

FPC NEWSLETTER

DEEPER IN CHRIST, FURTHER INTO THE WORLD



We Meet over This by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

When I was very new to pastoral ministry, I got to see Ian McKellan perform his one-man play, *Acting Shakespeare*. Before he was internationally known as Gandalf and Magneto in movies, McKellan performed all the great Shakespearean roles. This show included excerpts from *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, interspersed with comment. At one point, he picked up a script and walked toward the audience. “What happens in theatre is that you and I meet over this. My job is interpret these lines in a way that you can connect to them.” I realized, “That’s it! That’s what happens at church. We meet over the script that is Scripture. As teacher and participants interact over the passage, it comes alive to us.”

Of course this meeting happens (I hope!) during a sermon. It’s not just my talking, but your participation with your thoughts and questions and feelings as we work through the text. My job is to anticipate your questions and name them, to realize my own resistance to these truths and consider how those struggles might be yours too. In that way, though you may not be speaking aloud, you are interacting with the Word along with me. If it works, you leave feeling that the Bible story is indeed your story. And the Spirit has moved your life along according to the sacred script. It’s the coolest!

But this meeting happens so many other ways at church as well. We interact with others around, over and through the Bible and the great narrative of our redemption in Christ. This meets our deep need to be introduced to God.

And also our yearning to be connected to others. Such interaction is the heartbeat of our church.

Think of that when you gather for a home-group meeting over I Peter. Or when you engage Mark’s gospel in this fall’s women’s studies. When you meet with a fellow church member and talk about the Word together. When you’re in Sunday school or Circle, early morning study or talking about the Bible with a Gardere student. These are the life-giving conversations where God himself is our discussion partner!

Faith Driven Entrepreneur Conference

We want to highlight the interaction between our faith in Christ and our work in the business world. And we have an exciting, energizing way to do that! The Faith Driven Entrepreneur Conference will stream live in our Sanctuary Wednesday, September 28 from 9.30 to 3.30. In addition to a stunning array of presenters, lunch will be served and there will be break out groups as we consider what it means to belong to Christ and be engaged in business. Visit fpcbr.org to register. The conference is free when you check out using the discount code available on the website. Contact Hank Mills, Blake Fowler or Gerrit for more information.

This will be an important day, well worth our time. As ever, please know how much I love being your pastor.

Gerrit



2 WELCOME BACK, WHITNEY!

3 STIRRING ONE ANOTHER UP: SMALL GROUPS

3 OPPORTUNITIES AROUND

4 DAUGHTERS OF THE KING MINISTRY

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

rEcess Resumes SEPT 2
One 10.30 Service SEPT 4
Discover First Dinner SEPT 18
Women's 50s/60s Social SEPT 22
IFP Social SEPT 30

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fellowship & Testimony Evening OCT 14
Couples' Workshop OCT 21-22
Kirkin' Service OCT 30

BIRTHS

August 16, 2022
Rowan Eliot Swarner
Parents are Elizabeth and Jeff Swarner

IN MEMORIAM

August 7, 2022
Buddy Holden

BAPTISMS

August 14, 2022
Hayden Beau Luna
Parents are Maggie and Jay Luna
Ansley Elizabeth, Braden Wenter and
Mary Katherine McIntosh
Parents are Mary and Braden McIntosh

Annie Frances Miller
Parents are Shelby and Connor Miller
Gradparents are Connie and Robert
Miller

FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers
are given . . .

SEPT 4 . . . in loving memory of and
with thanksgiving for Van Andrew
Wilson on his birthday by his parents
Claire & Steve Wilson.

SEPT 11 . . . to the glory of God in
loving memory of Jerry Johnson by
his wife LaNelle Johnson and their
daughters Debra Matthews, Joy
Pennington and Jeri J. Cochran.

SEPT 18 . . . to the glory of God and in
loving memory of Gay & Dick Barnett,
Alice & Nye Barnett, Frances & J.B.
Meadors and Irene Bearden Meadors,
parents and grandparents of Leah
Edrington by Leah & Billy Edrington.

SEPT 25 . . . to the glory of God
and in loving memory of Mr. & Mrs.
Henry G. McKowen II, Mr. & Mrs. Alex
C. McKowen Sr., Mr. & Mrs. Frank
Woodford, Jolie Thuneman Peel
and Jolie Berry by Jeanie McKowen
Thuneman, Wayne McKowen, Ann
McKowen Gerald and Allie McKowen.

Exhilarating and Exhausting by Whitney Alexander, Associate Pastor for Missions

Thank you for the sabbatical and vacation time
this summer. It was an exhilarating and exhausting
walk across Northwest Spain May 24-June 1 on
the Camino de Santiago with six friends from
First Presbyterian and Abounding Love Ministries.
Charles Goebel, Annette Lamond, Milt Witty, John
and Carol Norwood and their son-in-law Josh all
participated in this incredible walk. It will be a
cherished trip for as long as I live. I arrived at
Santiago de Compostela Cathedral on the fifth
anniversary of my terrible car accident.



Much of my time during sabbatical was spent
reading the book of Revelation in preparation
for leading 20 men in two different Bible studies
this coming year. The month of July specifically
focused on reading Ruth Haley Barton's newest
book, Embracing Ryhythms of Work and Rest:
From Sabbath to Sabbatical and Back Again. I
also attended a retreat in July on Discernment:
Recognizing and Responding to the Presence
of God at Transforming Community in Wheaton,
Illinois.



I had the opportunity to vacation with Phyllis in
Colorado, be with Andrew for Father's Day weekend and see Patrick in California at the end
of my sabbatical. The rest was needed and I am excited to return and serve again at First
Presbyterian.

Thank you for caring for my family and especially allowing me a break after my many years
serving Christ here.

