



NOVEMBER 2021

ISSUE 21-11

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.”

AT A GLANCE

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Leadership

PERUSING PASSAGES? PERILOUS PITFALLS!

From Pastor Mackay

We all desire to read the Bible daily, but developing the habit is a life-long discipline. Every one of us needs God's sanctifying grace so that we can sing with the Psalmist, "I open my mouth and pant, because I long for your commandments." (Psalm 119:131)

I often find that a repeated fault and frustration on my part comes from the mistake of misplaced **expectations** when I open God's Word. What am I expecting to find in the Bible? We need to let the Bible set our expectations, but if we're honest we often impose our own. What do you expect to find when you open God's Word? Here are a few expectations that, though not totally out of bounds, can hinder our love for God's Word.

Gold Nuggets. We live in an age of the soundbite. Numerous sociologists have recognized that our age of screen-saturation and instant-everything has changed not only our appetites, but the way that we think. Our attention spans are shrinking and the ability to engage complex ideas is slipping. This affects our Bible reading, too! We hunger for one-sentence summaries, thus we can go to a verse that addresses a topic as the sum total of the answer to a question. This allows us to zip up our brains and say, "Done!"

God has given us a book full of gold nuggets. Yet Scripture, as the Psalmist says, is to be "sweeter than honey" (119:103). We are to bask in Scripture, and to work to savor it more and more. Consider how we have taken John 3:16 out of context. John 3:16 is a gold nugget, no question! But, do we content ourselves with just that verse? Do you know the context of John 3? What comes before it, and what comes after it?

When we read, don't put on your mental metal detector like a treasure hunter at the beach. We shouldn't ignore the beauty all around us in hopes of finding one nugget. The bigger danger is that we begin to feel like we (or the Bible) have failed if we don't walk away with a "zinger" each day. Read long sections of Scripture at once, like an entire book. Search for the bigger picture.

Circumstantial Exegesis. That's a fancy way to say that we tend to read the Bible through our current predicaments. There's nothing wrong with this, in principle. God's Word has revealed to us "all things necessary for [God's] glory, man's salvation, faith and life..." (WCF I.vi), thus all our problems should be addressed first and foremost by God's Word. However, do we let our priorities overtake the priorities of God's Word itself? For example, in our current climate of total sexual confusion, we may feel a bit annoyed by the fact that the Bible doesn't give a 45 page treatment of every possible issue surrounding sex plus a blueprint to redeem a befuddled culture. Yet, this should tell us something: God's concern is much bigger than that particular topic! We must allow God's priorities to be our own, not expect God's Word to address our problems on our own terms.

Secret Meanings. Sometimes you'll hear a sermon and think, "Wow! How did he get that meaning out of that verse?" We can therefore become unimpressed with the plain, literal meaning of Scripture. Again, we may think "failure" when we don't have some major revelatory moment every time we open the Bible.

God has given us not a secret code, but a clear Word (Psalm 119:130). God isn't hiding anything from us. It's true that he calls scholars and teachers of the Word, and he uses their devotion to yield important insights that others may miss. It's also true that God uses our own study, comparing scripture to scripture and using commentaries and good books, to help us grow in knowledge and love for him. However, we must not begin with the idea that the "real" word of God is hidden under or in between the words on the page.

So why do we read the Bible? It's a complex answer. We read because we should (while I know I shouldn't read only to check it off for the day, that motivation sometimes leads me to read when I otherwise wouldn't). We read to learn about God. We read to glorify him. We read to encourage others. We read to grow in grace.

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To summarize, we read to find the One that the word presents to us: and that is Jesus. When Jesus showed Himself to those travelers on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24, He didn't throw down a puff of smoke and say "I'm Jesus!" like some magician. Instead, "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself...." Jesus used the Bible to direct others, by the Holy Spirit, to Him. He is the Word made flesh. He is the greatest revelation of God.

