

Vacation Bible School Was Out-of-This-World!

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**Celebrating Mission
Trip to Dominican
Republic**
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**See Save the Dates for
Summer & Fall at FPC!**
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Talk About All the Big
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Pastor's Article

A Tale of Two Diamonds

REV. DR. BOB FULLER

July 4 is a day to celebrate the wonderful blessings and opportunities we have in this country. Over the last three decades, I have had an opportunity to travel to a variety of different countries. While it is always a blessing to visit other nations, and to immerse oneself in other cultures, whenever I come home I am reminded how truly blessed we are in this country.

One of the great blessings that we enjoy is that certain rights have been recognized and enshrined in our Constitution. Among them is the right of free speech included in the first amendment at the beginning of our Bill of Rights. The particular text of the first amendment reads.

Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech.

Lately, however, the responsibilities that come with this amendment have been put to the test. Although I could use lots of examples to illustrate this idea, I want to consider how this issue is playing out on the field of America's pastime: the baseball diamond.

On one diamond, in Los Angeles on June 16, the Los Angeles Dodgers gave a Community Hero Award to the Los Angeles chapter of an organization called the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence (SPI). The award was given as part of the Dodgers "pride Night" and was given to the group *"for their countless hours of community service, ministry, and outreach to those on the edges, in addition to promoting human rights and respect for diversity and spiritual*



enlightenment." (Emphasis added).

Unfortunately, the group honored by the Dodgers has a reputation for controversy and indulgence rather than spiritual enlightenment. The group's "hook" (gimmick) is the open mockery of Christianity—particularly Roman Catholicism. In addition to men wearing grotesque makeup and lewd versions of nuns "habits" (uniforms), the group performs strip-tease pole dances on life-size crucifixes, pantomiming lewd acts on other performers representing Jesus. On Easter, they hold an annual "Hunky Jesus" and "Foxy Mary" parade mocking the faith of millions of believers.

This is how the Dodgers organization chose to exercise their right to free speech and to "support" the LGBTQ+ people of Los Angeles. Sadly, even though there are a host of other pro-LGBTQ+ charitable organizations that the LA Dodgers could have honored, they chose to give a platform to one of the most controversial, hostile and vile groups they could

find. Whatever advocacy the SPI provide, or charitable support they give, that work is overshadowed by the narcissistic and blasphemous "indulgence" the group uses to get attention.

Meanwhile, on another diamond in Oklahoma City, the freedom of speech was being exercised in a very different way. This diamond (softball this time) was the host of the 2023 NCAA Women's College World Series Softball Championship, and the winners were the women of the University of Oklahoma.

In a June 6 media briefing following their 3-1 victory over Florida State to seal their third straight WCWS title, Sooners' infielder Grace Lyons was quick to explain where true joy comes from. She said,

"The only way that you can have a joy that doesn't fade away is from the Lord."

Far from being a performance for the cameras, the OU players continued praising God for their success on social media. Following the title game, Lyons shared an Instagram video in which she described how her walk with God has shaped her approach to both winning and losing. In a letter titled "Dear Softball," Lyons said,

"For a while, you were something that my hands had such a tight grip on. My identity was tied so tightly to a game that leads to failure almost all of the time. And I rode the roller coaster of emotions... Then I met Jesus."

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I learned I have a loving Father who died for my sins and has a plan for my life, a plan to give me hope and a future."

Instead of using their free speech as an opportunity for indulgence, the team used their platform and turn at the microphone to point to Jesus as the source of their joy.

What would you say if you held the attention of millions?

The rights enshrined in the constitution are not simply granted by the constitution, or by the United States. We recognize them as unalienable rights bestowed on us by God. They are of divine origin. As the apostle James says,

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17)

How are we using the gifts God has given to us, and how are we exercising the rights enshrined in our constitution? Are we using our voices to promote good or to provoke division and spite? Are we using our freedom of speech to tear down his people in mockery or to lift up Jesus Christ as the satisfaction of our deepest desires and the hope of the world?

