

First Baptist Regina Weekly News

For the Week of September 20th, 2020

Does God Answer Prayer?

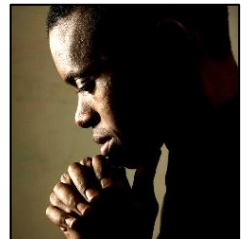
Once there were three guys stranded on a desert island. One day, they found a magic lantern containing a genie, who granted them each one wish. The first guy wished he was off the island and back home. The second guy wished the same. But the third said, “I’m lonely. I wish my friends were back here.”



“Be careful what you wish for” is a well-known aphorism.

This saying tells us more about ourselves than about God. We all struggle to some degree to discern what we think we need – at least, we ought to struggle with this! Society, history, and creation are nearly impossibly complex. As well, in our hearts, we are conflicted with competing desires. For this reason, some teach that asking God for things is non-sensical or even wrong: who are we to tell God how things should turn out? Does God need a daily list of to-dos?

I can’t resolve the difficult questions about why things go the way they do, or when or why God ‘answers prayer.’ I turn to God with this question, to scripture, and to the church’s 2000 years of teaching, and a few things become clear.



First, God calls us to come and talk about what is going on within us and to ask for things. In fact, God does not stand away from us and wait. Jesus said, “I’m standing at the door of your heart and knocking. If you open up, I’ll come in and sit down with you.” Second, God isn’t cruel. God doesn’t give us something terrible and then shrug his shoulders and say, “Well, that’s what you asked for.” Quite the opposite. God delights in giving good gifts to his children and is drawing all history toward a good goal. Third, as we pray, we find we are



speaking to a being who not only listens to us, but speaks to us in return. God’s words have power and accomplish something, always. Sometimes God’s words correct us. Other times they help us understand. Or they heal, comfort, or strengthen us. Often, God calls us to action, to be a part of the answer to our prayers.



Let us continue to pray for our city, our world, and one another, to our Father, from whom comes every good and perfect gift.

With love,
Pastor Joel

First Baptist Regina Re-Opening

First Baptist Regina has re-opened its sanctuary for in-person worship services. If you are planning to attend this Sunday and it will be your first time back, please familiarize yourself with the Sunday morning precautions, found on page 3 of the attachment: *First Baptist Regina Re-Opening Plan*. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with one of the board members or pastors, email [the church](#), or leave a message at (306) 359-1450.

Achievers Luncheon on Zoom

On Thursday, September 24, at 12:00 noon, we will hold our first Achievers Luncheon of the fall. It will be held online, and our guest speaker will be Julie Hovey. Julie will share with us: "My Life Journey on Reflection." If you are 55+ years young and would like to join the luncheon from your home, please see the **First This Week** email for the link to the Zoom meeting. For more information, please email [Pastor John](#) or call the church at (306) 359-1450.

Baptismal Service

On Sunday, September 20th, we had the privilege of sharing in a part of Karlee's journey of faith as she, in obedience to Christ's command, was baptized in water.



Interview: Karlee Mock

Kar, tell us something about your early life. Who were/are your family and where did you grow up?

I was born on the 2100 block McKay Street, here in Regina. My father, Jack Mock, owned clothing stores (Mister Jacks, The Wedding Gallery and Hansel & Gretel). I left Regina in 1987 and moved to Edmonton for employment opportunities. After a marriage of 11 years and the birth of a daughter, she and I returned to live in Regina.

What prompted you to work for Social Services and what kept you in that profession?

When I came home in 1998, I was a single mother and had new priorities. My father suggested I apply at Social Services and I did. Not a page turning story here, but it was meant to be.

I held many positions, from supporting clients on the front lines to building programs as a Business Analyst, the last job of my career. I stayed for 20 years because I believe we made a difference in Saskatchewan.

Tell us something about your spiritual journey. How did your life in Christ begin, and how did you come to the desire to be baptized?

I was raised Roman Catholic. One day in 2012, my girlfriend Daphne V. asked me if I wanted to come to a noon hour prayer meeting in the building in which we were working. That day I met Ruby G. and Sharon K. These patient ladies taught us, prayed with us, and coached us every day. It was during this time I gave my life to Christ.

