



“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

Galatians 5:1

July
2020

The News

Table of Contents

AN ODD AND DIFFICULT TIME.....	2
<i>Stay Connected</i>	4
Finance Update	4
Children`s Ministry	5
Youth Ministry	8
July Fourth Word Search	10
This Month.....	11
Prayer Ministry.....	12

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AN ODD AND DIFFICULT TIME

By Pastor Rich McDermott

Recently, we have seen a resurgence of the rates of infection of COVID-19 in Tarrant County, Texas, causing us to rethink, and eventually to postpone, our anticipated date for re-opening FPCA for in-person worship. I never thought I would see anything in my lifetime that would cause us to cease meeting in our sanctuary for public worship for over four months. But it has now happened, and we are not finished with the virus yet. It is a strange time.

The unjust killing of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police was an unspeakable travesty, and has prompted new discussions about racism, police brutality, racial justice, and the maintenance of law and order. It has also prompted dozens of protests across the country, some peaceful, and many others not peaceful. The arson, graffiti, destruction of property and businesses (several of which are minority-owned), and tearing down of statues has been profoundly discouraging to many, as it takes away from a legitimate and real discussion about racism, and reform of policing. Having watched similar events in the late 1960's (just as many of you did), I find myself lamenting where we may be headed as a country. Truly, it is an odd and difficult time.

Unfortunately, the solutions being suggested are painfully naive and unhelpful, especially to the minority communities that genuinely need the help. Defund the police, take over the cities and police precincts, divide along racial lines, install new leaders, overthrow the system, begin a new utopia, etc. Current demands seem to leave out thoughtful discussion of the issues at hand, often opting for the most radical and least-tested ideas, relying primarily on ideology and power politics. There is something missing that makes a great deal of difference. I would call it theological reflection, and Christian action.

When Jesus was beginning his public ministry in Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30), he chose some of the words of Isaiah 61. The first three verses (Is. 61:1-3, complete) read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion--to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of

gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory." Jesus chose this passage (or the first part of it) very intentionally. Jesus was indeed a savior and a liberator, but one who was anointed and sent by God, not by humans.

There were several groups of Jews who wanted to co-opt Jesus for their own purposes. The Pharisees and scribes wanted Jesus to affirm their rigid, elitist and exclusive interpretations of the Mosaic law. The Sadducees wanted Jesus to reject ideas about the resurrection. The Herodians hoped he would show support for the royal family. The tax-collectors hoped he would affirm their vocation as agents for the Pax Romana, or the peace of Rome. The zealots were in favor of a violent overthrow of the Romans, and hoped to use Jesus' popularity for an insurrection. He even called a zealot and a tax-collector, Simon and Matthew, two mortal enemies, to be part of his band of disciples. Two wealthy members of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, were secret followers of Jesus.

Jesus did not join any of these people, groups or causes and instead challenged them all. Jesus challenged the Sabbath laws by his acts of healing on the Sabbath. He challenged the cleanliness laws by healing lepers and touching the unclean. He challenged ethnic and racial and religious taboos by connecting with Samaritans and healing Gentiles. He challenged prevailing views of women by meeting the Samaritan woman at the well and, in his resurrection, appearing first to Mary Magdalene. To many, Jesus was too liberal; to others, too conservative. He "bound up the brokenhearted," but he also "proclaimed liberty to the captives."

The church also needs to show radical compassion and profound respect for people. We should not be co-opted by the insurrectionists or the reactionaries. The faith Jesus founded has championed the cause of the absolute (and not relative) value of every human life, from the womb to the tomb, for 2000 years. We must not lose perspective when it comes to racial injustice and making our voices heard. We must stand up on behalf of the victims of racism, and stand up on behalf of the victims of lawlessness as well. It is not an easy place to stand.

One day we will see the vision of the apostle John: "After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'" (Rev. 7:9-10).

Amen.

Stay Connected

By Pastor Chris Campbell

While we are disappointed that our original plans to resume in-person worship last month, discipleship continues on. Several of our Sunday school classes have been meeting using programs like Zoom or Google Meet. One has even met outside at church with appropriate distancing! There may have been some holding out thinking this break would not last as long as it has. Perhaps your class is ready to start meeting but you do not know how to get started. Please feel free to reach out to me or Eric Gottmann. Our email addresses are listed below. It's crucial we stay connected while having to remain apart. Technology doesn't replace the experience of what we are used to, but it gives an opportunity to do the best we can given the circumstances. We're here to help and happy to direct you to online resources like from Right Now Media.