The Scriptures have been given to us that, by the Spirit's power, we may know God in Christ. Let's pray that the Spirit would enflame our hearts to listen to the Word for His glory and our good. ■

PRAYER FOCUS

- NOVEMBER 7** - Veteran's Day
- NOVEMBER 14** - Discipleship Weekend
- NOVEMBER 21** - Thanksgiving
- NOVEMBER 28** - Advent Season Meeting

Magnify the Lord! Women of Advent

- Nov. 28, Gen. 3:14-15
Eve and the Plan of God
- Dec. 5, Gen 15:15-21, 21:1-7
Sarah and the Promise of God
- Dec. 12, Exod. 1:8-2:10
Miriam and the Providence of God
- Dec. 19, 1 Sam 25:1-42
Abigail and the Protection of God
- Fri., Dec. 24, Luke 1:26-56
Mary and Faith in God
- Dec. 26, Luke 23:50-24:12
Witnesses of the Resurrection

God has brought us Jesus through his eternal plan of salvation, played out by his power in human history. This advent season, we will consider God's mighty work through his chosen servants and praise him for his goodness and grace.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The elders of First Presbyterian Church meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday. The following are highlights from the meeting on October 26.

- Prayer was given for our the needs of our congregation and the ministries of our church.
- Nominations Committee update: officer training for potential elder and deacon candidates took place on October 16, 2021. The potential candidates will be interviewed by active elders prior to the next session meeting, with the goal of approving a final slate at the November meeting.
- The 2022 church budget was approved for a congregational vote, and the annual congregational business meeting was called for December 12 after worship.
- Pledges toward the 2022 budget will be received November 7 (church officers), November 14 and 21 (congregation).
- Stewardship and Finance reported a strong September, with a 10% surplus of contributions for the month. As of Sept 30, contributions were at 71% of the annual budget, which is higher than the five year Jan-Sept average of 64%. Thanksgiving to God was offered for his provision.
- The Lake Wales Care Center Thanksgiving Community Service will be held at FPCLW on Tuesday, November 23rd at 7:00pm. ■

Congregational Meeting

The session has called the annual congregational business meeting for election of church officers and the approval of the 2022 budget for **Sunday, December 12** following worship.

Discipleship

November 12-14, 2021

Discipleship Weekend

In Times Like These, Pray Like This

with Rev. Matt Miller

The cultural turmoil of the last few years has raised questions for all of us about how we are to think and live as Christians. Our Discipleship Weekend is an opportunity for training together as we



look to Jesus! How should we pray to God in the world today? How does God use our prayers to transform our thinking and living?

Rev. Matt Miller (Ph.D. Cand., University of Bristol) is our speaker for this year's Discipleship Weekend. Rev. Miller was born and raised in Knoxville, TN. Matt is a well-known pastor in the ARP, having served as the Senior Minister of Greenville ARP Church, the director of Family Bible Conference, and a conference speaker at Bonclarken many times. He is a graduate of Wake Forest, RTS, and holds a doctorate from

Ersine Seminary. Matt currently serves as City Director for the C.S. Lewis Institute-Greenville and is working on his Ph.D. He is married to Lindsay, and they have three children, Elise, Davis, and Owen. ■

Schedule

Friday, November 12

6:00 p.m. - **Supper** (Fellowship Hall)
7:20 p.m. - **Keynote 1** (Chapel)
8:10 p.m. - **Q&A** w/ Rev. Miller
8:30 p.m. - Dismissal

Saturday, November 13

9:00 a.m. - Coffee, and Welcome (Chapel/Parlor)
9:20 a.m. - **Keynote 2**
10:15 a.m. - Break w/ Refreshments
10:45 a.m. - **Keynote 3**
11:40 a.m. - **Q&A** w/ Rev. Miller
12:00 p.m. - Dismissal

Sunday, November 14

9:30 a.m. - **Morning Worship**
Rev. Miller Preaching

ROCK ON WEDNESDAYS

Wednesdays in Fellowship Hall

Weekly Schedule

6:00 - Supper in Fellowship Hall
6:30 - Celebration of Community / Dismissal of Students
6:30-7:30 - Children's Program / Youth Program
6:45 - Program (See Below)
7:25 - Conclusion

Program Rotation

1st Wednesday - Potluck and Family Fellowship
(children and youth will participate in main program)

2nd Wednesday - Breakout Night

3rd Wednesday - Hymn Sing and Prayer Meeting

4th Wednesday - Bible Study

5th Wednesday - Rock on Wednesday will NOT meet on 5th Wednesdays.

