



**“but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”**

**Isaiah 40:31**

**August  
2020**

# **The News**

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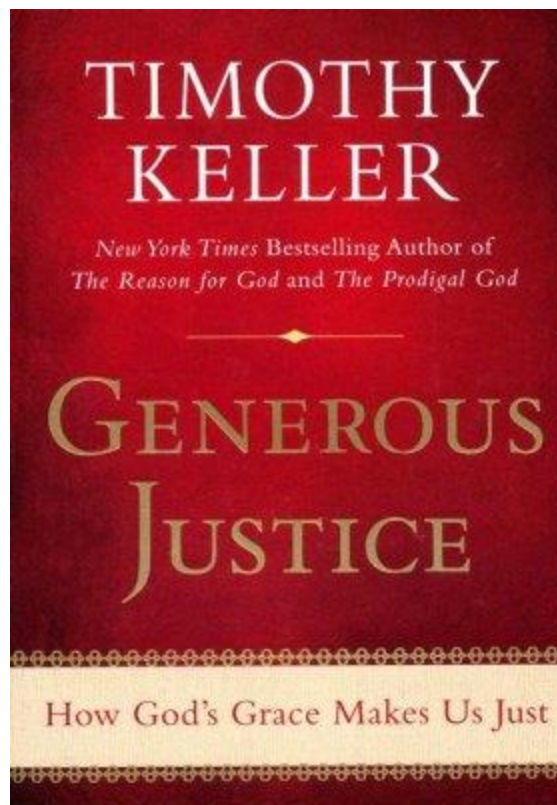
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# Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just

A Book by Timothy Keller, available at [Christianbook.com](http://Christianbook.com) and other booksellers

Online Study with Pastor Rich McDermott to begin Monday, August 3, 7:00 PM



Please join us and register (with [kim@firstprestexas.org](mailto:kim@firstprestexas.org)) for our 7-week online discussion group (by video call) on Monday evenings, beginning August 3, at 7:00 PM. We will be doing a 7-week book study on Tim Keller's book called *Generous Justice: How God's Grace Makes Us Just*. We urge you to purchase your own copy at **Christianbook.com** or another bookseller, and read the first two chapters to prepare for August 3.

Here is the introduction to the book: *It is commonly thought in secular society that the Bible is one of the greatest hindrances to doing justice. Isn't it full of regressive views? Didn't it condone slavery? Why would we look to the Bible for guidance on how to have a more just society? But Timothy Keller, pastor [emeritus] of New York City's Redeemer Presbyterian Church, challenges these preconceived beliefs and presents the Bible as a fundamental source for promoting justice and compassion for those in need. In Generous Justice, he explores a life of justice empowered by an experience of grace: a generous, gracious justice. This book offers readers a new understanding of modern justice and human rights that will resonate with both the faithful and the skeptical.*

Pastor Rich writes: I am excited to help lead this study on this timely topic for our congregation. While there is a great deal of banter about "justice" in our culture today, I also find a great deal of confusion about what true justice is. Tim Keller's book will help to answer that question. Rather than reacting to the loudest voices and the narrowest views on this topic, Keller's reasoned and Biblical understanding of justice will guide us on a path of thoughtful learning and compassionate action.

There is no question that justice is a primary theme of the Bible. In the second section of Isaiah's prophecy (chapters 40-55), we find four "Servant Songs" describing a deliverer who will bring God's teaching and restore justice to the nations. Interpreters have generally held that the servant described here could be the people Israel, or an individual acting on behalf of Israel. Christians have seen in these passages a powerful description of the person and mission of the Messiah, Jesus, who fulfills much of what is described. In Isaiah 42:1-3 we read, *"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth **justice** to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth **justice**."* (emphasis mine).

In Micah 6:8 we read this amazing summary of our Lord's requirements of us: *"He [the Lord] has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do **justice**, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"* (emphasis mine). When Jesus confronted the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:23, he said, *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: **justice** and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others."* (emphasis mine).