This Fourth of July, I choose to say "Amen!" and "Boomer Sooner!"

SAVE THE DATE

- 4-5** July Dates
- 6** August Dates
- 7** September Dates

MINISTRY ARTICLES

- 8** The Alpha Course
- 9** KEYS Summer
- 10-14** Vacation Bible School was a BLAST!
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- 16-17** Mission Team Celebrates Successful Return to the Dominican Republic

FIRST CUP

- 18-19** Readings and Prayer List

BACK COVER

- 20** New Covenant Partners

First Press is a monthly publication from the FPC Communications Team.

Want to be featured in FIRST PRESS?

Deadline to submit content: the 15th of the previous month.

Hank Cherry: **Director of Communications**

Dorothy Hecimovich: **Graphic Designer**

Edwin Stephens: **Media/AV Manager**

Nona Hall: **Volunteer Photographer**

Questions? Contact: Hank Cherry
(210-271-2728/hankc@fpcsat.org)



Save the Date

MINISTRY SUMMERS

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES SUMMER

The 8:30 AM Tools and Topics Class taught by Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller as well as the 9:30 AM Ambassador Class for families with young children will take a summer break beginning July 2. Contact Sheila Figueroa, sheilaf@fpcsat.org.

MUSIC MINISTRY SUMMER

Portions of our Music Ministry will be taking summer breaks. Friday Singers and the Handbell Choir will be taking June and July off. The Sanctuary Choir will continue to meet Sunday mornings at 10:45 AM throughout the Summer to rehearse before services, however, they will take a break from Wednesday Night rehearsals from July 5 - August 12. Contact Tom Dooling, tomd@fpcsat.org.

UNIVERSITY MINISTRY SUMMER

Contact: Ben Henderson, 210-845-3845, benh@fpcsat.org

University Ministry Summer will include the Gospel Community Group for College Students (*weekly*) as well as the University Ministry Based Theologians Society (*July 17, July 24, July 31, August 7*) off campus on Monday evenings. We will also have Gallantry, Grace, and Grub Umin Cookouts on *Sundays, July 16, July 23, July 30, and August 6* at 6:00 PM off campus. For up to date specifics, please text Ben for more information.

FPC CHILDREN'S CENTER SUMMER PROGRAM

Times: Monday-Friday, 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Dates: June 5 - August 31
Contact: Laura Ortiz, (210) 225-0960
laurao@fpcsat.org

Kids 4-6 years, come and join the FPC Children's Center for the summer while we explore, learn and play! Full and part time camp available. Child-centered, play-based learning program full of exciting activities. Visit fpcsanantonio.org/childrens-center.

JULY

THURSDAY, JULY 6 -
MONDAY, JULY 17

ALASKA VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL SUMMER MISSION TRIP

Location: Chevak, Alaska
Contact: Rev. Dr. Joe Moore, joem@fpcsat.org
Lindsay Selli, lindsays@fpcsat.org

A team from FPC will be going to share the hope and joy of Christ as they lead Vacation Bible School and build relationships in Chevak, Alaska. Please pray that the team is united for the mission that God has for them in Chevak, and that the community would be prepared to receive the team.

The remoteness of the village requires the team to purchase and bring their own food from Anchorage. Please consider donating to help with this food cost.

SATURDAY, JULY 15

YOUNG ADULTS COMMUNITY TUBING TRIP

Time: TBD
Location: New Braunfels
Contact: Chris Roper, 210-782-2687,
christopherdavidroper@yahoo.com

Join us for a river float day somewhere in New Braunfels. More details to come. All young adults (single, married, and with kids) up to age 35-ish are invited to attend. Invite your non-First Pres friends to join!

