

FPC NEWSLETTER

DEEPER IN CHRIST, FURTHER INTO THE WORLD

REFLECTING AND VISIONING

By Gerrit Dawson
Senior Pastor

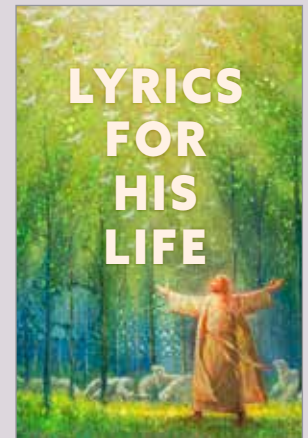
At the turn of the year, I like to remember and give thanks, then look forward. First of all for you, beloved church. I brag about you to my colleagues all the time. Your sincere faith in Christ Jesus, your passion for his Word, your love for one another, your engagement with our community, your realization that being in Christ empowers and influences every aspect of life. It really is a joy to be your pastor!

In particular, I want to express thanks for our staff team. Nearly all of them are dedicated church members. They are us! And how they love Jesus and his people. We strive to make every experience at church feel seamless and appear effortless, organized and comfortable. When I think of what it takes to host Sundays that invite and elevate, with the literally hundreds of moving pieces, I feel so grateful for a team that serves with such energy and excellence. They strive to include, knit, integrate and bless the whole congregation into one. And they feel your love.

Looking forward, our 200th anniversary is just three years away! I'm excited that the foremost way we will prepare is to start a process of long-range visioning that will lead to a five-year strategic plan. During the first half of this year, you'll hear about opportunities to provide input into our priorities. Congregational engagement will be essential to the direction our elders give to begin our 3rd century. More near term, this winter we'll finish out our series on

Ephesians. There are some powerful passages yet to come. Lent comes early, so in mid-February we'll take up *Lyrics for His Life: Praying the Psalms with Jesus*. This is a book I've wanted to write for a long time. It was quite moving to imagine which psalms Jesus might have prayed during events of his life, and then to join him in prayer. I believe you'll get closer to Christ as you pray psalms alongside him. In addition to reading the printed book and daily emails, this year you can also listen to the daily content on our *Lyrics for His Life* podcast! Being part of a community group deepens the whole experience, so I hope we'll have a record number of participants.

Meanwhile, the wonderful programs and missions of our church kick back into high gear, and there are lots of ways to get involved. It's good to be on the quest with you, the quest to press deeper into Christ and share his love further into the world.



Gerrit

2 : 1 & 2
THESSALONIANS
STUDY

3 : TWO NEW
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
PORTALS

4 : GAME NIGHT
WITH
INTERNATIONALS

JANUARY EVENTS

- JAN 15 Women's 1 & 2
Thessalonians Study Begins
- JAN 18 Stay & Pray
- JAN 21 Discover First Dinner
- JAN 26 IFP Game Night
- JAN 29 Mother's Day Out Church
Member Registration

BIRTHS

December 30, 2023
 Lucas Lorenzo Perez
 Parents are Elizabeth & Eddy Perez

BAPTISMS

December 17, 2023
 Milo Maverick Gabriel Agosta
 Parents are Amy & Gabe Agosta

Lillian Pearl Maranto
 Parents are Kaitlyn & Jacob Maranto

Julien James and Mila Renée Shafto
 Parents are Nicolette & John Shafto

IN MEMORIAM

December 2, 2023
 Gene Booth

December 19, 2023
 Dorothy Gorman
 Mother of Hal Gorman

December 22, 2023
 Sam Bacot

December 29, 2023
 Roger Doherty
 Father of Susan McCarter

FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers are given . . .

JAN 7 Open date.

JAN 14 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. & Mrs. Frank L. Norwood Jr. and Larry Charles Musgrove Sr. by Chrystal Norwood Musgrove and family.

JAN 21 . . . to the glory of God and to celebrate the marriage of Mollie Thompson & Drew Nyman and to honor the memory of Graham Thompson, by the Thompson family.

JAN 28 Open date.

If you would like to donate flowers for a particular Sunday, please contact Kathy Mullins at 603.4735.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS STUDY

BEGINS THE WEEK OF JANUARY 15



The Apostle Paul had such affection for the church in Thessalonica, and he writes to them on two occasions: to celebrate their genuine love for the Lord and commitment to each other in the face of persecution, and to praise them for building strong leadership within the church. But more importantly, he writes to encourage them to remain steadfast in their faith and to continue pursuing godly living. He is concerned they may become complacent or grow weary in studying and spreading the gospel, so he reminds them to live each day in light of the promised return of Jesus Christ.

Join Women's Ministry as we study two of Paul's most God-centered letters, 1 & 2 Thessalonians. These letters teach us how to remain grounded in the gospel in the midst of a fallen world. They emphasize the importance of walking consistently in the power of the Holy Spirit. And they encourage us to not grow weary in our relationship with the Lord or each other, but to live in the hope of eternity.