Learn More about First



Senior Pastor Gerrit Dawson and Director of Community Life Emily Viguerie
are hosting a Discover First Dinner Sunday, September 18 at 4 pm. This
is a great opportunity, in a smaller setting, to learn more about how
to be part of our mission and ministry. You'll get to meet the church
program staff and ask questions. If you are interested in attending or
would like more information, please contact Emily (emily@fpabr.org or
225.333.9084).

September IFP Social

The International Friendship Partners (IFP) team
welcomes and loves internationals in Baton Rouge.
Through hospitality, we build bridges of friendship,
trust and mutual respect while sharing the love of
Christ. All are invited to join us for our monthly socials.
Our September social is Friday, September 30 from 6
to 8 pm at Kathleen and Trace Pourciau's home (7335
Seven Oaks Avenue). Please contact LeeAnn Kozan for
further information (leeannkozan@gmail.com).



Stirring One Another Up: Fall Small Groups by Kelly Wood

Naomi mourned and rejoiced with Ruth. David sharpened spears with Jonathan. Paul labored alongside Barnabas and Timothy. C. S. Lewis drank tea and smoked a pipe with Tolkien and the other Inklings. Even our Lord surrounded himself with twelve good friends that he walked with, talked with, ate with, laughed with, cried with.

When we live out our ordinary rhythms of life in a community of believers, we become transformed to look more like Jesus. Our small groups put teaching into practice alongside a community that grows through the power of the Holy Spirit. Members take time each week to meet together, pray together, eat together and learn together.

We have a wide variety of groups available - some meet seasonally, others meet throughout the year. Some meet in homes, others at the church, some are even virtual. New groups are starting this fall; others have been meeting for decades. Each spring our groups read through the church's annual Lenten Guide together. At other times of the year, they might study a book of the Bible or a devotional guide, a video series on Right Now Media or follow along with the current sermon series.

Please pray and consider if God might be inviting you to grow deeper in him by joining a community. We'd love to have you. As Lewis said, "Is any pleasure on earth as great as a circle of Christian friends by a good fire?" If you'd like to learn more, contact Kelly Wood (kelly@fpcbr.org).



Opportunities Abound!

It's time to get "Back to School" at Buchanan Elementary! There are several opportunities for us at our adopted school Buchanan Elementary this year including serving as an Encourager, Reading Friend, Storytime Reader or events throughout the year.

We have 35 teachers hoping to be adopted by an Encourager. Encouragers support their teacher during the year through prayer, sending a note, email, call or small gift each month. Items can be left at the church for delivery. It's an easy way to make a huge impact on folks who are working the "frontlines" and appreciate that someone is thinking of them.

We are also recruiting Reading Friends who work one-on-one with a below reading level student in kindergarten through second grade. The commitment is to work with the student at least twice a month for 30 minutes each time. Training is provided through Volunteers in Public Schools and it's exciting to see students progress with this one-on-one help that makes such a difference.

The fifteen Pre K-2nd grade teachers would love to have a Classroom Storytime Reader come into their classes once a month to read to their students. The kids love to hear stories from their special reader and, by the end of the year, you are almost considered a celebrity when you enter the classroom!

We continue to collect much needed school supplies. Items needed can be found on a list at the Connection Center. Thanks to all who have donated to this effort. Collections will continue through the fall.

For more information or to sign up for any of these opportunities, visit the Connection Center each Sunday after services in September or contact Laura Shaw (laura@fpcbr.org or 387.0617). Let's get back to school and help make a difference in the lives of our neighbors just two miles from our church!

SEPTEMBER SERMON TEXTS

September 4, 2022
1 Peter 1: 10-12
One 10.30 am Service

September 11, 2022
1 Peter 1: 13-21

September 18, 2022
1 Peter 1: 22- 2: 3

September 25, 2022
1 Peter 2: 4-8

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS
Ministry Executive

DARIN TRAVIS
Associate Pastor for Discipleship

COLTON UNDERWOOD
Assistant Pastor of Children,
Youth and Families



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763 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245

BR Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287
brchristiancounseling.com

A New Ministry, 50s/60s Social and Circles: Women's Ministry Happenings

Women's Ministry is excited to launch the Daughters of the King, a new ministry designed to build community for single adult women through discipleship, fellowship and study. We desire to provide a safe, supportive and vibrant space where you can make meaningful connections in the life of the body, serve according to your unique gifts and grow in your personal relationship with Christ. No matter what your marital or relational status, you can confidently claim your title as a Daughter of the King. We meet the second Wednesday of each month with our first meeting Wednesday, September 14 from 5.30 to 7.30 pm in the Bride's Room. Please contact Sara Green Mele (sara.g.mele@gmail.com) or Melissa Miley (melissa@themileylawfirm.com) for more information.

50s/60s Social, September 22: Each month, FPC Women's Ministry organizes social fellowship gatherings targeting women in specific decades. There is no agenda! These are simply extra opportunities to gather together outside of the church walls for food, fellowship and fun. Our Thursday, September 22 gathering is at 6.30 pm and is intended for women in the 50s/60s age range, but truly, anyone is welcome, even if they aren't in this age range. Feel free to bring a friend or someone you know may be interested in connecting with others. The more, the merrier! Dinner will be provided. Bring a bottle of wine or a dessert to contribute if you'd like. Stay tuned for details on our social location. RSVP to Jaime Carnaggio (jaime@fpibr.org).

Women's Circles Resume in September! Our Circle focus is on the person and work of Jesus Christ, covering seven key qualities and descriptions of his identity as described in "Name above All Names" by Alistair Begg & Sinclair Ferguson. Circles begin meeting in September with multiple day and time options. Visit fpibr.org/womensministry or contact Jaime Carnaggio (jaime@fpibr.org) for more information.