JOIN THE YOUNG ADULT TEXTING GROUP

Text YAC to 210-981-3339 to join

 @fpcsa_yac



JULY

SATURDAY, JULY 22

PRISON MINISTRY VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Time: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 Location: Room 302
 Contact: William Etheredge, 210-410-3497
wmethrdg@yahoo.com

Chaplain David Busby will be leading a Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) volunteer training class on July 22nd. Attendees will learn about opportunities to serve and become approved TDCJ volunteers. Class is from 8:00 AM until 12:00 PM on July 22nd. This is an excellent way to respond to Our Lord's charge in Matthew 25:31-40, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Contact William Etheredge to register or for any questions. Please use the church entrance on Avenue E and arrive before 8:00 AM so we can start on time. Coffee and pastries will be available.

SUNDAY, JULY 23

KINMART DONATION DEADLINE

Contact: Grace Morehouse,
samanthagrace10@yahoo.com
 Lindsay Selli, lindsays@fpcsat.org

FPC is one of the host sites for KinMart, an event designed by The Alliance to help local foster families. On July 29, we will welcome families to Westminster Hall for an enjoyable and cost-less "shopping" experience for school supplies. We want to STUFF THE STORE with new, unopened school supplies. Donations needed by July 23 and can be delivered to Marianne Ryan or Lindsay Selli at FPC, or shipped to FPC through the Amazon Wishlist at <https://amzn.to/44NeSY2>.

JULY

SATURDAY, JULY 29

KINMART

Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 Location: 1st Floor Nutrition Center & Assembly Room
 Contact: Grace Morehouse,
samanthagrace10@yahoo.com
 Lindsay Selli, lindsays@fpcsat.org

FPC is one of the host sites for KinMart, an event designed by The Alliance to help local foster families. On July 29, we will welcome families to Westminster Hall for an enjoyable and cost-less "shopping" experience for school supplies. You can help in two ways: donate school supplies or volunteer the day of the event. Volunteer sign up at <https://bit.ly/kinmart23-serve>.

LIFE RESTORED SA (LRSA)
VOLUNTEER & MENTOR TRAINING

Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
 Location: Geneva Room
 Contact: Katy Vidales, 210-740-0011
katy@liferestoredsa.org

Come join us on Saturday, July 29th and empower yourself to serve our community and fight human trafficking. Our LRSA Volunteer and Mentor Training will give you the knowledge and tools to use your God-given talents to join the fight against trafficking in our city and beyond. With various volunteer opportunities available, there is something to fit into everyone's schedule. Don't miss out on this opportunity to make a lasting impact - sign up today at <https://bit.ly/lrsa-volunteer-app>.

KinMart

We want to **STUFF THE STORE** with new, unopened school supplies. Donations needed by July 23, 2023



DONATE

- Full-Size Backpacks
- \$10 Walmart Gift Cards
- \$10 Target Gift Cards
- Classic Markers
- 24 Count Crayons
- Scissors
- Wide Ruled Spiral Notebooks
- College Ruled Spiral Notebooks
- Wide Ruled Notebook Paper
- College Ruled Notebook Paper
- Elmers Glue
- Tissue Boxes
- Hand Sanitizer
- Clorox Wipes
- Box of #2 Pencils

Donations can be delivered to Marianne Ryan or Lindsay Selli at FPC, or shipped directly to FPC through the Amazon Wishlist (<https://amzn.to/44NeSY2>).

AUGUST

TUESDAY, AUGUST 1

YOUNG ADULTS COMMUNITY
OPEN MIC NIGHT

Time: 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM
 Location: The Pigpen on Broadway
 Contact: Chris Roper, 210-782-2687,
christopherdavidroper@yahoo.com

Give those vocal chords a workout at Open Mic Night at the Pigpen. All young adults (single, married, and with kids) up to age 35-ish are invited to attend. This is also the perfect opportunity to invite your non-First Pres friends to join!