I know you attended church before you joined our congregation. What brought you to us, and what has prompted you to stay?

Initially, I came to First Baptist Church (FBC) because I had moved downtown. The first day I arrived, I was met with kindness and fellowship. You [Esther] introduced yourself and invited me for coffee at Time for Friends. I was nervous, but I went.

There are so many people at FBC that have become like a family to me. I have never experienced anything like it in any church I've belonged to. What a great gift and a welcome blessing. I'm very thankful.

Kar, I know you have survived an accident that was life threatening. What of that experience would you like us to know? How has it changed you?

In June of 2017 I poured a bath, when I got in, the water was scalding. Life was hectic and I was clearly distracted, it was a terrible mistake.

The burns kept me in bed for a year because I fell during the event. The nature of the injuries left me in isolation for many months. I think I [read everything on] the internet and watched everything on Netflix and Crave.

As soon as I was able to walk again, I started looking for a rehabilitation center. It was about this time that I started thinking about baptism. Which was new for me.

In June of 2018, I spent the summer at a medical facility in Hawaii. I came home physically, spiritually, and mentally stronger! It was time to carry on with my life! I am still not 100% well, but every day I continue to get up in the name of Jesus!

What calls to you now that you are retired?

While in Hawaii, I was introduced to a unique program entitled SMART Recovery. The facility utilized some of these tools to help with my Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

At the time, Saskatchewan ministries and treatment centers were not supporting this program. I became certified in SMART Recovery and have successfully launched this program in the Health and Justice Ministries as well as numerous community outreach facilities.

Currently, I am working [as a volunteer] on a proposal for the Ministry of Education. It includes SMART Recovery Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) tools that will hopefully become a part of the school health curriculum.

To me, my involvement [in these areas] is a public showing of my commitment to Jesus Christ.

What are your expectations of us at FBC as you prepare to become a member?

I hope [FBC] will continue what [it has] begun. I've learned so much and have definitely grown spiritually since coming to FBC. This wonderful place has surpassed my expectations from day one. That's more than anyone can hope for. I feel blessed.

Is there something you would like to say that I haven't asked?

Yes. How do we get every church to be this awesome?

—Interviewer: Esther Wiens

What else is happening at First?

Morning Prayer

Join us each morning, Monday to Friday at 7:15 am to begin your day with scripture and prayer, via Zoom. Visit our [website](#) for the link.

Children

We are excited to announce the launch of a Sunday morning kids' class beginning this Sunday, September 27! We will be following health guidelines. You will find all the details in a separate attachment: *FBC Families Reopening Letter*.

Youth

The youth are meeting on Saturday, September 26, at Candy Cane Park for outdoor games. Pastor Chris notes, "We will continue to have youth group outside for as long as it makes sense. Please bring any sports equipment you might like (soccer ball, basketball, frisbee, ball gloves, etc.). There are some large parks spaces where we can play, as well as a disc golf course nearby for those who might want to do that." For more information, contact [Pastor Chris](#), or leave a message at (306) 359-1450.

Adults

Learning for Life: Annabel R. is facilitating an online series that is a study of Romans. The class will explore how Paul's epistle to the Romans focuses on his message to the followers in Rome, who are under the shadow of Caesar. Paul states that God's plan for the world has been revealed through Jesus, and his message demonstrates that God has been faithful to his covenant with Israel. For more information, please contact Annabel, or leave a message at the church at (306) 359-1450.

Reading through the Old Testament: In this online reading group, participants will read through the Old Testament chronologically. The group will be meeting weekly, via Zoom, at two different times: Sundays at 4 pm and Thursdays at 11 am. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact [Pastor Richard](#), and he will provide you with the reading schedule and Zoom link.

Gospel of John small group study: Pastor Richard is leading a small group online that is looking at the Gospel of John. This group is meeting, via Zoom, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7 pm, and the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 10 am. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact [Pastor Richard](#).

Renovaré Canada has a couple of online programs running this fall. There is an [Online Renewal Group](#) as well as a course (taught by Pastor Richard) entitled, [Wendell Berry: A Spirituality of Sustenance](#).

