

fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

June 2016 Volume 50-06

The Deepest Realities of Worship

By Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Our elders have just finished a major review of worship at our beloved church. A special taskforce made of six elders and six deacons worked from the ground up to bring the session a report that, among other things, identified 11 primary worship values in our church. I'd like to share the first five with you this month. As you read, consider just how extraordinary an hour of gathered worship actually is. There's so much going on that it actually dazzles the mind to think of how important Sundays are.

1) Exalt through the reading and preaching of Scripture Jesus Christ as Lord of the universe and Savior of the world.

2) Extol through prayer, song and message the glories of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit and his mighty redemptive acts in history.

3) Enact Baptism and the Lord's Supper as evangelical sacraments meant to seal and nourish union with Christ. Celebrate the Supper at least monthly, with clear explanation and in continuity with the major components of historic liturgies of the Western church. These include a) welcoming to the table, b) present remembering of Jesus' person and work, c) thanking the Triune God for his great deeds of salvation, d) asking for the Spirit

to make the sacrament effective, e) instituting the Supper properly in word and act and f) offering Christ to the people through their partaking of the supper.

4) Express this worship through musical styles that are consistent with our Reformed heritage yet fresh in expression, are Scripturally-saturated and lyrically rich in Christ-content, arise from our unique personality as a congregation and evoke robust participation from worshipers.

5) Enfold the congregation into the communion of saints, that is the awareness that we are connected to the people of God in all times and places who have professed Jesus and are his one body.

In short, every time we gather for worship, we seek to become aware of the deepest realities. To know that the center of all things is the Triune God who has come to us in Jesus Christ. And we are connected to him by his Spirit, along with all those believers who have gone before us. We have been gifted with specific ways to encounter our God: Word, Song and Sacrament in a fellowship of faith. This week, stop and think just how different Sunday worship is from anything else you do, ever. When I think of what we get to do together each week, it's no wonder I love to be your pastor!

five E's
of worship

One Church, One Worship This July

The Sundays of July we will gather at 10.30 for worship. Each week we will take the journey of worship together, but every service will have a slightly different accent musically. These services will be a blend of each of our services, wrapping us all with the joy of partaking of the Lord's Table as one body with one faith. We have some special preaching treats, too. On July 3, our dear pastor emeritus Russ Stevenson will be preaching. And on July 17, our dynamic young church planter Ben Cunningham will be back. Oh, and Derek and I will be leading and preaching in July as well.

Sunday school for all ages will begin at 9.30 am in July, with three special tracks for adult education, including Christianity Explored, a global outreach course with MacGregor, and a course about community, following our Summer reading, "Side by Side."

Further into the World, Further into the Future

Our church is blessed to have an endowment of funds set aside to enable us to do ministry and mission over and above our yearly work. The church Foundation manages these funds and then makes available to the elders a yearly distribution of income.

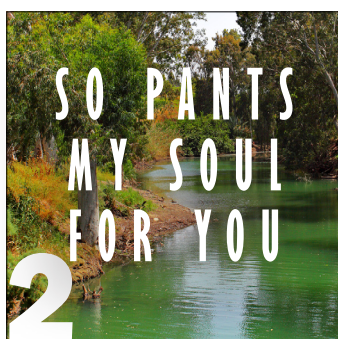
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JUNE CALENDAR

Women's Book Study Begins	June 1
Children's Story Time	June 2
Discover First Class	June 5
Women in Ministry Socials	June 14
Father's Day	June 19
VBS Family Kick Off Night	June 26
VBS	June 27-30

IN MEMORIAM:

April 29, 2016

Weldon McInnis

April 29, 2016

Mary Ann Gunter, mother of Triche Osborne

May 2, 2016

Catherine Maraist, mother of Tom Maraist

May 5, 2016

Paige Williams Peterson

Daughter of Rachel and Kirk Williams

BIRTHS:

May 9, 2016

Gavin Paul Gray

Parents are Sarah and Paul Gray

BAPTISMS:

May 8, 2016

Clayton Percy Tucker

Parents are Michael and Susan Tucker

Dawson Anders Tucker and Devin Alan Tucker

Parents are Lauren and Douglas Tucker

Grandparents are Susie and Bob Tucker

May 22, 2016

Sarah Elizabeth Hunter

Parents are Jodie and William Hunter

MARRIAGES:

April 30, 2016

Laura Furr married Chris Mericas

May 21, 2016

Elise LeBlanc married Brandon Maddox

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 ...

June 5 ... in honor of Sue and Bill Edrington's 69th wedding anniversary on June 2 by Leah and Billy Edrington, Lynn and Mark Edwards and Susie and Buzzy Heroman.

June 12 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of James Monroe Gill by Winnie, Wyn and Jane Gill.

