



Stitching It Up! by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Surely this is one of the strangest years ever! Everything can seem upside down. Just when we need each other, we can't touch and can't meet. It seems like we've lived in a fog for the last seven months. What happened to 2020?

A lot of things have fallen away. We've learned to live without watching sports all the time (OK, so some diehards did watch the bean bag tossing championships. We pray for their souls.). We've grown to like having a less frenetic pace. But we've missed parties and barbecues and hugs. And church. If you've been back in the Sanctuary since the pandemic began, you know how great it feels. To be in the house of the Lord with his people. The soaring ceilings. The beautiful wood. The ascension window. All the memories. To hear the music. To sing, even in a mask. To know that the church is still the church. How very precious our church is to us.

As the fall months come, we're working hard to re-gather our congregation. On September 13 we will return to two Sanctuary worship services: Contemporary at 9 and Classic Reformed at 11. Sunday school will resume at 10.10 on Sundays. We're learning to gather in ways that are as safe as we can. But I know it will take an effort. We've got to overcome the rhythm of just staying at home. We've got to push against the inertia of isolation. We've got to put up with the inconvenience of safety measures. We're taking a gamble that we can fill in two worship services with enough people that it doesn't feel like we're in a cavern. I think it's time! Come to church! Invite others to



come. Let's stitch up the fabric of our fellowship, one returning worshiper at a time.

As the weather cools later in October (Amen, may it be so!), we want to do more outside gatherings. Imagine a huge tent on the terraced garden. And a Kirkin' celebration outside. What if we could have our Christmas cantata outside on North Blvd. one December Sunday? What if Christmas Eve could accommodate 1,500 people because we made it a Journey to Bethlehem, touring with candlelight in groups through the stages of the Nativity Story, ending in the Sanctuary with communion? There are so many possibilities that can open up with a change in temperature. We will be an adventurous congregation!

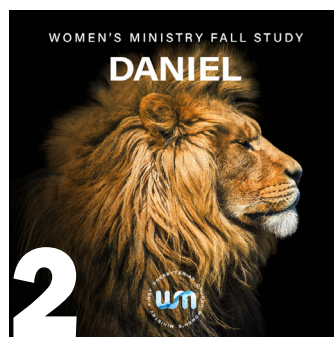
Meanwhile, let's stay tethered through our individual praying of the Psalms. I love reading a psalm knowing that hundreds of you are praying it that morning too. It's not too late to connect through a Shepherding through Psalms group. Just contact Darin (darin@fpcbr.org) or Kelly Wood (kelly@fpcbr.org).

I'm also happy to report how your generosity reaches into our city and around the world. We received about \$75,000 in our Neighbors Fund and have already disbursed half of it to individuals and ministry partners. We continue to keep a watch out for needs related to COVID-19, and thanks to you can act quickly to help. Also, the session approved sending \$20,000 to the Philemon Project, an EPC ministry in Beirut that cares for orphaned children. The recent explosion that devastated the city has made the need desperate. We're grateful to help.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Circles Begin	SEPT 1
Women's Daniel Study Begins	SEPT 2
Church Office Closed	SEPT 7
9 am & 11 am Worship Begins	SEPT 13
Sunday School Resumes	SEPT 13
"A Night of Social Distan-SING!"	SEPT 17
Countering Cancel Culture	SEPT 20
Presbytery Meeting at FPC	SEPT 25

UPCOMING EVENTS

Blood Drive	OCT 4
Couples' Workshop	OCT 16 & 17
Kirkin' O' the Tartans	OCT 25

MARRIAGES:

August 1, 2020
Rachel Reese to Josiah Kollmeyer

August 15, 2020
Lauren McKowen to Luke Bourgeois

BIRTHS:

July 30, 2020
David Michael Breard
Parents are Caroline and Luke Breard

August 19, 2020
Connor Robert Hart
Parents are Kathyryne and Ryan Hart

IN MEMORIAM:

August 5 2020
Elizabeth Owen
Daughter of Cherry and Gene Owen
Sister of Eleanor Kerr and Hays Owen

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The flowers are placed . . .

SEPT 6 . . . in loving memory with thanksgiving for Van Andrew Wilson on his birthday weekend by his parents Claire and Steve Wilson.

