

# fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

November 2017 Volume 51-11

## What Do You Love?

By Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

“What do I love when I love you?” asked Augustine in a prayer 17 centuries ago. It’s still a good question. Especially in this season of Thanksgiving. When we feel we love God, and express that in worship, what are we loving? Augustine worked on his answer. “Not the beauty of bodies, nor the fair harmony of time, nor the brightness of the light, nor the sweet melodies of songs, nor the smell of flowers, nor the limbs that physical love likes to embrace.” Augustine loved all of these things but they in themselves are not God. Yet, Yet, somehow these lovely things send our love God’s way. He went on,

**“Yet I do love a kind of melody, a kind of fragrance, a kind of embrace when I love my God . . . for there shines into my soul what space cannot contain, and there sounds what time cannot carry away. I breathe a fragrance which no breeze scatters, and I lie in an embrace which cannot be separated.”**

Augustine felt that the beauty in the world carried him into God’s presence. Every created delight awakened love

in him. Yet none of these attractions in themselves were sufficient. All this world’s glory, both subtle and spectacular, directs away from itself to the deep beauty of our Creator.

Augustine felt that each thing he loved in this world spoke to him, “We are not God, but he made us.” In his inner man, in his soul, Augustine perceived the light, the fragrance, the melody and the embrace of the Triune God. In him alone, these delights of earth do not pass away. Rather they lead us up in gratitude and worship to know the God who himself is light uncreated, everlasting song and eternal embrace of love.

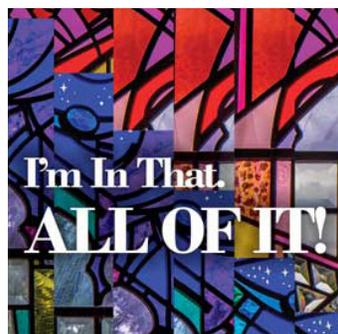
As you pause to give thanks this month, may you rejoice fully in all that is good in the world of which you get to partake. But I pray that each of these will speak to you: we are not God, but he made us. Look upward, beloved, to the Source, and rejoice in his eternal being! Know that as we sit down to table, Rhonda and I will give hearty thanks for you! I love to be your pastor!

*Gerrit*



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NOVEMBER CALENDAR

rEcess	Nov 3
Ex•plore Forgiveness	Nov 4
Daylight Savings Ends - Fall Back	Nov 5
Stewardship Sunday	Nov 5
Open Air Ministries	Nov 5
Service of Healing & Hope	Nov 5
Caring to Love Banquet	Nov 9
Thanksgiving	Nov 23

UPCOMING EVENTS

Live Nativity/Festival of Lights	Dec 1 & 17
Messiah Concert	Dec 7

IN MEMORIAM:

- October 4, 2017 - Bill Raborn, Sr.
- October 5, 2017 - Rardon Bevil  
Cousin of Ella Rein Wheeler
- October 6, 2017 - Freddie Frances Ayres  
Mother of John Ayres
- October 7, 2017 - Don Cripe  
Father of Peggy Stoll
- October 9, 2017 - Dewey Carpenter
- October 14, 2017 - Ford Bell III  
Former FPC member
- October 14, 2017 - Matthew Peré  
Nephew of Ray Gaspard
- Jeanne Tims - Date unknown  
Former FPC member

BIRTHS:

- October 5, 2017 - Christian Edward Anderson  
Parents are Elizabeth and Scott Anderson  
Great-grandmother is Marilyn Gladden

BAPTISMS:

- October 8, 2017 - Charles Wilson Baldrige  
Parents are Samantha and Colin Baldrige  
Grandparents are Betty and Wilson Baldrige
- Sally Ann Lapeyrouse  
Parents are Amelia and Jeremy Lapeyrouse

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

- The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary . . .
- Nov 5** . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of our parents, Rev. James and Mary Lee Logan and Frank E. Holloway, Sr. by Eden and Ronnie Logan.
- Nov 12** . . . to the glory of God and in honor of all those who have served and protected us through the years by Dr. and Mrs. Louis Cenac, Jr.
- Nov 19** . . . in loving memory of Patricia Nickell, mother of Harry Burglass, and Henry B. Alsobrook, Jr., father of Eugenie Burglass, by Eugenie and Harry Burglass.
- Nov 26** . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Miller and Blake Miller by the Robert Miller family.

Dedication Sunday, November 5

WORSHIP. CARING. SERVING. DISCIPLESHIP. FELLOWSHIP. MISSIONS. PRAYER.

We're in all that because we are one church. We each participate in all we do. That's the miracle of stewardship. When we give to God through our church we become invested in everything our church is doing. And that's a lot!

