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ISSUE 19-10

# The Diligent

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ARP LAKE WALES, FL

“...a Christ-centered fellowship of believers devoted to glorifying God through true worship, personal evangelism, discipleship, and servanthood.”

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# Leadership

## THE GREAT PRISON BREAK

**From Pastor Chad**

*We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:4-11)*

I have never been in prison. For that matter, I have never even been arrested. I do not know the cold feel of shackles around my wrists, the cramped confines of a jail cell, the coarse touch of a prison jumpsuit, or the strict orders of armed guards who are given dominion over every second of my existence.

I have, however, known the coldness of Sin's vice grip upon my heart, the constrained existence of a life lived in fear, the rough nature of my old self, and the grim rule of worldliness. Before Christ Jesus set me free, I knew these all too well. I did not fully understand that the manner in which I was living was prison-like at the time, but I do now. Now that I know the freedom of life in Christ, I am keenly aware of the newness of my life and that I have been freed, not just from a spiritual prison but from a spiritual death.

Christ did that for me. He did it for all who are united with Him by grace through faith. He did not come in simply as a visitor, but He became a fellow prisoner. He came and took the sentence that was due to us - DEATH. He accepted the guilt of our sin on the cross and then conquered it three days later at the resurrection. In doing so He has busted wide open the gates of Sin's

penitentiary. There is nothing now holding us in; nothing holding us back from living freely and boldly the life that Christ has set before us. This is the reality of the resurrection of Christ for you, me, and for all who have been buried with Him in baptism. We have been raised with Him to new life. New life!

What is it that Christ has freed you from? Has He freed you from the need to please others and receive their approval for your accomplishments? I do not mean the godly call to serve others, but the need to please others lest they withhold their love from you because you are not good enough or deserving in their eyes; the need to do enough to earn their favor. In Christ, you are freed from that. God the Father, in His love for you, has redeemed you and calls you child. You need not strive to earn the love of another, nor do you need to strive to earn His love. It is already yours in Christ Jesus who died and rose again for you. You are a prisoner no longer to the expectations of others. You are shackled no longer by the threat of withheld love.

He has also freed you from the all-out pursuit of worldly pleasure. Was your life before Christ characterized by drunkenness, sexual immorality, entertainment, leisure, and greed? Were you pursuing all or some of these in an effort to feel pleasure, ecstasy, etc.? Or, were you pursuing them in order to not feel sorrow, disappointment, etc.? Perhaps the pain of being you was just too much and you sought to shut it all out with the numbness of pleasure. In Christ you are prisoner no longer to your fleshly desires for pleasure or numbness. Your pursuit of happiness at the expense of your soul is no more. You are a new creation in Him who loves you. The old has gone and the new has come. Fallen by your side are the chains of debauchery. In your past are the confines of greed and lust. You are Christ's now and have been transformed to know the abundant joy of God's grace.

Has He freed you from the bitterness you used to harbor in your heart toward another? Perhaps it was your father who abandoned you at a young age? Maybe it was the relative who

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abused you during your childhood? It could be that it is the spouse who betrayed you, or the friend who slandered you, or the child who wandered away? The pain and the hurt of these wounds is profound, but in Christ they hold you down no longer. Just as you have been forgiven by grace, not because you deserved it, so too can you now forgive those who have wronged you. You no longer need to be locked inside the cell of your anger and resentment. The door has been thrust off of its hinges. You are free to show them the same grace you have so freely received.

Our freedom in Christ is a present reality. We are dead to sin. That said, we still struggle in this present darkness to live out the life of faith in, by, and through Christ Jesus. We cannot do it in our own strength but must rely completely upon the Holy Spirit who has been poured out richly upon us. We will all find that the sins and struggles I mentioned above do still tempt us and cause us to stumble at times. But take heart, Christ Jesus is with us always, by the Spirit, to remind us that He reigns supreme and that these old masters of our lives have no ultimate power over us any longer. My prayer for each of us is that we would take hold of Christ our Savior by faith and walk in the newness of life He has given us by His death and resurrection. ■

## PRAYER FOCUS

**OCT. 6** - The Church Throughout the World

**OCT. 13** - The Pikes and The Bridge Europe Team

**OCT. 20** - Missions Sunday: Rev. Leon Brown and the Montage Church of Los Angeles, CA

**OCT. 27** - Stewardship of Resources at FPC

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

### September 2019 Session Highlights

The elders of First Presbyterian Church meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The following notes are highlights from the meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

