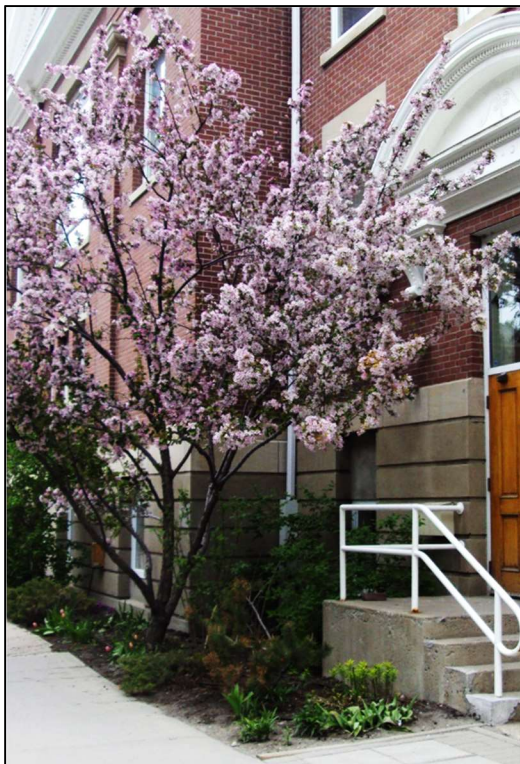


First Baptist Regina Weekly News

For the Week of May 24th, 2020

We are enjoying the fullness of spring!



At the same time, winter draws near many countries in the south. Spring does not come to the world at the same time. The church likewise seems to grow dramatically in certain places and times as if obeying heavenly seasons.

Last June, a group from First Regina visited Lebanon and saw and heard first hand that some are living out the stories from the book of Acts, with baptisms by the hundreds, with miracles, and with love and joy in the midst of great suffering and danger.

This past Sunday, those of you who attended the mission luncheon saw a glimpse of this in the interviews that took place. There are many places across North Africa and the Middle East where people are turning to Jesus in great numbers and great humanitarian work is being undertaken. Hearing this inspires us to keep working and praying ourselves.



We also have a unique opportunity to play a small role in their growth. Please read the report inside. Pray for our brothers and sisters in these countries and as you are able, I encourage you to give.

With love, Pastor Joel



Live from Lebanon!

Our fundraiser last Sunday was a moving experience with powerful stories from our SENT team, the Botros family in Beirut, and a Palestinian seminary student.

Luncheon highlights:

- Lebanon was in the midst of a political and economic crisis when Covid-19 struck
- Schools and banks closed intermittently since the fall
- Prices for food and other necessities have risen dramatically and staff salaries have been cut
- A number of students remain stranded in the dormitories, unable to return home
- Local churches and the LSESD continue to care for Syrian refugees
- Young people, including an increasing number of believers with a Muslim background, are choosing to enter ministry with a heart for their people
- The student shared how attending ABTS has given him tools and turned his heart towards peaceful ways of being faithful to Jesus in his relationships and in his community
- We were asked to pray for the church among Palestinians: for peace between Muslims, Jews and Christians.
- Emad has finished his dissertation on Jonah and the Quran and will defend it in June



Ways to give:

1. Online with a credit card: <https://www.givetogo.org/team/FBCRegina>
2. Mail, or drop off, your donation to First Baptist Church, 2241 Victoria Ave, Regina SK S4P 0S4. (Please do not leave cash in the mailbox.) If you require an in-person pick up, call the church at (306) 359-1450.
 - Make cheques out to "CBM"
 - Note "SENT Lebanon" in the memo line or on the envelope

AGM 2020 – Online



Our spring Annual General Meeting has been delayed due to COVID-19 but is now scheduled for Sunday, June 14th, 2020. It will be held online via Zoom meeting following the morning service.

Be sure to attend: we have much to celebrate and much to discuss!

The 2019 Annual Report and other related information may be found on our website: www.firstbaptistregina.ca

If you need a printed copy of the agenda and annual report delivered to you, please call the church at (306) 359-1450.

What's been 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 at firstbaptistregina.ca for the link.

Children

The younger children are meeting online, twice a week, with Pastor Joel. The older children are meeting weekly with Julie Hovey, also online. Parents who have signed up will receive a private invitation. If you know of any parents who would like to sign up, please have them contact Joel at joel.fbcregina@sasktel.net.

Youth

Pastor Chris has been meeting weekly with our youth. The meetings take place online.

Small Groups (via Zoom)

Who is Jesus? Recognized by many as the earliest written account of Jesus' ministry, we will be reading through the Gospel of Mark as we look to answer this simple question. We are meeting twice a month to discuss our reading for that week, apply what we've read to life, and deepen our relationship with our Lord and King and with each other. This group will run May through August at two different times: the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7pm and the second and fourth Friday of each month at 10am. The two groups will meet this week on Wednesday, May 27 and on Friday, May 29, respectively. Participants are asked to read the first two chapters of Mark in preparation for the meeting.

Please let Pastor Richard know if you are interested in joining us and if so at which time and he will provide you with the Zoom link. If you have any questions please let Pastor Richard know (richard.fbcregina@sasktel.net)

Daily Bread Devotionals

The Daily Bread devotionals for June, July, and August, have been dropped off at the church. If anyone would like one, please contact the church. We can leave them in the mailbox or mail them to you.



Ready for a couple of groaners? (Don't say we didn't warn you!)

I went to a really emotional wedding yesterday. Even the cake was in tiers.

Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The ceremony wasn't much, but the reception was excellent.

My sister bet me \$100 that I couldn't build a car out of spaghetti. You should have seen the look on her face as I drove pasta.

“A Continued Ministry”

Pastor Richard Hovey’s sermon from Sunday, May 24th, 2020.
Ephesians 1:15-23; Psalm 93; Luke 24:44-53.

