



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FAIRDALE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

It's almost time for our big, summer, church-wide event - Vacation Bible School. This year students will be taking off to Breaker Rock Beach and will discover that God's truth never changes, be reminded that everyone needs Jesus, and be encouraged to speak the truth in love.

Vacation Bible School is such a wonderful time for our church to grow in so many different ways. Most obviously, it is a fantastic opportunity to share the truth of the gospel with children who may have never heard of the sal-

vation that comes through Jesus Christ.

Secondly, it is a great way to disciple the children in our church who are already believing in Jesus. VBS is a week of concentrated teaching about what it means to be a follower of Jesus and the truths that our kids learn will stick with them for years.

VBS is also a perfect opportunity for the older members of our church - teenagers, college students, and adults - to serve and utilize their giftings and callings. There are so many different ways

to serve during VBS that anyone in our church who desires to do so can participate.

Finally, Vacation Bible School is a chance for our church to practice prayer. Please pray that God would work in the hearts of the children and adults who participate. Please pray that lives would be changed through the preaching of the Word. Pray that leaders and volunteers would be strengthened and healthy during the very busy week. Pray that the Holy Spirit would empower us to exalt Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God the Father!

A Peaceful, Proactive Summer

Josh Greene | Pastor

Memorial Day weekend marks the unofficial kickoff to summer. After we got through with the scary storms, we were left with some beautiful weather. This is ideal weather to enjoy the beginning of summer.

There are various ways to approach the hot and sunny summer months of June and July. Some people like to do less, enjoy the down time, and embrace the slower pace. Some people like to fill up the calendar with fun and adventurous activities that they only have time for during the summer. However you approach the summer, we all know that longer days, heat and humidity await us.

So how will you spend it? Psalm 90 reminds us **“Lord, teach us to number our days”** And so even in the summer vacation months we want to “serve the Lord with gladness” (Psalm 100) and “make the best use of the time” (Ephesians 5).

I do not want to tell you what to do this summer, but I do want to tell you lovingly to have a peaceful, proactive summer.

Here are 3 encouragements for you and your household as you advance into June and July:

NO DISTRACTIONS - FOCUS

Be proactive in determining now what you want the summer to be like. Of course, we are open and flexible and spontaneous, but there are some parts of our faith that require us being proactive. The summer can be such a time of strengthening and inspiration if we allow it.

With the extra time, there is ample opportunity to read the Word and to spend time

in prayer. Distractions will try to keep you from that. Focus in now on how you want to grow in your faith this summer.

NO DIVISIONS - UNITE

Divisions are all around us. Things that cause divisions are all around us. Weaknesses in ourselves that cause divisions will be visible this summer. We need to be proactive to be peacemakers and those who strive for unity. Distance and isolation are sneaky in creating divide amongst believers. We must be focused on staying connected and doing our part. May we walk by faith to being a key piece to us being a united church.

NO DISCOURAGEMENTS - ENCOURAGE

Of course, it is wishful thinking that the long summer would not have any discouragements. Bad days and moments are bound to come. But the hope here is that we would be proactive to minimize discouragements in the faith and in the church. One way to do this is to build people up. We all need encouragement. We all love being encouraged. Life-giving interaction with a fellow brother or sister in the faith is truly so good! May we counter discouragement with encouragement.

I am hoping and aiming for me and my family to have a peaceful, proactive summer. We have a calendar filled with events, but we also have lots of slow and easy days.

We are looking to Jesus and aiming for no distractions, no divisions, and no discouragements. And we are believing that we need to focus, unite, and encourage!

May God give us all a peaceful proactive summer!

College Ministry: Pray, Encourage, Disciple

Andrew Crawford | Minister of Music

College Ministry is often one of the most formative aspects in the life of young people in the church. Students are learning what it means to be Godly men and women and how to honor God with their lives as they move towards adulthood. The most important aspect of any college ministry is not the college group itself, but a church that is intentional about ministering to its college students. While Jess and I, alongside Chris and Elizabeth Harrod, spend time every week teaching, discipling, and growing in relation with the college students, the role of ministering to students is the responsibility of the church as a whole. I want to outline three distinct ways the church can be engaged in ministering to college students.

Pray for our college students

College is a fun and exciting time, but also a very difficult time for many. A recent poll from Psychology Today noted that 73% of American college students report feeling lonely and isolated – higher than any other age bracket. Now as much as ever, we need to be praying and encouraging the students in our church. When Paul writes to Timothy, he tells him that he prays for him day and night – that he would be filled with joy and strengthened in his faith (2 Tim. 1:3-5). In this same manner, we should pray for our college students – that their faith would be strengthened and they would be filled with the joy of Jesus Christ.

Encourage our college students

When Paul writes the first letter to the Thessalonians, he expresses a great desire to be united with the church. He describes this as being “being separated - in person, not in heart” (1 Thes. 2:17-18). In just a couple of months, many of the college students in our church will move away from here to attend

various colleges throughout the state and the country. And while we are separated from them for a time during the semester, we are united with them in heart and in spirit. How encouraging it would be for these students to receive letters and care packages reminding them that their home church loves them – text messages letting them know that we are praying for them – phone calls to pray alongside them.

Hebrews 3:13 tells us to “encourage one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” College is a season of new excitement, growth, and transition – but also a season of new temptation, trials, and weariness. When the church encourages its college students, we help point them to Christ and resist the deceitfulness of sin that the world offers them.

Disciple our college students

The responsibility of discipleship does not fall solely on an individual, a leader, a pastor, or some ministry position in the church. Discipleship is the responsibility of the church. Life-on-life discipleship is central to building up college students into Godly men and women. I speak personally when I say that my life was shaped by mature Godly men who invested in my life while I was in college. Look for opportunities to engage with students, invite them to join your Sunday school class, or take them to lunch after church (it will probably be the nicest meal they eat all week).

A church that is engaged in discipling the college students is actively working to build up the next generation of leaders, and Godly men and women