SEPT 13 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Jerry Johnson by his wife LaNelle Johnson and their daughters Debra Matthews, Joy Pennington and Jeri J. Cochran.

SEPT 20 . . . 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 and Billy Edrington.

SEPT 27 . . . 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.

If you would like to donate flowers for a particular Sunday, please contact Kathy Mullins at 291.3095.

Sunday School Resumes September 13! by Darin Travis, Director of Discipleship

September is here, and we are eager to reconnect in person! One of the key parts of our weekly rhythm on Sunday mornings has always been Sunday school. I'm thrilled to announce we're starting up again on September 13. As we embrace our current new normal, I believe we have a suitable plan that will not only provide for assembling in a safe socially-distanced way, but also create a fantastic avenue for connecting with old friends and making some new ones.



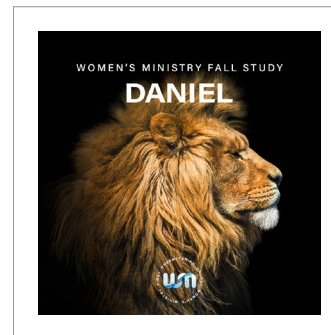
I've often been asked, "Our classes are arranged by stage of life; can we do something that allows for cross-generational connection?" I have good news! Starting on the 13th, we will have three Sunday school options to choose from that will be intentionally inter-generational. Ryan Dickerson will teach the book of Revelation in the two rooms on the 2nd floor outside the Sanctuary. Hank Mills, Jeff Swarner, Larry Simeral, Kris Kirkpatrick and Barry Phillips will cover two other excellent options. One class will teach about political ideologies from a biblical worldview, discussing in particular Liberalism and Cultural Marxism, using a recent Tim Keller article (202 of the Education Building). The other class will focus on the Psalms and prayer. It will meet in Dunham Chapel.

All three options begin at 10.10 am and will have insightful teaching and plenty of opportunity to bond over our mutual love of Christ.

Come join us; we're eager to have you back!

Women's Fall Daniel Study

We feel displaced. We feel confused and concerned. Thousands of years ago, another believer felt this way. Daniel, whose name means "God is my judge," fought to balance his loyal service to Babylon with his ultimate obedience to God. Through his apocalyptic visions, Daniel reveals that in spite of present circumstances that make it appear as if evil is winning, God is in control and will ultimately be victorious. He is sovereign over the course of history, even over those who rebel against him and seek to destroy his people. He is aware of the suffering of his people and will bring their trials to an end on the day when he reestablishes his kingdom. All of the kingdoms of this world will come to an end and will be replaced by the Lord's kingdom, which will never pass away.



Fall Bible Study Kicks Off September 2-3: Wednesdays @ 6.30 pm (Virtual) or Thursdays @ 9.30 am (Sanctuary).

Women's Ministry Circles

The Women's Ministry Circle book for 2020-21 is *Identity Theft: Reclaiming the Truth of Who We Are In Christ*. Who am I? It's a question we all ask ourselves at some point. Depending on the season, we focus our identity on our job performance, marital status, personality type, or social network, among other options. However, there's a larger question to consider. Who am I in Christ?

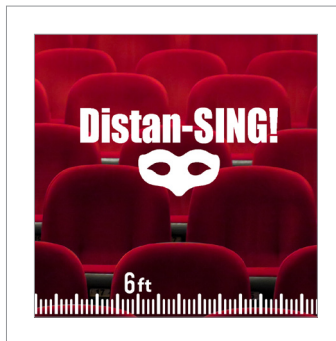
Join us as we explore how knowing who we are in Christ changes every aspect of our lives. Circles kick off in September and there are multiple options (in-person and virtual). Contact Jaime (jaime@fpcbr.org) for the 2020-21 Circle Schedule.

A Night of Social Distan-SING! by Chris Phillips, Director of Worship

What happens during a global pandemic when you put a group of fantastic vocalists together with the new Director of Worship? An idea is planted that grows into a little treat for you we're calling "A Night of Social Distan-SING!" We want to sing for you!

You'll tap your toes to familiar songs. You'll hear a new stunning setting of the "Serenity Prayer" by local composer Jerrell R. Gray. With the music of Sondheim, Bernstein, Verdi and others we'll comment on these challenging times. We'll ask some important questions. We'll laugh a bit and reassure you with the hopefulness that beautiful music can rouse.

