

Good News



May 31-June 6, 2020

A Pastor Letter

Do you ever look around the world and think, “Is the world coming to an end?”

The world is pretty crazy these days, isn't it? We have the pandemic, the economic challenges, an election year, and – did you see this – the Asian Giant Hornets – aka the Murder Hornets – have arrived on US soil! Over the last couple of months, I have looked up from the news thinking, “I'm living through an apocalyptic movie.”

Gratefully, the Bible speaks about end times. Some Christians throughout the centuries have read the Bible as a secret code book attempting to link God's plan to present events. This never works! Many wonderful people have been left staring at the sky as the world keeps on moving.

Rather than a secret code book telling us when the world will end, the Bible points us to God who is leading all things to a completion. The Greek word for “end” is *telos*. *Telos* also means completion or fulfillment. The world is not just moving to an end, it is moving to a completion.

Our lives matter because there will be an end. We will die. There will be a conclusion to our story. The Bible invites us to ask, “how will our lives matter in the end? How will lives be fulfilled?” With the end in mind, we live our lives differently. We pay attention to God's work in our lives. We slow down and enjoy our children or grandchildren more. We call on our friends. We live ethically in our business practices.

The pandemic has assisted us in paying attention to end things. And I have seen us start living new lives because of it.

In June, I will preach a sermon series called **The End is Near: Lessons from the Minor Prophets**. While we will briefly focus on the idea of end things, we will primarily examine things that must end in order to live authentic, abundant Jesus lives in our world.

Then, in July, we will begin our first in-person gatherings with the Wednesday Night Live Bible Study in the Sanctuary. I will be teaching on the Book of Revelation. It will be a fun, exciting story. I hope you will join us in person or through live stream.

Your life matters - to God, to me and to our church. I'm grateful for you. I look forward to a fun summer together.

You are Loved!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric'.

Pastor Eric
Senior Pastor



This Week in Living Room Worship

This Sunday, May 31, we will celebrate Pentecost Sunday. Our theme for Sunday is “Participating in the Creative Work of the Holy Spirit.”

Pentecost celebrates the creation of the Global church. This is also the Sunday our Nicaragua Mission Team was to be in Matagalpa, Nicaragua celebrating worship with First Baptist Church and the Missionary Ventures. While we grieve our inability to be together in person, digital Pentecost gives us the opportunity to still worship together.

In worship, Pastor Eric will interview Pastor Javier Moraga Guzman of First Baptist Church and the two pastors will pray for each other’s church. The FBC Matagalpa worship band will lead us in a worship song filmed before the pandemic. While the words will be in Spanish, you will feel the power of the Holy Spirit at work. If it feels strange, imagine those early disciples in Acts 2 hearing all of the different languages at once.

Pastor Eric will preach from Number 11:24-30 and Acts 2:1-21 as we focus on seeing the Holy Spirit at work in the mess and uncertainties of our lives.

Please share this week’s worship with your family and friends.

Here is this week’s Order of Worship:

<https://fbcgainesville.net/download/4102/>

Remember to find our Living Room Worship ONLINE:

FBC Worship can be found on Sundays at 8:00 am in the following places:

- YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_Ogqg5UQI4OkCjR7_HDVEw?view_as=subscriber
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-of-Gainesville-FL-224911824189421/>
- Website: <https://fbcgainesville.net/sermons-2/>
- Email: sign up to receive the link here: www.fbcgainesville.net/newsletter-sign-up
- Roku TV: If you own a smart TV or use ROKU for streaming, you will find a YouTube app on these devices. Simply search for our FBC Gainesville FL page and find the videos you want to watch.

Words of Wisdom

“And in this day...while great are the numbers of online research, medical expertise, authority edicts, hopeful suggestions and personal opinions regarding the health of the world’s inhabitants...our daily, family and community trust remains in the Lord whose name is Eternal as are His promises.”