Dates R.O.W. will NOT meet this fall - Nov. 10 and 24, Dec. 22 and 29.

LARGE GROUP

THE HUB

Adult Large Group Class

The Hub meets Sunday mornings in the fellowship hall following the worship service. If you do not currently have a small group and are interested in exploring our Sunday morning adult discipleship, join us at The Hub for a sermon discussion led by a pastor or elder, fellowship, and refreshments. All are welcome!

Music Ministry

NAVIGATING THE TRINITY HYMNAL

From Vince Treadway

The *Trinity Hymnal* is much more than simply a collection of hymns, songs, and spiritual songs that we use on Sundays. It can be a valuable tool for personal devotions, study, Scriptural poetry, information on composers of music and authors of texts, a Psalter, and more! I thought it would be valuable to point out some of these wonderful features so you might enjoy and utilize your *Trinity Hymnal* more fully.

One of the most important reasons that we use the *Trinity Hymnal* at First Presbyterian Church is that the texts are carefully chosen because they are true to God's Word. We believe that the Bible is God's inerrant Word, and so what we sing must be completely in line with Scripture. Let's begin by selecting a hymn and looking at the information available about it.

Hymn 30 is *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*, and if you look at the bottom left corner of the page you will find information on the source, author, and date that it was written. You see that it comes from Psalm 90, was written by Isaac Watts in 1719, and was altered and modified in 1990. Now if you turn to page 887, you will find Isaac Watts listed among other authors, his date of birth and death, (1674-1748) and a list of all the hymns he wrote that are found in the *Trinity Hymnal*. If you go back to hymn 30 and look at the bottom right side of the page you will find the tune name (*St. Anne*), the syllabification C.M. or common meter (8.6.8.6.=how many syllables there are in each phrase), the composer of the tune (William Croft) and the collection of hymn tunes that it came from (Tate and Brady's *Supplement to the New Version*, 1708). If you turn now to page 888 you will find William Croft listed with his dates (1678-1727) and the other hymns that have

tunes composed by him. If you turn to page 895, you will find a list of all the tunes in the hymnal, and in that list is *St. Anne* and all the hymns it is used for in the hymnal.

You might ask, "Why do I need to know what the syllabification is?" I'm glad you asked that question! If you turn to page 896 you will find a list of the meters in the hymnal, and you may remember that this hymn has Common Meter which is 8.6.8.6., so look at the list of tunes under "C.M." and you will find quite a few; 43 to be exact! If for some reason you do not know *St. Anne* or do not like it and

want to use another tune, you could select another tune from the list under "C.M."

Now if you would like to find a setting of a particular Scripture text, either as an introduction to a hymn, or as the text of a hymn, you could turn to pages 900-903 where all the Scripture references that are found in the hymnal are listed. While not every Psalm is represented in the *Trinity Hymnal*, most are, as well as many other Scripture texts.

The *Trinity Hymnal* also

contains a Psalter (pages 785-841); Creeds (pages 845-846), the Westminster Confession of Faith (pages 847-877), a topical index (pages 904-935) and a list of titles and first lines (pages 936-943).

There are other tools that can be found in the *Trinity Hymnal*, and I hope that I have given you enough information to do further investigation into how to use this great tool for your own devotions and study. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about our hymnal, so please feel free to contact me if you would like to talk further about it! ■



Family Ministry

Opportunities abound for all ages to learn from God's Word!
Contact a pastor, elder, or a teacher below for more information.

