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American Privilege by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Super Shuttle had forgotten me at the Orlando Airport. Only Uber Black (that's the really nice cars!) was available. My driver was gregarious. Born in Haiti, he had come to America in his teens to play soccer. Now he was a proud U.S. citizen. "I love this country," he said. "The electricity works all the time. I came here with nothing but soccer skills. Then my knee blew out, but I got great medical care. I worked hard, and now I have my own driving business. My wife became an accountant. We have such a great life here. I love America."

In troubled times, when we're straining to do better as a nation, it helps to remember just why so many people from around the world want to be here. To me, any discussion about our nation needs to begin with grateful acknowledgement of American Privilege. It flows across the tapestry of ethnicities that make up our nation of immigrants. As my driver said, the electricity works all day long. So does the in-flow of clean water, and, importantly, the out-flow of sewage. I'm thankful every Tuesday for the infrastructure of sanitation. They actually take my garbage away! (If I make the effort to put it in the bin.)

All anyone has to do in a crisis is dial 911. Within minutes, fire, ambulance or police come no matter who you are. Emergency rooms treat any and every one who comes with astounding medical care, whether you can pay or not. Education from pre-K to high school is available to every citizen, including free transportation. Our schools provide ten meals a week to those who need them. Public assistance offers vouchers for food;

housing for the disabled and disadvantaged; a host of services to the elderly, those fighting cancer, the demented, the physically handicapped; or those with other special needs.

We have 2.7 million miles of paved roads. Pollution controls have cleaned up the air we breathe. Public libraries are heated and cooled for comfort as they offer both print and electronic resources for free to all. There is land to spread out to. There is natural beauty of such variety and magnitude that it takes your breath away. At the city, state and national level we have beautiful parks. Our nation's resources have created an overflowing abundance of goods in which everyone can participate. (A Ralph Lauren polo shirt for \$2 at the Purple Cow: amazing!) Opportunity for social and economic mobility continues to be the envy of the world. The mightiest military in history protects us.

We freely elect our government officials. We govern by rule of law, with powers divided between three branches, the model of liberty for the world. We still have remarkable freedom to express our opinions and exercise our religion. Moreover, we have the ability to critique ourselves, to have the conversations that lead to change.

Are we perfect? Of course not! But this July 4, I want to begin with gratitude for all we have. And respect for those who sacrificed and labored and fought to make it so. Would I prefer the level of religious freedom that's in Saudi Arabia? Or machine

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Combined 10.30 am Worship JULY 5-26
 Women's Covenant Study, Weds. JULY 1-29
 VBS JULY 19-22

Stay tuned for upcoming event information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Global Missions Conference AUG. 29-30

BIRTHS:

April 25, 2020
 Mary Virginia Carville
 Parents are Fairly and Joe Carville
 Grandparents are Leah and Billy Edrington

May 27, 2020
 James Wright Mericas
 Parents are Laura and Chris Mericas
 Grandparents are Renee and Brett Furr

May 29, 2020
 Claudius Andrew Barr
 Parents are Adelaide and Andrew Barr
 Grandmother is Nelwyn Hair

June 17, 2020
 Finley David McKeon Baldrige
 Parents are Samantha and Colin Baldrige
 Grandparents are Betty Baker and Wilson Baldrige

BAPTISMS:

June 14, 2020
 Banks McCullor Moore

IN MEMORIAM:

June 26, 2020
 Faye McDowell Sylvest
 Mother of Brenda Salassi

June 29, 2020
 Carolyn Robinson
 Mother of Paige Davis and Jeff Robinson

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The flowers are placed . . .

JULY 5 . . . in loving memory of Cade Cardenas and Brennan Butler by Eugenie and Harry Burglass.

JULY 12 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Lewis W. "Puna" Eaton, Jr., on the occasion of his July birthday given by Barbara Anne Eaton.

JULY 19 . . . to the glory of God and in memory of loved ones by Melissa and Mike Thibodeaux.

JULY 26 . . . in honor of our service men and women, both here and abroad, and to all first responders by Nan and Herb Boydston. May God bless America.

If you would like to donate flowers for a particular Sunday, please contact Kathy Mullins at 291.3095.

Kids Hope USA and First Presbyterian by Annette Lamond, Kids Hope USA director

Why does the wealthiest nation in the world have the highest rate of teen suicides, incarcerations and pregnancies? These are the questions Virgil Gulker asked himself 25 years ago. After conducting research, Gulker determined that one hour, one-on-one sessions between an elementary-age child and a loving adult could change the trajectory of that student's future. Thus, Kids Hope USA was founded; a faith-based mentoring program offering effective training, prayer and support for the volunteer mentors.



In September 2019, First Presbyterian Church officially partnered with Kids Hope USA by committing to be a positive influence at Gardere Community Christian School. We currently have eight volunteers but the goal is to mentor 50 students and make a positive, hope-filled difference.



Here is a testimony about a successful Kids Hope USA mentor/mentee relationship. When Mr. Layne cautiously became a Kids Hope USA mentor, he had no idea the impact it would have. He was matched with Terrance, a 2nd grade boy who was recommended to KHUSA as his father had sadly been killed in a shooting. Soon after, Layne's brother died and the two helped console each other. They met once a week, did some school work, played games and talked about making good choices. Mrs. Ginger, another Kids Hope USA volunteer, prayed for them.

A great relationship was blooming, when Terrance's mother felt it best to move back to Alabama. Layne and Terrance kept in touch through emails and phone calls. Mrs. Ginger continued to pray.

