

First Baptist Regina Weekly News

For the Week of March 21st, 2021

The Seven Deadly Sins

I suppose most of us have heard of them. A better translation might be the “seven deadly attacks.” Why did Pastors once make these lists? They wanted to understand what was going on so they could point people to life in Christ.

Why attacks? As an analogy, consider demon possession. Now, bear with me! While I don't really understand possession (nor do I want to), I picture a being from outside attempting to enter a person in order to take over completely – in a sense, to become that person. The person under attack is at risk of no longer being separate from the demon.

Pastorally, we have two things to say to such a person. It wasn't their fault that they were vulnerable, nor was it their fault they were attacked. However, at the same time, they made choices to participate in some way.

Thankfully, there is another being at work: God. Exorcism is God's work to separate again the person from the demon, to return the person to what they truly are, to restore them to themselves.

Sin can be thought of in a similar way, as an attack from outside us. Sin intrudes into our thoughts and our hearts, and attempts to shape us into that sin. Through no fault of our own, we are vulnerable, each in different ways.

At the same time, we are responsible for choosing to participate. When we do, sin begins to shape our hearts and minds. It can get to the point when there is little left of a person, only the sin. For example, greed or envy can, eventually, completely define a person. Throughout this whole process, our sin then works from within us to affect others, and even our culture, creating a cycle of sin attacks.

Jesus created a chance for us to choose obedience to him instead. Repentance is the crucial step of taking responsibility for our actions and rejecting the power of sin. Acts of obedience to Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, are meant to create a separation between us and that sin. To work against greed, we practice sacrificial giving, thus imitating Jesus. To work against envy, we practice giving thanks for what we have. In turning our lives and all we have over to God, God rebirths us into who we really are.

With love,



Pastor Joel



AGM 2021

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM), will be held on Sunday, March 21st, 2021, following the morning worship service. It will be on Zoom as well as in person, in the church sanctuary. **Please note:** If you wish to attend in person, due to current restrictions, *registration will be required*. To register, please send an email to [the church](#) or call (306) 359-1450.



Be sure to attend: We have much to celebrate and much to discuss! The 2020 Annual Report and other related information may be found on [our website](#). There are also hard copies available in the church foyer.

A Virtual Easter Alleluia

Time is passing quickly and Easter Alleluia 2021 is just around the corner! It will be held on March 28th, at 7:00 pm on Zoom.

In this concert, FBC musicians and friends, both past and present, come together in unique ways to present the Easter story...

- Guest Musicians: Karen Martin; Narrow Gate
- First Baptist Musicians: JuBELLation Ringers, Christa Walsh (piano), Mark Anderson (organ), John Nelson
- Archival music from Exaltation Singers, Sanctuary Choir, His Kids, YIM (Youth in Ministry), Fuller Brass, Rob Nelson, Becky Findlay, and Jeff Sotropa

Mark your calendars. You can join the concert on Zoom, watch it live on Facebook, or watch it later on YouTube. (Please visit [our website](#) for the links.)

Invite your friends to join or watch this reflective and inspiring presentation!

Our Condolences



We have recently learned of the passing of Rick Roland, on Thursday, March 11, 2021. Rick served as an usher at First Baptist for 25 years, greeting any and all with a friendly smile. Rick also showed leadership in the community, and his calm and gracious demeanor was appreciated by friends, colleagues, and the people he served. He will be missed. Our condolences go out to his family and friends at this difficult time. Funeral information will be announced later.

Holy Week 2021 – The Journey to the Cross

Holy Week is March 28th to April 4th. Set aside time for silence, prayer, and fasting as we follow the story of Jesus' self-sacrifice for the world. We are offering morning and evening online gatherings for worship.

Here is a list of Holy Week Worship Services and Events:

Palm Sunday – March 28th

- Learning for Life, 9:30 am, online only
- Morning Worship, 11:00 am, in-person and online
- Easter Alleluia, 7:00 pm, online only. FBC musicians and friends, both past and present, come together in unique ways to present the telling of the Easter story.

Monday – March 29th

- 7:00 pm, online
- Jesus confronts the temple authorities. A short service of scripture and prayer.

