



**“As a father has compassion on his children,
so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him;”
Psalm 103:13**

June
2020

The News

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Reflections on God's Love and Marriage

By Pastor Rich McDermott

This is primarily a reflection on marriage (but also on singleness), as I am preparing to celebrate, on May 24, my 40th wedding anniversary with Elizabeth Stallard Kenyon McDermott, better known to many of you as Betsy. What a great milestone and a great blessing! It is hard to express my gratitude to God for directing me to this amazing woman. Betsy and I met at seminary in New Jersey and were married after my first year in pastoral ministry. Together, we have raised five children and we are preparing to welcome our sixth grandchild around Thanksgiving; praise God! We have served five churches in Florida, Mexico, Colorado, Nebraska and Texas. There is great joy in my heart for God's amazing grace, mercy and saving power when I think of my marriage to Betsy. While the times of joy are predominant, it would be false to say that married life has always been great. Marriage is often a struggle and takes hard work, maturity, humility and determination. Singleness also involves all of these, as Jesus has taught us, and as I reflect on later.

Anyone who has been married (or had a roommate) knows that it is hard to live with another person, period. In our case, Betsy and I are remarkably different people, and we often wonder how and why the Lord put us together! You name it, we are different: books, movies, recreation, celebrations, favorite foods, activities, sports, restaurants, sense of humor, friends, family, worship, service to others, etc. etc. In each of these areas we have different wants, needs, tastes, desires, love languages, thoughts, capacities and interests. Over the years we have often asked, how can the Lord make this work? The answer lies within the question. Are we willing *to let the Lord make this work?*

The Bible has some fascinating lessons, analogies and metaphors for God's love for his people. The Book of Hosea, one of the minor prophets, tells the story of how the Lord commands the prophet Hosea to marry Gomer, an unfaithful and adulterous woman, who is perhaps even a prostitute. This union is an object lesson, analogous to God's love for the people of Israel, where the Lord is like a faithful husband, and Israel is like an unfaithful wife. Here God is declaring his own faithful and steadfast love for his people, and rebuking Israel for their faithless and idolatrous behavior and lack of love for the Lord. Even when Israel abandons the Lord and

worships false gods, the Lord painfully endures their faithlessness and continues to love them.

Remembering the story of Hosea can teach us something about marital love. Over forty years there have been times when, I'm sure, Betsy did not want the burden and headache of being married to me, and would have preferred life alone or with someone else. I can think of similar times for me. It is important to understand that these times and these feelings happen to just about every married couple. We are not alone in these occasional desires of wanting to give up on our spouses. But that is why we have the prophecy of Hosea: to teach us the nature of that steadfast, divine love that must come to the rescue of our natural human loves. God's steadfast love (Hebrew: *hesed*; Greek: *agape*) can redeem and transform the love that we bring to the table, if we will *let the Lord make this work*.

I didn't fully understand the nature of God's divine love when I was younger. I began to learn that *love comes from God* (1 John 4:7), and *we love because he first loved us* (1 John 4:19). I learned that this love is illustrated for us in that amazing sacrifice when *God loved us and sent his Son to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins* (1 John 4:10). While we are not God, we can learn from this that true love (whether in marriage or singleness) involves commitment, sacrifice, steadfastness, dedication, and patience. Patience. In the King James Version, this word was translated by the term *long-suffering*. There is no question that marriage requires patience, and I won't repeat what it really means. If you are married, or have been married, you get it. Marriage is awesome, but it takes work and involves *long-suffering!* Singleness involves this as well.

I believe marriage is one of the most important callings from God that we can answer. More people need to answer it! Studies tell us the following: The most certain way to avoid poverty is to get married. The most certain way to avoid ill-health is to get married. The most certain way to live a long life is to get married. The most certain way to be productive is to get married. *But not everyone is called to be married. It also takes courage to answer God's call to singleness.*

Jesus was not married, and was arguably the most productive human being ever. The greatest person who ever lived was called to be single for his entire, but brief, life. Jesus loved the whole world like each of us is called to love our neighbor, our spouse, and our friends. But the Lord did not call Jesus to be married, and thereby elevates others who are not called to be married. Because of Jesus, singleness has honor, dignity, distinction, and completion. Anyone can respond to God's call, whether that means singleness or marriage. The most important thing is *to answer God's call*. We are to *let the Lord make this work*, whether in marriage or in singleness. After forty years of marriage to Betsy, I am now starting to get it!