- The Session continued its study of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, taking a considered look at the teaching from chapter 5, "Of Providence." Please be encouraged to read the *The Westminster Confession of Faith* along with the Session.
- Stewardship and Finance reported that as of the end of August, tithes and offerings for the church's general operations were at 54% of the annual budget. This is below the average of 58.7% (2013-2017) the church has historically received by this time of year. Praise was given to God for His financial blessing and prayer was offered that the giving of our congregation would match the ministry needs.
- Dave and Patty Falk were received as new members of the First Presbyterian Church. They will be presented before the congregation during worship in the near future.
- The Session approved the request by Maria Herman, Director of Administration, to rescind her resignation which was given on September 18, 2019. A fuller communication has been made via email and during announcements at Sunday Worship and Ekklesia
- The Session reviewed the list of potential candidates for the offices of deacon and elder. These candidates will participate in a six-hour officer training program as a prerequisite for potential nomination to serve FPC as an officer. Please keep these candidates and the nominations process in your prayers.
- The chairmen of the committees of the Session gave reports of the ministries they are overseeing. Prayer was offered after each report, asking for the Lord's guidance and blessing for the continuing work of the church..
- A season of prayer was had for various needs within our congregation, community, and world.

# Discipleship

## CENTERED ON CHRIST: READ-DEEMING OUR TIME

**From Pastor Mackay**

*Our discipleship theme for 2019-2020 is "Centered on Christ."*

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:15-16)*

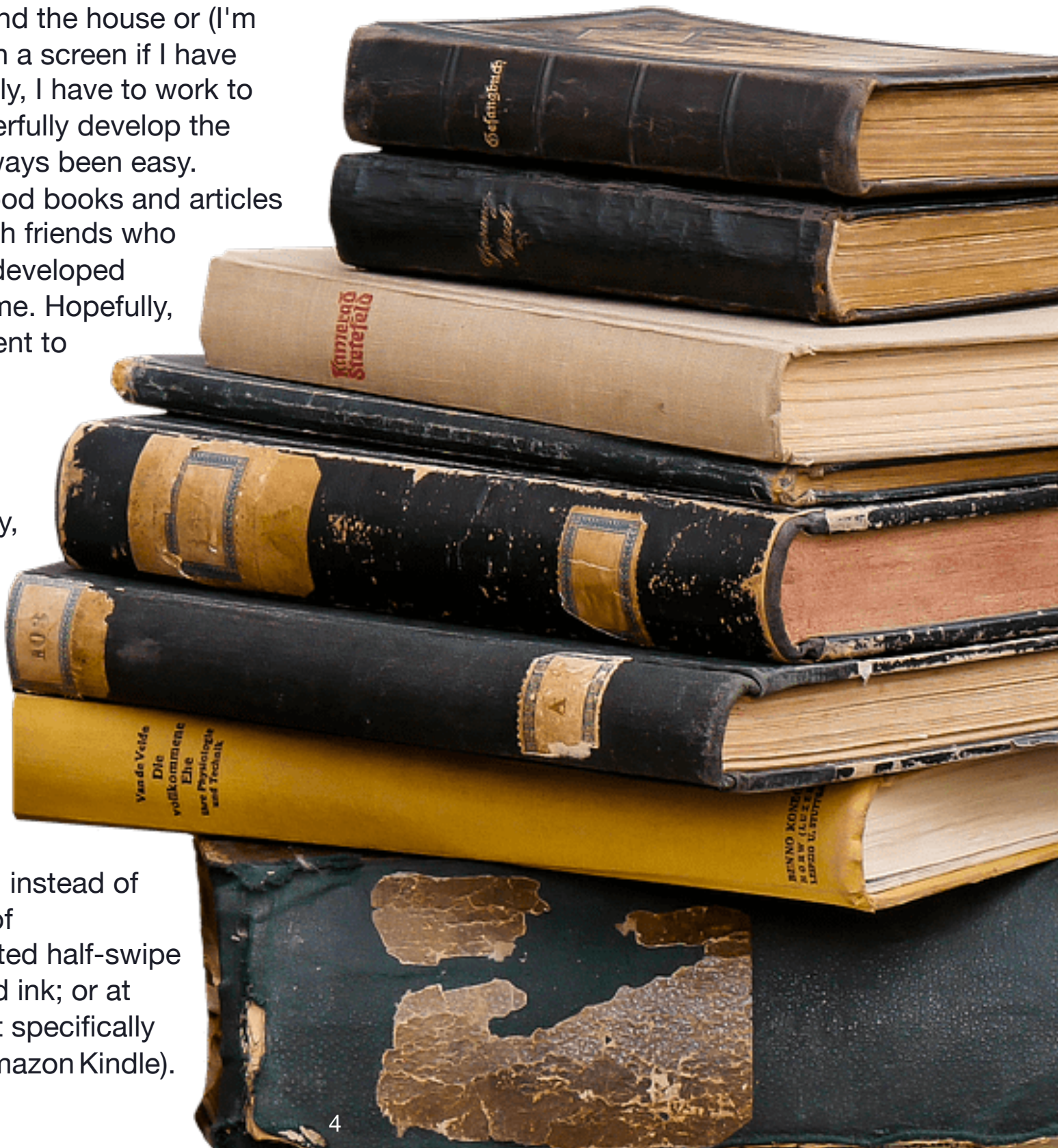
In our Ekklesia study of The Walk, we are discussing the importance of the simple habit of Bible reading. The Bible is our primary source; our only rule of faith and practice and the indispensable way we stay centered on Jesus Christ. That said, we can also benefit from an abundantly rich heritage of good Christian books.