Youth Council Chair: Frank Hunt

Children's Council Chair: Vince Treadway

Children's Ministry

Sunday Worship - 9:30am

Sunday School

Following Morning Worship in the children's department.
Teachers - Angie Crews and Lynne Shear

Wednesday Nights - 6:30-7:30pm

R.O.W. Kids! - Study of Psalm 23

*On some Wednesdays, our children will remain with their church family for the Rock on Wednesday program.
Stay tuned to church announcements.*

YOUTH MINISTRY (MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL)

Sunday Worship - 9:30am

Sunday School

Following Morning Worship in the Game Room
Teachers - Mike and Julia Berkau

Sunday Night House Group (Nov 28 & Dec 19) - 5:00pm

Middle and High School are welcome!

November 28 - Bob and Lynne Hulen home

December 19 - Christmas Party - David and Cindy Nelson home

Wednesday Nights 6:30-7:30pm

*On some Wednesdays, our youth will remain with their church family for the Rock on Wednesday program.
Stay tuned to church announcements.*

BIRTHDAYS

November 1, Jennifer Fugate
November 1, Karen Allen
November 2, Jake Cockrell
November 4, Deeley Hunt
November 6, Lawrence Maxwell
November 6, Susan Ebel
November 8, Dayle Dierks
November 8, Niven Owings
November 8, Ellie Lippert
November 9, Pam Estes
November 9, Madison Campbell
November 12, Autumn Miller
November 12, Luciana Abele
November 13, Shelley Paros
November 14, Leah Gibson
November 18, Susan Coyne
November 18, Jane Terry
November 19, Jim Weaver
November 21, Eva Michalkiewicz
November 22, Molly Ann Lewis
November 22, Loren Furland
November 22, Jake Friend
November 23, Shelley Underwood
November 23, Jo Garrett
November 23, Susan Lama
November 29, Jim Underwood
November 29, Esther Lippert
November 30, Rebecca Youmans
November 30, John Grimes
November 30, Cortland Kohl
November 30, Nancy Turnquist

ANNIVERSARIES

November 10, Scott & Angie Crews
November 17, Rick & Penny Wright
November 17, Aaron & Kaitlyn Nelson
November 18, Rob & Dawn McCollum
November 19, Daniel & Adrijana Hunt
November 20, Rob & Janet Thullbery
November 23, Dick & Dottie Bailey

We are so grateful for the many kind gifts, thoughtful notes, and words of encouragement so many of you have shared with us this October for pastor appreciation month. God has used you to lift our spirits (and fill our bellies)! What a testimony all of you are to God's faithfulness in our lives. We give thanks for the humbling privilege of ministering among you. May God continue to guide us as we seek to glorify him together.