Our church pulses with energy for ministry and mission. We're always pressing to live more deeply *from* Christ so we can live more effectively *for* Christ.

Our pledges matter because each of our gifts funds the whole work of our church. We're all in with Christ. We're all in all that we do as a church. Together, let's keep following the path deeper in Christ and further into the world. Stewardship Sunday is November 5.



What Is Gratitude? By Whitney Alexander, Associate Pastor of Missions



On May 31, my life changed forever . . . in an instant. Driving to New Orleans to prepare three couples for marriage, I dozed for a moment and an angel of the Lord woke me to see the

back of an 18-wheeler within inches of my car. I pulled the steering wheel to the right and prayed instantly, "Dear God, please help me," and he immediately did. God spared my life and I would begin to receive his gracious blessings.

I crashed into the right side of the truck, peeling the left side of my car, while breaking several bones in my shoulder, hip, pelvis and knee. Within minutes after the car came to rest in the grass on the side of the interstate, a Good Samaritan pulled me gently from the wrecked vehicle and an ambulance took me to a hospital in Baton Rouge.

For the next 20 weeks, my family was reminded of the goodness of gratitude. We have been prayed for by thousands of people, many of whom we have never met. My recovery has been because of the prayers of the saints from all over the world. We have recognized that the sources of this goodness are outside of ourselves. We acknowledge that other people gave us many gifts, big and small, to help us achieve the goodness in our lives. The Good Samaritan, people who stopped to help move my body from the wrecked vehicle, doctors, nurses, radiologists, numerous physical and occupational therapists, hundreds of friends who stopped by the hospital, a band of brothers who stayed with me for forty nights in the

hospital (you know who you are), and hundreds of meals, cards and texts kept us from sinking into despair. We are deeply thankful for the acts of love given to our family.

Our family sees this time as an emotional relationship strengthening opportunity because it requires us to see how we've been supported and affirmed by other people. Many of our family and friends came to assist Phyllis immediately after the accident. This emotional support was key to our stability and welfare during the trauma of the first few hours.

As the outpouring of love and gifts overwhelmed us, I wondered why we received such an outpouring. I read his word often and realized the Lord's people are generous and keep giving because of their deep abiding relationship with Jesus. One of our closest friends whispered to me, "Everyone loves your family and wants to support you in this difficult moment."

As we enter into the Thanksgiving season, may we practice being gracious to our friends and especially our families. Gratitude brings us happiness, reduces anxiety and depression, and is good for our bodies. Grateful people sleep better and if you want to sleep more soundly, count blessings, not sheep. Gratitude strengthens relationships and I believe it promotes forgiveness. The past five months have taught me so much about being gracious and thankful for every person in my life.

My favorite Scripture is Ephesians 3: 20: "Now to him who is able do abundantly more than we can ever begin to ask or imagine through the power at work in us." God has worked through so many. My family is thankful for the awe-inspiring gratitude received in the past few months.

## A Service of Healing & Hope

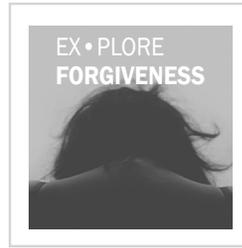
Join us on Sunday, November 5 from 5-6 pm in the Sanctuary as we pray for those who grieve over their lost unborn or infant children. Recalling before the Lord the ones we've lost can bring both tears and joy, both closure and hope. Especially as the holidays approach, we want ways to memorialize little ones who left us too soon. Jim Solomon and Gerrit Dawson will lead this special service in our Sanctuary, with music provided by the Foto Sisters. You are welcome to invite friends from outside our church community who may have suffered such loss.



## Ex • plore Forgiveness

**ex • plore = To travel in or through (an unfamiliar area) in order to familiarize oneself with it.**

Forgiveness is the first topic we will cover at our new Ex • plore series. Many of us have grappled with forgiveness in our relationships with others, ourselves and even God. Some of us have an incomplete view of what forgiveness is, what it isn't, and just how to go about it. Join teachers Jim Solomon and Katie Forsthoff on Saturday, November 4 from 10 am to noon in the Reception Room. To register please contact Laura Shaw ([laura@fpabr.org](mailto:laura@fpabr.org) or 620.0222).



## First Presbyterian Wins Downtown Distinction Award

For the past seven months, the Downtown Distinction Award Campaign has recognized downtown businesses/organizations that exhibit excellence in exterior maintenance and property beautification. Each month one business/organization is recognized in a specific category as the Downtown Distinction Award winner. This is a yearlong campaign that began in March 2017 and will continue to March 2018. At the end of the campaign, a "People's Choice" award winner will be chosen from the 12 previous monthly award winners. First Presbyterian Church was selected as September's Downtown Distinction Award recipient in the Churches/Non-Profit category.