May the Lord richly bless you, as you answer His call to you.

We love because He first loved us!

Reopening Taskforce

By Pastor Chris Campbell

Last month, the Church Reopening Taskforce received over 150 survey responses from our congregation. That was higher than the average percentage rate, so we want to thank everyone who took the moment to submit responses. The Taskforce (Pastor Rich McDermott, Jamee Shroyer, Art Pena, Russell Farnell, and I) closely studied the results. Russell did a great job breaking down the information. The results were congruent with the Taskforce itself which is eager to resume public worship as soon as safely possible, but as of the end of May, there was no consensus on when we

felt that could take place. The church, with the excellent help of Mannie Owings, continues to be a safe and sanitized space, but that is easier to manage with minimal contact. We are working on completing a thorough plan that we can share with the session and the church that will give us the confidence we are doing everything we can. The Taskforce continues to meet weekly and we are keeping our eye on the wide variety of reports that apply to Texas, Tarrant County, and the city of Arlington. Everything we do is covered in prayer and we ask for your prayers as well for wisdom and guidance from the Holy Spirit. Alan Wildes from Generis, Tim Cool of Cool Solutions, and fellow Presbyterian pastors in our area are also providing information so we can make the best decision for FPCA. We can't wait to offer public worship as soon as safely can. There will always be a risk (the flu, colds, and so on) so we cannot eliminate every possibility. But we will do our very best so each person and household can make their own decision.

Pentecost Crossword

Pentecost

B A H S L A X R J D C L P X K G Q Z S M B K X I
 J T B Q H V L Y G I I N B G E N T L E N E S S P
 V Q R I E B L R P A G Q S Y S G R X D S D X F B
 E A Y O O K I N D N E S S O V H G S Y K S K P X
 I P E A C E P D W Q Q F I G M B G V K R Z R I U
 A Q J X N H P V S U S E J S P L E H W O N T V I
 N I H E R H E M L G O O D N E S S K A N P N I J
 P S D C B O U I B K J F P P Z R O P T J W L E R
 V C L O R L M Q F J X X W V C X A O E P I T M E
 S C V E W Y D M C C A O C P L X B W R R I N P Q
 A C V G E S T E S O U I V J B H P E H S F W Q B
 T E F B C P L T O N G U E S H L G R R H C A H P
 F J A V N I R Y A O P T V X L L P J N Q N O C K
 I S I I E R S L B Q K J M L E E E M Z N R F Z D
 G S T F I I E F V G H C A E T K N T N K B F L O
 B R H L T T L I T W A A B G O W T A Q C H M C D
 O B F I A S F R S C I Z W P R U E S Z P G H C E
 Z Y U U P Y C E F F Y N S O Z G C E B B P R K M
 E E L U X P O Y X Y Y T G T B Y O Q L H E H J F
 W S N L O O N G O P T I N S M I S J U Y O J N D
 D K E R B O T D B Q C Z K W H H T W Z B Q N D H
 E G S W Z B R B V L A M H C A E R P R Z R D F U
 Z G S C O S O J Y T F I F V R U H M I N X B G L
 A A M C I M L A F S M E B N G R O L U W Q D M S

Pentecost Jesus Fifty Power Water Helps Preach Teach Tongues Gift
 Holy Spirit Fire Self Control Goodness Patience Faithfulness Gentleness Kindness
 Peace Joy

Children's Ministry

Preschool



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

June and July are all about what we can spy with our little eyes. Get ready for I Spy! It's a great theme that not only helps us see the things that help us believe in Jesus, but it also goes right along with our VBS theme, Focus. Get it? Focus. I Spy. It's all about the eyes.

Whether it's in our curriculum or VBS, we are helping preschoolers see so they can believe in Jesus. We will have

one key question and bottom line for June and July. We don't think we can say these too much. They are that good. Get ready to ask, "who can believe in Jesus" and respond with, "I can believe in Jesus," over and over again. Our hope is that each of your preschoolers will have the truth that they can believe in Jesus with them forever.