June 19 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of Jack H. Field by Sharon, David, Stephanie, Sydney and Estin Field.

June 26 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of our parents, Joachim and Dorothy Aubert and Pete and Emma Ramos, by Fe' and Murphy Aubert.



The Chancel Choir and Psalm 42

By Stephen Rushing, Chancel Choir Director

Almost every Wednesday night a group of faithful individuals gather around 7 pm in the choir room on the second floor of the Sanctuary building. They range in age from 16 to 80. They come with a singular purpose in mind and that is to pray with words, music, body, heart and soul.

The evening evolves in fellowship; sharing stories of the week's events, some humming from a random alto, one of the men hammering out his notes on the piano. It is a symphony of souls. They do not come because they have to or necessarily want to. They come because, since the last time they met, they have grown thirsty.

As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God...By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.

Yes, it is a selfish act to show up at choir rehearsal. Individually thirsty for revival of the soul's pneumatic needs, they gather to conspire also. Not unlike instructions on a plane flight, "In the event of a decompression, an oxygen mask will automatically appear in front of you. If you are travelling with a child or someone who requires assistance, secure your mask on first, and then assist the other person." In the end, their act is selfless as they know that giving is better than receiving.

What they give to each other during Wednesday night rehearsals is a breathing together with a singular purpose. The sound of unified inhalation is followed by phrase after phrase of God's unique gifts of scripture, poetry, prose and music. What they share is nothing short of a miracle; the healing power of music is the healing power of God.

By the end of rehearsal all are refreshed and their thirst is quenched. But reminded of their purpose, they recall the previous Sunday.

These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival.

The rehearsal always ends with a prayer, thanking God for the privilege to be recipients of such unique and fulfilling blessings.

It is the following Sunday morning when they gather again; this time to pour out their souls, leading worship with songs of praise. Spiritually refreshed from the Wednesday night journey of filling their souls with spiritual oxygen, they assist in worship by energizing the throng, giving multitudes the inspiration to praise him who taught us all to pray and sing.



During the month of Ramadan June 6-July 5, join us in prayer for the Muslim World. We will pray for the hearts of our Muslim brothers and sisters that they come to know the truth of the Gospel and the hope that is in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior! You can pick up a prayer guide in the Connection Center or go online to fpcbr.org/news. Contact Whitney Alexander for more ways to reach the Muslim world around us.

WHAT'S IN THE BIBLE?

VBS 2016
 What's in the Bible?
 June 27-June 30
 9 am-12 pm

Register online at fpcbr.org.
 Invite your friends and neighbors!

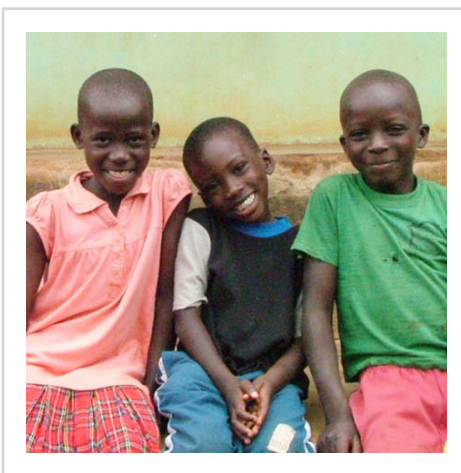
VBS Family Night
 Sunday June, 26 at 5 pm

Bethany Centre Update

In April 2006, members from the community of Jjungo in Uganda gathered together in one of Bethany Centre Primary School's three classrooms (there are now 8 classrooms and offices) for prayer and Bible study. They discussed how students of Bethany Centre Primary School could best learn the basics of the Christian faith and, from this meeting, the Bethany Church was started. Through the Sunday service, community outreach and weekly chapel service at the school, this body of believers is actively ministering to the Bethany Centre Primary School community which serves over 600 disadvantaged children, many orphaned due to the AIDs epidemic or living with family members suffering from the disease.

First Presbyterian Church (FPC) has partnered with the church and school to show compassion to this needy community by supporting projects to improve their way of living. Most recently, a generous grant was given through the Session Income Allocation Committee to complete a multipurpose building at the school and, in April, Whitney Alexander and Mac Magruder made an encouraging visit to the school.

Peter Kiwanuka, founder and director of the Bethany Centre Primary School and a former LSU student and friend of many in Baton Rouge said, "There are many low-income families who are in need of hope and services. There are also many people in our community who are living with the painful disease of HIV/AIDS. I know and have known many people who suffer from this disease. It isn't easy."



Mukisa is a young mother with AIDS. During a visit from a Bethany Church member she spoke of her difficulties: "I am currently going through a rough time with the illness and my body is very weak."

