

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

fpcNEWS

January 2018 Volume 52-1

Rage? No. Blaze!

By Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Are you mad? Lots of people are. As we reflect on the year that has passed, we recall 2017 as a year of continual outrage. Just a glance at a news site reveals constant use of trigger words for rage. Someone is always “furious,” “offended,” “attacked,” “slamming” or “accused.” We snap, bite and devour with voracious outrage.

But do you ever wonder who benefits from making sure you are in a constant state of agitation? Lots of people want to keep us angry. News sites want you addicted to the chemical rush of being furious at “those” people. Politicians want you hostile enough to vote against their opponents. Nonprofits count on our anger to inspire donations. In short, anger undergirds power. Outrage is a fuel, and we supply it by the tanker load to those who use our anger for their gain.

By contrast, Scripture tells us, “The anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God” (James 1: 20). In other words, we’re getting duped into thinking that outrage is productive.

Christ’s kingdom is not built on the screechy offendedness of a provoked people. When we *seethe*, we’re being *deceived*. We’re not building, we’re only burning. And we’re being used for others’ purposes.

The task of Christ’s people is very different than perpetual outrage. But that doesn’t mean we’re to be bland, passionless door mats. We’re called to *blaze* with the light of Christ. It’s a light that exposes darkness and leads people home. It’s a light that illumines injustice even as it reveals a better kingdom. Shining the unquenchable light of Christ will outrage the already outraged. So be it. There are those shivering in the dark who need the heat of the gospel. There are those falling into ruin from the users and the takers. They need the creative fire of Christ to rebuild their lives. Only Christ’s people have that light. We have to uncover it and let it shine.

At the beginning of WW II, the poet W.H. Auden noted,

“Defenseless under the night
The world in stupor lies.
Yet dotted everywhere
. . . points of light
Flash out wherever the Just
Exchange their messages.
May I . . . show an affirming flame.”

As we look forward to a New Year, let’s be committed to moving from rage to blaze. From shredding words to the *affirming flame* of encouragement, truth and love. Jesus the Light of the world told his disciples, “You are the light of the world.” We draw fire from him. He sends us to blaze with the flame that recreates.

I look forward to a year of shining Christ’s light together, and to another 12 months where I can affirm how much I love to be your pastor.

Gerrit



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MEDIA

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MARRIAGE MATTERS

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JANUARY CALENDAR

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Offices Closed | Jan 1 |
| Open Air Ministries | Jan 5 |
| Sunday Evening Prayer Resumes | Jan 7 |
| <i>Jacob's Follies</i> Tryouts | Jan 7, 13 & 14 |
| Children's Choir Resumes | Jan 14 |
| Perspectives Class Starts | Jan 14 |
| Women's Bible Studies Resume | Jan 17 |
| Marriage Matters Seminar | Jan 20 |
| Discover First Dinner | Jan 28 |

UPCOMING EVENTS

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Good Grief Seminar | Feb 3 |
|--------------------|-------|

IN MEMORIAM:

December 1, 2017
Bill Stirling, brother of Louis Stirling

December 3, 2017
Bob Hester

December 3, 2017
Margaret Tranchina, grandmother of Mary Ann Yeargain

December 4, 2017
Edna Rowland

December 14, 2017
Carolyn Sanford, aunt of Wilson Baldrige

December 15, 2017
Lucile Lawrason, aunt of Lin Sturgis and Ed Douglas

December 21, 2017
Mary Lou Beck

BAPTISMS:

December 17, 2017
Addison Daigre Rigby
Parents are Elise and Chad Rigby
Grandparents are Jill and Nick Garner

December 24, 2017
Evelyn and Forothy Daniel
Parents are Arleen and John Daniel
Grandparents are Mark and Gail Ewing

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary . . .

Jan 7 . . . to the glory of our Lord and Savior and in loving memory of Dana Baker Othmer by Hans, Devan and Jacob Othmer.

Jan 14 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. Norwood, Jr. and Larry Charles Musgrove, Sr. by Chrystal Norwood Musgrove and family.

Jan 21 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Allison Poché Brumfield by her family.

Jan 28 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Clifton Frank Fabr  by his wife, Margery and children: Kip Fabr ; Sandy and John Fabr ; Lauren and David Fabr ; Farin and Marty Ware and Calvin Fabr  and the girls.

