

# First Baptist Regina Weekly News

*For the Week of September 27th, 2020*

Our family went for a long fall drive last weekend through the Qu'Appelle valley. We started near Grenfell and drove to Lumsden, sometimes on dirt roads and at one point even a tractor trail through a field. We passed abandoned homes and towns long gone. We entered a number of reserves with many well cared for buildings.



It was the tail end of the fall colours in the valley. I'm sure I'm not alone in loving the yellow ash, aspen and poplars and the flame-orange cherries and hawthorn covering the hills and bunched into the coulees. Despite its beauty, fall can evoke melancholy.

In scripture, the seasons are a sign of God's orderliness and faithfulness:

what is needed will come in its time. The fall rain and the piles of leaves (once the children are done jumping in them), prepare the earth for spring.

May God be with us all as we wait on his timing, and may God help us see the beauty in this season of our lives.

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*, or see the [Letter from our Board and Pastor](#) on our website. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with one of the board members or pastors, email [the church](#), or call (306) 359-1450.

## Funeral for Rod Eliason

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Rod Eliason, who passed away on Friday, September 11, 2020.

Rod's funeral will be this Saturday, October 3rd, at 1:00 p.m. You are welcome to come to the funeral in person. We will follow the same health guidelines as in our Sunday morning worship services. If you plan to attend, please review the guidelines in the [Letter from our Board and Pastor](#) on our website, or see page 3 of the attachment: *First Baptist Regina Re-Opening Plan*. If you wish to view the livestream of the service, \_\_\_\_

Rod's Christian faith informed the way he lived his life. He was a devoted member of First Baptist Church for over 30 years, serving on a number of commissions over the years. He greatly enjoyed the ministry, community fellowship, and sacred music. Rod's commitment to Christian faith and values brought him peace, grace, and joy.

## Opportunity to Serve

We are seeking to add people to help prepare communion. If this is something you could help with once a month, please speak with one of the pastors, email [the church](#), or call (306) 359-1450. Thank you.



Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources Officer asks a young engineer fresh out of university, "And what starting salary are you looking for?" The engineer replies, "In the region of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package." The interviewer inquires, "Well, what would you say to a package of five weeks vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years, say, a red Corvette?" The engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?" The interviewer replies, "Yes, but you started it."

## 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 that our Sunday morning in-person kids' class resumed last Sunday, September 27th. We are following health guidelines. You will find all the details in a separate attachment: *FBC Families Reopening Letter*.

### Youth

On Friday, October 2nd, the youth will have a Bible study and games, over Zoom. 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 on the book 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.

**Voice** is resuming their online meetings starting Wednesday, September 30th. We will be reading *Jesus Among Other Gods* by Ravi Zacharias. Voice is a reading-based small group for women. For more information, email [the church](#), or call (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: Hospitality

Following up on the concepts of submission and service (not needing to have our own way but considering the interests of others and being willing to serve others out of a place of selflessness), we add the concept of hospitality. This is not simply a willingness to not need to have our own way or our own preferences always meet, but to open up our lives to others. Hospitality welcomes the other in our own space – including our home space. In her book, *The Gospel Comes with a Housekey*, Rosaria Butterfield writes: “Radically ordinary hospitality is this: using your Christian home in a daily way that seeks to make strangers neighbors, and neighbors family of God. It brings glory to God, serves others, and lives out the gospel in word and deed.”

In radical hospitality we take a vested interest in the lives of those in our community. We long to have our lives intersect with theirs, their lives intersect with ours. In this sense, as well, there is nobody who is less than or unworthy of being extended hospitality. Hospitality sees others – all others – as being made in the image of God.

We can at times, or perhaps often, be afraid of people we do not know or understand – people who are different from us. Hospitality seeks to break down these barriers. The word hospitality “approximates the Greek word *philoxenia*, which means ‘love of the stranger.’” Henri Nouwen writes: “In our world full of strangers, estranged from their own past, culture and country, from their neighbors, friends and family, from their deepest self and their God, we witness a painful search for a hospitable place where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found. Although many, we might even say most, strangers in this world become easily the victim of a fearful hostility, it is possible for men and women and obligatory for Christians to offer an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings.”

