

FPC NEWSLETTER

Deeper in Christ, Further into the World

PALATE CLEANSER

By Scott Graham

Interim Senior Pastor

What a joy it is to address you for the first time in my new role as Interim Senior Pastor. Transitions can be challenging times for us individually or as a church, but these are also significant opportunities for us to see God at work in new and powerful ways among us. I am grateful for my skilled colleagues Darin and Colton, as well as our first-rate staff and enthusiastic elders and deacons. God has blessed us with wonderful and devout leadership, and I'm excited to experience with you what God shows us about himself and how he is leading us.

I have had some experience and training in the area of Transitional Pastoring. I'd like to share with you three advantages our EPC denomination sees in having an interim/transitional pastor:

Provide a clear understanding of the church's mission and purpose, which allows the pastoral search team to discern the gifts and experience needed for a pastor that best suits the congregation.

FPC did some excellent work on our mission and purpose before Gerrit's departure. I've held individual interviews with each of our Ruling Elders on the Session, and I guided interviews with all of our staff members to update and clarify where we are now.

Mature and stable leadership allows the pastoral search team the *time to be thorough*.

Having three and half years with our church family has provided a sense of security for many that I believe will help give "breathing space" for our search team, knowing that Jesus Christ is still our true Head Pastor.

Intentional preparation for the congregation to receive the new pastor well.

We don't know how long this season will last, or exactly what the next permanent pastor will be like. We do know, however, that he will have a different skill set and particular call from the Lord as your pastor that is a bit different from Gerrit. If we were to compare Rev. Dawson's ministry to a fine wine, and his successor to a new wine to be decanted, it only makes sense to have a cold glass of water in between to "cleanse the palate."

God has good and important work for us to do here and now. Let's enjoy that together as we walk into the future he has for us!

Blessings,




SUMMER WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church will have combined 10.30 am services each Sunday in July and on August 2. All Sunday school classes (children, youth, and adults) are taking a summer break as well.

2 WOMEN'S
TESTIMONY
LUNCH

2 CHILDREN'S
MINISTRY
SOCK HOP

3 COLLEGE
SCHOLARSHIP
APPLICATIONS

3 VOLUNTEER
MISSION
OPPORTUNITIES

4 OFFICER
NOMINATIONS

JUNE CALENDAR

- 1–5 Middle School EPiC Retreat
- 8–11 Vacation Bible School
- 12 Youth Church Cleaning Day
- 20 & 24 Habitat Workday
- 22–25 Capernaum Camp
- 24 Women's Testimony Luncheon
- 27 IFP Pool Party

JULY CALENDAR

- Each Weds. Women's Study
- Each Sunday 10.30 am Worship
- 31 Officer Nominations Due

BIRTHS

February 24, 2026
 Bennett Voelker
 Parents are Claire & John

DEATHS

May 10, 2026
 Kay Kirkpatrick

BAPTISMS

May 10, 2026
 Christopher Robert Slaydon
 Parents are Amelie Claire & Joel

FLOWERS

The Chapel and Sanctuary flowers are . . .

June 7 . . . given in loving memory of Sue & Bill Edrington and Mary & Emmett Edrington by Susie & Buzzy Heroman, Leah & Billy Edrington and Lynn & Mark Edwards.

June 14 . . . to the glory of God and in memory of our parents, Hazel & Paul Peters and Jerry & Ned Hickel, by Cherie & Bill Peters.

June 21 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of our parents, Dorothy & Joachim Aubert and Emma & Pete Ramos, by Fé & Murphy Aubert.

June 28 . . . given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Dr. Lindley Spaht Dodson on the occasion of her birthday, June 30, by Susan & Frederic Billings.

TELL THE STORY: WOMEN'S TESTIMONY LUNCHEON

I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation (Psalm 40:10).



Our testimonies are so much more than merely faith stories; they are powerful tools through which we bear witness to the real and tangible ways the Lord has met us, sustained us, shaped us, and continues to draw us closer to him over time. Scripture calls us not to keep God's faithfulness hidden, but to speak of it, to tell of his deliverance, and to make his love and goodness known.

Join Women's Ministry for a time of testimony and fellowship as Jackie Cagley, Ryn Jones, Rachel Reese-Kollmeyer, and Candace Walker share how the Lord has worked personally and powerfully in their lives. Come and be encouraged as you hear what God has done—and what he is still doing—in our family of faith.

Wednesday, June 24 from 11.30 am–1.30 pm in the FPC Reception Room
 A variety of salads, sips, and sweets!
 \$15 per person. [Register online](#) on Church Center or fpcbr.org.
 Childcare is available.

Why These Women? Women's Ministry Summer Study

When we open Matthew's Gospel, we're immediately met with a genealogy, and if we're honest, it's a long list of names we're tempted to skip. But tucked into that list are the names of five women: Tamar. Rahab. Ruth. Bathsheba. Mary. Not the names you would expect. Not the stories you would choose. Women. Outsiders. Complicated stories intentionally placed by Matthew at the very opening of his Gospel. So, we are inclined to ask: Why these women?



This July, Women's Ministry will spend five weeks looking at these women's stories and what they reveal about our Savior, and how they powerfully and uniquely prepare us for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We'll meet Wednesday, July 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29 from 6 to 7.30 pm at the home of Suzie Thompson (13 Stones Throw). Light refreshments will be provided.

Attention Parents of Rising 1st Graders!

Parents of rising first graders are invited to join their children for their final Children's Church on August 2. Please accompany your child to Dunham Chapel when dismissed during the greeting.