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10

YOUNG OCEANS CONCERT

Time: 7:00 PM- 9:00 PM
 Location: FPC Westminster Hall
 Contact: Callan Brown, callanb@fpcsat.org

“Young Oceans push the furthest edges of the indie meditative genre with densely layered Eno-atmospherics of equal appeal to the devoted believer, meditative transcendentalist, and discerning artrock fan.” (Noisetrade).
www.youngoceans.com

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13

BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING

Time: 9:30 AM- 12:30 PM
 Location: FPC
 Contact: Rebecca Sweet, rebeccas@fpcsat.org

FPC is sending you to school this year with lots of prayers and a blessing! Invite your school friends, teachers, staff, school administrators to church on August 13th (all services) for a special blessing. Bring your back pack and receive a back-pack tag to remind you that God is with you and you are LOVED by all of the FPC family.

PRAYER AT THE FLAGPOLE

Time: 5:30 PM
 Location: Your neighborhood school
 Contact: Debbie Taylor, rpdstaylor@gmail.com

Gather at your school flagpole to pray for the schools, students, teachers, administrators, all staff and families. Contact Debbie to get involved and make sure as many schools as possible are covered in prayer.

AUGUST

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19

2ND ANNUAL RISE UP & PRAY

Time: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
 Location: Shearer Hills Baptist Church
 12615 San Pedro Ave San Antonio, TX
 78216
 Contact: Sherry Sigmon, jsigmon@satx.rr.com

Ladies, it's time to Rise Up & Pray for our students and their schools before the 2023-24 school year begins! Join other moms, grandmoms, aunts, sisters, and teachers for a time of worship, encouragement, and united scriptural prayer! Enjoy a light brunch at 9:00 AM before the program starts at 9:15 AM. We are thrilled to have the South Texas State Coordinator for Moms In Prayer International, Jennifer Appleton, as our guest speaker. Register now to be a part of this FREE life-changing event at <https://bit.ly/riseup2pray>.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20

KICKOFF SUNDAY

Contact: Rev. Becky Prichard, beckyp@fpcsat.org

Mark your calendars! We will be kicking off the fall semester at FPC with a SECOND Modern Worship service at 9:30 AM in Westminster Hall! To make this a success, we need more volunteers for the new service as well as for Sunday school and childcare. Is God calling you to help in this kingdom-multiplying work? Stay tuned for more info on the annual Kick Off celebration and volunteering opportunities coming soon!

Pray for our Prison Ministry

FPC's Prison Ministry team (under the leadership of Will Etheredge) seeks Congregational prayer for:

1. The thousands of prisoners incarcerated in San Antonio, and the staff who operate our prisons
2. Volunteers to lead a monthly discussion group or Bible study ministry at the Dominguez unit.
3. FPC and other volunteers for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice orientation/training/certification training to be hosted at FPC in late July.
4. The Holy Spirit to move in churches throughout SA to rebuild ministry at Dominguez (after the Covid pause and post-Covid regrouping at churches)
5. Guidance in engagement in existing approaches to ministry and expansion of biblically holistic dimensions of outreach

SEPTEMBER

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

FIRST LITERATURE CIRCLE MEETING FOR 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR, 2023-2024

Time: 1:30 PM (Social begins at 1:00 PM)
Location: McCullough Room
Contact: Grace Clouse, Chair,
grace.clouse42@gmail.com

FPC Literature Circle will meet **the second Tuesday of each month from September - May** in the McCullough Room. This upcoming year is the 50th anniversary of the Circle 13 Literature Circle at FPC! Get started on the reading list this summer and plan to join us for the reviews throughout the year.

