

fpcNEWS

Deeper in Christ, further into the world.

September 2017 Volume 51-09

A Word on Discipleship

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

The month of September is exciting in the life of our church. As kids jump back into the rhythm of school, our church presses full speed ahead toward the goal of going deeper in Christ and further into the world. One way we go deeper in Christ is through discipleship. What exactly is discipleship? Jesus said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Paul said, "God is the one who brings to fruition the good work that he has begun in us." How do these two seemingly parallel concepts of spiritual growth and discipleship take place?

The Bible has much to say about these topics, but in short, God has always dealt with his people through covenants and those covenants have always had responsibilities. When God first called Abraham, he told him, "I will make you a great nation." In the very same paragraph God also told him, "Now, go to the place I have for you." Abraham was specifically chosen by God to be his people by a divine act of grace; that foundation of who Abraham had become also required action.

You might not audibly hear God speak to you exact commands like he did for Abraham, but make no mistake, his directions for you and me are clear—we are to grow in being conformed to the image of Jesus. This month First Presbyterian has a few easy entry points to do just that. Every Sunday morning our Sunday school classes are an incredible place to be taught from God's Word in an intimate environment. Gifted teachers open God's Word in such a way that it isn't simply an intellectual event, but a journey into community with God and others. Have you not yet attended or has it been a while since you have attended a

Sunday school class? Now is a great time to graft into one of our ten different classes!

Sunday school provides an opportunity for community in our church because of its practicality; we're already on campus for Sunday services and the class time is short—generally around 40-45 minutes. The challenge of Sunday school is that you may leave with a desire for more! More personal conversation, more time to pray together, more time to share lives with one another.

One way we seek to meet that challenge is small group ministry. This is a great way to create the space needed to go deeper with God and others. Many of our small groups are seasonal; starting in the fall, they run up to the holiday season and then pick back up during the season of Lent. Some of our small groups are active year round. I encourage you to find a group that is near you and fits with your schedule. To facilitate this, we are having a small group mixer on September 17 that will help you find the right group. Join us in the reception room immediately following 9 and 11 am worship to meet our current small group leaders.

Whether you are going deeper by attending a Sunday school class, small group, or both, the Bible exhorts us to do all things for the glory of God! He is worthy of your investment!

Darin



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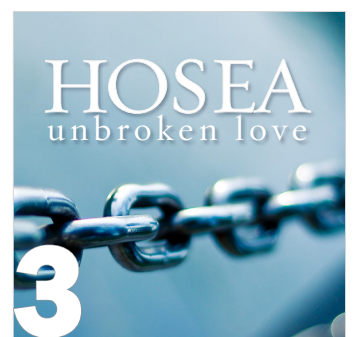
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SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| rEcess | Sept 1 |
| Open Air Ministries | Sept 3 |
| Office Closed for Labor Day | Sept 4 |
| Women's Fall Studies Begin | Sept 6 |
| Small Group Mixer | Sept 17 |
| Communion Training (K-5th) | Sept 24 |
| Baton Rouge Concert Band | Sept 24 |

UPCOMING EVENTS

| | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| "Fish Tales" Mini-Musical | Oct 8 |
| Gardere School Dinner | Oct 10 |
| Discover First Class | Oct 15 |

IN MEMORIAM:

July 28, 2017 - Wesley Griffith
Son of Sarah and Gilbert Griffith

August 6, 2017 - Linda Johnson
Aunt of Jeff Shaw

August 11, 2017 - Clayton Schexnauldre, Sr.
Grandfather of Barat Travis

August 15, 2017 - Jim Ritter
Grandfather of Josh Maddin

August 19, 2017 - Mike Roeling
Uncle of Lewis Roeling

August 26, 2017 - Susan White
Laurie Adams' mother

BAPTISMS:

August 13, 2017 - Austin Douglas Lala
Parents are Emily and John Lala

BIRTHS:

August 14, 2017 - Charles Wilson Baldrige II
Parents are Samantha and Colin Baldrige
Grandparents are Betty and Wilson Baldrige

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 . . .

Sept 3 . . . in loving memory with thanksgiving for Van Andrew Wilson on his birthday weekend by his parents Steve and Claire.

Sept 10 . . . to the glory of God in loving memory of Jerry Johnson by his wife, LaNelle Johnson and their daughters Debra Matthews, Joy Pennington and Jeri J. Cochran.

Sept 17 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Henry G. McKowen II, Mr. and Mrs. Alex C. McKowen, Sr. and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Woodford by Jeanie McKowen Thuneman, Wayne McKowen, Ann McKowen Gerald and Allie McKowen.