—paraphrase from the Post-Testamental writings - Questatations 1:1

Anyone else feeling the confusions of the first part of my statement above? I would imagine that each of us is deep into discerning what we are comfortable or confident in doing to deal with Covid-19. But, I would also believe that we are even more confident of God’s sovereignty in His world and His desire for us to be assured of His love and mercy for each of us during these days.

Pastor Eric is leading us thoughtfully, courageously, and compassionately while looking ahead at various possibilities for the future - and the staff and church council is discussing it regularly. I have shared with Eric the pervasive response from the musical world that I have connected with over the last couple of months (including 2 online conferences sponsored by the National Association of Teachers of Singing and the American Choral Director’s Association). The health and safety issues regarding musical group rehearsal/performance, choral singing, wind instrument performance and congregational singing require extreme caution. This is due to, primarily, to the fact musical performance, especially choral music, projects more aerosols than normal speaking or solo singing which can be more isolated.

Church musicians around the country are currently attempting to determine what can be done now or in a progressive timeframe. There is still more data needed before a vaccine to determine what and when choirs and orchestras can do what they most want: offer their music to the Lord, each other and their community.

So, for now, you might consider...

- Read the Psalms inscribed to the Chief Musician, a Psalm of Asaph or some of the Psalms of David
- Hum in the morning to ‘explore’ your voice as it awakens; buzz your lips and have some fun with lip trills.
- Lightly sing a hymn, chorus or favorite song as your day progresses - then, as the voice feels healthy and strong...let it fly!
- Listen to inspiring music - vocal, choral, orchestral and contemporary Christian...in addition to your favorite genre
- Feel free to commiserate and console other musicians who are experiencing the same thoughts and emotions - pray with them and for them and the struggles within their organization or church.

“Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you with all wisdom, teaching and instructing each other in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs singing to God with thankfulness in your hearts.” —Colossians 3:16

Finally, here is a performance of “Sweet Are the Prayers of a Friend” by Pepper Choplin and performed by singers from Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis, TN and conducted by Calvin Ellis, organist-choirmaster - that shows their selective courage in providing this anthem for their congregation.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCV-_25eJJM

Donn Wisdom
Worship Pastor

Starting in July

Tales of the End: A Study of the Book of Revelation

Dr. Eric Spivey

Summer/Fall 2020

Starts Wednesday, July 8, 2020

Location: FBC Sanctuary

Time: Wednesdays @ 7:00 pm

This study will be Livestreamed online for those who cannot attend in person.

Description: The Book of Revelation reveals Jesus the Christ. With its symbolism, imaginative language and focus on the end of things, the book both captivates and scares us. This summer and fall, Pastor Eric will dive deep into Revelation as a powerful narrative telling the story of Jesus for each generation. He will also invest time in the different end time theologies giving each of us the opportunity to trust in God's victory.

Pastor Eric will also make space for new technology during this study. Individuals at FBC or in their homes will be able to text questions to him during the study.

Bible Study/Small Group Opportunities

- Sunday morning Video Bible studies are released each Sunday morning at 8:00 am. This week Russell Clifton will be teaching!
- Join our Men's Bible Study each Monday night at 5:30 via zoom. Contact Eddie Baker for a zoom request: bestdaysstartwithu@gmail.com.
- Join our Women's Bible Study each Thursday morning at 9:30 via Zoom. Contact Betty Ann Franks (franksba@bellsouth.net)
- Several Bible Study Groups are meeting via Zoom each week. Contact Pastor Lynn to see if your class is meeting online.
- Prayer and Bible Study with Pastor Eric: Wednesdays @ 7:00 via Zoom and YouTube LIVE. **YOUTUBE LIVE IS NEW. PLEASE JOIN US ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL AND NOT FACEBOOK.**

Zoom Meeting Details

Zoom allows you to meet face to face online with Pastor Eric as we pray together and as he teaches. To Join Zoom Meeting:

Click Here: <https://zoom.us/j/871161219?pwd=RWM4QlFUd2xFdVpGc2szelU0cHNCUT09>

Meeting ID: 871 161 219

Password: fbcgzoom

Operations Updates

And the People Gave

Thank you for everyone who generously gave to FBC this week when no literal offering plate was passed.

