance. Rest assured this will deeply gratify. Will always be beautiful.

When we gather as God’s people we do so as a royal *priesthood*. We meet to do the work of worship. Cues are given from the pulpit to the pew. But we all are tasked with sending the various offerings of worship upward to the throne room of the Most High. We harness the power of music as one way of doing the work of worship. It has been so since the days Moses led Israel through the Red Sea (Exodus 15). And according to John’s visions in Revelation 4, 5 and 7, it will remain so throughout all eternity.

Ash Wednesday Worship

Join us as we kick off Lent with an Ash Wednesday noon service in the Sanctuary. All are welcome. Bring a coworker. Details on future Wednesday services are being planned. Stay tuned.

Chapel and Sanctuary Flowers

The Chapel and Sanctuary 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 603.4735.

Lenten Small Groups by Darin Travis, Associate Pastor for Discipleship

Every year during the Lenten season, our church gathers together in small groups throughout the Baton Rouge area for rich study of God’s Word and engaging fellowship. Despite the global pandemic, this year we will continue our beloved tradition! Just like previous years, Gerrit has written a wonderful Lenten guide; this year it is entitled *In Christ Alone Discovering Where You Truly Live* and will help us discover the beauty and wonder of our position in Christ. What will be different this year is the actual structure of our groups. Rather than larger groups formed by people signing up in the Reception Room after a service, this year we are hoping for smaller, more intimate groups primarily formed by friends gathering friends together. We are trusting God for 20-40 groups of 5-10 people each to meet in COVID friendly ways. Many of the groups will meet outside with social distancing in place, some



will meet inside yet spread out and some will be online via Zoom. Each leader will decide what will be best for their group.

We are excited that because the groups will be smaller in size, the interpersonal dynamics will be different as well—we think in a really good way. By being more intimate, there will be more opportunity to hear from one another how the daily/weekly Scripture reading is changing lives. There will also be more opportunity for prayer and shepherding one another toward going deeper in Christ.

If you’re interested in leading by gathering some of your friends, please contact Kelly Wood at kelly@fpcbr.org. If you want to join a group but don’t know what group to join, Kelly can help you with that as well. We’d love to get you connected!

Created for Connection Couples’ Workshop

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 Friday, February 5 & Saturday, February 6 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/c4c.



Men’s Skeet Shoot and Gumbo Cook Off

Come join the men of FPC on Saturday, February 6 from 10 am to 2 pm for an incredible day of fellowship, food and fun at our second annual FPC Skeet Shoot and Cooking Competition in Morganza, LA. We’ll be on a beautiful 6,000 acre working sugar cane plantation that’s just an hour away from downtown Baton Rouge. We’ll enjoy this amazing property and have even more shooting stations than last year. More stations mean smaller teams which translates into more opportunities to shoot! The shooting areas will all overlook a beautiful pecan orchard. Further details and registration are available online at fpcbr.org.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

7.45 Chapel Communion
 9 am Contemporary
 11 am Classic Reformed
 Livestream at 9 and 11 am on YouTube or Facebook

FEBRUARY SERMON TEXTS

Texts are subject to change.

FEBRUARY 7, 2021
 Luke 5: 27-32

FEBRUARY 14, 2021
 Luke 5: 33-39

FEBRUARY 21, 2021
 Philippians 3: 7-10

FEBRUARY 28, 2021
 2 Corinthians 1: 20-22
 1 Corinthians 1: 30

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
 Associate Pastor for Discipleship



PH: 225.387.0617
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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

Sign Up for Daily Lent Emails

This Lent, we explore what it means to live “in Christ.” We take up in prayer and study what it means to discover that our truest address is in Jesus. This reality pervades every aspect of our life. Living in Jesus, we draw on a source which alone satisfies the deepest human longings and needs. In Christ may be found deep peace, effective forgiveness, enduring hope, robust love, energizing purpose and everlasting life. During these 42 days, we want to take time daily to live where we truly live: in Christ alone!

Get ready for 42 days of focus on where true, vivid life can be found: in Christ alone. In addition to the printed study guides, you may sign up for the daily lesson by email.

**Text “INCRISTALONE” to 42828 to register for the
Lent daily emails or use the online form
at fpcbr.org.**

You're Weird! *cont. from pg. 1*

Please pray for God to guide us and bring the right person to this crucial position. Also, feel free to refer suggestions to elder Will Adams. The search committee would like to hear from parents about what they think is important in this role and what qualities we should look for in candidates. To that end, we'll be hosting two Zoom calls. Monday evening, February 8 at 7 pm and Tuesday morning, February 9 at 11 am. We'll send parents an invitation by email soon.



**SOCIAL MEDIA
@FIRST PRES**

NEW MEMBERS

January 2021



ABBEY ASHMORE



TRIPP BRYANT III



BILL MITCHELL



EMMIE AND JOE CHANEY
McKenna, Carson and
Anna Claire



SHEA AND TIM FIRNBERG



**KRISTA AND JAMES
HARMAN**
Hayden and Megan



CATE HEROMAN



COURTNEY AND CHRIS HILTON
Liz and Mae



BECKY HYMES

NEW MEMBERS

January 2021



M.J. MADISON



SARA MELE
Matthew and Ava



**VIRGINIA AND CHRIS
PHILLIPS**
Ben



MITCHELL RODEHEAVER
Mitchell's wife, Brennan,
is already a member.



BETTY AND JIM STARNES



NANCY WAGNER