I'll share a personal fact with you: I am not a "voracious" reader. Given a choice, I often prefer working on a project around the house or (I'm sorry to say) zoning out on a screen if I have some quiet hours. Basically, I have to work to read. So, I've had to prayerfully develop the habit, and this has not always been easy. Thankfully, as I've read good books and articles on reading, and talked with friends who read more than I do, I've developed some precepts that help me. Hopefully, they'll be an encouragement to you as well.

The first is obvious: the screen is probably your enemy. Note well that I say, "probably," for if you are a particularly disciplined person, you may be able to use your iPad or iPhone to do a great deal of reading. But let's be honest, you and I are far more likely to waste time with our phones than to use them well. So, instead of trying to read with hours of entertainment one distracted half-swipe away, stick with paper and ink; or at least devices that are built specifically for reading (such as an Amazon Kindle).

I've found great freedom from reading humbly: I pray always for the glory of God, but not always for other ends. When Rev. Billy Graham wrote later in his life of changes he would have made, he wrote, "I would spend more time studying the Bible and meditating on its truth, not only for sermon preparation but to apply its message to my life. It is far too easy for someone in my position to read the Bible only with an eye on a future sermon, overlooking the message God has for me through its pages." I can relate to that; both when it comes to reading the Bible and to reading elsewhere. Reading can be crippled if it is always a means to an end. I want to read so I can teach a lesson. I want to read so I can preach a sermon. I want to read so I can be a good reader. Rushing to our designed end may not allow God to carry out His intended purpose for our reading. So, there is a sense that we are free to read for the sake of reading. A former pastor put it this way: our Bible study and

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reading is like covering a forest floor with nutrient-rich leaves and decaying wood. Over time, we may have a difficult time picking out that precise leaf we saw once, but what we will have is a mind teeming with fertile soil; a place where strong roots of thought and wisdom can grow.

We should challenge ourselves by what we read. You could build a library solely devoted to the novels of John Grisham, but you probably wouldn't see much spiritual growth. That said, don't allow a book that doesn't hold your interest to tyrannize your reading time. Keep the glory of God primary and read what you want to read! If *Farming Practices of Lower Mesopotamia* has been sitting on your nightstand for six months because you are unable to get through a single page without falling asleep, put it away and try something else! There are so many good books out there and we should feel absolutely no guilt from "failing" to finish one. Yes, even Christian books can be candidates for dust-collecting. That's OK! Put the paginated brick walls back on the shelf and come back to them if your interest is re-kindled.

Finally, write in your books. A seminary professor taught me the practice of cluttering the (nice clean) title page with a written index of helpful thoughts, notated by page numbers something like, "pg. 49 - Great summary of Jesus' priestly ministry." This has enabled me to pick up a book and immediately see the major "helps" I found in it. Underlining and making margin notes can also help engage your brain as you read.