In Matthew 26 and Luke 7 we find two beautiful accounts of a story of hospitality being displayed by Jesus (and resisted by other house guests, even the owner of the house it appears). In each account, Jesus is offered hospitality at a home but we soon learn the hospitality is not genuine or true, for when a woman from the streets enters the house the house owner and other guests are bothered that such a woman would even dare to enter. This house was not a house for the stranger! Jesus rebukes the house owner and others, welcoming the irreputable woman with true hospitality. An interesting note, the woman who is welcomed by Jesus comes bearing a gift – that of oil to anoint the feet of Jesus (Also interestingly, this was not a gesture that the home owner made). Often in scripture we find the welcomed stranger bringing a gift. (See the accounts in Genesis 18:1-5, 1 Kings 17:9-24, and Luke 24:13-35 as further examples). Nouwen states: “When hostility is converted into hospitality then fearful strangers can become guests revealing to their hosts the promise they are carrying with them.”

Who is someone you have kept at a distance in your life? A stranger you have not welcomed in? Consider welcoming them in this week, recognising in them the image of God and through genuine hospitality learn what gifts they bring to your life.

## Walking in Grace

Pastor Richard's sermon from September 27, 2020

Colossians 1:3-14

Let me pray for us as we come before the word of God this morning: "Lord we do ask your blessing. Lord, might your spirit abound and speak. Lord, confirm the truth within our minds. Let it be planted within our hearts and let our will respond as we seek to know and discern the will of God for us. As we seek to grow in our knowledge of you and what you would have us to be and to do, we ask your blessing in Jesus holy name. Amen."

We're going to take some time this morning just for a little bit in Colossians. I won't reread it, but I want to note verse 9, and just pick up there as we begin to reflect this morning.

In verses 3 and 4 of Colossians 1, Paul notes: "In our prayers for you, we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints. For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you."

I don't know what you normally might pray for when you pray. I don't normally pray, even at this age in life, when I get into a pinch or a difficulty, or when life isn't going as I would hope or as I had planned. But when there is heartache or catastrophe, ill news, whatever it might be, then those can be profound seasons of prayer. And rightfully so. They ought to be.

But one of the amazing things we find with Paul here in Colossians, is that we find something similar in some of his other letters to the churches that he's writing to. He "prays without ceasing". "He prays always". He continues to pray for them, based upon the good news that he has heard, and he prays that it would increase. He prays that it would abound. He prays that it would become even more good news in their lives: "You've heard the gospel, it's beginning to take root in your life and in your heart, in your being, and we're seeing fruit from your faith. We're seeing that you love. We're seeing that you care. Hearing this news has led me to pray."

Again, often when I hear bad news, that leads me to pray. Paul has heard *good* news and he's praying that this news he has heard would abound even more in the lives of the saints at Colosse: "Here at this church, for this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding."

Wouldn't it be great if you could share with somebody how well things are going in your life, and we would reply by saying, "I'm going to pray for that." Often, again, we pray for the negative, the broken, the hurt. And we should. But let's pray for more of the good.

Let's pray for more of the knowledge of God. Let's pray that the gospel would have more of an impact in our lives.

He is praying that they might grow, that they might be filled, if you will, with the knowledge of God's will.

Maybe you're not like me. Often, for me, here as well, my prayer life increases when things are tough. And when I seek to discern the will of God, it's usually about something for my life. Some might ask and seek the will of God for whom to marry. (I'm not praying that now – I just want to clarify, I've got a wonderful wife and I'm not praying that prayer anymore.) But we might pray for things in our life that we need. And again, those are good prayers and there's a call for this within the body of Christ.

But Paul's prayer here, continuing on the idea that he's praying for more of the good, is that they would discern even more fully and completely what it means to live this gospel, in their context, among their community, as the body of Christ at this place. So he prays that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will.

Let me turn to Psalm 143 for a moment. We find in verse 10, these words of the Psalmist, David: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. Let your good Spirit lead me on a level path." Teach me to do your will.

One of the beautiful pictures that unfolds in the letters of Paul, which is true of the Old Testament teaching and the words of the prophets as well in the words of Christ, is to understand and to discern the will of God. It's not just a mental or an academic activity. We discern the will of God so that we know what we ought to do – in our culture, in our time, in our place.