Chris

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Eric

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Finance Update

For the month of **May 2020:**

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$ 76,202

Expense: (\$ 64,585)

Income - Expense for month:

\$ 11,618

Income - Expense for 2020 Year to Date:

\$ 58,553



Comments:

Total Operating Income is under budget for the year by (\$13,268).

Funds Released is under budget for the year by (\$8,321).

Donors – Over budget for the year by \$6,116.

Total Expenses were under budget for the year by (\$74,739).

Session Discretionary Funds (not designated or reserved) - \$ 17,573

Cost to operate church for one month - \$ 93,320

Children's Ministry

Preschool



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

This month we continue with the incredible truth, I can believe in Jesus. This truth is so powerful that we will continue asking the question, "Who can believe in Jesus?" so our preschoolers will know, "I can believe in Jesus!"

It's hard to imagine, but one day, our preschoolers will make a choice that they think is so bad they'll wonder if Jesus still loves them. Or, they'll leave a classroom wrestling

with what their teacher or professor just taught and how it fits with what they believe.

We want them to believe Jesus is real and know that He loves them no matter what. Jesus is who He said He is, and He wants to be their friend forever. That's the truth friends. You better believe it.

WEEK ONE

BIBLE STORY
Peter's Denial
Luke 22:54-62; John 21:15-19;
Ephesians 2:8-9

STORY FOCUS
I spy someone Jesus loves,
no matter what.

WEEK TWO

BIBLE STORY
Paul Teaches in Athens
Acts 17:16-34

STORY FOCUS
I spy someone who
made everything!

WEEK THREE

BIBLE STORY
Paul in Rome
Acts 28:11-31

STORY FOCUS
I spy someone who
tells the truth.

WEEK FOUR

BIBLE STORY
Jesus Prepares a Place
John 14:2-3; Acts 1:1-11

STORY FOCUS
I spy something
that is real.



MEMORY VERSE

"THESE ARE WRITTEN SO
THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE
THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST,
THE SON OF GOD."

JOHN 20:31, NLV

KEY QUESTION

WHO CAN BELIEVE
IN JESUS?

BOTTOM LINE

I CAN BELIEVE IN JESUS.

JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.

Elementary and KFC



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

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.

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,

WEEK ONE	BIBLE STORY: Grace is a Gift Ephesians 2:8-9	BOTTOM LINE Jesus is a gift for everyone.
WEEK TWO	BIBLE STORY: Paul in Athens / Unknown God Acts 17:16-34	BOTTOM LINE You can help others know Jesus.
WEEK THREE	BIBLE STORY: Paul Shipwrecked Acts 27-28	BOTTOM LINE Knowing Jesus changes the way you see your problems.
WEEK FOUR	BIBLE STORY: Heaven Revelation 21:3-5a	BOTTOM LINE Following Jesus will turn out greater than you can imagine.

MEMORY VERSE

"GOD'S GRACE HAS SAVED YOU BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST. YOUR SALVATION DOESN'T COME FROM ANYTHING YOU DO. IT IS GOD'S GIFT."

EPHESIAN 2:8, NIRV

FAITH

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

AUTHENTIC FAITH

Trusting Jesus in a way that transforms how I love God, myself, and the rest of the world

AUTHENTIC FAITH



Incite WONDER

So they will...
KNOW GOD'S LOVE
& MEET GOD'S FAMILY

Provoke DISCOVERY

So they will...
DISCOVER GOD'S CHARACTER
& EXPERIENCE GOD'S FAMILY

Provoke DISCOVERY

So they will...
OWN THE OWN FAITH
& VALUE A FAITH COMMUNITY

Fuel PASSION

So they will...
KEEP PURSUING AUTHENTIC FAITH
& DISCOVER A PERSONAL MISSION

Pray for them
And pray aloud
with them.

Sing faith songs
Love Me.

Repeat basic truths
"God loves me,"
"God loves me,"
"God loves me,"
"I love you."

Encourage them
to pray
Pray with them
Pray for them
Pray with them
Pray for them

Repeat basic truths
Say things like:
"I can't wait to be
traced."

Read the Bible
Talk about the Bible
Say things like:
"The Bible is my
friend."

