



The Torch

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CAPITOL HILL
2022 – MARCH VOLUME 64 NUMBER 6

PASTOR'S PEN

[Psalm 51:10 states, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."](#)

The psalmist helps us to understand that God is the one who gives us what we need to live the quality-of-life God desires, and we need. With all that has gone on over the past few years we need that re-creation and renewal to do and be what God's plan is for us.

It is in this spirit that we will observe Spiritual Renewal Week, March 21-23, 2022. The services will start each night at 6:00 p.m. We will be open for people to attend in person if they so choose. We will also have the services livestreamed as we do all of our services.

We have three young preachers who are here in the Nashville area to preach for us.

- Monday, March 21 – Minister Jordan Griffin, Master of Divinity Student at the Vanderbilt Divinity School.
- Tuesday, March 22 – Elder Diamond Gantt - Associate Pastor of Vision Development and Execution at The Mount Zion Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee.
- Wednesday, March 23 – The Reverend Jeremiah Parks – Special Assistant to the Pastor, The Temple Church, Nashville, TN

Our Spiritual Renewal Week is similar to revivals that many other churches have. It is a time for the congregation to share in worship. It is also a time for reflection and rejuvenation. It is a time for refocusing and rededicating ourselves on the tasks which are ahead of us.

We will share with you other things we are asking of you as we approach the week. Please plan to share with us in person or online. Think of at least one friend you can ask to share in the services with us. I am looking forward to it. It will be a blessing.

March 5, 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of our moving into our current building in 1972. We were initially at 319 Eighth Ave, North and moved to 900 James Robertson Pkwy, which is our current location, though the address has changed. We entered marching and rejoicing [Psalm 122:1!](#)

Kelly M. Smith Jr

Pastor

DISCIPLESHIP MOMENT

Praying Scripture: Growing Deeper Roots in God's Word

"And he (and she) shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water..." ~Psalm 1:3a

Submitted by Rev. Joe Ella Darby, Assistant to the Pastor for Discipleship

Praying Scripture is an early church practice that involves reading, meditating, listening, and praying God's Word. It has been believed that praying Scripture deeply connects one to the mind and heart of God.¹ In prayer we lay aside our desires and agendas; thus, praying Scripture allows us to be open and creates space for us to be attentive to God and God's agenda.

The Lord's Prayer is a great place to learn how to pray Scripture. I believe it is a helpful model, not only because it contains the words of Christ, but also because it covers everything that we need to be in conversation with God concerning life and living. Below are four simple steps to help you begin praying Scripture and growing deeper roots in God's Word.

Read the Passage: Read the passage a few times, maybe even read more than one version. Let's look at the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 NKJV.

Meditate on the Passage: Note any key words, phrases, or a verse that resonates with you. Reflect on their meaning. Consider what it means to you and how it applies to your own life. For example, you may take note of the word and phrases "bread" and "do not lead us into temptation". You may want to think about your desires, wants, and needs. What, where and how are you seeking nourishment? You may want to think about temptations you may be facing and whether you feel strong enough to resist them.

Engage the Passage: Pray the words of the Scripture back to God, applying them to your life and/or situations. Using "bread", you can pray, "Lord, thank you for hearing my prayer. Today, I am stressed. I need your grace and peace. As a good father, thank you for providing for my daily needs. Today is no different. Thank you for nourishing my soul from your Word and reassuring me that you got me covered."

Using "do not lead us into temptation", you can pray, "Lord you know I love you, but I am tempted to go against that which I know is your will for my life. God please do not lead me into this temptation, as I fear I won't have the courage to choose rightly as I honestly want to give in to this temptation. Please deliver me from the evil in my heart that tempts me to believe that this wrongdoing is not as bad as it seems. Help me not to wander from your truth and that which is your best for me. Help me to desire your will and to live for your glory, not my own glory or self-gratification. Thank you for your power that is available to me forever. Grant me courage to apply it and live to the audience of One. Amen"

Receive from the Passage: Since prayer is a two-way conversation, take time to listen to what God wants to speak to you. As you listen, remember there is a difference between conviction and condemnation. Conviction is good and draws us closer to God, but condemnation is not of God as it drives us into hiding (Romans 8:1). Write down what you sense or hear. It may be a word, a phrase, a verse, or even a song. If you do not understand what you hear, ask God for wisdom. (James 1:5) Thank God for meeting you.