For more information on either of these opportunities, please contact [Pastor Richard](#), or leave a message at (306) 359-1450.

Spiritual Disciplines Series: Service

In John 13, we find the astounding account of Jesus washing his disciples' feet. What led, in part, to Jesus taking up this menial task, was the fact that no one else had volunteered to do it. This was a task which was normal and expected culturally, but none of the disciples, in that moment, saw themselves as a servant of others.

Jesus said, after washing his disciples' feet: "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."

In service, we humble ourselves and take the place of a servant to those around us. "In service," writes Richard Foster, "we must experience many little deaths of going beyond ourselves. Service banishes us to the mundane, the ordinary, the trivial."

In Matthew 20:25-28, Jesus said: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Again, following the moving example of Jesus washing his disciples' feet, we find here instruction from Jesus to his disciples on the importance and need to serve one another as followers of Jesus.

Richard Foster goes on to note: "We must see the difference between choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant. When we choose to serve, we are still in charge. We decide whom we will serve and when we will serve. . . . But when we choose to be a servant, we give up the right to be in charge. There is great freedom in this. . . . When we choose to be a servant, we surrender the right to decide who and when we will serve. We become available and vulnerable." The call of Jesus to his disciples is not to fill a quota of acts of service but rather to take up the attitude of a servant (in the Greek, literally that of a slave).

An important piece in understanding service is understanding that it is more than actions, but is also an attitude. One may be involved in service, but it may be for the wrong reasons (i.e. personal praise or benefit). One way to check our hearts in this is by doing secret acts of service; there is a principle of hiddenness in this. Jeremy Taylor stated: "Love to be concealed, and little esteemed: be content to lack praise, never be troubled when you are slighted or undervalued."

I think of Luke 10 and the account of Mary and Martha. While not unpacking all that is going on here in this story, we do see that Martha is not pleased about serving in this context – she does not appear to be doing it for the sake of Mary.

The Apostle Paul admonished the church at Galatia with these words: "You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another" (Galatians 5:13). The call of Christ is echoed here to the early church. Through your life and mine, might the call to servanthood be displayed and encouraged in the church today!

Practical steps to a life of service:

- Be mindful of those around you: are there needs in your family or neighborhood you could be meeting through simple acts of service?
- Is there a service project you could give yourself to once or twice a year, like picking up litter/garbage in your community?
- To put this into perspective in your own life, take a sheet of paper and make two columns. One column is to list the activities that you were involved in for yourself, and the other is to list the activities you were involved in for the sake of others. Take an inventory of your activity this week: what was self-serving and what was for the sake of others?



Q: Why don't koalas count as bears?

A: They don't have the right koalafications.

Q: Why is it always windy in a sports arena?

A: All those fans.

Q: Which rock group has four guys who can't sing or play instruments?

A: Mount Rushmore.

Q: Is this pool safe for diving?

A: It deep ends.

Q: Why does Humpty Dumpty love autumn?

A: Because he always has a great fall.

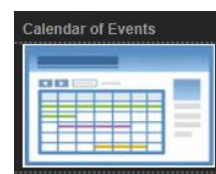
Internship

Julie Hovey (wife of Pastor Richard Hovey) is now interning with us. Julie is nearing the completion of her Master's program in Christian Ministry at Briercrest Seminary. She will be working in the area of Children's Ministry at First Baptist.

Website

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our church events and schedules in every way. The church website (firstbaptistregina.ca) is a valuable source of information that can be used to keep you connected and up to date with the various programs that are available and how our church leadership and pastors are responding to the pandemic.

Click on the calendar icon (pictured on the right) at the bottom of any of our web pages to open the Calendar of Events page. Each entry on the calendar provides a link to information about various events, Learning for Life, small group studies, prayer times, etc. You can keep on top of upcoming events by visiting the calendar page regularly.



Also on our website are links to our Facebook page and YouTube channel, where you will find video reflections, devotions, and studies by a number of our members and pastors.

Finances

As of the end of August, our revenue is 14% below our YTD budget. Our expenses are 11% below YTD budget. This results in a current deficit of \$8,500 (spending more than our income).