One More Present: Right Now Media

by Darin Travis, Director for Discipleship, Men's Ministry & Young Adults

rightnow MEDIA

The Christmas season has wrapped up for the 2017 year, but I have one more present for you! As the director for discipleship at our church, I am often asked about where good content for small groups or Sunday school material

can be found. Others are asking me for solid Bible studies for their personal devotional time at home. When someone is wanting to develop a deeper walk with Christ, wrestling through challenges in a marriage, seeking wisdom for raising children or simply looking for good programming for their kids' entertainment, where can they turn?

Our church would like to equip you with resources for these areas of life and more, which is why we are giving every First Presbyterian Church member a free subscription to Right Now Media (RNM). RNM is an online treasure trove of Biblical content with hundreds of videos from many of our nation's Christian teachers. You will find series on individual books of the Bible as well as relevant topical subjects. Within the site is also a wide variety of downloadable Bible studies for personal and small group use.

One of the best things that my family has personally enjoyed about RNM is the programming for kids. Have you heard of *Veggie Tales* or watched an episode of *What's in the Bible?* I have found that kids and adults alike love learning Biblical principles while enjoying the witty comedy of these series. Road trips in our mini-van wouldn't be complete without watching a few episodes of *Adventures in Odyssey* or *Bibleman*. The kids' videos on RNM are plentiful and excellent.

My desire in making all of this material available to you is that you would walk deeply with Christ. Look for an email from the church inviting you to create a login and enjoy your membership to Right Now Media!

Renovations, Replacements and Repairs

by Jay High, Director of Media, Technology and Facilities

It was a blessing to return my focus (after the 2016 flood) to our beautiful campus in 2017! It has been a busy, messy, but productive year! It started with completing the replacement of all Education Building windows and the restoration of the lower stained-glass windows—which all turned out beautifully!



Susie Thompson enjoying the new windows in the Library.

Before the window paint had even dried, we moved on to repairing or replacing the roofs throughout our campus. This was no small undertaking. We had eliminated roof repairs from the 2010/2011 renovation, due to downsizing the scope of the work. Many of you have pointed out damaged walls and ceilings throughout the campus, and if these issues were not fixed by the new windows, they were to be fixed with the roof repairs or waterproofing—which was coming next! From fixing the Sanctuary's pitched roof, to replacing the flat roofs over the Sanctuary and Education Buildings, to repairing every other roof, the work is nearly complete and all leaks eliminated!

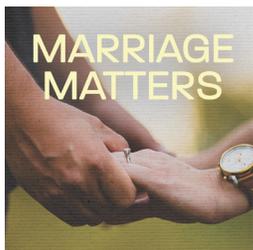
Before the roofing dumpster was even gone, we were on to waterproofing, including new sealant around windows, replacement of damaged wood, to coating the buildings with special

protectants. Our contractors will resume the work right after the new year.

We are already getting quotes to repair and repaint damaged walls and ceilings. Within months, we will be finished restoring the interiors and exteriors of our beautiful campus. Thank you for your generous giving which makes all this possible—and my job more fun!

“Marriage Matters” Seminar

by Jim Solomon, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care and Prayer



Whether we are single, married, divorced, widowed or know somebody who is, we can each be blessed through learning about and living out God’s Design for Marriage. The marriage in mind may be your current and only marriage, your final marriage or your future marriage. If you are single whether through never having been married, being divorced or being widowed, the marriage in mind for your future will affect your attitudes, actions and behavioral patterns in your present. Why? Because what we learn today and what we do in response to what we’ve learned will either make us or break us when it comes to experiencing God’s best for us in our marriages and in our lives.

On Saturday, January 20, from 9 am to 3 pm, we will learn about, reflect upon and even enjoy a small assignment on what it takes to build (or “rebuild”) a marriage that will go the distance. The seminar will be based on God’s Word and filled with the timeless truths of the Bible, rather than what I often call “Man’s Word,” which is influenced by the customs, conveniences and consumerist mindset of our culture. We will discuss everything from communication, sex and money to oneness, loyalty and commitment.

I hope and pray that you will join me regardless of your current social status as we strive to model our lives after the Master of Life and all he offers us for our own transformation, others’ blessings

Ways of Worship: Chapel Communion

by Gerrit Dawson

Every Sunday, we offer three distinctive styles of worship. The Scripture and message are the same in each service, but the order and music vary. I encourage all our members to become multilingual in worship: to try each service during the course of a year.