<p>WEEK ONE</p>	<p>BIBLE STORY Jesus The Gospels</p>	<p>STORY FOCUS I spy God's Son, Jesus.</p>
<p>WEEK TWO</p>	<p>BIBLE STORY Easter Matthew 26-28; John 21:1-14</p>	<p>STORY FOCUS I spy Jesus is alive!</p>
<p>WEEK THREE</p>	<p>BIBLE STORY Paul's Conversion Acts 9:1-20</p>	<p>STORY FOCUS I spy someone who believes in Jesus.</p>
<p>WEEK FOUR</p>	<p>BIBLE STORY Peter and Cornelius Acts 10</p>	<p>STORY FOCUS I spy someone I can tell about Jesus.</p>
		
<p>MEMORY VERSE</p>	<p>KEY QUESTION</p>	<p>BOTTOM LINE</p>
<p>"THESE ARE WRITTEN SO THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD." JOHN 20:31, NLV</p>	<p>WHO CAN BELIEVE IN JESUS?</p>	<p>I CAN BELIEVE IN JESUS.</p>
<p>JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.</p>		

Elementary and KFC



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN FAITH AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

God has always been involved in the world He created. We see His handiwork on display in creation. We see God's love on display through Jesus, who came to rescue us. We respond to God in faith,

believing in what we can't see because of what we can see. When we focus on what we know to be true about God and the world God created, we can have faith in what we can't see or fully understand.

WEEK ONE

BIBLE STORY:
Faith Is . . .
Hebrews 11:1-12:3

BOTTOM LINE
You can know Jesus even though you've never seen Him.

WEEK TWO

BIBLE STORY:
Paul Becomes a Believer
Acts 9:1-9

BOTTOM LINE
Knowing Jesus changes the way you see everything.

WEEK THREE

BIBLE STORY:
Ananias Helps Paul
Acts 9:10-31

BOTTOM LINE
Knowing Jesus can help you face your fears.

WEEK FOUR

BIBLE STORY:
Peter Goes to the House of Cornelius
Acts 10

BOTTOM LINE
Knowing Jesus changes the way you see others.

MEMORY VERSE

"FAITH IS BEING SURE OF WHAT WE HOPE FOR. IT IS BEING SURE OF WHAT WE DO NOT SEE."

HEBREWS 11:1,
NIRV

FAITH

Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

Youth Ministry

How the Pandemic Has Been Good For Parenting

Written by: Dr. Sara Anderson

Parents Just Want to Keep Kids Safe

If you have ever read any kind of parenting blog, book or resource, you are probably familiar with the term “helicopter parent.” It’s the parenting style that thrives on hovering over the children, paying attention to any sense of discomfort, unhappiness, emotional distress and then taking care of it. In recent years, a new kind of parenting emerged (even more intrusive than helicopter parenting, if you can imagine). They call it “lawnmower parenting.”

Essentially, it’s parenting by preparing the path for the child instead of the child for the path.

A lawnmower parent doesn’t wait until something difficult happens to their child and then sweeps in to fix it, like the helicopter parent. The lawnmower parent makes sure something difficult never happens. (Think college admissions cheating scandal.) Lawnmower parenting removes all obstacles. It serves as a buffer, a barricade between the real world and the child. It comes from a place of love and concern. But it is largely motivated by fear. And as most parents realize, at some point or another, parenting doesn’t work the way they realize.

Because ultimately, this desire to protect and keep safe and to shield? It backfires when we understand that no amount of parenting can keep our kids safe from the world.

And that’s what COVID-19 has made increasingly clear. As a result, our default parenting strategies and styles are being challenged in a way they never have before. In a strange sort of way, this age of COVID-19 is saving our children from our detrimental parenting strategies.

The World Is Not Always a Safe Place

Because the truth is, this pandemic crisis has brought to light what has always been true, but we, as parents have been reluctant to admit. The world isn’t always a safe place. It isn’t fair. It isn’t easy. It raises questions we don’t know how to answer. The truth is, there’s not a whole lot we can do to protect our kids from the reality of life. No amount of helicopter parenting or lawnmower parenting will do it.