## Caring to Love Banquet

You are invited to the Caring to Love Ministries annual banquet with keynote speaker Todd Starnes. The annual banquet to benefit our ministry partner in their crisis pregnancy work will be held on November 9. Join Caring to Love Ministries staff, volunteers, supporters and fellow First Presbyterian Church members at the Baton Rouge Capitol Hilton for an eventful evening.



Todd Starnes is a columnist, author and television and radio personality. "The Deplorables' Guide to Making America Great Again" is set to be released in 2017 by Charisma Publishing.

The Care Pregnancy Clinic operates a statewide initiative offering compassionate, life-affirming choices to women, particularly low-income women. The program offers pregnant women clear, accurate and timely information about their choice in ensuring a healthy full-term pregnancy rather than terminating their pregnancy.

**Consider Adoption!** There are seven wonderful teachers at Buchanan Elementary who would love to be adopted by a member of First Presbyterian Church. The commitment to be a Teacher Encourager is very small but the rewards are great. Please stop by the Connection Center and sign up to be an Encourager. These ladies are waiting to be adopted: Gail Leonard, Lourain Walker, Kelli Shatlan, Charon Davenport, Chasity Penn, Prunella Smith and Genesis Brown. For more information, contact Laura Shaw at [laura@fpabr.org](mailto:laura@fpabr.org) or 387.0617.

**Perspectives Is Coming!** See the world through God's eyes. Perspectives is an in-depth, through-the-Bible overview of God's plan to reach the world. Study the Scriptures about how God has blessed us to be a blessing and explore how to effectively carry the gospel to every nation. Sign up for this life-changing, 15-week course beginning in 2018 (January 14-April 29) at Chapel on the Campus. For more information, please contact Wendi French, [wyndston@outlook.com](mailto:wyndston@outlook.com).

## SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

### COME WORSHIP WITH US!

7.45 am Chapel Communion  
9 am Contemporary  
11 am Classic Reformed

### NOVEMBER SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Texts are subject to change.

#### November 5

2 Corinthians 10: 1-6

#### November 12

2 Corinthians 12: 1-10

#### November 19

2 Corinthians 13: 1-10

#### November 26

2 Corinthians 13: 11-14

## 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



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225.620.0245

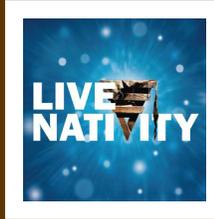
Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center  
225.387.2287  
[brchristiancounseling.com](http://brchristiancounseling.com)

## Creative Arts Events

**Shelly Johnson to Lead Worship.** Christian singer/songwriter Shelly Johnson and her acoustic band will be our special guest worship leaders at the 9 am Contemporary service on Sunday, November 26. Shelly will also bless us with songs from her latest CD, "Christmas Is Beautiful."



**Live Nativity, December 1 and 17.** Baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, the three wise men and the shepherds along with a camel, donkey and sheep will re-enact Jesus' birth. Join us in the terraced garden. Children's petting zoo on December 1. Cast members are needed. Please contact Nancy at 387.0617 or [nancy@fpabr.org](mailto:nancy@fpabr.org) if you are interested. Only one rehearsal on November 26 at 5 pm.



**Messiah, December 7.** From the beginning of Handel's *Messiah* to the final triumphant chorus, the gospel is woven into a musical tapestry. This message of hope and the good news will be performed by the Chancel Choir and guests on Thursday, December 7 at 7 pm in the Sanctuary.

**Save-the-Date: Jacob's Follies, March 16-18.** The Creative Arts Ministry is putting on the original Terry Byars' musical, "Jacob's Follies." Try outs will be January 13 and 14, 2018. Cast of 30 needed. Ages 12 and older.

## Angels Arrive November 19

Please stop by the Reception Room to receive the name of a child whose parent is incarcerated. You can bless them with Angel Tree gifts on behalf of their parent this Christmas. Angels are available November 19, 26 and December 3. Co-ordinator is Cheryl Brodnax, 678.2448.

## Christmas Bags for Malachi Dads

Items are being collected for Christmas bags to be distributed to the Malachi Dads (prisoners) at Angola Penitentiary. Please consider making a donation and dropping it off at the Connection Center: soap, anti-perspirant, toothpaste/toothbrush, shampoo, lotion, body wash, socks or baby powder. Cash donations also accepted.

## Advent Readers Needed

Readers are needed for special Advent worship readings. Please contact Jaci Gaspard ([jaci@fpabr.org](mailto:jaci@fpabr.org)) with the Sunday you are available.