If you are beginning, pray a Psalm once or twice a week until you become more comfortable. As you are growing your prayer life, do not forget to journal. It is always nice to see God's activity in your life, as well as see how you are growing deeper roots of confidence, faith, hope, and peace through God's Word. Grace to each of you as you pray Scripture and be transformed!

¹ Adele Ahlbery Calhoun. *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transforms*. (Downers Grove, III: InterVarsity Press, 2005), p. 246.

MISSION AT YOUR DOORSTEP

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Matt 25:40

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Arrol N. Martin, Assistant to the Pastor

As we look to Jack Frost moving off of the scene and the coming of Spring, our world globally has taken a turn for the worst. Vladimir Putin president of Russia and a former KGB agent has unleashed the might of the Russian military on its democratic neighbor Ukraine. Was the west foolish to think that His ambitions would have been satisfied with only the annexation of Crimea? Turning to history, In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the area we know as Ukraine was controlled by Polish and Russian interest. Ukraine was a founding member of the USSR in 1922. The country regained its independence in 1991, following the [dissolution of the Soviet Union](#). Thus what we see happening today is the result of a former KGB agent who wants to rebuild Russia in the image of the former USSR. What does that mean for us as members of the American Baptist Churches?

VALLEY FORGE, PA (2/25/22)—In response to immediate needs resulting from the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24, 2022, International Ministries, on behalf of American Baptist Churches USA, has sent an initial grant of \$15,000 in One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) emergency relief to the European Baptist Federation to provide humanitarian aid for Ukrainian Baptists. This grant joins a larger, global Baptist response to this evolving situation.

Initial relief will provide basic provisions—food, shelter, medicine, and hygiene items—to people who are fleeing their homes. Displaced people will be served by distribution centers set up by the Ukrainian Baptists to provide temporary shelter and relief. In addition, the threat of the incursion and the invasion have resulted in refugees fleeing to neighboring countries. In those countries, Baptists are also responding. There will be ongoing needs both within Ukraine and in the surrounding countries.

“We ask American Baptists to join in prayer for our Baptist sisters and brothers, and all the people of Ukraine: for protection and provision for those who suffer, and for peace to be restored. And for our Baptist sisters and brothers and all peace-loving people in Russia, that God will give them courage to pursue peace.”



Deacons of the Week for March 2022

Week of	Deacon	Phone
6 th	Sunny Owunnah	(615) 708-1893
13 th	Pamela Wood	(615) 259-0623
20 th	Carol Boone	(615) 851-1527
27 th	Derek Howard	(615) 318-6469

Nashville, Tennessee 50 years ago in March 1972

On March 2, 2022, The Tennessean published a series of photos from around Nashville taken during the month of March 1972. March 5th 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of the new sanctuary for First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill, located at what is now 900 Nelson Merry Boulevard. The photos below are from the day the congregation marched from the location on 8th avenue to the new sanctuary.



The congregation of the historic First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill pray after the reading of scripture and a final benediction ever in the church at 319 Eighth Avenue North March 5, 1972, before marching a block away to their new \$500,000 sanctuary at 900 James Robertson Parkway. The old church was the center point of the civil rights movement for Nashville in the 60s.
FRANK EMPSON / THE TENNESSEAN



Dr. Leonard C. Archer, marshal for the day, leads the 600-member congregation of the First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill on a block long march from their old historical church at 319 Eighth Avenue North, background, to their new \$500,000 sanctuary at 900 James Robertson Parkway March 5, 1972.
FRANK EMPSON / THE TENNESSEAN