If I'm any barometer, I fear our modern culture is losing the ability to read and read well. We, as people of the Book, should take care to exercise the precious gift of literacy for our well-being and our ministry to others. Would you pray with me that we will do just that? ■

# EKKLESIA

## FAMILY TRIVIA NIGHT!

It's coming back on Wednesday, October 23rd. For this evening, we'll pause our study of *The Walk* for an evening focused on fellowship. We'll intentionally mix up tables after supper to meet other adults, youth, and kids who may be new to us!



We welcomed Dr. Amjad Mahand to Ekklesia on September 25th and heard about his more than twenty years of Gospel ministry in High Wycombe, England (near London). Dr. Mahand recently became a cooperative missionary with World Witness as a member of the Bridge Europe Team.



# Missions & Outreach

## MISSIONS SUNDAY: MEET REV. LEON BROWN

On Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, we will welcome Rev. Leon Brown to First Presbyterian Church for Missions Sunday. A native of Los Angeles, Rev. Brown is the lead pastor of Montage Church in Los Angeles, California. Prior to this, he served as the church planting pastor of Crown & Joy Presbyterian Church in Richmond, VA. Rev. Brown received a B. A. in communication studies from the University of San Diego, a B.A. Honors in Hebrew from the University of the Free State, an M. Div. from Westminster Seminary California, and an M. A. in historical theology from Westminster Seminary California. He served in the navy for ten years. He and his wife, Rosalinda, have four children.

Rev. Brown has returned to Los Angeles with a heart to impact the city for God with an ARP church plant that intentionally reaches across usual dividing lines of culture to draw together a *montage* of people who will become a new, diverse, and vibrant congregation for Jesus Christ. This is his vision:

“People from 140 countries call L.A. home. The various cultures perspectives and vocations make L.A. what it is. And we are all bound together in our common humanity, having a desire to love and be loved; we are all bound together in our need for an extraordinary Savior, one who will befriend us and take all the brokenness of our lives and begin reassembling us. Here’s what I envision: a culturally, ethnically, and social economically diverse church that in response to having our sins forgiven, having the guilt and shame removed, and receiving Christ himself, loves God, but also loves one another, and loves our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus said, ‘a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.’ That love transcends political affiliations, it enables African Americans, Asian Americans, those of Jewish descent, and all others to come together to worship Jesus of Nazareth and to have fellowship one with another. We as the church are called to love our neighbors well by extending a listening ear and by serving with our hands and our feet and our



Rev. Leon and Rosalinda Brown

resources” (Brown, L., Jan. 10, 2019. Transcribed from video. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/pg/montagechurch/posts>).

Rev. Brown will deliver a dynamic sermon during Sunday morning worship and again during a special, missions-focused evening service. We will gather at 5:30 p.m. for a fellowship dinner of California-style fare, worship, missionary updates, and Rev. Brown’s message. There will be a missions-focused lesson for the children in the children’s department after dinner and nursery will be provided.

### **Missions Sunday Joint Small Group Meeting**

Join us in the fellowship hall at 11 a.m. for a missions-focused joint small group meeting with a live video chat with Colby and Emma Pike in Strasbourg, France. See and hear how our missionary family is doing since their move last summer from language school in Paris to their new home in Strasbourg with the Bridge Europe Team. Coffee and light breakfast snacks will be provided. ■

### **Missions Sunday Schedule of Events**

9:30 a.m. - Worship with Rev. Leon Brown  
10:45 a.m. - Coffee & Breakfast Snacks (Fellowship Hall)  
11:00 a.m. - Joint Small Group Meeting  
5:30 p.m. - Fellowship Dinner (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 p.m. - Missionary Updates & Children’s Program

# Music Ministry

## ANCIENT HYMNS

### From Vince Treadway

One of the most interesting and thrilling facts about the songs of the church is that we can sing the same songs that our brothers and sisters in Christ have been singing for literally thousands of years! This is a true testament to the fact that God's Word is the same yesterday, today and forever! (Heb. 13:8)

