

fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

January 2017 Volume 51-01

A Great Year Ahead

By Gerrit S. Dawson, Senior Pastor

Our church begins the New Year with great opportunities for studying God's Word and living out his peace in our city. As you recall, for five Sundays after the flood, members of **Abounding Love Ministries** worshipped with us. Several of their congregation even joined our fall small groups. We've directed work crews and resources their way and, at last, they are ready to re-open on Hooper Road. We are all invited for their festive re-opening worship service, Sunday afternoon, **January 8 at 4.30 pm**. Their new banner will read, "The House That Love Built," because they have felt the love that flowed from us, from the community and from Christians around the country who came to help. Pastor Adraine will preach from Hagai on "Better Than the Last." Our worship team will join theirs for special music, and Pastor Albert and I will be leading the communion service together. A huge dinner follows. Plus, we will re-launch our "Fifty on Fifty" program of sharing dinner in one another's homes. We believe in healing the racial divide in our city through the unity and love shown between Christians. This is a tangible way to express that hope.

Can We Trust Our Bibles?

Every year, some clever author or television network takes a new angle on an old heresy: telling us that we cannot trust our Bibles. In ever sensational ways, we are told the Bible was put together by a bunch of power hungry old guys who suppressed the brave thinkers. Or Jesus never said half what the Bible says he said. It makes us wonder, "How did we get our Bibles? How do we know they are accurate? How do we know this is what God said rather than what man said?"

We have a world expert in the reliability of Scripture coming to speak to us! **Dr. Michael Kruger** is a New Testament Professor and the President of Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte. He's going to be leading us in three powerful sessions, Friday night and Saturday morning January 20-21.



Michael J. Kruger, President and the Samuel C. Patterson Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC.

Can We Hang Out More with Each Other?

Dr. Kruger's lessons are part of an all-church "Stay-Treat." What's a stay-treat? It's a retreat where you get to sleep in your own bed! We're wrapping the learning with food and fellowship. Dinner for all ages and stages Friday night at 6 pm then an ice-cream social after the Friday teaching. (Plus both nursery and separate children's lessons during the adult sessions). Saturday morning will feature snacks before and between Dr. Kruger's two presentations with a sandwich lunch to follow. All for a super-low price! Register now! Underwritten in part by our Ed Grant enrichment Fund.

Believers for Baton Rouge

More than two dozen churches across our city are joining together for a worship service of prayer and racial reconciliation, Thursday, January 26, 6.30 pm at the River Center.

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JANUARY CALENDAR

rEcess	Jan 6
Abounding Love Worship	Jan 8
Sunday Evening Prayer Resumes	Jan 8
Perspectives Begins	Jan 9
Polar Thang Youth Retreat	Jan 13-15
Celebrating Scripture Stay-Treat	Jan 20-21
Believers for Baton Rouge Service	Jan 26
Life Line Screening	Jan 27

IN MEMORIAM:

November 28, 2016
Robert James Smith, father of Tim Smith

December 4, 2016
Sylvia Washaur, mother of Susan Lovett

December 5, 2016
Mary Seward

December 10, 2016
Janelle Foshee, mother of Jane Kirkpatrick

BAPTISMS:

December 18, 2016
Cynthia Louise Birch
Parents are Meghan and Trey Birch

Ladd Tyrus Griffin
Parents are Katie and Adrian Griffin

Charles "Charlie" Edgar Hair, Jr.
Parents are Brianna and Charles Hair
Grandmother is Nelwyn Hair

Elliott Swayze Rigby
Parents are Elise and Chad Rigby
Grandparents are Jill and Nick Garner

BIRTHS:

Audrey Paige Cox
Parents are Emily and Andrew Cox
Grandparents are Neil and Samantha Gowdy

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

The Advent poinsettias will remain in the Sanctuary and Chapel until Epiphany, January 6. Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary to the glory of God ...

Jan 8 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of Dana Othmer by Hans, Devan and Jacob Othmer.

Jan 15 ... 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 22 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of Allison Poché Brumfield by her family.

Jan 29 ... to the glory of God and in loving memory of Clifton Frank Fabr  by his wife, Margery and children: Natalie and Kip Fabr , Sandy and John Fabr , Lauren and David Fabr , Farin and Marty Ware and Calvin Fabr  and the girls.

Healing Through Christ-Centered Fellowship

by Jim Solomon, Associate Pastor of Pastoral Care and Prayer

A Sunday School teacher asked her children on the way to church service, "Why must we be quiet in church?" One little girl proudly replied, "Because people are sleeping!" I trust that didn't happen while I delivered the message at FPC on January 1! Whether or not you were able to join us then, I'd like to share some encouragement regarding how we might practice on weekdays what we learn on weekends with you now.

In my sermon message, we considered, at a time of New Year's resolutions, the most popular of which usually involves dieting, four items on the menu of a healthy diet for growing Christ-followers based on Acts 2: 42-47. One of the items included healing, causing us to ask how we can be healed of ailments if nobody knows we have them except ourselves! What is true of physical illness is true of emotional, psychological, mental, relational and spiritual illness as well. If nobody knows about your sickness, you won't be given anything that may heal you of it!