Sept 24 . . . to the glory of God and in loving memory of E. David Kendrick and Mr. and Mrs. L.S. Bridges by Bobbie Kendrick and family.

We Caught the Vision

by Cody Watson, Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship

Folks caught the vision at the 2017 Global Missions Conference! After hearing from two phenomenal speakers, over forty people expressed interest in one of three mission opportunities —the Perspectives Course, hosting internationals through International Friendship Partners or joining a short-term mission trip to Romania with Smiles Foundation.

Dr. Greg Livingstone kicked off the weekend with over 200 people in attendance on Saturday morning. For over 50 years, Greg has been a pioneer in missions to the unreached people of the Middle East with Operation Mobilization, Frontiers and now with the EPC's World Outreach. Your Presbytery (EPC Gulf South) is focusing on Syria with Nour and Rebecca (Lunceford) Botros and their team ready to mobilize to that country once the war ends!

Unreached people groups, of which there are 350 in the US alone, was the focus of the video Greg shared called, "What Is a UPG?" (Watch it on gogfm.org.) Understanding the meaning behind statistics which help missionaries gauge their effectiveness was a perfect tie-in to one of our global missions opportunities: International Friendship Partners. IFP currently has 14 international LSU students looking for friendship partners.



Fazilla from Afghanistan and Valerie Gastinel

International friends from Iran, Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, Kenya, Egypt, Taiwan, Japan and Ghana joined First Presbyterian members by sharing their cuisine at Saturday's International Friendship & Food Festival. Americans and internationals shared tables giving everyone an opportunity to engage with someone from another country. Mac Magruder graciously introduced our guests. It was a joy to see the pride in the faces of our international friends as they gave their names, told where they were from and thanked us for hosting them.

Steve Douglass, President of Campus Crusade for Christ (Cru), was Sunday morning's guest preacher. Darin Travis had the honor of introducing his former boss and welcoming him to the pulpit. In Steve's 50 years with Cru he has never seen God more at work increasing prayer movements across the globe, reaching "unengaged, unreached people groups" where there is no church and no one is trying to bring the gospel, improving Bible translation, making *The Jesus Film* available online in 1,561 languages and church planting. The big takeaway is that the task of the Great Commission can be finished in our lifetime! As in the story of the woman at the well, our challenge is to "lift up our eyes" (John 4: 35) and get involved in the harvest. **It is now.**

Greg Livingstone and Gerrit Dawson wrapped up the conference Sunday evening with a time of prayer for global missions reminding us of Jesus' words in Matthew 9: 35-38. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

Do you want to catch the vision? Do you want to find your place in the story? Find out more about participating in a global missions opportunity by visiting fpcbr.org/missionsopportunities.com. You may also text MISSIONS to 38470 and see what happens!

Cody Watson, a mission mobilizer with Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship, has been supported by First Presbyterian for many years. Cody attended our missions conference, and shared his thoughts and impressions.

Kids Communion Training. Sunday, September 24



Parents and children in Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join us for a Kids Communion Training with Pastor Gerrit during the Sunday school hour on September 24. You and your child will join us in the Dunham Chapel at 10.15. There will be no children's Sunday school for kindergarten through 5th grade this day. This is a great opportunity for you and your child to hear from our pastor about what communion means for us. Many of our elders will be present as well. If you have any questions about this communion training for kids please contact Audra Cato, Director of Children's Ministry (audra@fpcbr.org).



Something Fishy Is Going On

by Lauren Honea, Joyful Noise Choir Director

Something fishy is going on at FPC. Thankfully, this fishy activity is not the kind that will arouse doubts. Instead the fishy stories told in the children's musical, *Fish Tales*, are meant to reel you into God's Word. *Fish Tales* is a mini-musical telling the story of Drew, a young girl who has never been fishing. Joined by her friends Theo, Gillian and Taylor, Drew enters a fishing tournament where she catches more than bream. They catch a supernatural, factual tale about our awesome God!

I have had the pleasure watching God take our Joyful Noise Choir and multiply it. He has blessed our children's choir by providing resources, time and energy to pour into our children. Even when we feel at our weakest, God is there. This also happens over and over in the Bible where God takes small offerings and repeatedly does miraculous things with them. He fought for the Israelites in Judges with the smallest army, he took out a giant named Goliath with a small stone and he fed over 5,000 people with two fish! He saved the world through the birth of a small baby boy. This is no ordinary God. This is a great God.

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What Are Circles?

