

First Baptist Regina Weekly News

For the Week of March 28th, 2021

“Come, you daughters, help me to lament,
O Lamb of God, innocent,
See! Whom? The bridegroom,
Slaughtered on the beam of the cross...”

Listening to *St Matthew's Passion* by J.S. Bach has become a tradition for me during Lent, even if the music is so rich it feels somewhat indulgent. Lately, Mark Anderson has concluded our services with pieces from this epic work. My favourite recording (with very limited experience) has Philippe Herreweghe conducting. ([Watch it here.](#))



Bach takes the themes and, with subtle changes, evokes courage and authority in one moment, grief and mourning in the next, and then gently offers us comfort.

The music alone is powerful, but the words reveal even greater depths of emotion and insight. ([Find the English lyrics in full here.](#))

“When I one day must depart from here then do not depart from me,
When I must suffer death then step forward next to me!
When most full of fear I am in my heart, then snatch me from my fears.”

In response to Jesus' love for us, these very personal and direct words are sung:

“Although my heart swims in tears, since Jesus takes his leave from me,
Yet his Testament makes me rejoice...
I shall give my heart to you. Come down, my salvation, and bury yourself within it!
I shall bury myself in you.”

The weeklong observance of Jesus' suffering and death has come. At Christmas, many of us turn to music to help us reflect and celebrate. I suppose Bach is not for everyone! And two and half hours is a serious commitment. What traditions do you have during Holy Week? What might you do as part of turning your attention to Jesus?

May God be with you as we meditate again on our Lord's suffering and death on the cross.

With love,



Pastor Joel

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 – Thursday, April 1st

- Morning prayer – 7:15 am, online
- Noon prayer – 11:30 am, online

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

- 7:30 pm, online and in person (*Please note that the time has been changed.*)
- 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: Location and time to be determined. **Please note:** If you're thinking of attending, please contact Joel by email, or by calling the church at (306) 359-1450. 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](#).

Our Thanks.....

The family of Margaret Ziolkowski extends heartfelt gratitude to our church family for the many kind cards and messages of condolence received since the passing of our Mom. We were much comforted to "see" so many of you with us in the sanctuary for her memorial service last Thursday as well.

Particular thanks to Joel, John, Heather, Derrick, and Kevin for the part you each played, including all the technical and audio preparation and support. Your work made a beautiful service in Mom's memory.

With love,
Brenda, Barbara, Susan and Lorna,
The Ziolkowski Family

Birth Announcement

Rob and Nicole Nelson welcomed a baby boy, James Perley Nelson, at 3:33 am on Friday, March 19, 2021. James is a little brother to sister Jaeleigh, brother Daniel, and four-legged brother, Gus.

Congratulations to proud grandparents, John and Debby Nelson.



Annual Missions Virtual Luncheon and Fundraiser – April 18th

Join us on Sunday, April 18th, for our annual missions fundraiser in support of our partnership with Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM), the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development, and the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS). Our CBM global field worker, Emad Botros, will be speaking in the morning service and answering your questions afterwards, during our virtual luncheon.



Emad is an assistant professor at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS). He and his family are our missions partners in Lebanon. The family hosted members of First Baptist Regina during the [SENT team's visit to Lebanon](#) in June, 2019.

Find out more about how COVID-19 has affected the work happening in Lebanon, the shift to distance education at the ABTS, as well as the ongoing impact of the Beirut explosion (August, 2020) on the city and country. Please send your questions for Dr. Botros to [Pastor Joel](#) by Thursday, April 15th. We will also be showing some pictures from the 2019 SENT trip to Lebanon. Find out more on [our website](#).

You will also find, on [our website](#), some Lebanese recipes to help celebrate our luncheon!



Quotes from actual insurance claims...

- Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I didn't have.
- I collided with a stationary truck coming the other way.
- I had been driving for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had an accident.
- I told the police I was not injured, but on removing my hat I found that I had a fractured skull.
- In an attempt to kill a fly, I drove into a telephone pole.
- The pedestrian had no idea which direction to run. So I ran over him.

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

Our children's program is online at this time. For more information, please contact [Pastor Kayely](#).