May 24, 2020

Tithes & Offerings: **\$7,570.78**

And the People Engaged

Over the coming weeks and months as we begin to worship both online and in person, we will be evaluating various ways to measure the engagement of our church in God's Mission in the world. Online analytics and actual attendance will be limited in telling us how we are growing in our love for God and love of neighbor. Below are some analytics to describe how people engaged our online ministry this week.

Unique Viewers of the Worship Service: 96

(Some churches are using 2.14 people/unique view to gage their online audience.

Hours Watched: 31 Hours

Average time watched: 12 Minutes

Facebook Analytics

Unique Viewers of the worship Service:

220 People

Estimate Reach: 604

Beautiful Feet Serving Gainesville



May 29 – June 6 was to be the week our mission team traveled to Matagalpa, Nicaragua. As we look forward to plans for next summer, we can learn more about the organization Missionary Ventures International (MVI) and our own missionary partner Brenda Rose who lives in Matagalpa and works alongside the church and the people there. To explore MVI, go to <https://mvi.org/>. For a brief bio of Brenda Rose and to donate to her work, go directly to <https://mvi.org/who/missionaries/>, type Brenda Rose in the search bar and click on her picture.

Each day this week from Sunday through Saturday we will use QuikKast to send out prayer needs for the workers and the people of Matagalpa. Please join us as we lend support through our prayers.

Deacons of the Week

May 24 – May 30

Bobby Bennett: 352-376-1440

Jon Samborski: 904-759-7343

May 31 – June 6

Eddie Baker: 352-792-3200

Dick Brodbeck: 601-954-0271

Birthdays

May 31 – June 6

May 31 Margaret Rivers

June 1 Billy Wright

Susan Ward

June 4 Robert Gerner

Dean Burdge

Bing Nobles

June 5 Dorothy Haythorne

Margie Locke

June 6 Trevy Brownlee

Funny Kid Stories

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?"

One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?"

A little kid said, "Verge."

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

The kid said, "Well, you know they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

Giving to First Baptist



- Send your offering via **US Mail** to the church office. Lots of folks use this one! Our mailing address is: 14105 NW 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32606



- **Automatic Draft** from your bank (usually free service.)

Online Giving



- Give through our **website** www.fbcgainesville.net You can set up a regular donation charged to your bank account, credit or debit card.

- **Text to Give.** Use your smartphone to give your offering.



Here's how:

Text... **FBCGAINESVILLE \$(amount you want to tithe)...** to **73256** to give to Vanco Tithes & Offerings using your text messaging (*Tithes \$25 – suggested location and amount*). *Standard text message rates do apply.* First time, you'll get a registration link · After that, it's automatic!

Questions? Call Elizabeth at 376-4681

Connecting to FBC

During these weeks when we do not see each other physically, we are working even harder to stay connected. Here are the steps to stay connected to FBC.

Sign up for our Email Newsletter

Each Sunday morning at 11:00, we will send out the link to our video Worship Service.

Sign Up Here: <https://fbcgainesville.net/newsletter-sign-up/>

Sign up for QuikKast.

We use QuikKast to send quick, short announcements to the whole church and to smaller groups within the church via email, text or phone call. To sign up, please call the church office at 352. 376.4681 or email Elizabeth.byrd@fbcgainesville.net.

Sign up for Facebook

If you are not connected to Facebook, this will be a good time to sign up. To get messages from the church, please search for First Baptist Church Gainesville. Hit the "Like" button and you will get notices when we go live.

FBC Website

Each week, we will use this page to inform our church members of opportunities, changes, and events in which we can participate. Make this page a weekly go to spot online. www.fbcgainesville.net

YouTube Subscription

Each week's bible study and worship will be release on Youtube. Subscribe to the First Baptist Church Gainesville channel to se all of these

videos. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_Ogqg5UQl4OkCjR7_HDVEw?view_as=subscriber