

fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

July 2016 Volume 50-07

What's the Big Deal About Small Groups?

By Derek McCollum, Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Young Adults

Let's face it—these days it's easy to put together a really wonderful worship experience in the comfort of your own home or car. You can download the best music, find the best preaching and tailor everything to your most particular desire. But guess what? Finding the best of everything on your own is the worst way to go about the Christian life. Why? Because we need each other in order to grow as Christians. As one author puts it, "your walk with God is a community project."

It's because the Lord has built into us a need for community that First Presbyterian is making a strong push this fall for greater involvement in small groups. In particular, we are re-launching our home fellowship groups (remember the groups from Lent?). These groups are a great opportunity to get together with others and experience the truth of the gospel together.

Let me give you a quick glimpse of how things are going to roll out in the early fall (we're planning for these groups to begin right after Labor Day).

- Groups are already starting to organize. In fact, this is a great time for you to start discussing the idea of a small group with your friends and neighbors. Been in a group before? Talk to those group members. New to the small-group-thing? Start talking to those you know about getting together. It's really that easy.

- Then, as August ramps up, we'll host two major small group events—we're calling them Meet and Match events (m&ms!)—and they will take place in the reception room during the Sunday mornings of August 14 and 21. These events will simply let you find a group based on the criteria that matters most to you. All of our groups will be represented, allowing those unattached to mingle, meet and match up with those that represent the best fit. It's like speed dating for small groups!

- The majority of our groups will then get together weekly (between Labor Day and Thanksgiving) and study the Bible passage that was preached on the previous week. With the content already delivered and discussion questions provided, we think getting together will be both easy and flexible.

Our goal is to have 500 people connected in a small group. That's an ambitious goal, but I think it's doable. Will you consider being one of those people? I hope so.

July Combined Worship and Sunday School

During the five Sundays of July, First Presbyterian will come together for one single

10.30 am worship service in the Sanctuary. We'll have three adult Sunday School options. Each begins at 9.30 am with combined worship following at 10.30 in the Sanctuary (No SS on July 3).

Options include:

1. Christianity Explored. A good class if you:

- a. Aren't sure what you believe or are new to church and/or to Christianity.
- b. Have a friend who fits into that first category. This is a great class to bring a friend.
- c. Have been a Christian for quite some time. It's easy to forget what it is like to hear the gospel for the first time.

Come and hear it afresh and be reminded of the core message of Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

2. "Side by Side." This class will explore the book, "Side By Side," that was given out a few weeks ago. Come and discuss what it means to be needy and to be needed—the roots of true community. Call the church of office (387.0617) if you need a book.

3. Global Outreach. Let MacGregor Magruder and Whitney Alexander walk you through the materials Mac uses on the mission field and learn more about God's mission in the world. We encourage you to invite a friend for these blended services.



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JULY CALENDAR

Community Outreach Meal	July 3
Church Office Closed	July 4
Women in Ministry Social	July 12
Women's Micah Study Begins	July 12
Children's Story Time	July 14
Stay for Fellowship	July 31

IN MEMORIAM:

June 7, 2016
 Jim Upton, Brent Upton's father
 Joyce Roy, Brooks Roy's mother

June 11, 2016
 Quinn Lemieux, Louis Quinn's grandson

June 17, 2016
 Mary Lee Posey, Whitney Weiner's grandmother

June 19, 2016
 George Hall, Steve Hall's father

June 22, 2016
 Robert Bowers, Buddy Bowers' brother

BIRTHS:

June 14, 2016
 Elliott Rigby
 Parents are Elise and Chad Rigby
 Grandparents are Jill and Nick Garner

June 15, 2016
 Maeve Mills
 Parents are Kate and Zach Mills

June 17, 2016
 Haydn Irby
 Grandparents are Leslie and Stan Bardwell

June 28, 2016
 Charles Cotton
 Parents are Lindsey and Neal Cotton

BAPTISMS:

June 19, 2016
 Joy (born June 6) and David Hall
 Parents are Becky and Steve Hall

June 26, 2016
 Theodore "Teddy" Price
 Parents are Stacie and Jesse Price

MARRIAGES:

June 18, 2016
 Stephanie Hartmann and Andrew Rutledge

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary to the glory of God ...

July 3 ... and in loving memory of Homer Dale Spaht and Kay Spaht Hutchinson, by Sue Spaht and family.

July 10 ... and in loving memory to honor Betty and L.V. (Herc) Cunningham, by Grace and Joe Scoggin.

July 17 ... and in loving memory of Thomas Cole Main Jr., Thomas Cole Main III, Shelby Main Harris and Milton Harris Sr., by Mrs. Milton Harris.