Tuesday – March 30th

- 7:00 pm, online
- Jesus' final confrontation with leaders in Jerusalem. A short service of scripture and prayer.

Wednesday – March 31st

- 7:00 pm, online
- Jesus' warning to his disciples that suffering is coming and to keep alert. A short service of scripture and prayer.

Maundy Thursday – April 1st

- 7:00 pm, online
- Jesus' Last Supper, prayer on Gethsemane, and arrest. Holy Communion will be celebrated. This will be a subdued but beautiful a cappella worship service. Holy Communion will be celebrated.

Good Friday Service – April 2nd

- 10:30 am, online
- Rob Ogilvie, CBWC Executive Minister, will be preaching. This is a joint service involving First Baptist, Argyle Road Baptist and Westhill Park Baptist churches. The service will be live-streamed from Westhill Park Baptist Church.

Easter Sunday – April 4th

- Sunrise Service, 6:30 am, in-person, at Wascana Marina. This will be a short, joyful celebration with scripture, song, and prayer. Face masks and social distancing between households will be required.
- Easter Sunday Morning Worship service, 11:00 am, on Zoom and in person. Christ is Risen! From the Easter greeting to the Hallelujah Chorus, this joyful celebration of God's victory is the high point in our calendar as a congregation.
- We will be sharing special music from First Baptist Regina, including the Hallelujah Chorus.

For more information and links to the various services and events, please visit [our website](#).

Achievers' Virtual Luncheon

The March Achievers' Luncheon will be this Thursday, March 25th, at 12:00 noon, over Zoom. If you are 55 years or older, you are warmly invited to join us. Our guest speaker will be Rev. Rob Ogilvie, Executive Minister for the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada (CBWC).

For full details, visit the [church website](#). Please RSVP as soon as possible by emailing [the church](#) or calling (306) 359-1450, ext. 223 or ext. 221. Questions? Please contact [Pastor John](#). To join the luncheon, click here: [Join Achievers' Luncheon](#).



Eating in the fifties...

...Pasta had not been invented. It was called macaroni or spaghetti.

...Chickens didn't have fingers in those days.

...Healthy food consisted of anything edible.

...Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.

...Water came out of a tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than gasoline for it, they would have become a laughingstock.

...Seaweed was not a recognized food.

...Pizza? Sounds like a leaning tower somewhere.

...Surprisingly, muesli was readily available. It was called cattle feed.

What's happening at First?

Morning Prayer

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

Children



At the beginning of Lent, the kids were invited to draw or write what they wanted to do throughout Lent to draw closer to God. They have also received nine pages to colour, each page depicting a Psalm that relates to the Lenten season. The children have been invited to colour these pictures throughout Lent as they reflect on their Lenten journey. These photos are some samples of their art work. For more information, please contact [Pastor Kayely](#).



Youth

Pastor Chris: "Last week (March 12th) the youth group met to visit on Zoom. It was really nice to hang out, catch up, and hear how each one of us is doing. While there was no devotional this night, we did take time to pray for one another, and share what is going on in our lives. Meeting with these youth is a privilege, and laughing and playing games makes it so much more enjoyable. We continue to look forward to the time when we can meet together face to face, but also appreciate that we live in a time and place where we can still connect online." For more information, contact [Pastor Chris](#).

Adults

Learning for Life: Pastor Richard is facilitating an online series: "Jesus' Earthly Ministry: Revealing the Heart of God." This class is focusing on the four Gospels, allowing them to shape the account of Jesus' life and teachings, and discovering how Jesus revealed not only God's heart toward humanity, but also how our hearts ought to be toward one another. For more information, visit [our website](#) or contact [Pastor Richard](#).

Voice: A small group for women who like to read and enjoy lively conversation. The group meets every second Wednesday from 7 to 9 pm, using Zoom. For more information, visit [our website](#), send an email to [the church](#), or contact Laureen S or Bonnie AW.

Reading through the Old Testament: In this online reading group, participants are reading through the Old Testament chronologically. The group meets every Thursday at 10:30 am, via Zoom. For more information, please visit [our website](#) or contact [Pastor Richard](#).

