

FPC NEWSLETTER

Deeper in Christ, Further into the World



REMEMBER THIS?

By **GERRIT DAWSON**

Senior Pastor

As 22 years flows too quickly to a close, I've been thinking about memorable times in our church. Of course, wonderful Sundays, beautiful weddings and heartbreaking funerals. Live Nativities and Christmas Eves, Palm Sunday processions and Easter sunrises. But a few events pop to mind:

The Sunday in 2004 I was to give my first visioning sermon. The theme was "Let Your Light Shine." That morning the whole campus lost power and we worshiped in the dark. 🙄

Katrina in 2005 and hosting 50 U.S. Marshalls in our Gym. How safe we felt!

The decision in 2007 to align with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) denomination as a matter of faithfulness to the essentials of the faith. Huge growth followed.

Hurricane Gustav in 2008 and members on sleeping bags in the Church Library. Our custodian cooking for a hundred each night as we ate together before curfew.

Renovating the Sanctuary and creating the Terraced Garden in 2010.

Hosting the EPC General Assembly in 2012.

2016. Worshiping in solidarity with Abounding Love

during the racial tension. The Flood: all hands on deck helping our members and our city for months.

Covid 2020! Pivoting to worshipping online and finding ways to connect. Navigating masks and protocols. Having 600 for Kirkin' worship in the parking lot. The Gym becoming a winter wonderland for Christmas services.

2026: The purchase of the Tamarisk property doubling the footprint of our campus. What wonderful ministry beyond what we can see now is just beyond the horizon?

So many great memories of being on the journey with you to press deeper into Christ and reach further into the world. How grateful I've been to be your pastor!



Gerrit

Combined Worship and Reception

Sunday, April 26

Join us on Sunday, April 26 for a meaningful and memorable morning as Gerrit preaches his final sermon before retiring. We will gather for one combined service at 10.30 am, followed by a reception to celebrate his faithful ministry and lasting impact. There will be no adult or children's Sunday school.

2 "GENERATION TO GENERATION" GALA

2 HOLY WEEK WORSHIP

3 "NEHEMIAH NOW" WOMEN'S STUDY

3 YOUTH & CHILDREN'S BUZZ

APRIL EVENTS

- 2 Maundy Thursday Service
- 3 Father/Son Hike
- 3 & 6 Office Closed
- 12 Kids' Special "Manners" Class
- 15 "Nehemiah Now" Begins
- 15 Prime Time Club Trip
- 17 Gala
- 19 "Ask a Pastor" Kids' Class
- 26 10.30 am Worship
- 26 High School Senior Blessing

UPCOMING APRIL EVENTS

- 3 Senior Sunday
- 3 Confirmation Service
- 16 Returning Hearts Celebration

BAPTISMS

March 22, 2026
Allison Alleman
Parents are Andrea & Andrew

CHAPEL AND SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers are given . . .

April 5 . . . to the glory of God and in memory of Norman Saurage III, Maude & Norman Saurage Sr., Alma Lee & Norman Saurage Jr., and Flora & Gustave Spaht by their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

April 12 Open date.

April 19 . . . in honor of our grandchildren, Robert Wilson Russ IV (25), John Boydston Russ (23), Corinne Elizabeth Boydston (17), James Ryan Whittington (15), John Herbert Boydston III (11), Kirby Elaine Boydston (8), and Katharine Elizabeth Boydston (6) from their loving grandparents Nan and Herb Boydston.

April 26 . . . the glory of God and in loving memory of Cherry & Gene Owen by Eleanor Owen Kerr & Patrick Kerr.

Please contact Kathy Mullins if you would like to donate flowers (603.4735).

IT'S ON! "GENERATION TO GENERATION" GALA

Mark your calendar for "From Generation to Generation: A Night of Celebration & Vision" on Friday, April 17 at Boudreaux's. This special evening will joyfully honor Gerrit and celebrate his faithful leadership while also sharing our new Master Campus Plan and the vision for what's ahead for our property. The night will feature a festive atmosphere, dinner, live music, and dancing as we give thanks for God's faithfulness and look ahead with anticipation to where he is leading us next. The price per person is \$75 with special offers available. Please register by Friday, April 10 by scanning the code or visiting fpcbr.org.



Prime Time Club Spring Getaway: Coach Trip to Jefferson Island & Cajun Dining!

Join us for the long-anticipated trip to Jefferson Island on Wednesday, April 15. We will ride in style on board a chartered coach and travel to Lafayette where we will enjoy a wonderful lunch at Prejean's Seafood Restaurant. From there, we will travel to New Iberia to explore Jefferson Island, the historic Jefferson Mansion, and the tranquil Rip Van Winkle Gardens. Exact details will follow, but we will depart the church after 9.30 am and return before 6 pm. Visit Church Center or fpcbr.org to register. \$14 is the base cost. The chartered coach (\$45) and Prejean's lunch (\$35) are optional. If you have problems with the online registration, please feel free to call Brenda Salassi (225.241.4916).



The Prime Time Ministry is open to FPC members who are 60 and older. Let Brenda know if you are interested in inviting any non-members or if you'd like to be included as a Pre-Prime-Timer! We have been able to accommodate these requests thus far.

The deadline for registration is Tuesday, April 7 at 11 pm.

Maundy Thursday Service of Shadows: Cursed Tree/Wondrous Cross April 2 at 7 pm

A multi-sensory, multi-media service of worship inviting all to consider the shimmering facets of the finished work of Christ Jesus on Calvary's cross.

Easter Sunday Is April 5! 6.30, 9 and 11 am Worship

Easter is a time to come together with fellow believers and celebrate the victory of life over death, and rejoice in the hope of Christ's resurrection. Bring your loved ones and let us celebrate this blessed day together!

