

FPC NEWSLETTER

DEEPER IN CHRIST, FURTHER INTO THE WORLD



WHICH WAY IS YOUR FACE?

By Gerrit Dawson
Senior Pastor

That's a great question for a church! We head where our faces, well, *face!* So which direction should a church point its nose? I tend to think the answer is that we are called to be *four-faced*. The "direction" of a church can never be just one way. A vibrant church faces upwards, outwards, sideways, and, with caution and on occasion, inwards.

First and always we look *upwards* to the Triune God. "Seek him who made the Pleiades and Orion," says Amos. "Look upon him and be radiant," says the Psalmist. "Set your hearts on things above where Christ is," wrote Paul. We use *upwards* in relation to God to acknowledge that God is the reality, and he is always more than we are. God is not just an internal spiritual part of us. He is the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by whom all things were made. You can tell how a church faces upward by how that congregation admires Jesus, the face of God turned toward us.

We look *sideways* because Jesus connected loving him to loving one another. "They'll know we are Christians by our love." That's the truth! We want to be a church full of

people who *look* at each other. In such a way that we see how it is with one another. We regard, listen, respond. Our sideways face radiates love.

The *inward* look is tricky. Because we can, like Narcissus, get enamored with our own reflection. Or mired in our own needs. Or stuck in our old shames. The proper inward look takes time to a) confess our sins and repent of them, and b) notice all the blessings of God and give thanks for them. We always need to grow in awareness as individuals and a church body. But never to stay stuck looking inward! Our inward look drives us to look up to Jesus, sideways to each other, and . . .

Outward to the world. A hurting world wants to know, "Do you see me? Do you drive around me or come to visit me? Do you bask in the warmth you have with each other without opening the circle or extending the reach?" I'm always proud of our church, but I especially admire the relentless outward facing. As individuals, you are aware that every day you enter the mission field of your life. You know that your work is part of caring for the world. You look for opportunities to love and serve in every situation. And as a body, we push outwards in mission.

We've been blessed with abundance. We have an endowment. But your leaders make sure endowment income from our Foundation faces *outwards*. Last week the session released \$79,000. We're supporting five seminary students training for either church ministry or Christian counseling. We granted a Russ Stevenson Church Planting scholarship to a pastor beginning an EPC church in Smyrna, GA. We also reached across continents, making a grant to our partner church in Cairo for youth training. And we began what we hope will be a long partnership with EduNations, an evangelistic ministry in Sierra Leone of which Scott Graham is current board president. We're showing our face in Baton Rouge, across the country and around the world.

You have a beautiful face, dear church, as it points all four directions!



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MAY EVENTS

rEcess	MAY 5
Confirmation Service	MAY 7
Mother's Day	MAY 14
Single 10.30 am Worship	MAY 28

UPCOMING EVENTS

VBS	JUNE 19-23
RYM-Middle School	JUNE 26-30

BAPTISMS

April 9, 2023
Leland and Pearson Brokaw
Parents are Micaela and Jeremy Brokaw

April 9, 2023
Anya and Jude Kisling
Parents are Jessica and Aaron Kisling

WEDDINGS

April 8, 2023
Anna Catherine Cuccio and
Dakota Schoenfield

April 15, 2023
Marie French and Ryan Bourdais

IN MEMORIAM

April 11, 2023
Janie Fowler
Mother of Blake Fowler

April 12, 2023
Ruth Ingram
Mother of Jim Ingram

FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers are given . . .

MAY 7 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mary Crosby McDuff by Ann and Michael McDuff.

MAY 14 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of three mothers, all very special to our family: our mother, Jackie Lee Airhart; her mother, Claudia Lee Tisdale; Kristen's mother, Becky Richardson by the children of Jackie Lee Airhart.

MAY 21 . . . to the glory of God and in thankful memory of our mothers, Kathryn Leake Graving and Dorothy Stebbins Mullins by Kathy and Julius Mullins.

MAY 28 Open date.

SUMMER YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY EVENTS AND TRIPS



Youth RYM Summer Conference

RYM (Reformed Youth Ministries) strives to serve the Church through summer conferences which are God-centered, Word-driven and Gospel-focused. Students will be encouraged and challenged by the Word of God, grow closer together as the body of Christ, and enjoy times of fun and fellowship. Middle School dates are June 26-30. High School dates are July 10-15. Details and registration are now online at fpcbr.org.



Lake Forest Ranch Camp

Kingdom Kids children ages 7-12 are invited to join us as we head to Macon, MS for camp at Lake Forest Ranch. LFR's mission is to build relationships for eternal impact. Your camper will experience life-changing messages, uplifting worship and high energy recreation. Camp dates are July 17-21. Please visit fpcbr.org for details and registration.



Jerusalem Marketplace VBS

VBS Dates: Monday, June 19-Friday, June 23, 2023
Time: 9 am to 12 pm each day
Registration Closes June 15

Jerusalem Marketplace VBS is a unique Bible immersion, living history experience for children entering kindergarten through 5th grade. Come hear Bible stories from a seasoned storyteller, learn to make amazing crafts as apprentices of master craftsmen, interact with the kinds of people Jesus did when he walked the streets of Jerusalem, and bring your tough questions when you visit the synagogue to learn Biblical truth from a local rabbi. We will worship together, eat together and have fun together! Come join us! There is no charge to attend.

Limited places are available for children entering kindergarten through 5th grade and for helpers. All children will be placed in age-integrated tribes so siblings and friends can be together. Students entering 6th, 7th and 8th grades will be "tribe helpers" in the twelve tribes. Older students (9th-12th Grade) will be placed in several available leadership positions.