Youth

The youth are meeting alternate Friday evenings at 7:00 pm via Zoom. 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](#), email [the church](#), or call Lauren at (306) 529-2963 or Bonnie at (306) 537-8474.

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](#).

He Gave His Life for You

Annabel Robinson's sermon from Sunday, March 21st, 2021 (To hear an audio recording of the sermon, dial (306) 992-1912.)

Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

Two weeks ago, Richard was preaching on Mark 9, where it says, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it. And then the disciples got into an argument about who was the greatest. I thought Richard had stolen my passage. I was so moved by what he said, especially since it was following Learning for Life, when he had talked about how the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, and Joel with his little people making it all so vivid, that I copied this image not only here, but into my journal as a daily reminder.

Now we're in chapter 10, and Mark tells us essentially the same thing, but at the end he takes it one step further. We tend to read the Bible in bite-size portions, but it's important also to read books as whole books to get the overall emphasis of the author.

Jesus and the disciples are going to Jerusalem, where the disciples are expecting Jesus to be made king. Jesus tells them of his forthcoming death. This time they argue about who gets to sit next to him in glory. We are appalled when we hear this. James and John are deaf to what he has just said. They still think he's going to Jerusalem to be crowned king. Well, in one sense he is, but not the way they thought.

Jesus teaches them about service; how he will give his life. This passage is all of a piece with what has gone before. In Richard's passage last Sunday, Jesus has told them that the first will be last and the last will be first. But they don't get it: "But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it." (Mark 9: 32)

So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers, lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mark 10:42-45)

Or, to paraphrase: "In secular organizations, even the best of them, those at senior levels set policy and direct people serving under them. The kingdom of heaven doesn't work like that. The most important people are those at the bottom rung of the ladder who do the grunt work. If you want to get ahead in the kingdom of heaven, go after one of the positions at the bottom. You won't get a corner office or six weeks paid holiday. You may have to work shifts. You'll work at minimum wage with no pension or

other benefits. But that's where you'll find Jesus, cleaning toilets after hours. He has a gift for you that is worth more than all the corner offices in the world.”

The disciples had begun to experience Jesus' lifestyle of service, having lived with him for three years: He worked long hours, listening to people and paying attention to their needs. He noticed Zacchaeus at the top of the tree. When people made a nuisance of themselves in the crowd, clamouring for his attention, his disciples tried to get them to shut up. But Jesus singled them out and healed them. He stopped on the way to Jairus' house to heal a woman with a menstrual disorder. He touched people that no one else would go near. He paid attention to children. He washed the dirty, smelly feet of his disciples—the work of a slave.

All this is, as one commentator has said, the true meaning of victory over evil. (Pheme Perkins, *New Interpreters' Bible*)

He spent time in prayer, but had to get up long before everyone else in order to find quiet and solitude.

When John the Baptist was killed and his body violated, he withdrew. He had a lot to process, knowing that what happened to John foreshadowed what awaited him. But he couldn't get away from the crowds. When it was time for supper, his disciples finally saw their opportunity and wanted to send the people off to find food. Not so Jesus. He used his last ounce of energy to feed them.

On two other occasions, Mark tells us that Jesus and the disciples had no time to eat (3:20; 6:31). Another time, He was so tired that he fell asleep in a boat in a storm.

And now, on the way to Jerusalem, he continues to prepare them for what will happen there.

Again, he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him, this time with a little more detail: “We are going up to Jerusalem,” he said, “and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.”

Actually, as Tom Wright puts it, he's been telling them this for the last two chapters, and they still haven't even begun to grasp the point. *He is going to die*; and his death will not be a messy accident.

The disciples didn't get it. They were still thinking about the corner offices.

Centuries earlier, the Psalmist had glimpses of what had to happen—one of those rare times in the Old Testament where someone who loves God perceives that there has to be a life with him after we die, and perhaps speaks more than he knows:

“No one can redeem the life of another
or give to God a ransom for him—
the ransom for a life is costly,
no payment is ever enough—
But God will redeem me from the realm of the dead;
he will surely take me to himself.” (Psalm 49: 7-8; 15)

But more than this, Jesus has in mind the “suffering servant” passage in Isaiah:

“Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer,” —I think this is one of the most startling verses in the whole Bible—

“and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

After the suffering of his soul,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.