That’s the bad news.

The good news? What our kids can learn as a result. **Resilience. Resilience is the skill we develop when things are challenging, difficult and overwhelming, when it feels like we can’t go on, but then learn, remarkably, that we can.** That even though things don’t go the way we want, we discover we are far more capable than we think we are.

That’s what these strange times have the potential to teach our kids.

That the world is scary. But we can handle it.

That things don’t look familiar. But that we can face it.

That uncertainty is hard. But we can survive it.

That nothing feels secure. But that we will always have each other.

That’s resilience. A lesson we never would have chosen for our kids, but a lesson our kids need nonetheless.

Our Kids are Learning Resilience

Our families and our kids have lost a lot of things in the past couple of months.

We lost normalcy.

We lost structure.

We lost sports.

We lost birthday parties.

We lost playdates.

We lost graduations.

We lost church gatherings.

We lost the intangible millions of little and big things that made our life, ours.

And there have been more days and nights than maybe we care to admit where we felt overwhelmed and emotionally beat up. Moments where another day doing the same thing in the same space with the same needy children makes us want to bang our heads against the wall. We feel defeated. We feel like we are failing. We feel like if there was a “best practices” for parenting in a pandemic (which there aren’t), we’d be screwing it up in every way possible.

But here’s the thing.

We’re still here. We are still getting up every day and doing it. Maybe not perfectly. Maybe not even adequately. (Although really, who’s to judge?) **We are showing up. And so are our kids. They’re learning as they go, just as we are. And it may not be great or even good. But it’s enough.**

See, the secret in this time isn’t just that our kids are learning the lesson of resilience—the lesson we never wanted to teach them for fear of what the challenges might do to them. **The secret is that we are learning resilience, too.**

We are Learning Resilience, Too

As parents. As families. As neighborhoods. As churches. As schools. As cities. As states. As countries. As a global community. We are growing and stretching and it is uncomfortable and painful. But because we have no other option. We are doing it.

We are working from home while homeschooling and sheltering in place. We are pivoting our lives. We are physically distanced from family and physically vulnerable loved ones.

We are finding that the things we outsourced to others—whether that’s cooking or our kids’ spiritual development—we are doing ourselves, and we aren’t terrible at it. Not that it’s been easy.

But we are discovering, thanks to resilience, we are far more capable than we thought we were. What a surprise. And what a gift.

There’s a lot that COVID-19 has taken from us. A lot that isn’t fair. A lot we didn’t expect or plan for. But it has given us something too. The blessing of resilience. And that is no small thing. For us or for our kids. We will be better for it. We will.



Sarah Anderson
Contributor

Sarah Anderson is a writer and communicator who has been involved in ministry since 2003. She is a lead writer and content creator for Orange's XP3 High School curriculum. Sarah lives in Roswell, Georgia, and is a big fan of her husband, Rodney, her two boys, Asher and Pace, and, in her weaker moments, McDonald's French fries. Read more from Sarah on her

blog, www.sarahbanderson.com.

Blessings in Christ,
Adrian Rodriguez

Finance Update

For the month of **April 2020:**

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$122,343
Expense: (\$ 67,576)

Income - Expense for month: **\$ 54,702**
Income - Expense for 2020 Year to Date: **\$ 49,316**



Comments:

Total Operating Income is over budget for the year by \$12,514.

Funds Released is under budget for the year by (\$21,632).

Donors – Over budget for the year by \$15,715.

Total Expenses were under budget for the year by (\$54,538).

Session Discretionary Funds (not designated or reserved) - \$ 17,573
Cost to operate church for one month - \$ 93,320

Virtual Vacation Bible School - June 8-12

We will have a virtual VBS for children 4 years old to 6th grade June 8-12. This will be done primarily via video. We will also put together a VBS experience box for each family that will contain each day's supplies for arts and crafts, daily theme pins, parentcue/devotional pages and other goodies. The theme is Focus: Take A Closer Look. The memory verse for the week is Hebrews 12:2a "Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the one who started this journey of faith. And He is the one who completes the journey of faith."