Let us not fall into the trap of the scribes and Pharisees, and let us address these "weighty matters" that are now front and center in the news and in our culture, so that we do not cause any young or innocent or uninformed people to stumble when it comes to their faith in Christ. I look forward to our conversation. May God bless our virtual time together!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Rich

# *How is FPCA perceived in our neighborhood?*

By Pastor Chris Campbell



July marked our family's third year to visit Panama City Beach, Florida during the July 4th holiday. (I've included a picture that I'm pretty sure won't make it on this year's Christmas card but is one of my favorites.) July 4th also happens to be our younger son Hudson's birthday. This year he hit the big 5! The previous two years we stayed at the same place. We learned all the short cuts, how to get in and out, and discovered our favorite places. (Go visit Moe's Original BBQ. Yes, it's a chain. But those smoked wings plus their Alabama white sauce are unreal. This is what made white sauce make sense to me!)

Just to change things up this year, we decided to try somewhere new and stayed on a different section of the beach. While we generally knew our way around, we had to learn everything all over – getting in and out, short cuts, all that. The turn off the main road to get to our place was not at a red light. It was a residential street. Eventually I knew I would have to stop relying on my phone to tell me where to turn. So what do we do? Find a landmark! In this case, it was a small Assembly of God church with a good-sized white cross at the intersection. Of all the things that could have served as a beacon, it was pretty refreshing to be on the lookout for a cross. I found myself more and more grateful for that church throughout the week. It made it feel more like “home” as the days passed.

It got me thinking – how is FPCA perceived in our neighborhood? Granted, we are one of several churches in the immediate area. But for residents who pass it regularly, I hope we are a part of what makes the area feel like “home.” But in addition, especially during this time when many people are not attending in-person worship, how are our lives serving as a landmark, pointing the way to Christ? This goes for those of us who are the designated grocery shoppers. Or maybe those brief moments we find ways to safely get take out or curbside food to bring home. It definitely applies to us on social media. Are our words, our hot takes building others up or tearing them down? Most times they are, but not always. All this is just to say that church reminded me how we are

ambassadors representing Christ to the world. That is a very tough job that requires incredible humility. Thankfully, the One we represent, knows a thing or two about humbling himself to 1) redeem the world and 2) shows us how to do it.

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 **June 2020:**

### **Budget (Operating and Funds Released)**

Income: \$ 76,495

Expense: (\$ 99,776)

Income - Expense for month: **(\$ 23,281)**

Income - Expense for 2020 Year to Date: **\$ 30,108**



### **Comments:**

**Total Operating Income is under budget for the year by (\$37,583).**

**Funds Released is under budget for the year by (\$24,498).**

**Donors – Under budget for the year by (\$3,328).**

**Total Expenses were under budget for the year by (\$78,971).**

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

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

# Children's Ministry

## Preschool



**PRESCHOOL**

AUGUST 2020

### MONTHLY OVERVIEW

I am wonderfully made in God's image! Do you ever think about yourself like that—that you are wonderfully made in God's image? We tend to forget about all of the wonder that went into making us as we become grown-ups. Time has a way of dulling our shine. It's part of the reason why people have to prod us to 'say cheese' when they take our picture.

I think if we really, really, really believed that we are wonderfully made in God's image, no one would ever have to tell us to smile when they pulled out a camera. We would be smiling from ear-to-ear as we lived in the wonder that God made me!

That is what we want for preschoolers. We want them to smile with confidence, because they know God made me.