What is your sickness? Perhaps it is something that has been hidden in the darkness of your heart that needs to be exposed to the Light of God's Word in the midst of truly Christ-centered fellowship. James tells us, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other

so that you may be healed." (James 5:16a, NIV)

It's easy to correlate prayer with healing while never asking what confession has to do with it. As a former accountant, I sometimes find it humorous that the Lord gives me "equations" to help me understand his timeless truths in an easy way. I'd like to share one with you here: Vulnerability + Accountability = Possibility. If your life is falling apart, it may be a result of not surrendering something to the One who can put it back together. (Colossians 1: 17) Yet, he can't do his part if you won't do yours. If you won't open up to somebody about something that is keeping you from looking up, then you will eventually fall down. This is why confession is critical before we can be free from all things that are detrimental and as a result, rise above what would hold us below in our thoughts and actions, growing not only in God's peace but also in God's power released in post-confession prayer. "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." (James 5: 16b, NIV)

Why waste more time managing the perception others have of you when you can be real with others so that Christ can heal you even through others? May the joy of loving one another into obedience of him be full in our walk with him! (John 15: 11-12)

Year Ahead *continued from page 1*

The service will feature internationally known speaker, Dr. Tony Evans. We believe that the peace and well being of our city requires the churches of Christ Jesus to cover our town with a blanket of prayer and unity in Christ. We want 5000 people to attend!

This is a major endeavor and features unprecedented cooperation among the churches. I urge us all to attend. Change your plans, skip the kids' activities, forego other entertainments. This will be a historic evening!

Respect BR

As our city strives to find its future after a year of racial tension and flooding, one of our ministry partners has a unique plan for weaving us all together. Respect BR is an initiative created by Manners of the Heart (their offices are in our Sanctuary building!). It's a plan for each of us, in practical ways, to daily show respect and love to our neighbors. Consider getting on board by taking the pledge of respect. You can find it at mannersoftheheart.org.

As you can see, in 2017 our church life starts strong with these major events. I'm so thankful to be your pastor in these important days.



Jim

Buchanan Ministry Recognized by Volunteers in Public Schools!



L to R: Buchanan Elementary preschool teacher Beverly Davis, First Presbyterian Church member Ella Rein Wheeler and Principal Charlotte Britten.

First Presbyterian Church was recognized at the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board meeting in November for its work at Buchanan Elementary. Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) selected FPC as its "Partner in Education" for November and thanked the church for the many ways we have supported the school. Ms. Lynelle Dixon of VIPS and Superintendent Warren Drake presented the award to Buchanan co-chair Ella Rein Wheeler. Buchanan Principal Charlotte Britten shared how much the partnership between FPC and Buchanan means to the school and thanked all of our volunteers for their service to the school.

If you would like to join this ministry, please contact Laura Shaw at 387.0617 or laura@fpibr.org. We still have 8 teachers who would love a Teacher Encourager for this school year!

The House That Love Built

Join us Sunday afternoon, January 8 at 4.30 pm for a festive, energized service of thanks and unity as Abounding Love Ministries reopens their worship center on Hooper Road. Our worship team will join theirs for music; Pastor Adraine will preach; Gerrit and Albert will lead the communion service. A great dinner follows. And, we will re-launch our Fifty on Fifty dinner program.

More for Cardiovascular Health

Nine out of ten cardiovascular doctors support preventive screenings for those with key risk factors. Early warning information can help you and your doctor take important steps to reduce your risk for more serious health issues.

Life Line Screening services, sponsored by Baton Rouge Rehabilitation Hospital, will be in the First Presbyterian Church gym conducting screenings on Friday, January 27 from 8 am to 4.30 pm. Pre-registration is required. Call (888) 653.6450 to make your appointment.

Discounts are available online by visiting lifelinescreening.com/community-partners.

Annual Giving Tax Statements Online

Did you know you can print your giving statement from the Members Portal? After you login, click the "Give" tab, then select the "My Contributions" blue button. If you need assistance printing your statement, please call Carol Pruitt at 620.0231. Statements will also be mailed to each member.



January Perspectives

Perspectives is a course that helps believers from all walks of life see how they can get threaded into God's story of redeeming people from every tribe, tongue and nation to himself. It is NOT a class about missions, but a course on how every believer can be intimately woven into the story of God using his people to be a blessing to all the peoples of the earth. This class will ruin you for the ordinary.

Classes meet weekly and begin Monday, January 9, 2017 at 6 pm. Contact Katy Cosby (katy@fpibr.org) to ensure a spot.

2017-2018 MDO and Preschool Registration

Registration for First Presbyterian members begins in January (church members may register early prior to registration opening to the public). Contact Whitney Weiner at 620.0245 or mdu@fpibr.org for more information.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

7.45 am Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Reformed

JANUARY SERMON PASSAGES

Texts and titles are subject to change.

January 8
James 1: 1-8
"Falling Into Joy"

January 15
James 1: 9-18
"Is Your Faith Any Good?"

January 22
James 1: 19-27
"Growing Our Ears"

January 29
James 2: 14-22
"What Are You Doing?"

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



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Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287
www.brchristiancounseling.com

PRAYER SERVICE

Services Resume January 8
5 PM IN DUNHAM CHAPEL



Are You a Techie?

Livestream

Are you travelling out of town on Sunday? Are you home sick? Worshipping the Lord as part of a community is an important part of being a Christian. But sometimes it's not possible to make it to church. First Presbyterian Church video livestreams our 9 am Contemporary and 11 am Classic Reformed worship services. Visit fpcbr.org/livestream to watch on Sunday morning. Then join us in person the following Sunday!



FPC Podcast

Visit the church website (fpcbr.org.podcast) or the iTunes Store to download or update the First Presbyterian Church of Baton Rouge app.



BRSO Performance

First Presbyterian is pleased to host the next concert in the Lamar Chamber Series, "Introspections: Brahms and Dohnanyi" on February 2 at 7.30 pm.

Join BRSO musicians in a emotional display of virtuosity and lyricism featuring one of chamber music's most moving works, The Horn Trio in E-flat major, commemorating the death of Brahms' mother Christiane.

Borislava Itcheva, violin
Molly Goforth, cello
Robert DiLutis, clarinet
Angela Bagnetto Finley, horn
Dianne Frazer, piano

Tickets are available online at brso.org.