September kicks off Circle once-a-month book studies for women of all ages. This season we focus on Timothy Keller's, *The Reason for God*. If you are interested in being a part of a Circle of women please contact Elizabeth Parker (elizabeth@fpcbr.org) or Lynn Courtney (lynncourtney2@aol.com).

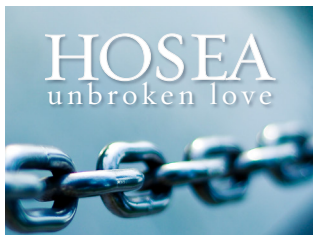
Circles are a group of women who "do life together." These ladies are prayer warriors, encouragers and a great resource. They pray through happy times and hard times. They encourage each other, monthly, to keep their focus on God in all that they do. They are friends who share books and experiences, encouraging each other and their families along their walk with the Lord. Circle friends are an invaluable support system of other dedicated Christian women.

Bonnie Adams (Circle 4)

The Circle ministry at First Presbyterian is so dear to me. For more than 30 years, the Lord has enriched my life through these small groups. Although we formally meet only once a month, we are bound by a deep love for the Lord and for each other, studying the Word, maturing in our faith, praying for each other's needs, celebrating each other's joys, and living life together. Regardless of chronological or spiritual maturity, every woman can connect through Circle participation to share a deepening relationship with Christ and each other.

Pat Canfield (Circle 10)

Why Did God Ask a Man to Marry an Unfaithful Woman?



Why would God ask a man to marry a woman who will be unfaithful to him? Why would God put this man in a

position where his heart would be broken time and time again? Hosea is a powerful story of God's faithfulness and redeeming love. Hosea's own marriage to Gomer symbolizes the relationship between God and his people. The message of Hosea helps us understand the terrible sin that is our unfaithfulness to God contrasted with the awesome nature of

continues on page 4 . . .

September is Buchanan Elementary Month!

Plan to check out all of the service opportunities at our adopted school Buchanan Elementary each Sunday in September at the Connection Center. You can sign up to be a Reading Friend, a Teacher Encourager (we currently have eight teachers who would like one and you can do this even if you work), a Classroom Storytime Reader or a Special Events Helper. No previous experience is necessary—all you need is a love for children and a willing heart.

Help us make a difference in the lives of our neighbors just two miles from our church! For more information, stop by the Connection Center or e-mail Laura Shaw at laura@fpcbr.org or call 387.0617.

SUNDAY WORSHIP @ FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

7.45 am Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Reformed

SEPTEMBER SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Texts are subject to change.

September 3

2 Corinthians 2: 12-17

September 10

2 Corinthians 3: 12-18

September 17

2 Corinthians 4: 1-6

September 24

2 Corinthians 4: 7-18

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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Mother's Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287
www.brchristiancounseling.com

Mary Lou Retton Featured Speaker at Living the Vision Dinner

On Tuesday, October 10 Gardere Community Christian School will hold its Living the Vision Annual Fund Kickoff Dinner at Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel. Featured guest Mary Lou Retton will inspire and encourage as we hear her story of overcoming obstacles. Come and help the children of our community overcome their obstacles! Please visit gardereschool.com to RSVP.

Got a Mission or Ministry?

If you know of or are involved with a ministry whose primary objective is to proclaim Christ and extend the love of Christ to those in need, please submit a grant request. This year's submission dates are from September 4 until October 2. Applications are available online at fpibr.org or by contacting Jaci Gaspard (jaci@fpibr.org).

Something Fishy *continued from page 2*

This same God also shows up every Sunday night for choir rehearsal. He is taking our small offering and is making something wonderful. This is the message I present to you and your children with this mini-musical. So, please, join us for a dinner theatre presentation of *Fish Tales* on October 8 at 5 pm. Five dollar tickets go on sale September 10. You can find them at the Connection Center or from a Joyful Noise member. There will be a photo booth, door prizes, a candy bar and plenty of fish to eat! As Theo says, "It'll be better than 'All You Can Eat Night at Fisherman Fred's!'"

Unfaithful Woman *continued from page 2*

God's forgiving, faithful love for us. In fact, he loved us enough to "marry" us when we were unclean and purchased us to himself through Christ's atonement. Come join us and see for yourself that God's love for you really is as this story describes it. This fall four women's Bible studies will work through Hosea. Details about each group are available online at fpibr.org/womensministry.org or at the Connection Center. Childcare is available for some of the study times (fpibr.org/childcarereservations). We hope you can join us!

Correction

Last month's newsletter inaccurately reported Mary Elizabeth Norckauer's track and field accomplishments. In the USA Track and Field National Masters Outdoor Championship, Mary competed in ten events, won all gold and set two American records!.