Before contracting the disease, Mukisa lived with her mother and two daughters (one who has since graduated from Bethany Centre Primary School and another who attended the school until recently). Mukisa continues, "I don't know what the future holds for my children when I die, but I thank God for what Bethany Church has done for me."

Peter has these words for FPC, "Your support has repeatedly played a key role in our success. There is no way to fully express our gratitude for your generosity. We at Bethany are continually inspired by First Presbyterian Church and we promise to continue our work in order to make a difference in our community."

POTLUCK DINNER

Join us Tuesday, June 14 at 5.30 pm for a potluck global missions dinner. We'll hear an update on the Bethany Centre from Whitney Alexander and Steve Tubré (both recently returned from Africa) as well as from Mac and Ashley Magruder in Kenya.

June Acoustic Communion Worship

The Acoustic Communion service is giving Derek a break in June. Please join one of the other three services: 7.45 Chapel Communion, 9.00 Contemporary and 11.00 Classic Reformed. In July, we all meet for the combined 10.30 services. The Acoustic Communion service will resume at 11 am in the Chapel on August 7.

Children's Story Time. You and your children are invited to join us on June 2 and July 14 from 10 to 11.30 am for story time and a play date. Parents are welcome to bring bag lunches for further fellowship. Contact Audra Cato if you have any questions (audra@fpcbr.org).

All Men Father's Day Choir at 9 am Worship. Only two rehearsals are required for the 9 am Father's Day choir on June 19. Fathers and sons are welcome! Please email Nancy Spiller (nancy@fpcbr.org) or come to rehearsals on June 8 and June 15 at 6.15 in the Sanctuary.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

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

JUNE SERMON TEXTS

June 5, 2016

"Passing Over and Passing Through"
Exodus 12: 21-28; Luke 22: 14-20

June 12, 2016

"Stepping into the Stream"
Revelation 4: 1-2, 6-11; 5: 6-14

June 19, 2016

"Falling and Following"
Luke 5: 1-11

June 26, 2016

"Devoted"
Acts 2: 42-47

PASTORAL STAFF

Gerrit S. Dawson

Senior Pastor

M. Whitney Alexander

Associate Pastor of City Ministry

Derek McCollum

Associate Pastor for Discipleship

and Young Adults

Barry Phillips

Ministry Executive

Josh Maddin

Assistant Pastor of Student Ministry



PH: 225.387.0617
FAX: 225.338.1010

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

www.brchristiancounseling.com

Women in Ministry Summer Events

Summer Socials: You know that feeling when you want to ask a question but you feel like it's the dumbest question ever? You'd never ask it out loud; especially in front of a room full of people. Somehow this feeling is even more intense when it's a question about Jesus, the gospel or Christianity in general. What if you could ask that question anonymously? On June 14, and again on July 12, Women in Ministry's summer socials will have the "Now That's a Good Question" theme. Come enjoy lunch or dinner, fellowship and this fun new format where a panel of pastor(s) and trained women will answer some commonly asked questions on theology, the church and Christian life. Luncheons will be at 11.30 am in the reception room. On June 14, we'll get together for a night time gathering at 6 pm at On the Border. It'll be fun so bring a friend and don't forget to bring your questions. Both the luncheons and the dinner are

\$10 per person. Register online or at the Connection Center. Childcare provided.

Pilgrim's Progress Book Study: Also, don't miss our next book study! Each Wednesday in June, Women in Ministry will meet at 6.30 pm in the parlor to discuss *Pilgrim's Progress*. Purchase your book and join us ready to have great discussion at our first meeting. No registration is necessary. Children's Ministry (kindergarten-5) will study alongside adapting *Pilgrims Progress* as its summer curriculum!

Micah Study: The Good Deposit, a small group of dedicated theology-minded women, will teach a 4-week study on Micah beginning July 12 at 6 pm. Can't make a night study? How about a 2-3 pm study led by Elizabeth Parker? The day time study begins on Wednesday, June 1 and continues until July 27. No registration is necessary.

Deepest Realities continued from page 1

Recently, the session approved some amazing grants to help create the leadership of the next generation, to further the planting of new churches and revitalization of an existing church. More than \$62,000 was granted to new and continuing seminary students who all have an intimate connection with our church: Rebecca Botros, Jeremy Brokaw, Cheryl Brodnax, Mary-Emeline Dawson, Darin Travis and Josh Woltmann. (Speaking of Josh, he returns June 1 as our summer pastoral intern!). We made a grant to EPC pastor Will Johnson who will mentor in church planting as he works in Atlanta in a multi-ethnic community, and we made a grant to our granddaughter church River South for renovations of their worship space. And we approved Women in Ministry college grants. I love that we do not use our endowment income to "feather our own nest." Rather, we reach outward to take Christ and his gospel far into the world and the future.

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