July 24 ... and in memory of loved ones by Meljissa and Mike Thibodeaux.

July 31 ... and in loving memory of the parents of Nan and Herb Boydston, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Lamar Boydston, Ms. Martha Wilbourne Nabers and Mr. Fred Foster Nabers Jr., by Nan and Herb Boydston.



Taking Care of Business

By Barry Phillips, Ministry Executive

Our campus and facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the generosity and sacrificial giving of our members. They provide a place from which we do mission and ministry far beyond downtown Baton Rouge. Inevitably, they require not only tender love and care, but also renovation and restoration. God has provided for this as well. So that you know:

- After careful professional analysis, a much needed campus wide waterproofing project has begun. It includes the replacement of the windows in the Education Building. And it will repair damage that has occurred over many years, prevent future deterioration and stop invasive moisture from seeping in to begin new damage.
- Our Bell Tower will benefit from a new control and sound system, giving us a purer sound and greater flexibility with songs and tunes.
- Our Dunham Chapel will be up-fitted with new lights for the chancel and primary space, improvements to the sound and lighting control system and tailored pew cushions.
- You may have noticed the stained glass windows on the east and west sides of the Sanctuary are 'missing.' They've been taken out for refurbishment and cleaning but will return by the end of July.
- The screens and projectors in our Sanctuary will be replaced over the next few months. Existing equipment is aging and failing. Look for a 'new look' up front when this project is complete.
- The grassy area between the Sanctuary and the Chapel will become more usable as it is up-graded to match our terraced garden north of the Chapel. The turf affords an outdoor platform for creative programming throughout the year (even when it rains).

Finally, we've begun exploring a campus wide wireless communication system that will enable our greeting and ministry teams, staff and pastors and all security personnel to communicate in real time. Coupled with additions to our security and emergency res mplete this year; and all of this because God has already provided the resources in the form of special funds, pledges and bequests. May we never take these many blessings for granted. May we be faithful in all things. May God be glorified in all that we have and all that we do.

FAMILYLIFE® Presents The Art of Marriage at The Dunham School

The Art of Marriage video event brings together some of the most respected and influential pastors and experts on marriage and family all in one setting. This unique video event provides a fresh approach by weaving together engaging stories, real-life testimonies, man-on-the-street interviews and humorous vignettes to help couples fully experience God's design for marriage.

couple, which includes individual manuals, event supplies, breakfast (served at 8.30 am) and lunch on Saturday.



The Art of Marriage consists of six video sessions and an accompanying manual that provides couples with projects to help apply the principles taught during each session. The manual is also designed for couples to use after the event by offering articles, date night ideas and useful tips for continuing to strengthen their marriage.

The two-day event will be held in The Dunham School auditorium on Friday, July 22 from 7-9 pm and on Saturday, July 23 from 9 am-5 pm. The cost is \$70 per

Register at cohbr.org/marriage.



Matthew 25: 40 By Kevin D. Hoy, CEO, The Smiles Foundation

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

The entire work of The Smiles Foundation in Romania functions day-by-day, 365 days a year, with these words of Jesus echoing in our ears. Our call to share the gospel to a hurting world is a privilege but a challenge, especially when the hurting world is right before our eyes and manifesting itself with hungry, sick or naked children. A challenge when mothers and fathers cannot provide the basic essentials, a safe home environment, the opportunity to attend school or the ability to work toward the hope of a better life.

When the plan and purpose God has for the starving, sick child is hard to explain and on the surface 'irrelevant' to his or her needs, sharing the Good News of the gospel becomes even more challenging. The daily challenge is to move the impoverished beyond immediate problems and look to the eternal solutions. Providing food and shelter for the vulnerable and giving healthcare to the sick is what Smiles does on a daily basis. We build the bridge that earns the opportunity to share the Good News of the gospel to all who will listen. In meeting these simple but essential needs, people come to understand our desire to support through the great challenge for survival. Through surviving another day, there is further chance to recognize God as the Creator and the One who has a plan and purpose for our lives.

Mircea is a seven-year-old boy. When he started school, his teacher insisted he go to a doctor. After many tests, it was discovered Mircea has no vision in his right eye. Surgery can restore his vision completely. His family does not have the funds to cover further testing, the cost of transportation to the hospital or accommodations for his mother to be with him for the surgery and recovery.

Each time we look at people like Mircea who need our support, we think of Jesus. If he was poor and starving, what would we do? Our hope and prayer is that whatever we do for the least of these, we do as if for him. Thank you for your help in continuing the mission. For information on how to participate, please contact Johnny Schwab at jschwab56@hotmail.com.