For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.” (Psalm 53: 10-12)

So he took them aside and told them about the kingdom of heaven. This is the third time Jesus has told them about his imminent death. This time he adds an explanation that is new: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)

There was a time when I didn't get it either. As a teenager I couldn't understand how the death of someone all those years ago could make any difference to me today.

I had heard many times that he died for the sins of the whole world. But I had assumed that that was supposed to have made the whole world right, and when I looked around that didn't seem to be the case. It didn't make sense. I was missing one important piece—the ransom.

The Psalmist was right—the ransom for a life is costly. No payment is ever enough. It took the death of someone who had lived a perfect life, to pay the ransom. Only Jesus could do that.

We tend to think of ransom in connection with people who have been taken hostage when a price is put on their heads.

But for anyone in the Roman Empire, the idea would have been familiar from the slave market. Ransom money could buy freedom. A slave could even save up his own money and buy his own freedom.

And underlying Jesus' words is the ugly fact that we are all sinners, held hostage to sin. Slaves. "Anyone who commits sin is a slave to sin." (John 3:34)

We don't like to think of it this way. We'd rather try to justify our behaviour.

But Jesus cut to the core. When he said he was about to give his life as a "ransom," he meant that he would pay the price with his own life, by standing in our place—your place, my place—as a substitute, enduring the judgment that was deserved for sin.

Paul puts it like this in his letter to the Romans: "at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:6-8)

A more contemporary idiom might be the idea of addiction. Anyone who lives a life of sin, makes a practice of sin, is addicted to sin. But whereas, in the case of addicts, there are people out there—recovered addicts and people who've never been addicted—that can help and offer support, in the case of sin, there's no one. Except Jesus.

Nothing less than Christ's perfect life could rescue us.

Jesus knew this, and loved us to the end.

The card is in the mail. Here's the other piece I was missing. It is not valid until you have signed it on the back.

He will never force our hand, but he invites every one of us, individually and personally, to accept his offer of forgiveness and eternal life.

That's what I did when I was sixteen.

Lord Jesus, I'm amazed when I think about your life and how you spent it in service to people of all sorts. You shocked the Jewish establishment when you socialized with people outside their respectable circle. You understood all sorts of people who weren't Jewish. You understand us. I pray for anyone here who feels caught in an addiction to sin, and pray that, with the power you displayed in your miracles of healing, you will also release them. I pray for all of us that you will continue to transform us, individually and as members of your kingdom, enabling us to serve one another as you have served us.

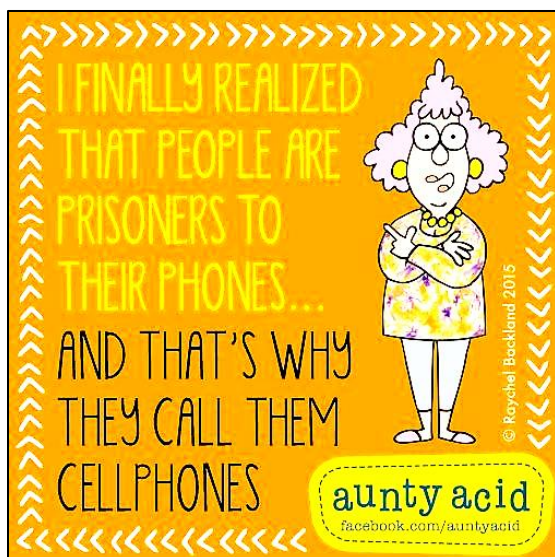
Tithing during the pandemic

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.



A woman carrying a struggling dog stepped off an escalator and marched over to a policeman. "I'd like to speak to you about that sign," she told him. She pointed to the lettering on a nearby wall: DOGS MUST BE CARRIED ON THE ESCALATOR.

"It's ridiculous," she huffed. "It took me half an hour to find this one!"

Q. What starts with an "O" and ends with "nions" and sometimes make you cry?

A. Opinions.