THREE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE:

- Mondays: 7.30 am, FPC Library (designed for ladies in their 20s/30s)
- Wednesdays: 6.30 pm, Virtual (ZOOM link at fpcbr.org). If prompted, the password is 1234.
- Thursdays: 9.30 am, FPC Room 202 (childcare available by request only)



MCKINLEY TEACHER ENCOURAGERS NEEDED

You have generously adopted the teachers at our ministry partner McKinley Elementary. But we still have four teachers who would love an Encourager! Consider being a blessing to them this school year. Contact Laura Shaw (387.0617 or laura@fpcbr.org) for more information.



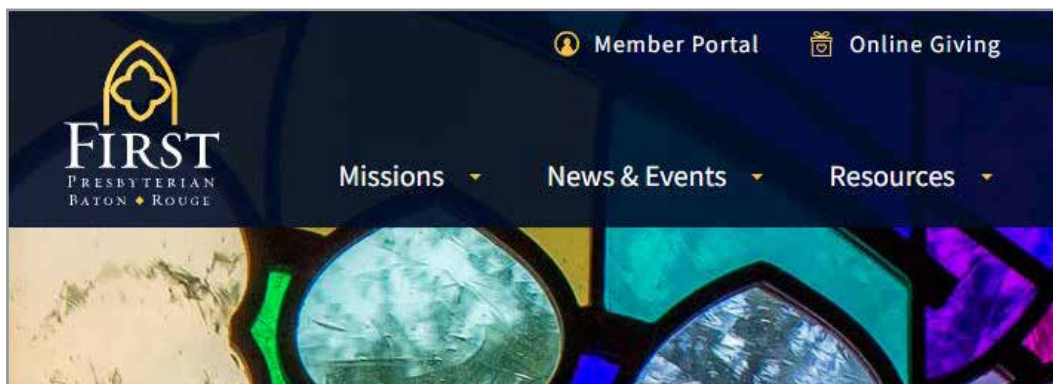
LENT COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS NEEDED

Community Group leaders are needed for our Lenten study, *Lyrics for His Life: Praying the Psalms with Jesus*. Please contact Kelly Wood (kelly@fpcbr.org) for details. Groups begin meeting the week of February 18.



TWO NEW FPC PORTALS

NEW FPC MEMBER PORTAL AND ONLINE GIVING PORTAL



FPC has launched two new safe and secure sites to help you manage your church membership data online. The Member Portal allows you to access the online church directory, update personal information and review your estimate of giving and donation history. In the Online Giving Portal, you can make a donation, update your bank or credit card information and make changes to your recurring gift schedule.

Links to both the Member Portal and the Online Giving Portal are in the top right corner of fpcbr.org, or by scrolling down to “Member Portal and Online Giving” in the FPCBR app. Separate login information is required for each site. Contact Laura Shaw (225.620.1222) if you have questions about setting up your account.

DISCOVER FIRST DINNER

JAN 21

Discover First Dinners are an opportunity for you, in a smaller setting, to learn more about how you can be part of our mission and ministry. Our next dinner is Sunday, January 21, 2024, 4–7 pm. For more information, please contact Emily Viguerie (emily@fpcbr.org or 225.333.9084).

MOTHER'S DAY OUT CHURCH MEMBER REGISTRATION

JAN 29

Church member registration for the Mother's Day Out 2024-2025 school year is Monday, January 29. Contact Whitney Weiner (mdu@fpcbr.org or 225.620.0245) for more information. *MDO: Creating a love for Jesus, a love for each other and a love for learning.*



STAY & PRAY

JAN 18

Parents, grandparents, volunteers and friends of educators are all invited to a casual time of prayer in Dunham Chapel Thursday, January 18 from 9.05 to 9.30 am. It's a wonderful way to start the new year with confidence in God's plan for our children, families and educators.



SERMON TEXTS

JANUARY 7
Ephesians 5:1–10

JANUARY 14
Ephesians 5:8b–21

JANUARY 21
Ephesians 5:20–33

JANUARY 28
Ephesians 6:1–9

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS
Ministry Executive

DARIN TRAVIS
Associate Pastor for Discipleship

SCOTT GRAHAM
Associate Pastor for
Pastoral Care and Prayer

COLTON UNDERWOOD
Associate Pastor of Children,
Youth and Families



CONTACT INFORMATION

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fpcbr.org
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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245

BR Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287
brchristiancounseling.com

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP PARTNERS GAME NIGHT



Join us for fun and games January 26, 6–8 pm, in the FPC Gym. Help us give a warm kingdom welcome to internationals and have fun playing games together. It is a great way to break the ice, share laughs and make international friends.

Bring your favorite table game so you can invite internationals to play it with you. We will have toss games, ping pong and indoor badminton set up. Fun for the whole family!

In the meantime, please pray about possible next steps when you have an encounter with internationals. Could you have a next step meeting with them soon after? Coffee? Dinner out? Dinner at your house? It doesn't have to be formal!

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2024 FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MISSION TRIPS



Mission trips are opportunities to serve others, share your faith and explore new cultures and places around the world. Whether you are gifted in teaching, childcare, medical or sharing the gospel, there many ways to participate in one of our six 2024 mission trips.

UGANDA April 1–6, 2024

EGYPT April 7–13, 2024

SIERRA LEONE May 4–13, 2024

COLOMBIA June 8–15, 2024

ROMANIA October 4–14 and December 5–14, 2024

If you are interested in learning more about these trips, please attend an informational meeting Sunday, January 21 at 10.10 in Dunham Chapel.