#### WEEK ONE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Wonderfully Made In God's Image  
Genesis 1:26; Psalm 46:1;  
Proverbs 2:6

**STORY FOCUS**  
I am wonderfully made in  
God's image.

#### WEEK TWO

**BIBLE STORY**  
You Are Important to God  
Luke 12:7

**STORY FOCUS**  
I am important to God.

#### WEEK THREE

**BIBLE STORY**  
God Loves Us So Much  
John 3:16

**STORY FOCUS**  
I am so important to God,  
He sent me Jesus.

#### WEEK FOUR

**BIBLE STORY**  
I Can Pray to God  
Jeremiah 29:12; Matthew 6:5-13

**STORY FOCUS**  
God made me to talk to Him  
anytime, anywhere, about anything.

#### WEEK FIVE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Timothy and Tabitha  
1 Timothy 4:12; Acts 9:36-39

**STORY FOCUS**  
God made me to help others.

MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE
"I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE." PSALM 139:14, NIV	WHO MADE YOU?	GOD MADE ME.
GOD MADE ME.		



## Elementary and KFC



**ELEMENTARY**  
AUGUST 2020

### MONTHLY OVERVIEW

#### GOD VIEW:

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

When we look outside and see the beautiful world around us, we're reminded that God is SO great, powerful, and creative. From the birds flying high in the sky to the planets orbiting the sun to animals scampering around the earth, each one points to God's indescribable creativity. Jesus used creativity in how He told parables, performed miracles, and helped His followers understand more about what it means to be part of God's Kingdom. On top of that, we're created in God's image. We can solve problems, create art and music, design skyscrapers high into the sky. When we create, we reflect the image of God to the world around us.

#### WEEK ONE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Creation  
Genesis 1—2:3

**BOTTOM LINE**  
There's no limit to God's creativity.

#### WEEK TWO

**BIBLE STORY**  
We Are God's Creation  
Ephesians 2:10

**BOTTOM LINE**  
God created you, so you can be creative.

#### WEEK THREE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Esther  
The Book of Esther

**BOTTOM LINE**  
God created you for a purpose.

#### WEEK FOUR

**BIBLE STORY**  
Four Friends Who Helped  
Mark 2:1-12

**BOTTOM LINE**  
God created you to work with others.

#### WEEK FIVE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Salt and Light  
Matthew 5:13-16

**BOTTOM LINE**  
God created you to share His story.

#### MEMORY VERSE

"LORD, YOU ARE GREAT. YOU ARE REALLY WORTHY OF PRAISE. NO ONE CAN COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND HOW GREAT YOU ARE."

PSALM 145:3, NIRV

#### CREATIVITY

Imagining what you could do because you were made in God's image

# Youth Ministry

## Passing Down a Faith-Filled Life, Not a Trial-Free Life

by Courtney DeFeo

Do you remember the first time your child was in harm's way? I remember the time my oldest kicked a bright bouncy ball and landed on her head on the concrete. I remember when my youngest got her feelings hurt by a friend and cried real tears, not whiny tears.

I've watched my kids hurt many times, and it stinks.

My knee-jerk reaction is to protect, hover, block, or tattle. Basically do anything to prevent my children from feeling pain.

The same goes with their faith. I want them to fall in love with Jesus and frankly never walk away, while at the same time never experiencing hardship. And then I realize I love them too much to desire a trial-free life. I remember my biggest moments of personal and spiritual growth were during my trials.

Bringing faith to life in our home is a great privilege. I'm encouraged that we don't have to have a perfect life to pass down a faith-filled life. He has got this. Our role is to simply teach them what we already know and to continue learning and sharing more day by day as we grow.

You can make a difference even if you're only one second ahead of your children in your own journey to know Jesus Christ better.

Your fear and your uncertainty can show them God's grace and mercy.

Your mistakes can teach them forgiveness.

Your strengths can shine a spotlight on God's blessings and gifts.

Your daily ordinary tasks can become extraordinary opportunities to reach the hearts of your children.

Is anyone with me? Let's slowly unpeel our grips and give God the chance to show up in the midst of trials. It's hard to imagine, but He loves our kids even more than we do.

Blessings in Christ,

Adrian



# 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  
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**Deadline for the September issue of The News is August 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, 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, Barbara Mooers, Bodil Overtree, J.D. Paulk, 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 Moore, Carrie and Cosme Pacot, Ann Pitstick, Jack and Betty Snowden, 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.