Adult volunteers are needed and most welcome. The So Loved nursery (birth through pre-K) will be available for children of adult volunteers. Please email Roxanne Struppeck (roxannestruppeck@icloud.com) to volunteer.

We will have a mandatory training day for all volunteers Saturday, June 17 from 10 to 11 am.

HALLOWED

Be Thy Name

Our Father God is all-powerful, all-knowing, indescribable and incomprehensible. And yet, throughout the Old Testament, he reveals himself through his names which exemplify human attributes that we can understand. The meanings behind God's names describe his character which better help us grasp who he is, what he does and how we can access him.

Join Women's Ministry this summer as we explore seven of God's lesser-known, intriguing names found in Scripture and contemplate the ways in which each name deepens our knowledge of him. We'll also look at how Jesus embodied each name during his life incarnate, and consider how we experience this particular name of the Lord in our own lives today through the power of the Holy Spirit. May we "Hallow His Name" with loving admiration, renewed devotion and passionate wonder!

Each Wednesday in July (July 5, 12, 19, 26) from 6.30 to 8 pm, at the home of Amber McConnell (4352 Woodside Dr.). Light refreshments will be provided.

SAVE
the date

Save the date for the Women's Ministry Summer Luncheon, "So I've Got a Question", Thursday, June 29, 11 am to 1 pm in the Reception Room. Childcare will be provided. Registration (\$10) will be available online soon. More details to come!!

DECADES
SOCIAL

Calling all ladies in their 60s, 70s, 80s, Oh My!! Let's get together for food, fellowship and fun! Our next Decades Social will be Tuesday, May 16 from 6 to 8 pm at the home of Martha Juban (1005 Carrollton Ave.). Dinner will be provided, but feel free to bring a dessert or beverage of your choice to contribute if you wish. RSVP to Jaime Carnaggio (jaime@fpcbr.org).

Our Newest Staff Member

Jacob Struppeck has been a member of FPC all of his life. His parents, Bobby and Roxanne, met and married at First Presbyterian. His parents' history here, combined with his being baptized here, make it easy for Jacob to safely say his roots are closely intertwined with this congregation. Little did he know that one day he would be a full-time employee! He is an older brother to seven siblings who share the same experience of being very committed to this body of Christ.



Jacob is not green to being a staff member of First Presbyterian, only green to the "full-time" aspect and donning the title of Assistant to the Director of Media, Facilities, and Technologies.

Jacob has prior experience in the world of production having worked on multiple films, TV shows and even running his own personal podcast. He is excited to expand his knowledge of outreach through the modern tools of media, livestreaming and the innovation of digital outreach. But more importantly, not for the expansion of his personal knowledge in the arts, but to the glory of God; to going deeper in Christ and further into the world with the use of the tools for which he is already passionate!

College Scholarships

The FPC Women's Ministry College Scholarship Fund is a unique fund established in 1955 for all students who wish to further their education. Its purpose is to offer financial assistance to church members who anticipate having difficulty meeting the obligations of continued education. The administration of the fund is the responsibility of the Memorial Scholarship Committee and honors particular need-based guidelines. Rather than academic achievements, aid is intended to be a helpful supplement in the student's pursuit of higher education. The application deadline is June 15, 2023. Please visit fpcbr.org for an application.

SERMON TEXTS

MAY 7, 2023

Genesis 1: 1-5, 26-31

MAY 14, 2023

Genesis 2: 15-25

MAY 21, 2023

Genesis 3: 1-10, 22-24

MAY 28, 2023

10.30 am Worship

Genesis 4: 1-16

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

Assistant Pastor of Children,
Youth and Families

PH: 225.387.0617

fpcbr.org763 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70802Mother's Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245BR Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287brchristiancounseling.com

LAGNIAPPE

In the Gym

PURPLE COW RECEPTACLES

Now is a great time to donate furniture, clothing and housewares to the Purple Cow. These thrift stores provide significant funding for the Christian Outreach Center, one of our core ministry partners. The COC assists walk-in visitors, leads job training workshops and teaches financial literacy. The COC offers a hand up, not just a hand out! Purple receptacles are now in the church Gym for your convenience.

New City Ministry Initiative

BACKPACK PROGRAM

It is estimated that more than 100 kindergarteners will need backpacks when Buchanan and University Terrace Elementary schools merge in the fall.

Stay tuned for details on how you can help fulfill the need this summer!

Now Available

CRYING BABIES/NURSING MOTHER'S ROOM

Our Bride's Room now doubles as a Crying Babies/Nursing Mother's Room on Sunday mornings with closed circuit TV simulcasting the 9 and 11 am services. For parents with small children, our nursery is available in the Education Building for children through age four.

Welcome Our Young New Members

CONFIRMATION WORSHIP, MAY 7

Our 6th grade students prepare all year to make their public profession of faith at a special worship service. On Sunday, May 7 at 4 pm in the Sanctuary, they

will profess Christ and be confirmed as active members of our church. Come support them at this celebratory service! A reception follows.

Memorial Day Weekend Worship

10.30 AM SERVICE

On Sunday, May 28, we will have one combined service at 10.30 am.

Future Mission Trips

COLOMBIA AND ROMANIA

Global Missions is currently planning a trip to Colombia (September 12-17) and a trip to Romania (December 1-12). Please contact Whitney Alexander for details (whitney@fpcbr.org or 225.810.2607).