



MARCH 2022

ISSUE 22-3

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

TWO MORE REFLECTIONS ON THE CHURCH

From Pastor Mackay

In our recent deep dive into 1 Timothy 3:14-16, we have focused on Paul's three images of a household, an assembly, and a pillar to deepen our understanding of the church. Here are two further reflections...

Regarding the church as a family, one direction we did not consider in our sermons was the passive role we each play in becoming part of the family of God. We did think of the household of God to deepen our grasp on our relationship with God (our Father) and with one another (our family-members), but consider our journey into the family of God.

Did you choose your family? No! Your parents and siblings came about completely outside of your control. This fundamental reality confronts you when you consider how to interact with them. In many situations, even in deep conflict, there is an underlying "...but we're family," that comes into play. The "givenness" of your family status drives you back to them again and again.

Such is the case with the church. The family of God has been made outside of our will, by the plan of God. Consider the beautiful language of Isaiah 43, "I have called you by name, you are mine..." It was God's call that brought us together in his household. Yes, we have all made a conscious choice of faith, but that faith was enabled by the Spirit of God working on our sinful hearts.

The implications of this are broad. If we belong to Jesus, we don't have a choice as to whether or not we are part of a church. We exercise our prayerful judgment to choose which local church, but the choice of whether we join ourselves to a local church isn't a choice at all. If we are really part of our earthly family, we will somehow react to that fact. It will affect our actions and attitudes, because we cannot change it! So with the church; because our Father and brothers and sisters were not chosen by us, but given us by God, we will react to that fact. If God's Spirit is working in us, we will commit ourselves to those in whom God has joined us in Jesus. Whom God has joined together, let no man separate!

Secondly, and we briefly touched on this in our sermons, God's design of people as body *and* soul plays a big part in our life together. Edward Klink, in his recent book *The Local Church*, writes about how our modern culture wrongly separates our "spiritual life" from our "physical life."

We can be tempted to think that our religious activities take place on some separate plain from our physical, bodily lives. Indeed, in some circles "worship" almost means some kind of transcendental meditation. Consider how many modern churches put their congregations literally in the dark as overwhelming music and lights thunder before them. People are actively discouraged from realizing others are there, and instead are shepherded toward a disembodied, "spiritualized" experience.

The outworking of this? Who cares if other people are in the room or not! We can live a "spiritual" life completely removed from other Christians. I can have a better "worship" experience in the anonymity of a darkened bedroom than in the messy awkwardness of shaking a stranger's hand in the sanctuary.

But, this is a mistake. Klink writes, "The error of a spiritual life disconnected from the physical world is that it fails to account for the full story the Bible tells and does not deal with the full person who eats, works, loves, and, if biblical, is intimately connected to a real, concrete, local (located) church." Our bodies are part of who we are, and thus to be part of God's family is to be physically with one another. We know that physical, in-person presence changes conversations...almost in a way we can't explain. That's because if we aren't together in person, we aren't really all together. So with the church; we cannot be together when we are physically apart.

Personally speaking, the recent pandemic and its effects have pointed out to me significant gaps in my thinking about the nature and purpose of the local church. I am grateful for several good books recently published on the subject, and I encourage you to meditate on God's amazing design he has revealed for his people. ■

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The elders of First Presbyterian Church meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday. The following are highlights from the meeting on February 22.

- The Session will begin a year-long study of the book *The Shepherd Leader* by Timothy Witmer.
- Prayer was given for our the needs of our congregation, including those made known through letters to the elders, and the ministries of our church.
- Stewardship and Finance reported that as of Feb 8, congregational giving has exceeded budget by approx. \$52k. Expenses remain low due to the lack of an Associate Pastor.
- The Nominations Committee presented a slate of candidates for the Associate Pastor Search Committee. It was approved for a congregational vote (see below).
- Chris Tibbetts (Elder, Bartow ARP) was approved for pulpit supply on March 20. Dr. Steven J. Lawson was approved for pulpit supply on March 27.

PRAYER FOCUS

MARCH 6 - Florida Presbytery Church Plants

MARCH 13 - Persecuted Church

MARCH 20 - Schools & Students

MARCH 27 - Ministry of Word/Preaching

•An installation service for Rev. Mackay Smith as Senior Pastor is scheduled for March 27 at 4:00pm. Dr. Steven Lawson will preach.