The 7.45 service fulfills Psalm 108, “I will awake the dawn. I will give thanks to you, O LORD among the peoples.” There’s a special joy in gathering first thing in the new day to proclaim the praises of our God.

The services unfolds in our beautiful Dunham Chapel. We are surrounded by stained glass windows depicting the story of Jesus. And we share the Lord’s Supper every week. Worshipers note how formative it is to their faith to partake of both Word and Sacrament each week. The intimacy of the Chapel creates a cozy, meditative feel to the morning. With piano, organ, special solos and personal prayers, Chapel Communion richly worships our Triune God.



Jesus and Boy with Loaves and Fishes, Dunham Chapel

Running with Perseverence: WiM Spring 2018 Studies

“Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.”

Women in Ministry will be studying Hebrews in the Spring and we would like to invite you to join us! Hebrews is an incredibly Christ-centered book that will challenge and encourage us in the race set before us.



Elizabeth Parker will teach Hebrews Wednesdays at 2 pm and 6.30 pm beginning January 17 and Thursdays at 9.30 am. Jaime Carnaggio will teach Hebrews in a mom’s

study Thursdays at 9.30 am. Contact Jaime at jaime@fpabr.org for more information. Elizabeth and Jaime’s Thursday morning studies will begin January 18 and will meet for 12 weeks.

Lisa Head will teach through the Psalms in her Wednesday, 6.30 am Bible study. Lisa’s Bible study goes year round and has been working through the whole Bible!

Lastly, there is an every other week Bible or book study which will also start back on January 18. Contact Barat Travis for more details (barat.travis@cru.org).

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

7.45 am Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Reformed

JANUARY SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Texts are subject to change.

January 7
Luke 15: 11-14

January 14
To be determined

January 21
Luke 15: 25-32

January 28
Luke 10: 25-37

PASTORAL STAFF

Gerrit Dawson
Senior Pastor

Whitney Alexander
Associate Pastor of Missions

Josh Maddin
Assistant Pastor of Student Ministry

Barry Phillips
Ministry Executive

Jim Solomon
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

Darin Travis
Director for Discipleship,
Men’s Ministry & Young Adults



PH: 225.387.0617
FAX: 225.338.1010

fpabr.org

763 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother’s Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287

brchristiancounseling.com

Perspectives: January 14



USE WHAT'S IN YOU TO BLESS THE WORLD AROUND YOU.

Experience 15 powerful lessons that have equipped thousands of every day believers with greater vision, hope and passion. In Perspectives, Scripture, history, culture and strategy converge to reveal the unfolding of God's redemptive purposes. He is on a mission to bless the peoples of the earth and you're invited to join him.

Dates for the Perspectives course are January 14-April 29, 2018 at Chapel on the Campus. Cost is \$300 or \$450 per couple.

If you have any questions about the course, please contact Wendi Couvillion French at wyndston@outlook.com or 205.6619.

Good Grief Seminar: February 3

On Saturday, February 3 at 10 am, we will have our fourth Good Grief Seminar. In this special two-hour seminar, insight will be shared regarding not only the psychological but also the emotional, physical, relational and spiritual effects of grief in our lives. The seminar is free of charge and open to the entire community. To register, please contact Laura Shaw (laura@fpcbr.org or 620.0222). Childcare will be available.

MDO and Preschool Registration: 2018-2019 School Year

First Presbyterian church members may register early for MDO and Preschool on Tuesday, January 30 prior to registration opening to the public. Contact Whitney Weiner at 620.0245 or mdu@fpcbr.org for more information.

Discover First Dinner

Several times a year, senior pastor Gerrit Dawson hosts a Discover First dinner. This is an opportunity for you, in a smaller setting, to learn more about how you can be part of our mission and ministry.

Our next Discover First dinner will be on Sunday, January 28. If you are interested in attending or would like more information, please contact Meagan Greene at meagan@fpcbr.org or 454.2504.

Jacob's Follies Tryouts

Tryouts for the First Presbyterian Church spring musical, *Jacob's Follies*, will be January 13 and 14 for adults. Middle and high school tryouts are January 7. Musical dates are March 16-18, 2018. Email Nancy Spiller for further information, nancy@fpcbr.org.