- Sept. 12 – "East of Eden" by John Steinbeck
(This book was reviewed in Sept. 1973)
- Oct. 10 – "The Ride of Her Life" by Elizabeth Letts
- Nov. 14 – "Brackenridge: San Antonio's Acclaimed Urban Park" by Lewis F. Fisher
- Dec. 12 – "Vanderbilt: The Rise and Fall of An American Dynasty" by Anderson Cooper
- Jan. 9 – "Facing the Mountain" by Daniel James Brown
- Feb. 13 – "The Second Life of Mirelle West" by Amanda Skenandore
- Mar. 12 – "The Sandcastle Girls" by Chris Bohjallan
- Apr. 9 – "Valley of Shadows" by Rudy Ruiz
- May 14 – (To be determined later)

Bring a friend to hear a great story and be reminded of the value of books. Delayed streaming is available each month on our FPC website: fpcsanantonio.org/lit-circle

Women of the Church Service Circles

WOC has a variety of women's circles which meet September through May. Some circles meet in homes, others at church, and many of them have lunch as part of their meeting. Some are Bible study circles, one circle knits and crochets prayer shawls, and another is just for young moms. The Service Circles 18 & 20 provide service all year long and would love for additional volunteers to help provide meals for families with new babies or those recovering from surgery or to assist in organizing and serving memorial receptions held at the church.

Circle of Concern - Circle 18

Small home baked cookies always needed for receptions. Volunteers for help with receptions needed.

Contact: Char-An Witten, Chair (210-341-1856)
Pat Brodeen, (pat@brodeen.com)

Circle of Service - Circle 20

Volunteers to make/take meals when needed.

Contact: Muffin Camp, Chair (210-789-1808)

Please refer to fpcsanantonio.org/woc to find the dates and times each circle meets, as well as contact information for each circle leader. Visitors are always welcome!

Friday SINGERS

Plan to Join the Friday Singers for Year 2023-2024

Wondering why Friday Singers are always smiling? It's because they love what they do! Love to sing? We are looking for new members to join this unique and wonderful ministry. No tryouts needed--just come ready to smile and participate with enthusiasm! Rehearsals start mid-August and include a selection of popular songs. Bring joy to nursing homes and retirement facilities by joining the Friday Singers! Sign up for the 2023-2024 year coming soon! Contact Brittanie Salazar – Administrative Assistant to the Music Department, 210-271-2731 or brittanies@fpcsat.org.



The Alpha Course

Meet new people & explore faith together.



We are happy to announce that we will be hosting an Alpha course here at First Pres on Wednesdays beginning September 6th. The class will last for 12 weeks and go from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Childcare will be provided.

Alpha has been held in over 100 countries in over 100 languages. Alpha began at Holy Trinity Brompton church in the UK in 1977. Nicky Gumbel, Pastor at Holy Trinity Brompton took over running the course in 1991 as an effort to reach his community with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Alpha is considered to be one of the most effective evangelistic tools available. It offers a place to connect with others and with God. Alpha allows guests to explore life's big questions in a safe and open environment. Alpha is for everyone regardless of background or beliefs. Nonbelievers, unchurched believers, new believers, and mature believers will benefit from this course.

We will provide a meal, watch a video, and have small group discussions afterward. We teach what we believe in the videos and allow guests to express their views with no wrong answers or judgment while the Holy Spirit works among us. This is our opportunity to invite someone for fellowship and explore the Christian faith in a non-threatening environment.

Please contact Elizabeth Crites if you are interested or have questions.

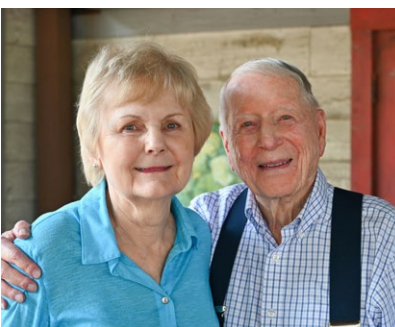
crcrites@aol.com, 713 822-0222



KEEPING EVERYONE YOUNG IN SPIRIT

Older Adult Ministry

fpcsanantonio.org/keys



During the remaining Summer months, July and August, we will not be offering a speaker and lunch on every Friday. However, we will continue to meet on the third Friday of the month for our Birthday Lunches. Each month we will meet at the restaurant at 11:30 AM, or you may take the shuttle from FPC that will leave at 10:45 AM. Off-site birthday lunches cost \$15. July 21 we will visit Milano Ristorante Italiano at 11802 Wurzbach, and August 18 we will enjoy the famous burgers (or other food) at Chris Madrids at 1900 Blanco Road. Make your reservations by signing up at the front desk, calling the church office at 210-226-0215, or emailing Alice at alicem@fpcsat.org or Marissa at marissab@fpcsat.org.