Gospel of John small group study: Pastor Richard is leading a small group online that is looking at the Gospel of John. There are two groups meeting, via Zoom. The first group meets on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 7 pm, and the second, on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 10 am. For more information, please visit [our website](#) or contact [Pastor Richard](#).

Lack, Loss, and Love

Pastor Joel's sermon from Sunday, March 14th, 2021 (A summary – to hear the complete sermon, dial (306) 992-1912.)

Scripture: Mark 10:17-31

A man with an abundance of wealth and an abundance of virtue came to Jesus, and asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus looked at him, loved him, and saw that there was still more that God would ask of this man. "You lack this, go and sell everything and give it to the poor. Then, come, and follow me."

I've sometimes thought that the man was asking, "How do I gain entry into heaven?" And that Jesus answered, "You lack one thing," as if this man was like a person at an airport counter with everything they need for their trip except for one thing – the ticket.

Jesus' teaching suggests that there's something much larger going on here. This isn't a question about the price of entering heaven. It isn't just about a ticket. Jesus is challenging the man, and all his disciples, to consider, "Are you ready to live a new way of life? A life of self-sacrifice and loss? A life of turning everything over to God?"

Instead of a story about a ticket, this scenario from Mark is much more like a diplomat who has spent his life preparing for his time overseas. Then he comes before his manager and says, "I'm ready to go to Norway. I've learned the language and I've learned about the food, culture, and history. I've got the clothes for the cool, damp weather. I'm ready." His manager replies, "Great work, I am proud of you. There's just one thing. You are going to Singapore."

The world that we live in is organized one way, while the world that we are preparing for is organized a very different way. The man who came before Jesus knew this and asked, "What does it take to get me ready to live in the kingdom? What does it take to be ready to live eternal life?"

In the world that we are preparing for, God owns all things and provides all things. Jesus looked at the man and saw that he wasn't ready to let go of his money and possessions. Therefore, Jesus asked the man to practice radical and sacrificial giving. Fair enough that the man went away grieving. Sometimes, obedience hurts.

For me however, the harshest word that Jesus said to the man was, "then."

For starters, by saying "*then* follow me," Jesus implies that, in order to become a disciple, the man must first give away everything (!) he owns to the poor, and only then can he follow Jesus. Second, by saying "*then follow me*," Jesus implies that the man's reward for giving everything away, is to join him on the road to suffering. Now, following Jesus *does* sounds good in many ways: getting to be near him always, walking with him and living with him. But hang on: Following Jesus means joining him on the road to suffering and, eventually, death.

Therefore, Jesus is saying first do an incredibly risky and painful thing. And then, as a reward, then, join me on the road to suffering.

What has Jesus asked you to give up? Is there anything more that Jesus might say? Is there's still something you lack?

I know God has asked many of you to give up money, security, relationships, or recognition. Even then, once we have given something up, isn't it often the case that God then asks for more?

Often, we're not really even given a choice. What we've given up is beyond our control. I've seen that God has called many of you to give up your health or your mobility; some have been laid off; others have had no choice but to go to work for an employer who treats them poorly. In this pandemic, we've all been asked to give up certain freedoms, regular personal contact with friends and loved ones, our sense of security, and our sense of safety outside of our homes or in groups. Even after we've given up so much, God will ask for more.

Eventually, God will ask each of us to surrender our very life into his care, upon our death.

C.S. Lewis reminds us that God isn't interested in gathering all of this and hoarding it for his own sake. No, God receives all that we give, and in the end, receives our lives, all in order that it might be returned to us, renewed, restored, transformed, made right, fulfilled, and made whole. We can think of our suffering as misfortune or chance, or we can think that God is in control and all of our suffering will be redeemed.

This is the picture that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 15:25-28. To this day, Jesus is bringing everything under his own authority. In the end, Jesus will turn everything over to God so that God may be all in all.