Start your day with a 6.30 am sunrise service in the Terraced Garden. Experience the beauty of the morning light as we gather outdoors to honor the hope and new beginnings Easter represents. This is a peaceful way to begin your Easter journey. Stay after worship for a light breakfast in the Courtyard. No worries if it rains. We'll gather in the Sanctuary.



If a later start suits you better, join us at 9 or 11 am in the Sanctuary for a vibrant and joyful service filled with uplifting music and a powerful message of renewal.

NEHEMIAH NOW WOMEN'S STUDY



Throughout our study in Nehemiah, we've watched God restore what was broken—walls rebuilt, worship renewed, a people re-centered on his Word. But that restoration was never just about Jerusalem. It continues in us.

In this four-week follow-up study, we'll explore how the themes of Nehemiah echo into the New Testament and into our lives today. Looking at passages like Ephesians 4:1–16, Matthew 16:13–20, 1 Peter 2:1–10, and 1 Corinthians 3:9–17, we'll

consider how God continues to build his Church through unity, holiness, spiritual maturity, and Christ-centered leadership.

The same God who strengthened Nehemiah to rebuild broken walls is still at work building his people, shaping his Church, and establishing Christ as our firm foundation.

This study will be offered the following **Wednesday** evenings from 6.30 to 7.30 pm at the home of Suzie Thompson (13 Stones Throw): April 15, April 22, April 29, and May 6.

It will also be offered the following **Thursday** mornings from 9.30 to 10.30 am in FPC Room 202: April 16, April 23, April 30, May 7. Childcare will be offered for this study, by request only.

Both studies will also be available via Zoom. Visit fpcbr.org for Zoom links.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRY BUZZ

Special Sunday School Class with Jill Garner on April 12

Get ready for a special treat in Sunday school! Jill Garner of *Manners of the Heart* is joining us for an engaging and meaningful lesson designed just for 1st–5th grades at 10.10 am in in SB 36.

“Ask a Pastor” with Colton on April 19

Pastor Colton is joining us for a special Sunday school Q&A just for 1st–5th graders! Come ready with your questions and enjoy a fun, engaging time of conversation and learning together. Join us at 10.10 am in SB 36.

Vacation Bible School Camper and Volunteer Registration Is Open! Dates Are June 8–12

Cost is just \$10 per camper, with free registration for volunteers' kids. Spots are limited—register now on the Church Center app or fpcbr.org! Volunteers are needed!

Father/Son Hike on Friday, April 3

Join Colton and Daniel for a middle and high school Father/Son Hike on Friday, April 3! Meet at church at 9 am and caravan together to Clark Creek for a day of fresh air and fellowship. Please bring \$10/person and plenty of water. We plan to return to Baton Rouge around 3 pm.

Senior Blessing on Sunday, April 26

Join us for a special Senior Blessing as we celebrate and pray over our graduating seniors. This meaningful evening will be held on Sunday, April 26 from 5–7 pm at the Kirkpatrick home. Come encourage and honor these students as they step into their next chapter! Visit Church Center to register.



SERMON TEXTS

Texts are subject to change.

APRIL 5

Isaiah 25:6–9

APRIL 12

John 20:19–31

APRIL 19

Mark 12:28–34

APRIL 26

1 Peter 1:3–5

BIRTHS

March 1, 2026

Jackson Hogue

Parents are Lauren & Jackson

March 13, 2026

Eleanor Smith

Parents are Elizabeth & Adrian

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON

Senior Pastor

DARIN TRAVIS

Associate Pastor for Discipleship

SCOTT GRAHAM

Associate Pastor for
Pastoral Care and Prayer

COLTON UNDERWOOD

Associate Pastor of Children,
Youth and Families

DANIEL CROSKREY

Pastoral Resident



CONTACT INFORMATION

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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

1827: FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BEGINS
Church History, Continued from March 2026
By Zora Olsson

At the conclusion of worship on May 27, 1927, the church was formally organized with fifteen charter members. Some transferred their membership from congregations in other towns and states, while others joined a church for the very first time. Many of these names remain familiar in our community today.

Formerly Members Elsewhere:

Mr. Josiah Alexander
Mrs. Mary A. Avery
Mrs. Rachel Carle
Mr. Richard Kinner
Mr. Sylvester G. Parsons
Mrs. Mary Sear
Mrs. Jane Searles
Mrs. Margaret Tuttle
Mr. Parmalee Walker

Joined for the First Time:

Mrs. Mary Kinner
Mrs. Elizabeth Lilly
Mrs. Mary Parsons
Mr. Albert G. Penny
Mrs. Elizabeth Stannard
Mrs. Sarah Walker

To be continued in next month's issue of FPC News.

MOTHER'S DAY OUT IS HIRING!

MDO is hiring a teacher for the two-year-old class for next year. Please contact Whitney Weiner to inquire (mdo@fpabr.org or 620.0245).

QUICK AND EASY VOLUNTEER FORM

Our online volunteer form is your front door to meaningful connection at First Presbyterian Church. Whether your heart beats for Community Life, Worship, Greeter Ministry, or the Pew Rack Guild, there's a place for your gifts to flourish. Visit fpabr.org/connect to explore opportunities and jump in. Your church needs you—and we can't wait to serve alongside you.

INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP PARTNERS

In April, IFP is focusing on building relationships with internationals from past gatherings—an ideal time to get involved. Opportunities to share God's love are everywhere through everyday activities. Ask the Lord to guide you. "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Hebrews 13:1–2). Contact Valerie Gastinel (225.241.1386) or LeeAnn Kozan (850.899.5444) for more information.