We have had a great year of events in 2023 and our planning committee is committed to bringing in relevant speakers beginning in September. If you have suggestions for speakers please let me know. Praying that you have a great summer with opportunities to connect with family and friends.

Blessings,

Joe

KEYS Upcoming:

July 21

Birthday Lunch at Milano

August 18

Birthday Lunch at Chris Madrids

Friday Fitness

Friday Fitness will continue this Summer via Zoom. Join Jacqueline Crow at 9:30 AM. Jacqi has been a champion for us and everyone loves the time with her. If you want to be included on the email notifications, send your email address to joem@fpcsat.org. You will be sent a link to join the Zoom Meeting.

Mahjong & Bridge

Mahjong & Bridge will meet this Summer on various Fridays in the Geneva Room. If you want to join in on the games call Suzanne West at 210-525-1499 or email Nancy Black at whythere@icloud.com for more information. You don't have to be a seasoned player and if you have a game you would like to play, let us know and we will make room for you!

Vacation Bible School



Dear Volunteers,

You are "Out Of This World!" Thank you for a "Stellar Week" and for "Shining Jesus's Light." We appreciate your dedication and commitment to the kids at First Presbyterian Church. You are making a difference and your love for Jesus is contagious.

Keep Shining,

Becky, Rebecca, and Holly







SERVE AT FPC

FPCSANANTONIO.ORG/VOLUNTEER

Are you looking for a way to get involved? We have room for you in several different areas around FPC for you to use your gifts and talents.

- Love Jesus and love kids? We need you in Children's Ministry! - Contact Rebecca Sweet, rebeccas@fpcsat.org.
- Help with FPC memorial receptions (set up, serving, & clean up) - Contact Pat Brodeen at pat@brodeen.com or 210-383-3083.
- Sunday Ushers - Contact Adam Sharpe at adam1980@pobox.com.
- Bake Cookies for Sunday FPC3 Fellowship - Sign up at bit.ly/sunday-cookie-signup.
- Sunday Greeters - Contact Nancy Turnbull at nancybtturnbull@gmail.com.







**KINGDOM
RESTORATION
COLLABORATIVE**

Praise Report

**By Chris Parker, Security Host for
the Kingdom Restoration Lab (KRL)**

Everyone meet Mr. R. Some of you would recognize him as the guy in the wheelchair that for the last six months has found himself a home directly across the street from us, on the sidewalk of what used to be the Express-News building. Well, over time I have been able to get him to trust me enough to go from receiving water from me to coming across the street and getting water and starting a conversation with me. He mentioned that he used to come to Loaves and Fishes a few years ago and would get a haircut too. I was able to give him a haircut and am in the process of scheduling him for a shower over at Corazon where they are expecting him. Recently, he had gangrene in his foot, so he had surgery and the medical team was able to save it. He currently has swelling in his foot and leg, so when I was trying to help him, I realized we would need to cut off his pants. This is where Corazon came in, they are aware of Mr. R's needs and are ready to assist with this medical need and afterward; Brandy agreed to redress the wound. The idea is to get a look at the extent of his infection to see if he needs to go back to the hospital. He did not think kindly of the idea, as he had been turned away before due to his unshowered state. I know they aren't supposed to do this, but we live in a different world. We must continue to be the light and find ways to make things work for all our neighbors. I just want to say thank you to all for providing me the platform and the resources to make things like this blessing happen, it is a collaborative, group effort, and we can continue to make a difference together! Thank you for letting me spread the joy!