Approved Operating Budget for 2020:	\$ 427.6K
Operating Budget to the end of August 2020:	\$ 285.1K
Operating Revenue to end of August 2020:	\$ 244.9K
Operating Expenses to end of August 2020:	\$ 253.4K
Restricted Reserve Balance:	\$ 101.6K
(Benevolent, Building, Organ, and Legacy Funds)	
CBWC Loan Balance:	\$ 0.0K
Organ Fund Loan	\$ 201.0K
CEBA (CRA) Loan	\$ 40.0K

Hidden With Christ in God

Pastor Joel's sermon from September 20, 2020

Colossians 2 and 3

This Sunday, we had the privilege of taking part as Karlee was baptized. The Father said to Jesus on his baptism, "You are my son." Baptism is a chance for God to say to Karlee, "I have made you my daughter." Baptism is a chance for Father to send the Holy Spirit and to fill her just as the Father sent the Holy Spirit down upon Jesus.

In today's passage from Colossians, Paul and Timothy explained that when a person is baptized, it is not just water that they are immersed into, but that the person's very life is now hidden inside Jesus Christ. As they write in verse 12, "You were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God."

In this passage, Timothy and Paul very quickly give us an outline of why baptism is necessary. There are two facts that must be dealt with by everyone. All of us, whether we like it or not, whether we do this intentionally or not, make a choice about these two issues.

First of all, sin is self-destruction. Sin means that the world cannot go on as it is. Life as we are living it, surrounded and immersed in sin, is not sustainable.

Now, for the first time in human history, we can see that humanity literally has the means to wipe itself off the face of the earth. We have the means to devastate the planet and perhaps make it uninhabitable. We can see the ongoing fracturing of our relationships, as sex, which is meant to unite, divides, and as the beauty and variety of backgrounds that we come from are a source of friction, a source of inequality, instead being a source of joy. Violence, greed, dishonesty, slander, and malice – these things that Paul lists – these are not just fussy, puritanical religious concerns. They're killing us.

Now, perhaps some of you, as you were listening to this passage, or as you're listening to the dilemma I'm describing, perhaps you are wondering if sin is really so bad. Isn't sin just a part of being human? If it's so bad, why is humanity is still around? Why, sometimes, does humanity seems to be making progress?

One reason we minimize the seriousness of sin is that when we are the ones to blame, sin can be justified or explained, and it doesn't seem so bad. However, when I see someone else doing the very same things, somehow it is easier to recognize that it is really a problem. Especially if it's something that is done to me or hurts me, then the problem is really clear!

However, the main reason that life carries on despite the prevalence of sin and that there appears to be progress, is that God refuses to abandon us or our planet. Day by day, God, by grace, brings healing. God renews. God restores order. God, who is love, is faithful to creation and faithful to humanity. And yet, God refuses to let this state of affairs go on forever.

This brings us to a second fact. God has said there is a day set when there will be a renewal: the renewal of all things, of all humanity, of all creation. On that day, Jesus will be all and Jesus will be in all.

So here's where things stand. We have this world, marred, maimed, and thoroughly corrupted by sin, and we have the coming renewal of heaven and earth when Jesus will be all and in all. These are the two facts that we face.

Will we choose to adjust to living within this doomed state, this dead end, this world of sin? Or will we turn and prepare ourselves for a time when Jesus is all and in all?

Sometimes, when we think of coming to heaven or the new kingdom, we have this metaphor comparing the kingdom of God to an exclusive club. Maybe you can picture the scene: There's this club that everyone wants to go to but you have to be someone special to get in. Outside the door is a mountain of a man with dark glasses and a checklist and it's up to you to convince this person to let you into the club. Finally, someone comes up and says, "I know so and so who owns the club," and the bouncer lets them in. In popular culture, that's often the standard picture of heaven: It's a place with a gate and Saint Peter is the bouncer at the door, letting people in if they can say the right name. "I know Jesus, my name's on the guest list!"

What Paul and Timothy say, in their letter to the Colossians, suggests that something far more radical is necessary, something far more personal, something far more transformational, something that God must do to us and within us, to prepare us to enter the new world, the redeemed creation. God changes something in us when we are baptized. Something essential happens and it's very much as if we were getting ready to settle on a new planet.