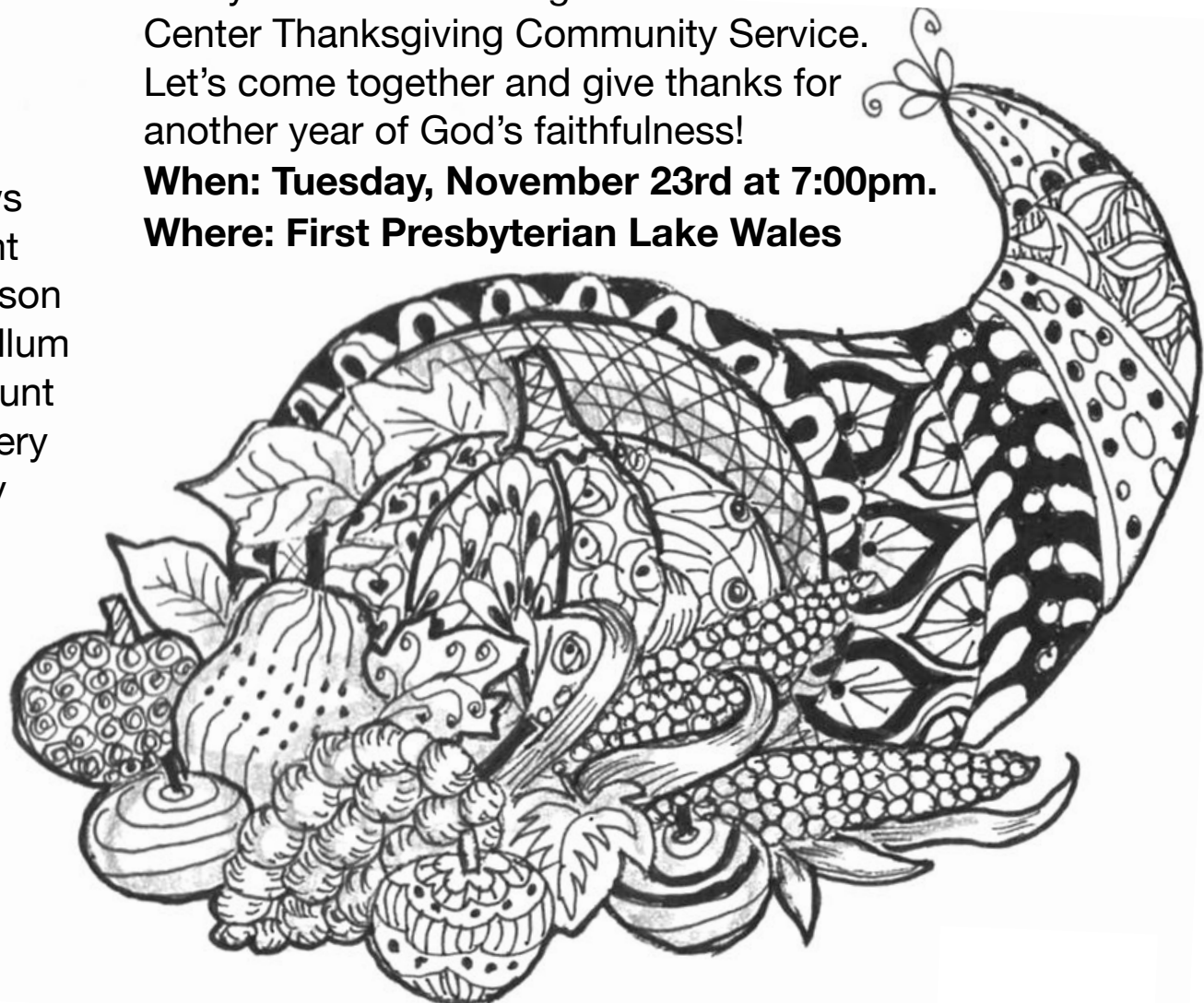
With love in Jesus,
Mackay & Rachel

Thanksgiving Community Service

This year we are hosting the Lake Wales Care Center Thanksgiving Community Service. Let's come together and give thanks for another year of God's faithfulness!

When: Tuesday, November 23rd at 7:00pm.

Where: First Presbyterian Lake Wales





First Presbyterian Church of Lake Wales
 16 N 3rd St, Lake Wales, FL 33853
 Phone: 863.676.0711
www.fpclw.org

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS

2021	2023
Mike Berkau	Scott Crews
Paul Benner	Doug Pace
Pat Frankenburger	
2022	2024
Frank Hunt III	Daniel Hunt
John Matteson	David Nelson
Vince Treadway	Andy Hunt

DEACONS

2021	2023
David Caldwell	Susan Coyne
Michael Kahler	Bob Hulen
Carl McCollum	Michael Matteson
Tony Thomas	Karla Campbell
2022	
Bea Meeker	
Aaron Nelson	
Mary Youmans	
Laura Hunt	

Moderator: Rev. Mackay Smith
Clerk of Session: Doug Pace
Chairman of Deacons: Bob Hulen
Deacon Secretary: Susan Coyne
Chm. of the Congregation: Josh Behr
Treasurer: Michelle Hurst (2020-2021)
Asst. Treasurer: Daniel Hunt (2020-2021)