Women in Ministry Summer Social

What if you could ask a question about Christianity, Jesus or the gospel anonymously? On July 12, Women in Ministry's summer social will again have the "Now That's a Good Question" theme. Come enjoy lunch, fellowship and this fun new format where a panel of pastor(s) and trained women will answer some commonly asked questions on theology, the church and Christian life. Lunch will be at 11.30 am in the reception room. It'll be fun so bring a friend and don't forget to bring your questions. \$10 per person. Register online or at the Connection Center. Childcare provided.

Officer Nominations for the 2019 Class

The First Presbyterian Church Officer Nominating Committee nominates Elders and Deacons by receiving suggested names of members from the congregation, prayerfully preparing a slate and presenting the slate at the annual October congregational meeting for election. Please submit names of members and place them in the offering plate or mail to the church office by the end of July. Suggestion cards are located in the pews and at the Connection Center.

THE BOOK OF **MICAH**

Have you ever studied a minor prophet? Micah is the "Lord's pen"—God's mouthpiece to a fallen world. Join us as we take a careful look at what the prophet Micah has to say about the painful burdens of life, sin, repentance and God's all-powerful, saving love!

The Good Deposit, a small group of dedicated theology-minded women, will teach this 4-week study beginning Tuesday, July 12 at 6.30 pm. No registration is necessary. Contact Katie Forsthoff for more information (404.518.9765 or katieforsthoff@gmail.com).

We look forward to a summer study each year because it provides an opportunity for all women to come together as one! Study location is 1505 Ridgeland. Hope to see you there.

Fifty Year Members! During worship on July 31 we will honor those people who have been members of our church for fifty years or more. Join as we honor a half century of faithfulness.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!
One Combined 10.30 am Worship Service
Each Sunday in July

JULY SERMON TEXTS

July 3, 2016

"Pursuing Truth"
John 8: 28-36

July 10, 2016

"Let's Talk About Prayer"
Selections from Matthew

July 17, 2016

"Baking Bread in the Dark"
Joshua 1: 5b-9

July 24, 2016

Text to be Determined

July 31, 2016

"Broken in Pieces"
Psalm 38

PASTORAL STAFF

Gerrit S. Dawson

Senior Pastor

M. Whitney Alexander

Associate Pastor of City Ministry

Derek McCollum

Associate Pastor for Discipleship

and Young Adults

Barry Phillips

Ministry Executive

Josh Maddin

Assistant Pastor of Student Ministry



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Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287

www.brchristiancounseling.com

S.T.A.R.S. Sports Camp Needs Volunteers

The S.T.A.R.S. sports camp is looking for men and women, excited to share the gospel to kids in inner city Baton Rouge. We will be joining with our sister church, Abounding Love, July 5-8 to coach kids in soccer and basketball while also leading them in gospel-centered Bible studies that correlate with our play on the field. Please contact Katy Cosby (katy@fpabr.org) or Josh Woltmann (joshw@fpabr.org) for more information.

156 New Kits to Reach 8,000 Children in 15 Schools

Manners of the Heart needs help assembling kits for EBR schools July 12-13, beginning at 9 am each day. Assembly will take place in the Sanctuary basement middle school classrooms. Join us as we pray over each kit! Contact Jill Garner for further information (jrigby@mannerstheheart.org).

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Buchanan Ends Another Great Year!

It's been another fantastic year at our adopted school Buchanan Elementary! A big thank you to all of the Reading Friends, Storytime Readers, Teacher Encouragers and Special Events coordinators that helped share the love of Christ to the teachers and students at the school. Your selflessness and generosity are so appreciated. If you would like to be a part of this ministry, consider joining us in August! For more information, contact Laura Shaw at 225.278.1929 or laura@fpabr.org "We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4: 19



Catholic-Presbyterian Apartments Has Vacancies

Catholic-Presbyterian Apartments is a comprehensive retirement facility designed to provide an independent living environment for seniors of moderate to low income. Located on the edge of the Spanish Town Historic District and adjacent to the downtown Central Business District, residents enjoy the peace of a quiet residential neighborhood while being within easy walking distance to downtown churches, banks, the library, shops, the Marketplace and museums. To inquire about an apartment, please contact Diane Perkins at 225.383.5551.

Children's Story Time

You and your children are invited to join us in the Library on July 14 from 10 to 11.30 am for story time and a play date. Parents are welcome to bring bag lunches for further fellowship. Contact Audra Cato if you have any questions (audra@fpabr.org).