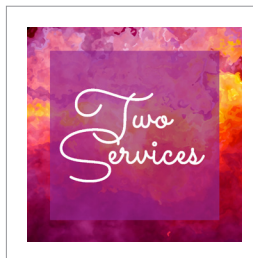
Join us via livestream on Thursday, September 17 at 7 pm.



"He who sings scares away his woes." -Cervantes

September 13: Two Worship Services

And Sunday school! It's time at last to re-gather the congregation! 9 am Contemporary and 11 am Classic Reformed return! Sunday school for children, confirmation, youth and some adult classes also begin. Please be patient as we work through our safety procedures. Masking and distancing will continue, but hey, we're used to it now!



FPC's Media Team by Jay High, Media Director

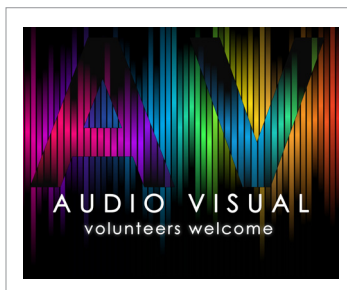
Do you hear that little voice prompting you to be more involved at First Presbyterian? We would love for you to join us as a volunteer on the Media team! There are all types of fascinating things that you can do to develop and stretch your creative and technical talents.

We have some new and exciting opportunities including running the slides, operating the lights and running the joystick controllers for our brand new livestream cameras. It would be something like playing a video game! Once the Chapel service resumes there will be volunteer opportunities operating sound and lights as well.

Are you calm under pressure and enjoy being creative on your computer? Our screen operators are responsible for what you see on the screens during the worship. Your ministry could be creating slides for worship songs, displaying Gerrit's sermon slides, playing videos and putting up photographs during baptisms - just to name a few.

Are you the go-to person in your family for making videos for birthdays, graduations and just cool stuff? Come help us shoot and edit videos! Our editing equipment is second-to-none . . . we'll train you! Help us create missions videos or videos for special services.

Does any or all of this sound fun and up your alley? Email me at jay@fpcbr.org or come up the AV booth during any service and talk with me.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

10.30 am Sanctuary worship.
September 13 begins 9 am and 11 am
worship schedule.
Livestream on YouTube or Facebook.

**SEPTEMBER
SERMON TEXTS**

Texts are subject to change.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2020
Psalm 28

SEPTEMBER 13, 2020
Psalm 22: 1-21

SEPTEMBER 20, 2020
Psalm 22: 22-31

SEPTEMBER 27, 2020
Psalm 24

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
Director of Discipleship,
Men's Ministry & Young Adults



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Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287

brchristiancounseling.com

Women's Ministry College Scholarship Fund

by Kathy Mullins, First Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge Foundation Board Member

In August 1955, a College Scholarship Fund was established by the women of the church to offer financial assistance to student members who would otherwise have difficulty meeting the obligations of continued education. In June 1975, Dr. Sherrard Rice asked the "Women of the Church" to be administrators of all educational gifts to the church; "Since the women of the church have done such a splendid job in the field for several years . . ."

Since these early times, more than one hundred fifty students have benefited from annual grants from this fund. Today, the Women's Ministry Memorial College Scholarship Fund is managed within the First Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge Foundation and is still reliant on donations from church families wishing to support the academic needs of students.

By indicating Women's Ministry Memorial College Scholarship Fund when donating to First Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge Foundation, this valuable legacy giving will grow and provide financial assistance for students of the future.

Supplies Needed for Hurricane Laura Relief

Until such time as it is safe to send relief groups to Southwest Louisiana, FPC is collecting the following items in the gym: bottled water, baby supplies, toiletries, non-perishables, batteries, tarps, pet supplies. Cash or checks will also be accepted.

Stitching *cont. from pg. 1*

On Sunday evening, September 20 at 5 pm, I'd like to host you in the Sanctuary for a workshop entitled Countering Cancel Culture. We'll take up the ideas we began considering in the message that contrasted the Christian and Marxist worldview.

Finally, our music department will host a fun night called "A Night of Social Distan-SING!" on September 17 in the Sanctuary. Our great singers will bring their talents for a delightful evening of celebrating the gift of music.

Onward, beloved congregation. Your faith inspires me. Your faithfulness astounds me. It's so natural to love being your pastor.