•Pastor Mackay will be on vacation March 18-25.

•The next stated Session meeting is March 29 at 6:00pm. ■

Associate Pastor Search

A Congregational Meeting has been called for March 6th to elect a Search Committee charged to seek an Associate Pastor for Family Discipleship. The following slate of nominees has been certified by the Session upon recommendation from the Nomination Committee: Angie Crews, David Falk, Daniel Hunt, Stewart Hurst, Ed Lamb, Kaitlin Nelson, Lynn Shear, Tony Woods, Tommy Wunker, Alison Freeland.

Be in prayer as we begin this important process ■

Familiar Face, Added Role!

As Vince Treadway continues to serve our congregation with excellence as the Director of Music, the Session has approved amending his title to *Director of Music and Congregational Care*. Vince blesses us all through his gift of pastoral care. He will now oversee our prayer chain and assist Mackay in scheduling and arranging pastoral visitation. Thank you, Vince! ■



Installation Service & Dr. Steven J. Lawson

March 27th

Mark your calendars for this important day in the life of our church. Dr. Steven

Lawson, president and founder of OnePassion Ministries, Ligonier teaching fellow, and noted author will

preach at our 9:30 morning worship service. The Installation Service for Rev. Mackay Smith as Senior Pastor of First Presbyterian Church Lake Wales will take place at 4:00 pm, with Dr. Lawson preaching. ■



Prayer Chain Information

One of our most powerful tools is prayer! God invites us to pray, and in fact commands us to pray! God uses prayer to accomplish his holy will if we ask according to his will. If you want us to put your prayer request on the prayer chain, we are happy to do so, but will not put anything on the prayer chain without your request and permission and/or the permission of the person for whom you want to pray. To protect privacy, we will use general terminology unless you specifically ask for particular wording. If you would like to put something on the prayer chain or if you would like to be on the distribution list you can email Vince Treadway at vince@fpclw.org or call Vince's cell phone at 863-978-7071, or call the church office at 863-676-0711. ■

Discipleship

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 March 30 or over SPRING BREAK, March 23



Missions & Outreach

SPECIAL GUEST

The Missions Committee invites you to a joint small group on Sunday, March 20th in the Fellowship Hall. We will welcome one of our World Witness missionaries to update us! Look to other church publications for more information. (World Witness asks that missionaries and their fields not be posted online.)



LAMENT AND LENT

From Vince Treadway

We are about to begin the season of Lent, March 2 through April 14, when we reflect on the passion, death, and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps more than any other time of the year we can read the Scriptural accounts of Christ's suffering and marvel about how great his love for us was to make him willing to suffer and die on our behalf. Not just any death, either, but one of the most heinous, hideous, and excruciating deaths conceived by man's evil heart; crucifixion!

Generally, most people don't like to think about death or sad things, and I can't tell you how many times when talking to me about planning music for a funeral a person will say, "I don't want anything sad." And I always think to myself, "Why not?! It is sad!" Of course, those of us who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior know that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord! Hallelujah! That is joyful news for sure! And as Christians we do not mourn as those without hope. However, *we do mourn!* In fact, to try to gloss over or skip the process of grieving is not healthy and is not supportable from Scripture. You can find many examples of the death of saints who were mourned for days, and sometimes weeks! Lament is a necessary and important part of life, and I would like to tell you that not only is it all right to mourn, it is necessary to mourn!

Unfortunately, we don't do much mourning in church, but there are many Scripture texts and hymns that point us to do just that. Many of the Psalms are lament, including all or parts of Psalms 12, 22, 25, 31, 44, 60, 74, 80, 85, 86, 90, and 142 to name a few. One of my favorite hymns of lament is by Martin Luther (1483-1546) entitled, *From Depths of Woe I Raise to Thee* found in the *Trinity Hymnal*, hymn 554. The tune for this hymn was also written by Luther; *Aus Tiefer Not*. The text is a setting of Psalm 130, and Psalm 130's lament is over the sin that we carry:

From depths of woe I raise to thee the voice of lamentation;

Lord, turn a gracious ear to me and hear my supplication:

if thou iniquities dost mark, our secret sins and misdeeds dark,

O who shall stand before thee?