Mission Team Celebrates

Successful Return to Dominican Republic

By Carrie Everson, Director of Young Adults & Young Women's Ministries

This year was our second trip to the community of El Circadillo in the Dominican Republic. Nine participated this time – four newcomers and five returning participants. For those of us who were there last year, what a beautiful homecoming it was! One teammate described returning to El Circadillo as the feeling you have when you come home for Christmas. What an apt description! The smiles and hugs we received when we first arrived said it all. The community was so excited to see us again, and to meet new friends as well. Furthermore, we were amazed to see the progress they have made since last year. Last June the community was just beginning a water project, which included digging trenches for pipes to transfer water from the well to a water tower, which will eventually pump water to every home in the community. This year we were able to help plaster and paint the water tower, which will soon be ready for use! As we sat together on the last day watching the young people dance as part of the closing ceremony, in the background we could see the water tower. What a beautiful picture of a community coming together, in Christ, and working together to reach their goal – clean running water for every household in El Circadillo!

Yet that is not the only reason we were there. Jesus told the woman at the well in John 4, that if she had asked, He would have given her living water. The people of El Circadillo, like all of us, need Jesus, their only source of living water. Thanks be to God we got to be a part of offering this living water to thirsty souls. One day Jake and Paige McKenzie, a young married couple on our team, led a group of married and engaged couples in a session on relationships. As it ended, some of the people started to ask





questions about Jesus and the Bible. They mentioned that they did not have a Bible at home, and the McKenzies were able to offer them free Spanish Bibles (thanks to the donations of FPC folks!). Instead of ending the session, they stayed to talk for a long time, and the McKenzies, alongside others from our team, shared the Gospel with them and helped them learn how to understand Scripture.

What a beautiful picture of the Kingdom of God! What a joy was ours to get to be a part of it! This community needed clean water, and thanks to the ongoing work of Food for the Hungry, they will soon have that need met. Yet their deeper need for Living Water is also being met! Thank you for praying for our team, and supporting our trip! God is at work, and we are excited to continue partnering with Food for the Hungry in El Circadillo!





FIRST CUP READINGS

JULY 2023

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.— Psalm 143:8

Dear Family in Christ,

First Cup is designed to assist you in the habit of daily Bible reading and prayer. The name is to remind you that as you reach for your first cup of morning coffee or tea, reach also for your Bible and prayer list. The prayers at the beginning of each week are taken from hymns, sometimes found in obscure hymnals in my library. They are intended to be read as your beginning prayer, to focus your mind on the daily readings that follow. May this spiritual discipline strengthen you as you face each day.

Blessings and
love in Christ,

Sandy Sturch

1 Job 1; 1 Peter 5:8-11; Psalm 37:23-40; Rev. 12:10-12

O God of earth and altar, Bow down and hear our cry; Our earthly rulers falter, Our people drift and die; The walls of gold entomb us, The swords of scorn divide; Take not Thy thunder from us, But take away our pride. From all that terror teaches, From lies of tongue and pen; From all the easy speeches That comfort cruel men; From sale and profanation Of honor and the sword; From sleep and from damnation, Deliver us, good Lord! Tie in a living tether The prince and priest and thrall; Bind all our lives together, Smite us and save us all; In ire and exultation Aflame with faith, and free, Lift up a living nation, A single sword to Thee. (The Hymnbook, No. 511)

2 Job 2:1-10; Matt. 4:1-11; 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Ps. 88

3 Job 2:11-13; Psalm 22:1-11; Prov. 17:17; 18:24; 27:6-10

4 Job 3; Jeremiah 20:14-18; Psalm 63

5 Job 4-5; 1 Cor. 3:18-20; Heb. 12:1-13

6 Job 6-7; Lamentations 3:1-26; Psalm 38

7 Job 8; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Psalm 25

8 Job 9-10; James 5:7-20

O gracious God, forsake me not when I am old and gray, that unto those that follow me I may Thy might display. Thou who has sent me many griefs wilt yet my soul restore, and out of sorrow's lowest depths wilt bring me forth once more. O turn again and comfort me, my waning strength increase, and for Thy faithfulness, O God, my praise shall never cease. (The Hymnbook, No. 396)