The first 11 verses of the Book of Acts serve as a transition to a new stage in the story, a reworking of a part of the story already told, a variant of Luke 24:36-53.

Fascinatingly, the distinction Luke draws between his two volumes is not that one is about Christ and the other about church, but rather two stages of the ministry of the same Christ! The book of Acts is what Jesus continued to do and teach after His ascension – through the Apostles. The transition between these two stages is the ascension, which terminated Jesus earthly ministry and inaugurated His heavenly ministry.

Acts 1:1-5

Theophilus – probably already a Christian, whose name means dear to God. We can at least discern that this man had already learned something about the rise and progress of Christianity, apparently believing himself in the message. Luke wrote to Theophilus to help him and others like him have a reliable account of the beginning of Christianity.

The first book recorded all that Jesus began to say and do; note that the acts of Jesus and the sayings of Jesus are inseparable! What we will see is that which Jesus began to say and do is to be continued after His ascension and will continue quite literally until He comes again. The ministry of Jesus was the beginning of Christianity! Luke’s gospel covers this account of the beginning till the time Jesus was taken up into heaven, the gospel ending with a brief reference to this (24:51).

The period from Easter Sunday to the Ascension is both the conclusion of the earthly ministry of Jesus and the beginning of the work of the Church! We note two characteristics of this period. Firstly, it provided evidence that Jesus was alive – not just one appearance, but rather repeated appearances to many people (see 1 Corinthians 15:5ff). The resurrection appearances of Christ are strong, irrefutable proofs that Jesus is alive, and provide a basis for all that follows – the sending of the Spirit, the creation of the Church, and the success of the mission. Secondly, this time between the resurrection and ascension was when Jesus gave instruction to the apostles for moving

forward. These resurrection appearances were not merely some visions from heaven – they were happenings on earth with continued in person teaching from Jesus.

The apostles were those who knew Jesus and were witnesses to his resurrection. Today we can claim that Jesus has spoken to us, revealed Himself to us, commissioned Himself to us as His witnesses, and has both promised and given us His Spirit. Luke, however, is speaking specifically of the qualifications of the apostles, those whom Jesus had chosen during His earthly ministry. These twelve are an important transitional group, binding the man Jesus with the early church.

While Jesus appeared to the apostles whom He had chosen, He spoke of the Kingdom of God, signifying the saving, sovereign action of God through Himself. The centrality of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus (see Luke 24:45-47) – this message is to be the continued theme and witness of the church! By writing Acts, Luke was making it clear that the story of Jesus has not been completed. And this message, the good news of the Kingdom of God, finds its consummation in the return of Christ at the end of the age as Judge and King. At the first coming of Christ, the age to come invaded this present age; at Christ's second coming the age to come will altogether supersede this present age. Between the two, these two ages overlap.

While staying/eating with them, Jesus orders them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father (Isaiah 32:15; Joel 2:28-32; Ezekiel 36; Matthew 10:20; Luke 12:12; John 14-16). The disciples might have been tempted to return to Galilee, but Jerusalem was the divinely intended scene for the giving of the Spirit. The promise of Jesus is strengthened by a reminder of the testimony of John the Baptist. To baptize literally means to immerse a person in water (to deluge).

The Apostles pose (in Acts 1:6) what seems to them to be a vital question to Jesus: will you at this time, Lord, restore the kingdom to Israel? The Jewish hope was that God would establish His rule in such a way that the people of Israel would be freed from their enemies (esp. Romans) and established as a nation to which others would be subservient. John Calvin noted that there are as many errors in this question as words! The verb 'restore' shows that they were expecting a political and territorial kingdom; the noun 'Israel' shows that they were expecting a national kingdom; and then the adverbial clause 'at this time' that they were expecting its immediate establishment.

The time of this event is the secret of God. Being God's secret there is no place for human speculation. The nature of this event is spiritual not physical or territorial, and the restoration will be full and complete. The Kingdom of God is the rule of God in the lives of people by the Holy Spirit. And this Kingdom of God has radical implications – Kingdom values will collide with secular values, while the citizens of God's Kingdom steadfastly deny to Caesar the supreme loyalty for which he hungers, which they insist on giving to Jesus alone.

Disillusioned by the cross, the disciples on the Emmaus road had stated that they "hoped Jesus was the one who was going to redeem Israel." This hope was rekindled by the resurrection but was still misguided, as seen by the question above.

There is another matter for the present: the immediate task to act as witnesses to Jesus from Jerusalem to the very ends of the earth. Yes, their concern – our concern – is this: to be witnesses to Jesus, and the scope of this task is worldwide. This question in verse 6 appears to have been the last flicker of the former burning expectation of an imminent political theocracy. From this time forth they devoted themselves to the proclamation and service of God's spiritual Kingdom.

The spread of God's rule, the spread of the Kingdom of God, was to take place by means of the Apostles, and later disciples, empowered by the Spirit. For this task, in fact, there is promised the power of the Holy Spirit and in fact they are told to wait for it! Jesus is then lifted up, a cloud taking him away from their sight. The disciples are portrayed as looking intently into the sky as Jesus disappears – suggesting that they are longing for the reappearance of Jesus or for something else to happen. The ascension of Jesus serves the function of making clear that Jesus' life on earth had a definite closure after the resurrection appearances.

The ascension parallels with the account in 2 Kings 2 – ascension of Elijah with the giving of a double portion of his spirit to Elisha, who would assume his mantle. The ascension is about the passing on of the power and authority of Jesus to His witnesses so that they might continue the Kingdom work Jesus began. Now, with the gift of the Spirit, this is true of us as believers in Jesus.

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 the church:

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.

Woody Allen: Beverly Hills is very exclusive. For instance, their fire department won't make house calls.