I pray that the work of God would continue to grow and abound among you, in that you would have knowledge of the will of God in your day-to-day life, in your day-to-day circumstances, in the context in which you find yourself in a secular, individualistic, consumeristic culture. Might we know the will of God for us.

What does it look like to live in the kingdom of God in our context? What does it look like to discern the will of God and how to live, now, in this year, in light of a pandemic in North America. This is what Paul is praying for them in their context: "That you might be filled with the knowledge of God's will."

What are some things that God wills? In one of the beautiful depictions of the will of God in 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul says that the will of God for you is your sanctification. That you would be fully and completely set apart. That you would be being made holy.

This is prayer for the will of God on a whole different realm. God, set me apart for you, fully, completely, undivided. Help me to discern your will for my life. Not simply whom I might

marry, not simply which job I should apply for, not simply which school I might go to, not simply which house or apartment to rent or buy, but Lord, how do I live in light of the gospel in this time? How do I reflect you? How do I be transformed into the hands, eyes, mouth, feet, being, of Christ in this community? Might you be filled with the knowledge of God's will who desires to sanctify you holy, with all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Let me read a couple of verses out of one of Paul's other letters to the church at Ephesus. In Ephesians 5:15, we find this: "Be careful, then, how you live. Not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil." Verse 17: "Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is, making the most of the time."

Making the most of our days in light of, as Paul gets to in this letter to the church at Colosse, in light of the fact that you have been transferred from darkness into light, you are no longer part of the kingdom of this world, but now you're part of the kingdom of God's son, discern what the will of God is in this time. How is it that you ought to live? With all wisdom and understanding.

Again, this is more than just a doctrinal understanding of God. One of the great truths of scripture and of the prophets that we find again and again (and as some of you get to know me I'm probably going to repeat things over and over again that have hit me in my life), is that God's intention was never for us to merely have a head knowledge or academic understanding or doctrinal understanding of him, but it was to understand who he is and to get a glimpse of his will for our lives, that we might then appropriate it into our very beings, and live as a people set apart. To live as a people redeemed. To live as the people transferred from darkness to life. And this is what Paul is praying for. That this might increase among them, "So that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord."

We don't live, necessarily, in a shame culture. But those who have any understanding, and I have minimal, of a shame culture, know that you do not want to bring shame to your family. You do not want to bring shame to the family name. You do not want to do anything that would mar the name of your family.

This is the image that is behind what Paul is getting at here. That everything you say and do, that everything in your life and your being, that everything in your thoughts and your actions, would bring praise to the name of Christ who has redeemed you, who has called you, who has saved you.

Might you walk worthy of the Lord. Not worthy, if I can be bold, not worthy of the expectations strictly of others. Not worthy of the expectations that you might have of yourself. Not worthy, perhaps, of the expectations of your church – and there's a place for all of this all in scripture – but worthy of the Lord. What is the Lord calling you to be and to do in your context? To fully please him.

In John 15 that was read for us, it notes: “Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit, and so shall you be my disciples.” Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear *much* fruit. The way that we can be pleasing unto God is that this work that he has begun in us, increases into much fruit. That it increases into much sanctification, much goodness, much righteousness in our lives and in our beings.

We don’t want to bear just a little bit of fruit. Or if you’re content bearing a little bit of fruit, may you be convicted this morning. We don’t want to bear just a little bit of fruit or just enough fruit. What do I need to do to get in? What do I need to do to be good enough?

No. Paul is praying that you would bear *much* fruit, and so be pleasing unto God. That your whole life would be transformed into ministry for Christ in his kingdom, for his glory, pleasing to him as you bear fruit in every good work, and as you grow in the knowledge of God.

One of the fascinating cycles that I believe exists within the Christian life and our spiritual growth and formation, is that, as we hear what we ought to do from the Word, the Spirit leading, as we hear what it is that God is calling us into and step into that in obedient faith and do that which God is calling us to do in the context in which we find ourselves, in that obedience, there’s an amazing thing that I found happens. As we obey, we learn more about God. Our knowledge of him increases as we obey him. Our trust in him increases as we obey him. Our experience of him increases as we obey him. And as our experience and trust and knowledge of him grows and our obedience to him grows, and we get new knowledge, we can then step into that greater knowledge with obedience.