9 Job 11; Prov. 3:5-8; Psalm 23

10 Job 12-13; Jeremiah 32:17-19; Heb. 9:27-28

11 Job 14-15; Psalm 37; 116

12 Job 16-17; Psalm 31

13 Job 18-19; Psalm 41

14 Job 20-21; Prov. 11:28, 23:5, 20:7-9; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; Luke 18:18-30

15 Job 22-23; Psalm 116; Prov. 8:17

He leadeth me: O blessed thought! O words with heavenly comfort fraught! What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me. Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom, sometimes where Eden's bow-ers bloom, by waters calm, o'er troubled sea, still 'tis His hand that leadeth me. Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine, nor ever murmur nor repine; content, what-ever lot I see, since 'tis my God that leadeth me. (The Hymnbook, No. 338)

16 Job 24-25; Ps. 139:11-12; John 8:12; Eph. 5:8-14

17 Job 26-28; Psalm 51:6; Prov. 2; James 1:2-8

18 Job 29-31; James 1:9-26; Eph. 2:8-10

19 Job 32-33; 1 Tim. 4:12; 2 Cor. 10:12; 1 Cor. 1:18-31

20 Job 34-35; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 2:5-11; Psalm 103:8-18

21 Job 36-37; Jer. 46:27-28; Heb. 12:4-11; Isa. 40:17-31

22 Job 38-39; John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Isa. 29:13-16; 49:9-14

God of our life, through all the circling years, We trust in Thee; In all the past, through all our hopes and fears, Thy hand we see. With each new day, when morning lifts the veil, We own Thy mercies, Lord, which never fail. God of the past, our times are in Thy hand; With us abide. Lead us by faith to hope's true Promised Land; Be Thou our guide. With Thee to bless, the darkness shines as light, And Faith's fair vision changes into sight. God of the coming years, though paths unknown we follow Thee; When we are strong, Lord, leave us not alone; Our refuge be. Be Thou for us in life our Daily Bread, Our heart's true Home when all our years have sped. (The Hymnbook, No. 108)

23 Job 40-42:6; Romans 14:4; Matt. 7:1-6; Prov. 20:27; Psalm 139:23-24

24 Job 42:7-17; Matt. 5:21-24; Col. 3:12-17; 1 Peter 5:6-11

25 John 17; 1 Cor. 1:1-17; Gal. 5:16-26; James 3:13-18

26 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5; Isa. 29:13-14; Psalm 111:10; Col. 1:9-14

27 1 Cor. 2:6-16; John 14:15-31; Romans 16:25-27

28 1 Cor. 3; Heb. 5:11-6:3; Luke 6:46-49

29 1 Cor. 4; Luke 12:42-48; Heb. 3:1-6; 2 Tim. 3:10-17

Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin. Each victory will help you some other to win. Fight manfully onward; dark passions subdue, look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through. To him that o'er cometh, God giveth a crown. Through faith we shall conquer, tho' often cast down. He, who is our Savior, our strength will renew. Look ever to Jesus: He will carry you through. Ask the Savior to help you, comfort, strengthen and keep you. He is willing to aid you, He will carry you through. (Worship in Song, No. 436)

30 1 Cor. 5; Leviticus 18; 1 Thess. 4:1-12; Eph. 5:1-17

31 1 Cor. 6:1-11; Matt. 18:15-20; Jude 4-25; Rev. 20:11-15

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. (Romans 8:26).

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New Covenant Partners!

Joined us in June 2023



Lynn Durbin



Randy Leal



Jamie & Julie Patterson



Ken & Sally Vick

New Covenant Partner Gathering
Sunday, September 17 | 5:00 - 6:30 PM | Off Campus
We will be hosting a New Covenant Partner Gathering to welcome those who have joined FPC since January 2023. The event will take place off campus at a location to be determined. Stay tuned!



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