Now, in fact, some people are proposing that colonizing new planets is the solution to our problems here on earth. Of course, there's a biological problem with moving to a new planet. Either the planet we settle has to change so that we can breathe and eat and drink on it, or we ourselves have to somehow change to adapt to the new atmosphere. This is actually a much better metaphor for what is happening in salvation and for what is happening in baptism.

When God renews heaven and earth, it will be as if this new creation has a new atmosphere, as if it's a new planet, one on which humanity, as it currently exists, could

not endure. We need, as it were, a new Adam and a new Eve, out of which we can be reborn. We need a new humanity, then, that would be able to survive in this new world where Jesus is everything and in everything. This is the metaphor used in the Bible. Jesus is the new Adam and the church, his bride, is the new Eve, bringing to life people prepared for this new creation. Baptism with faith unites us to Jesus so that his future becomes our future. So that his future life is transplanted into ours. Connected to Jesus, we are able to die to this old world, this old way of life, and begin to live a new divine life prepared for the renewed creation.

Being united to Jesus shouldn't seem like a duty, or a burden, or be treated merely as a hoop that must be jumped through. Joining Jesus means joining yourself to life, to joy, to love, to community, and to comfort.

Karlee is taking a step today toward uniting herself to Jesus through baptism. We continue to nurture our life in Christ after baptism. We don't live according to the old world, doing what pleases ourselves, or whatever passion grabs us in the moment. We're not seeking to live for ourselves anymore. We've died to that old way of life in the compromised world. The life that we live in Jesus is not compatible with the world as it exists now, and neither is a life of sin or rejecting Jesus compatible with the future of humanity.

We do what we can now to be prepared for that world. It is very much like moving to a new country. You know that you will have to learn a new language and new habits, and that you're going to be doing things in a new way. The new world is coming and we look to Christ to teach us a new language, new habits and a new way of doing things. In Colossians 3:12-14, Paul and Timothy exhort us: "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love which binds everything together in perfect harmony and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." Amen.

Benediction: As you go, may you indeed know the amazing love that God has for you. May you know the love that your brothers and sisters in the church have for you. And may you clothe yourselves with that love, as you go to minister and to serve the world. Go with the blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.

Tithing during the pandemic

With the COVID-19 crisis limiting contact with others and restricting meetings of groups, please do not neglect the financial needs of our church.

We have several ways to provide your regular tithes and donations to the church:

1. Mail your gifts to the church or call and leave a message at (306) 359-1450 to arrange for an in-person pick-up. Please place your cheque in your regular offering envelope (or any envelope marked "Offering"), and seal that inside another envelope addressed to: First Baptist Church, 2241 Victoria Ave, Regina, SK S4P 0S4.
2. Establish a **Pre-authorized Remittance (PAR) Plan**. This will automatically transfer funds from your account into the FBC Regina account on a regular basis. Please email the church or contact the Treasurer if you would like to set up PAR, or change your commitment.
3. Make an online donation:
 - Use **Interac e-Transfer** to donate from your phone or computer to FBCRegina@gmail.com *(no fee or cost to the church)*
 - Use a credit card with a PayPal account via the **PayPal Giving Fund** *(no fee or cost to the church... 100% of your donation reaches us and contributes to our mission)*
 - Use a credit card or PayPal via **CanadaHelps** *(a fee of 4% is deducted from the donation)*
 - Use a credit or debit card via **FBC ChurchTrac** *(the church is charged a fee of approximately 3% for each donation)*

PLEASE refer to our website at firstbaptistregina.ca for more specific information on these contribution methods. You may also contact the treasurer at (306) 775-1497 or email the church at main_fbcregina@sasktel.net for further details.



Anyone for a limerick or two?

Said a fervent young lady of Hammels,
"I object to humanity's trammels!
I want to be free!
Like a bird! Like a bee!
Oh why am I classed with the mammals?"

A fellow who lived on the Rhine
Saw some fish on which he wished to dine.
But how to invite them?
He said, "I will write them!"
Then he sat down and dropped them a line.