I would like to mention a few examples of ancient hymns that appear in fragments and in whole in the church today. Some of the oldest songs are from Moses and Miriam (ca. 1620-1525 B.C.) in Exodus 15 beginning with "I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously. . ."; the song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32; and the song of Deborah (ca. 1107-1067 BC) and Barak found in Judges 5. Of course, the Psalms comprise the most important sources of worship texts known and have been sung by the church for millennia. The authors of the Psalms include King David (ca. 1040-970 BC), Asaph, the Sons of Korah, Solomon, Moses, Hemen, Ethan, and many anonymous writers. There are quite a few poetic writings of ancient Bible figures that have also been set to music and sung including those by King David in 2 Samuel, chapters one and two, and 2 Chronicles 16; by Jacob in Genesis 69, by Hannah in 1 Samuel, chapter two, and by Habakkuk in Habakkuk 3 to name a few. In the New Testament, we find Mary's Magnificat and Zachariah's Benedictus, along with Simeon's song in Luke, chapter one.

The *Te Deum* is an ancient Christian hymn first mentioned in the *Rule of St. Caesarius* (A.D. 502) and one that has been sung by believers for centuries. The authorship is uncertain, but some scholars have attributed it to St. Ambrose and St. Augustine. Legend has it that it was spontaneously composed and sung on the night of St. Augustine's baptism (A.D. 387). Many texts used in church originated in Latin and were composed by important church fathers/scholars including St. Basil (330-379), St. Ambrose (340-397), St. Cassian (360-435), St. Augustine (354-386), St. Benedict (ca. 480-543), St. Ignasius (1491-1521) and Jean-Baptiste de Santeuil (1630-1697) to mention a few. Many

other Latin texts were based on Scripture and other religious texts. Many of the Latin texts were translated and used in modern settings during the Oxford Movement (1833-1845). Some of the important translators of the time were John Chandler (1806-76), Edward Caswall (1814-87), John Mason Neale (1818-66) and John Henry Newman (1801-1890).

What a blessing it is to be able to enjoy lyrics spanning so many centuries and know that one day we will sing them together again in praise of our Lord and Savior! Go to the back of our hymnal sometime and check out the hymn authors and their dates—you will be impressed with the huge span of time they encompass! ■



**Join us for *The Gray Havens* on Saturday, October 26th at 7 pm. Their projects have been hailed as “an imaginative treatment of faith.” They have a knack for creating a listening experience similar to paging through your favorite book, with richly textured compositions and multi-layered lyrics. Samples of their music can be heard on You Tube and at their website at [www.thegrayhavensmusic.com](http://www.thegrayhavensmusic.com).**

**This is the first concert of the 2019-2020 Concert Series of FPC. All concerts are free and open to the public; a free-will offering will be collected to defray costs. Bring your neighbor!**

# Children's Ministry

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR ADVENTURES!

### From Kelly Harrington

September was rich with great beginnings to this year's adventures in learning and growing through the children's ministry. Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings are off to a great start and I look forward to beginning a new year of Faith Finders Club in October.

Sunday school for our children is a remarkable time each week as they come ready to learn something new from God's Word about His character, His creation, and His church. Our toddlers enjoy of special time set apart during their nursery play time to worship God through singing and learning from God's Word in their own convenient environment either in the nursery or steps away in the nearby classroom.

Downstairs in the children's department, our grade-school students worship together in the children's chapel and then venture off to classes to discover amazing places and people of the Bible who show us how God's plan was always for our salvation! Students are excited to track their weekly travels and discoveries in their passports! Thank you to Sasha Friend, Faith Treadway, Troy and Suzie Hershberger, Randy Portwood, Stewart and Michelle Hurst, Katie Lippert, Julia Berkau, and Ilyssa Harrington for working with our children's Sunday school program this month. Also, a very special thank you goes to the Breakfast Club small group for warmly sharing coffee, breakfast, and fellowship with our teachers each week.

Another great adventure in September was the start-up of our weekly Ekklesia Kidz meeting! This has been great fun for me to have the kids and volunteers together to play, learn, pray, and fellowship for a very busy and fast-paced one-hour session on Wednesday evenings. After dinner with our families in the Fellowship Hall, we take to the gym to work out some wiggles with a quick run-around game, then head downstairs for a lesson. Our focus this fall is on learning to pray like Jesus did. Small group leaders expand the lesson and pray with our kids, giving them an opportunity to closely examine God's Word and pray specifically for one another's needs. We finish our time together with fun fellowship

centers, playing games and deepening our friendships! I am thankful for the weekly crew of leaders who come to play, share, love, pray, and teach our kiddos: Laney Reynolds, Amy Balentine, Teresa Bass, Caroline Swanson, June Ullman. Also, thanks goes to those who have stepped in to substitute in a pinch: Gail Tew, Julia Berkau, and Monty Harrington.