And as we step into that greater knowledge with obedience, guess what happens? We gain further knowledge of God. And as we gain further knowledge of God, we can step into that knowledge with obedience. And as we step into that knowledge with obedience, guess what happens? I can keep going if you haven’t caught it yet.

We want to grow in our knowledge of God. We grow in our knowledge of God by being faithful with the knowledge that we have. We want to be pleasing to him and bear much fruit. We grow in bearing much fruit by bearing some fruit, and then more fruit, and then much fruit, as we live the will of God into our context, into our own lives, into our communities.

I pray that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work. And as you grow, through your obedience, in the knowledge of God, may you be made strong with all the strength that comes from God’s glorious power.

Let me read again from Ephesians 1. And here we have another prayer for Paul in this time of prayer for the church at Ephesus. In Ephesians 1:15, we read the words of Paul – and again, catch this: “I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints. And for this reason, I do not cease giving thanks for you as I remember you in my



prayers.” Again, “I’ve heard of the good things that are happening, and it’s led me to prayer for you.” Verse 17: “I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him.” Very similar prayer.

Verse 18: “So that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which you have been called, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints in what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the work or the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at the right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come.” Might you know the glorious power by which, and through which, God raised Jesus from the dead.

Paul longed to know the power of God and to know Christ in the power of his resurrection. To experience the glorious might and power of God. Here’s a wonder of wonders, as growing in grace, as learning to walk more fully and completely in the grace of God, in my context. And as I learn more about it, to settle more fully and completely into it. To grow in this is a work of the power of God in my life. I don’t do this of my own strength.

You probably know the words of Paul in Ephesians 2:8-9: “For it is by grace that you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. Not of works lest anyone should boast.” But then in verse 10, he notes that we are saved on the good works which are ordained to be your way of life. We are saved to grow into the knowledge of God, and to walk more fully and completely each day in the grace that has been given us, knowing the strength that comes from God’s glorious power, that we might be prepared to endure everything with patience.

This life is not easy, because it’s counter-cultural. This life calls us to be uncomfortable, as far as world comfort is concerned. This life calls us to step out into unknown territory, in faith, trusting in the God who has called us to endure everything with patience while joyfully...” (Some of you aren’t looking quite so joyful at the moment. I can’t see your smiles, though.) “...joyfully, *joyfully* giving thanks to the Father who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

May God increase our faith. May God increase my faith to step into this kingdom, to step out of the selfishness I might hold onto. To step out of, as needed and as called, the consumeristic, individualistic, materialistic, world-oriented ways of our culture, and to step more fully and completely into the will of God for my life, for our lives. To abandon all for the sake of Christ. To joyfully hang on loosely to the things that are ours in this world, that the kingdom of God might be displayed in and through us, joyfully anticipating

what is to come, and joyfully living with patience and endurance into the reality of the kingdom of God all around us.

Might we grow to know God more. Might we be drawn nearer through faith by grace and obedience, into an understanding of what it is to be a Christian, to be a follower of Christ, during this season. May we step into it with enthusiasm, with excitement, with a heart aflame with the grace of God. To his praise and to his glory, we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

**Baptismal Service**

Last Sunday, September 20th, we had the privilege of sharing in a part of Karlee Mock’s journey of faith as she was baptized in water. Karlee was interviewed recently by Esther Wiens. To access that interview, please visit the [Folks at First](#) page on our website.

**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).

<b>Approved Operating Budget for 2020:</b>	<b>\$ 427.6K</b>
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

**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.

## 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](http://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](mailto:main_fbcregina@sasktel.net) for further details.



Q. Did Eve ever have a date with Adam?

A. No, just an apple.

Q. Where is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?

A. When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.

Q. Who was the most business-savvy woman in the Bible?

A. Pharaoh's daughter, who went down to the bank of the Nile and pulled out a little prophet.

Q. Who was the worst lawbreaker in the Bible?

A. Moses. He broke all 10 commandments at once.