Provide
to serve friends
and family

Share personal
faith stories

Serve your church
or community

Prioritize a weekly
small group

Empower them
to serve weekly

Encourage them with
scriptural insights

Talk about how
you've seen
them in their life

THIRD
TO ONE

FOUR
TO TWO

FIVE
TO FIRST

SIXTH
TO THIRD

SEVENTH
TO FIFTH

EIGHTH
TO SEVENTH

NINTH
TO EIGHTH

TENTH
TO NINTH

ELEVENTH
TO TENTH

TWELFTH
TO ELEVENTH

EMBRACE their physical needs

ENGAGE their interests

AFFIRM their personal journey

MOBILIZE their potential

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Youth Ministry

The Secret of Superman

by Reggie Joiner

When I was a kid, I was obsessed with Superman. Seriously! I still remember the day my parents handed me a box from Sears and Roebuck that contained a red cape, blue tights with a red-and-yellow “S” shield on the chest. When I put it on, something magical happened. It transformed me from a shy six-year-old to a superhero with unique powers.

I was more powerful than my dad’s parked car.

I could leap tall fences with a single bound.

I was faster than our speeding fox terrier.

Looking back, I am absolutely positive that I could jump higher, run faster, and do more whenever I put on that suit. That was the year I got in trouble with my mom for running across the roof of our house in my red cape and underwear. It was just one of those days when I had to get suited up fast, so I left the tights off and just went with the cape. And don’t ask me how I got up on the roof. You should know. I flew, of course. At least that’s what I remember.

I don’t actually recall when I stopped believing in Superman, but his story did convince me of something that is true.

Good will ultimately win over evil.

It’s ironic that the story of Superman was created in 1938 by two high school students in Cleveland, Ohio. Superman literally showed up in the nick of time. It just happened to be the same year Hitler appointed himself as the supreme commander of the armed forces of Germany, and set the stage for the most horrific war the world would ever know.

It’s intriguing that while nations were drawn into a world war that would threaten their existence, a fictional story of a superhero would entertain the imagination of a generation to suggest that good will somehow always prevail. I guess you should just never underestimate the power of a good story.

The point is, the stories you tell to your kids every week really matter.

Why do you think.

Frodo in Lord of the Rings,

Aslan in The Chronicles of Narnia,

and a boy named Harry have such an appeal to the imagination of kids?

Because they echo an aspect of an ancient narrative that God put into motion at the beginning of time.

They remind us of:

the struggle between good and evil.

the existence of a supernatural and miraculous power.

the potential to be personally restored and transformed.

The right story can inspire.

The right story can incite faith.

The right story can give hope.

If you want to change the way kids and teenagers see this world, then make sure you give them stories over time.

That's why we like to tell parents that **stories over time = perspective.**

Everybody loves a good story.

You latch on to someone who is going against the odds.

You identify with their struggle to push through.

Stories are powerful. Especially when they reflect God's story.

So, do whatever you can to amplify the best stories around you.

Read them.

Watch them.

Tell them.

Create them.

Write them.

Illustrate them.

Video them.

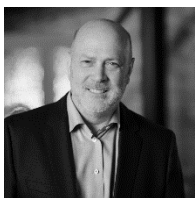
Live them.

Collect them.

They can make life fuller, faith deeper, hope stronger.

So, what if I was never able to fly? There's a secret I'll always know because of Superman.

Good wins in the end.



Reggie Joiner

Contributor

Reggie is founder and CEO of Orange (The reThink Group). He has co-written three parenting books, Don't Miss It, Playing for Keeps and Parenting Beyond Your Capacity as well as other leadership books including A New Kind of Leader and Think Orange. Reggie lives in Georgia with his wife, Debbie, and has four grown children, Reggie Paul, Hannah, Sarah, and Rebekah.

Blessings in Christ, Adrian Rodriguez.

July Fourth Word Search



July Fourth Word Search



ADAMS
AMERICA
BARBECUE
COLONIES
CONGRESS
DECLARATION
EQUALITY
FIREWORKS

FOURTH
FREEDOM
HOTDOGS
INDEPENDENCE
JEFFERSON
JULY
LIBERTY

NATION
PARADE
REVOLUTION
RIGHTS
STATES
THIRTEEN
UNITED

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, , 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
1200 S. Collins Street
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Deadline for the August issue of The News is July 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, Lee Carol Copeland, Michael Deardorff, Cheri Evans and family, the Farnell Family, Don Farrell, Yvette Fielder, the Gifford Family, Joe and Lila Glenn, Olivia Gottmann, Beth Henkel, Andrew Hydock, James Irons, Bob Johnson, Tim Karnes (Pat May's son), Gary Lindley, Pat May, Jay Miller, Barbara Mooers, Bodil Overtree, J.D. Paulk, Nita Price, Jim L. Quick, Jillian Reynolds, Joan Reynolds, Donna Vickers, and Nancy Welborne.

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, 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.