This month, we will again carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the students of Polk Avenue Elementary through our Faith Finders Club. Mrs. Quam, principal, is excited for us to the school again this year and said, "...it is an awesome opportunity for our students to learn about the Lord." We will hold our first Faith Finders Club meeting on Monday, October 21. Our volunteer training will be at 1 p.m. on Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup> in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us if you would like to be a part of this local ministry opportunity!

There is much work to do in the name of Jesus Christ, to teach and equip our students with His life-changing message of salvation! As we are called together to work for His kingdom, I am thankful for those who are willing to work alongside of me and give to the Lord in prayer, time, talent, and money. Together, by His grace and in His name, we will continue!

"Of this Gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power." ~Ephesians 3:7 ■



**Ekklesia Kidz is celebrating fall on Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>. We will start with our very own festive dinner at 6 p.m. just for the kiddos (in the children's department) and dig into several fun fall activities for the evening! Kids, be prepared to have a great time playing goofy games and making interesting items that you will take home at the end of our fabulous festivities! Parents, we will need you back at 7:30 p.m. to help us carry our things home!**



# Church Family

## MILESTONE CELEBRATIONS

### BIRTHDAYS

October 1, Morgan Roe  
 October 2, Kermit Richert  
 October 2, Sue Dolan  
 October 3, Susie Bellamy  
 October 4, Charles Fugate  
 October 5, Margaret Hunt  
 October 7, Rob Thullbery  
 October 7, David Ullman  
 October 7, Carter Ullman  
 October 7, Michael Berkau  
 October 10, Ashley Cockrell  
 October 12, Rilee Bennett  
 October 13, Kaitlyn Nelson  
 October 14, Judith Adams  
 October 15, Joe Martin  
 October 16, Maxcy Henry  
 October 16, Brystal Michalkiewicz  
 October 17, George Corcoran  
 October 17, Janet Ward  
 October 18, Teresa Bass  
 October 18, Kathleen Krpata  
 October 19, Catherine Ullman  
 October 21, Harry Nelson  
 October 21, Richard Fugate  
 October 22, Mariam Clough  
 October 22, Bea Meeker  
 October 22, John Yarbrough  
 October 23, Sara Grace Freeland  
 October 24, Jan Kahler  
 October 24, Dana Lewis  
 October 25, David Crews  
 October 27, Milford Myhre  
 October 31, Autumn Moyer  
 October 31, Eli Reynolds  
 October 31, Jeff Herman

### ANNIVERSARIES

October 7, Paul & Mary Benner  
 October 18, Chuck & Kay Clegg  
 October 21, David & Teresa Bass  
 October 22, Bob & Bea Meeker  
 October 24, Larry & Judith Adams



## CHURCH OFFICERS

### ELDERS

<b>2019</b>	<b>2021</b>
Andy Hunt	Mike Berkau
Daniel Hunt	Paul Benner
David Nelson	<b>2022</b>
Jimmy Seay	Frank Hunt III
<b>2020</b>	John Matteson
John Dubois	Vince Treadway
Stewart Hurst	
Ed Lamb	
Fox Rawlings	

### DEACONS

<b>2019</b>	<b>2021</b>
Jake Cockrell	David Caldwell
Troy Hershberger	Michael Kahler
Kevin Kohl	Carl McCollum
Michael Matteson	Tony Thomas
Wendy Moore	
<b>2020</b>	
David Bass	
Lynne Hulen	
Rob McCollum	
David Kennedy Nelson	

**Moderator:** Rev. Chad Reynolds  
**Vice Moderator:** Rev. Mackay Smith  
**Clerk of Session:** David Nelson  
**Chairman of Deacons:** Jake Cockrell  
**Deacon Secretary:** David Kennedy Nelson  
**Chm. of the Congregation:** Monty Harrington  
**Treasurer:** Michelle Hurst (2018-2019)  
**Asst. Treasurer:** Daniel Hunt (2018-2019)



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