Asking someone to suffer as Jesus does in this story, and as God has asked many of you to suffer, does not sound like love. And yet, we have in this encounter, the evidence that what inspired Jesus was love for the man. We can think of times when harm is meant in a loving way: The doctor who administers toxic chemicals to kill a cancer; the surgeon who breaks skin and bone in order to repair a heart; the cycling coach who pushes his or her rider to the limits of pain to win; or the parent who ushers their young ones out the door and into the world, in order that they might learn to thrive. When we look at these examples of causing intentional suffering, we understand that it is meaningful, because we know what the goal and the purpose is, and we can see the end result.

We know the goal of history. We know the end. We know that our suffering, our sacrifice, is preparing for us an eternal glory. (2 Corinthians 4:17)

Jesus asked the man to sacrifice what he had and to follow him, because Jesus loved him. It is crucial that, before we open ourselves to suffering, before we ask God, "Is there anything I lack?" It is imperative that we know that God loves us. Do you know that God looks at you, listens to your questions, listens to your searching, and loves

you? If there is any question in your heart about God's love, before attempting to follow Jesus, ask God in prayer, "Do you love me?" God's love is the main consolation in our suffering. God's love is also the basis for our obedience and sacrifice.

Jesus didn't offer a system, a theory, or a formula to the man. Jesus invited the man to know him as Lord, by giving him a personal command. Jesus looked at the individual and loved him and said, "This is what *you* must do."

Jesus' makes a final promise to his disciples in this lesson. You're not alone. You have brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers in this age. We have each other.

This past year as we have lived through the pandemic, we have all had the opportunity to experience this gift through this congregation. For those of you who have opened yourselves up, those who've taken part in relationships, those who've joined the prayer meetings, Sunday worship, small groups, those who've phoned and called others, those who've let people know how they're doing and listened, those who've given all kinds of gifts – you have experienced the truth of Jesus' promise of a church family. I have heard firsthand how, for many of you, despite of all that's been lost, the depth of relationship you've experienced has been enriching. We've experienced that we carry one another, we weep with one another, and we share what we have with one another. What a rich treasure this church family has been for so many of us through this year of Covid. I have confidence going forward no matter what we experience, we will be there for each other. And we know the end, we know the goal. The day of resurrection will come and all that's been lost will be returned transformed and renewed.

Prayer Request from Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS)

Emad Botros, our missions partner in Lebanon and Assistant Professor of the Old Testament at ABTS, has submitted the following prayer request: "Pray for students to gain wisdom as they learn how to create balance between work, family, ministry and studying, and that they are not discouraged along the way. As students study the word of God, pray that they grow not only in knowledge but also in character. Pray for a spirit of unity, collaboration, love and care among our new cohort of students, and that they become a community of humble learners. Pray for our faculty to continue being a source of encouragement and inspiration as they teach online."



We will do well to uphold both students and faculty in prayer as they work to meet the challenges of online learning. To see the most recent ABTS newsletter, [click here](#).

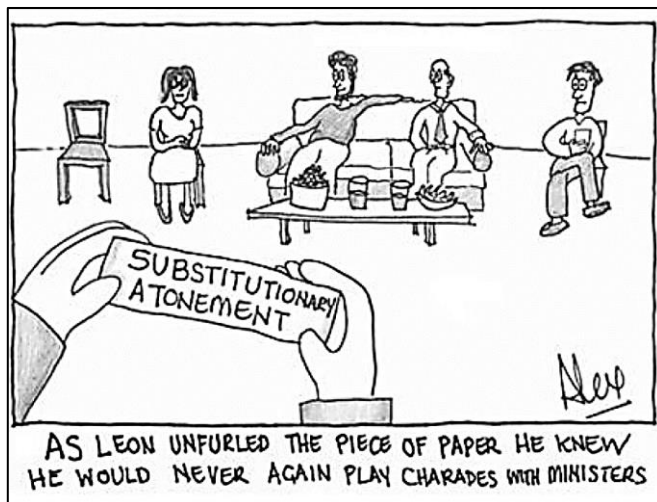
Tithing during the pandemic

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.



As a man and his five-year-old son were heading to McDonald's one day, they passed a car accident. Usually when they saw something terrible like that, they would say a prayer for whoever might be hurt, so the man pointed to the accident and said to his son, "We should pray."

From the back seat came an earnest voice: "Dear God, please don't let those cars block the entrance to McDonald's."