Lament over our sin is helpful in reminding us what our sin cost Jesus Christ, and in making a greater effort to turn from sin for the sake of Christ. Many of the prayers that we have from our Puritan brothers and sisters are prayers of lament for sin. King David prayed a prayer of lament in Psalm 51 when he said,

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

So I would like to leave you to consider how you might consider lament as part of your own devotional time with the Lord; not only during Lent, but throughout the year. I leave you with a text by Frederick Faber (1814-1863) entitled, *O Come and Mourn with Me Awhile*:

O come and mourn with me awhile, O come to the Savior's side

O come, together let us mourn, Jesus our Lord is crucified.

O love of God! O sin of man! In this dread act your strength is tried;

And victory remains with love; Jesus our Lord is crucified!

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

-John 15:13 ■



Family Ministry

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

Children's Ministry

Check out the updated Children's Ministry section of our church website!

Sunday Worship - 9:30am

Sunday School

Following Morning Worship in the children's department.

We thank God for a new 4 yrs-Kindergarten Sunday School class, led by Patti Falk.

1st through 5th grade teachers - Lynne Shear and Katie Lippert

Next Quarter (April- June) - ??

Wednesday Nights - 6:30-7:30pm

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

Second Wednesday teachers- Cindy Nelson & Caroline Swanson

Fourth Wednesday teacher- Rachel Smith & Caroline Swanson

*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

Study of Philipians

Sunday Night House Group - 5:00pm

Middle and High School are welcome!

April 3- Aaron and Kaitlyn Nelson home April

24 - David and Cindy Nelson home May

22 - Stewart and Michelle Hurst 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

Church Family

MILESTONE CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

March 2, Jonathan Smith
March 3, Susan Jahna
March 4, A.J. Bennett
March 4, Patti Roe
March 8, Ruth Miller
March 8, Monty Harrington
March 9, Carole Miller
March 10, Penny Wright
March 10, Larry Adams
March 12, Marilyn Fisher
March 14, Carol Grimes
March 15, Libby Matteson
March 15, Marie Hasse
March 17, Michael Matteson
March 18, Jane Jackson
March 18, Sawyer Matteson
March 19, Kathy Enz
March 20, David Bass
March 20, Mason Hixenbaugh
March 22, Rob McCollum
March 23, Joan Dick
March 24, John Miller
March 24, J.B. Wynn
March 24, Rick Wright
March 25, Janice Brandies
March 26, Bryah Knepper
March 27, Jim Ayers
March 27, Mary Kunkel
March 28, Daniel Roe
March 28, Lesleigh Miller
March 28, Debbie Tyus
March 31, Andy Bennett
March 31, Morgan McCollum

ANNIVERSARIES

March 15, Jim & Shelley Underwood
March 20, Donald & Kathleen Krpata
March 21, John & Charlee Dubois
March 21, Tom & Alison Freeland
March 26, Frank & Laura Hunt

CHURCH WORK DAY!



Saturday, March 19th, 8am- Noon

The deacons will be spreading a large amount of pine mulch and could really use your help. Wheelbarrows, shovels and willing workers needed. Mark your calendar today!





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

CHURCH OFFICERS

ELDERS

2022	2024
Frank Hunt III	Daniel Hunt
John Matteson	David Nelson
Vince Treadway	Andy Hunt
2023	2025
Scott Crews	Tony Woods
Doug Pace	
David Falk	

DEACONS

2022	2024
Bea Meeker	Leah Gibson
Aaron Nelson	Dan Miller
Mary Youmans	Randy Shear
Laura Hunt	
2020	
Susan Coyne	
Bob Hulen	
Michael Matteson	
Karla Campbell	

Moderator: Rev. Mackay Smith
Clerk of Session: Frank Hunt III
Chairman of Deacons: Aaron Nelson
Deacon Secretary: Susan Coyne
Chm. of the Congregation: Jim Weaver
Treasurer: Michelle Hurst
Asst. Treasurer: Daniel Hunt