Children's Ministry Sock Hop on August 7

Get ready to twist, jive, and rock around the clock at our Sock Hop! Children's Ministry invites our families to join us for a fun-filled evening of music, dancing, games, and sweet treats. Dinner will be served, so come hungry and ready for a night of fellowship and family fun. Dress in your favorite 50s-inspired outfits and join us for a blast from the past you won't want to miss! Our Sock Hop is Friday, August 7, 6–7.30 pm. Visit fpcbr.org or Church Center for [registration](#).



Youth Church Cleaning Day

Middle and high school students are invited to join us on Friday, June 12 from 9 am to 2 pm for a special service opportunity as we come together to help clean and care for our church home! Lunch will be served. Sign up on [Church Center](#).

MEMBER COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

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. Aid is intended to be a helpful supplement in the student's pursuit of higher education. The application deadline is July 13, 2026. Applications are immediately forwarded to the Committee after submitting. Visit fpcbr.org to [submit an application](#). Please email Stacey Moore (staceysandlinmoore@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

MISSION VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Come Volunteer at Camp Capernaum

The Capernaum Summer Adventure is June 22–25 at Tickfaw State Park Group Camp. Capernaum, a Young Life ministry for youth with disabilities, needs volunteers to help with activities, cooking, and meals. High school students (17+) and adults are welcome. Serve for a day or the entire week. Contact Lindsay Stratman for details and to sign up (lindsay@fpcbr.org).

Let's Help Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity is calling for volunteers to lend a hand building a home currently under construction. Join us on Saturday, June 20 or Wednesday, June 24 from 7.45 am to 2.30 pm. No construction experience needed! Volunteers must be 18 or older. Sign up to volunteer at fpcbr.org.

Making a Splash with Internationals

International Friendship Partners is excited to host its annual Pool Party at the Wilsons' (Billy, Garland, Wilhelmina, and Randall). Everyone is invited! This event helps welcome international students—who are feeling our Louisiana summer—and gives them time to relax with our First Presbyterian family. The details: Saturday, June 27, 5–7 pm. Food will be provided. For more information, please contact LeeAnn Kozan (850.899.5444, leeannkozan@gmail.com) or Valerie Gastinel (225.241.1386, vgastinel@yahoo.com).

Kids Hope USA: Loving Students through Mentorship and Prayer

All children need healthy, consistent relationships with adults who are committed to helping them grow, develop, and thrive. As part of our local outreach, First Presbyterian partners with Gardere Community Christian School through Kids Hope USA and one-on-one mentoring. Through these relationships, we invest in students and love them as Christ loves us.

As a Kids Hope USA trained mentor, you'll spend one hour each week during the school day with a student playing games, coloring, reading books, and talking. Occasionally, you may complete minimal academic work, but the focus of this time together is on building a meaningful relationship. You'll receive training and be matched with a behind the scenes prayer partner who will pray for you and your student.

There are three ways to be a part of Kids Hope USA: a weekly mentor, a prayer partner, or a special events volunteer such as teacher appreciation luncheon. Will you help us serve our friends at Gardere Community Christian School? To learn more about Kids Hope USA, connect with Bonnie Adams (bonnie@fpcbr.org) or sign up through [Church Center](#).



SERMON TEXTS

Subject to change. Please visit fpcbr.org for July texts.

JUNE 7
Exodus 17:1–7

JUNE 14
Exodus 19:1–9

JUNE 21
Exodus 20:1–3; 24:7–11

JUNE 28
Exodus 33:1–6, 15–23; 34:5–8

PASTORAL STAFF

SCOTT GRAHAM
Interim Senior Pastor
Associate Pastor for
Pastoral Care and Prayer

DARIN TRAVIS
Associate Pastor for Discipleship

COLTON UNDERWOOD
Associate Pastor of Children,
Youth and Families

DANIEL CROSKREY
Pastoral Resident



CONTACT INFORMATION

225.387.0617
fpcbr.org

763 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Pre-
school
225.620.0245

BR Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287
brchristiancounseling.com



ALOHA, FRIENDS!

Please join the Prime Timers (ages 60+) for our Hawaiian Luau on Thursday, August 6 at 11.30 am in the church gym. Enjoy delicious island-style food, tropical décor, and listen to the St. Alban's Ukulele Orchestra serenade us with their relaxing music. Be transported to far away island scenes and breezes! Slip on your flip flops, Hawaiian shirts and dresses, and feel the island vibes—grass skirts optional! So “lei” back and enjoy the fun and fellowship! Watch for the online registration in late July.

OFFICER NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2029 CLASS

The Officer Nominating Committee nominates elders and deacons by receiving suggested names of members from the congregation, then prayerfully preparing a slate and presenting the slate at the annual October congregational meeting for election. Please be in prayer about who you might suggest. Suggestion cards will be available in the pew racks and [online](#) beginning Sunday, June 28 and are due July 31.

NEW CHURCH BUILT IN 1828 FPC Church History, Continued from May 2026

By Zora Olsson

The original Presbyterian Church building was located at 4th and Church Streets. It was dedicated on June 29, 1828. Newspapers described it as “a neat wooden building and one of the chief ornaments of the town.”

Membership extended over a large geographical area with some living as far as 25 miles away. In 1835, the Mississippi Presbytery divided First Presbyterian of East Baton Rouge. Thirty-five congregants were organized into The Church of the Plains, 25 miles north of Baton Rouge. First Presbyterian Church also received as its new minister the Rev. James Purviance from Baltimore, under the direction of the Mississippi Missionary Society. He was described as a “man for the times.” He was deservedly esteemed by all and loved by the membership. By 1838, he became moderator of the Mississippi Presbytery leaving the church to look for a new minister.



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