Fast forward to June 2018. Layne received an invitation for he and his family to attend Terrance's high school graduation; with a football scholarship!

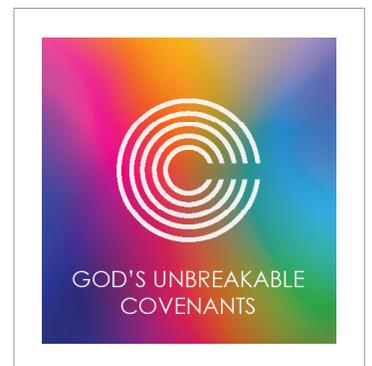
Kids Hope USA believes that some are called to be a mentor or prayer partner. If you believe you are being called, please contact Annette Lamond, Kids Hope USA Director and member of First Presbyterian Church (annette@fpobr.org or 225.773.8745).

July Women's Bible Study: God's Unbreakable Covenants

What is a covenant and what does it represent? How do the covenants of the Old Testament apply to us today?

Women's Ministry will journey through the five major covenants of the Old Testament, and as they unfold, discover how God's promises to restore his elect to covenant relationship with him from every tribe, nation, people and tongue is ultimately achieved through the obedient work of God the Son incarnate, which was God's plan from all eternity!

Join us each Wednesday in July at 6.30 pm live in the Dunham Chapel or livestream via Facebook or YouTube.



- July 1: Adamic Covenant Genesis 1-3
- July 8: Noahic Covenant Genesis 8: 20-9: 17
- July 15: Abrahamic Covenant Genesis 12: 1-9; Genesis 15, 17 & 22
- July 22: Mosaic Covenant Exodus 19-20, 24
- July 29: Davidic Covenant 2 Samuel 7, Psalm 89

Global Mission Conference 2020 by Wendi Couvillion-French

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth (Acts 1: 8).

First Presbyterian Church has a long tradition of support to evangelizing the globe. On August 29 and 30, Macgregor Magruder will graciously host FPC's mission conference. This conference is a unique opportunity to see God's faithfulness across the globe from the perspective of our partner field missionaries.



The entire globe is struggling with how coronavirus is impacting traditional lifestyles. Psalm 131 has significant meaning for both our field missionaries and our local coronavirus challenges. Historically sung as the pilgrims' song of ascent along the path to Jerusalem, Psalm 131: 1-2 lulls the pilgrim into rest with humility and trust. The coronavirus is isolating this worship dynamic to rest in God, as we are all wrestling the same level of fear and anxieties globally. Lastly, Psalm 131: 3 encourages us to actively rest and confidently expect God to work on our behalf. Globally, Christians can call on this universal truth: GOD is in control and we are to rest with expectation of his loving care.

Our field missionaries live with this universal truth daily. Having been planted in foreign communities, they lean completely into God with confidence and expectation. Please join us in August to hear how God continuously builds their faith inside each of their mission communities. "O Israel, put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore" (131: 3).

VBS To-Go: Presenting FPC's Great Treasure Hunt

This summer join the adventurous Penelope Pirate and her friend Princess Priscilla on a grand quest. Princess Priscilla is obsessed with all things that glitter and that includes her crown. When she suddenly loses her glittery head gear, she and Penelope Pirate set off to find the lost crown. Not only do they find her crown, but they discover an ancient treasure map! With the help of the wise Captain Phillips, they learn that all true treasure maps lead to real treasure and real treasure is something very different than expected.



Dates and Times:

Sunday, July 19 at 10.30 worship in FPC Sanctuary
Monday, July 20–Wednesday, July 22, 10 am–12 pm at various locations to be determined.

Officer Suggestions for the 2023 Class

The 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 be in prayer about who you might suggest. Suggestion cards are online as well as the church app until July 31.

MDO Teacher Needed

Mother's Day Out is looking for a co-teacher for the three-year-old class beginning in August. If you know of an individual with a passion for loving and teaching children, please contact Whitney Weiner (mdo@fpcbr.org).

SUNDAY WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church will have one Sanctuary service in July at 10.30 am. Livestream will be available each week.

JULY SERMON TEXTS

Texts are subject to change.

JULY 5, 2020
Jeremiah 29: 10-13

JULY 12, 2020
To be determined

JULY 19, 2020
Genesis 48: 1-20

JULY 26, 2020
James 1: 2-4

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS
Ministry Executive

JIM SOLOMON
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

DARIN TRAVIS
Director of Discipleship,
Men's Ministry & Young Adults



PH: 225.387.0617
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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

American Privilege *continued from page 1*

guns on every street corner like in Cairo? Would I prefer the surveillance culture of China? The heritage of ethnic genocides in Bosnia or Rwanda? The dictatorship of Russia? The poverty of the socialist experiment in Venezuela? No, thank you to all of the above.

Even the least among us have great privilege. Even the poor among us have, in the world context, great wealth. American privilege is a precious, priceless privilege that undergirds all our national conversations. We must begin, continue and conclude in gratitude for this nation in which God has seen fit to place us.



Gent

Happy Independence Day!

Prayer Walk, August 15

Prayer is the greatest tool the Lord has given us. As written by Oswald Chambers, “Prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer is the greater work.” Prayer moves the hand of God. Let our love and passion for Christ mobilize us to intercede for the unreached international and American students at LSU and in our city. Join us to walk and pray by 2s and 3s across the LSU campus. Prayer guides will be available.

Meet under the shady oaks in front of the LSU Union at 8.15 am. Parking is usually available directly in front of the Union or in the parking lot behind Barnes & Noble across from the Union.