VBS experience boxes will be available for pick-up from 10 a.m. to noon in the Preschool parking lot on Saturday, May 30.



This Month

All activities are postponed until further notice.



Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. in the parlor. Men of all ages meet and enjoy great fellowship and a prayer session. All men are invited to join this study.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Monday Night Bible study is open to all women. The next meeting is at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, in the parlor.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Men and women of all ages are invited to meet in the Bride's Room every Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m.

Music Ministries



Chancel Choir

This is the primary worship leadership ensemble for the 11:00 service. The choir also sings for special services around Christmas and Holy Week. It is more than just a great choir; it is a caring fellowship. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. *Nursery care is provided during rehearsals.*

Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble

This intergenerational handbell group rehearses Wednesday evenings from 6:15 until 7:15 p.m. If you are interested in ringing, please contact Russell Farnell (fpcamusic@yahoo.com or 817-274-8286).

Youth Choir

During the school year, this group of youth in grades 6 to 12 meets on Sunday, 12:45 to 1:45 p.m., in the choir room.

Children's Music Ministries

The children's choirs meet from 12:45 to 1:45 p.m. on Sundays during the school year. Children ages 4 (when school starts) through grade 5 participate in activities including music/singing and bells/chimes, instruments, and listening activities. There are two sections, divided by age, and both participate in the 11:00 worship service twice per year, usually in December and April.



Church Leadership

Deacon Meeting

Thursday, , at 6:30 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

Team Meeting Night

Thursday, , at 6:45 p.m., all teams meet for worship in the chapel with subsequent gathering into respective teams for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting

Thursday, June 25, at 7:00 p.m., the Session meets in the parlor to oversee the ministry of the church. The work of the Diaconate, church administration, and all Discipleship, Worship, Facility Management, and Mission and Evangelism ministries will be discussed.

Discipleship



Library Team

The library team works the first Wednesday of each month, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Anyone interested is welcome. No particular skill is required, the work is easy, and we always have a good time as we process books to be added to our inventory. If you would like to be involved in library work but cannot come at that evening time, please contact Sandy Thomlinson (at 817-460-8050) and special daytime work sessions can be arranged.



Fellowship

Happy Quilters

This group meets Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. to quilt, sew, knit, crochet, embroider, and just enjoy being together. Bring your project and join in!

Saints Alive!

Church seniors will meet for a potluck lunch on Thursday, , at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a casserole, salad, or dessert and enjoy a fun and interesting afternoon.

Contact Bev Koch (817-261-3202) for details.



First Presbyterian Church
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Deadline for the July issue of The News is June 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: Apana Agha, Elaine Bahn, Jack Bos, James (Andrew) Bridges, Carol Browning, Vannah Caylor, Frank and Allena Coburn, Edna Collins, Jeanne Chin, Lee Carol Copeland, Michael Deardorff, the Farnell Family, Don Farrell, Yvette Fielder, the Gifford Family, Joe and Lila Glenn, Olivia Gottmann, Andrew Hydock, James Irons, Bob Johnson, Tim Karnes (Pat May's son), Gary Lindley, Pat May, Jay Miller, Barbara Mooers, J.D. Paulk, Nita Price, Jim L. Quick, Jillian Reynolds, Joan Reynolds, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, and Karl Winter

Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces: Ben Boughton, Riley Curnutt, Austin Curran, James Dailey, Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Damien King, Mike Mancini, Amie Murtha, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, Colin Peden, Jason Polk, Ryan Powell, Ryan Regalado, Peyton Steeno, Christopher Young, and Robbie Wallace

Prayers for our homebound members: Esther Albright, Suzette Armstrong, Shirley Bragg, Tom and Bobbie Fowler, Jack Gray, Marge Harrand, Barbara Hughes, Barbara Kraemer, Jeanne Malone, Allen and Charlene Miller, Cary and Ruth Moore, Carrie and Cosme Pacot, Ann Pitstick, Jack and Betty Snowden, Lorraine Swanson, Brooks and Connie Taylor, Dee Uhri, Richard Whitenight, and Mary Jane Wright

Pray for those who do not know Christ!

If you have any congregational care needs, please contact Pastor Rich McDermott at 817-274-8286.