Members of the First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill's congregation walk into their new \$500,000 sanctuary at 900 James Robertson Parkway after marching a block from their historical old church at 319 Eighth Avenue North March 5, 1972.
FRANK EMPSON / THE TENNESSEAN



Article submitted by Rev. Richard Hughes, Associate Minister,
Ebenezer Baptist Church (Charlotte, NC)

In late December President Joe Biden made the decision to extend the pause on student loan repayments for the second time during his tenure. This came after he received much criticism for previously announcing that he would not extend the pause, causing over 43.2 million student borrowers to resume making payments on their student loans that have been paused since the pandemic started.

Student loans have crippled so many individuals in our society. The average federal student loan debt amount is over \$36,000 per borrower, and private student debt averages almost \$55,000 per borrower. While many argue that repaying student loans are the sole responsibility of the individuals who signed up for them, the reality is that there are many systemic forces and inequalities that factor into the reason why many are left with student loans as the only option to pay for their college education. Racially speaking, Blacks have been made victims by a series of policies that span across slavery and Jim Crow that explains why we have an average of \$25,000 more in student loan debt than our white counterparts. Cancelling the debt would make a tremendous impact on our economy - including, but not limited to, adding 1.5 million new jobs and lifting 5.2 million people out of poverty.

Reflecting on the student loan crisis led me to consider a possible Christian perspective on the matter. Does the Bible have anything to offer us as we are faced with what seems to be such an insurmountable amount of debt? The answer is an emphatic YES!

I'm reminded of a time when Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray. During what has come to be known as the Lord's Prayer, Christ offered these words: "*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*" At face value this seems very simple and a bit individualistic, a bit like a way to entice God to reciprocate an action toward us that we do to one another. But when examined in its proper context one will discover that Jesus is using prayer as a means to make a justice claim for society. Let me explain.

"...As we forgive our debtors" is a statement that is rooted in Old Testament law. In fact, it is a part of possibly the most important ethical aspect of the law - the Sabbath/Jubilee codes. The Sabbath as a matter of national policy was instituted by God after delivering the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. He commanded them to "*Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy... the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work...*" After working over 400 years to build supply cities for an Egyptian economy that cared more about their profits instead of the well-being of people, God commanded the Israelites to make time to rest. In this way, the commandment is more of a gift from God than a harsh way of enticing obedience. It is patterned after God's own actions in the creation process where He rested on the seventh day after completing all of His work on the previous days.

As Old Testament law progressed, the parameters of the Sabbath extended from a mere day of the week to a year among years - what would become known as the Jubilee Year. In Deuteronomy 15:1-18 the people were instructed to grant a remission of debts and release their slaves, ultimately to ensure that poverty would not become a perpetual cycle for individuals within society. They were guided by the understanding that in God's economy there are plenty of resources for everyone, and although people may fall upon hard times they would not stay in them.

What if we applied the message of the Sabbath and Jubilee Year to our society? In a world full of individual workaholics and corporations that prioritize profits above the well-being of people - even during natural disasters - what would happen if we prioritized rest as an act of self-care and releasing debts as a sacred act of justice? Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann noted, "The Sabbath rest of God is the acknowledgment that God and God's people in the world are not commodities to be dispatched for endless production and so dispatched... as 'hands' in the service of a command economy. Rather they are subjects situated in an economy of neighborliness." Perhaps we could benefit from a thorough understanding of the Sabbath and Jubilee Year as we navigate the complexities of the student loan crisis and other economic issues that cripple so many in society.

In order to keep our prayer list current, please let the church office know if you (or someone you know) have changed address or if someone should be added to or removed from the prayer list.

Deacon Richard Dinkins
Sis. Jan Jones Carter
Sis. Rosa Mimms
Major Alicia R. Bodie

Bro. Derrick McDaniel
Good Samaritan Health & Rehab
500 Hickory Hollow Terrace
Antioch, TN 37013

Sis. Rose McDonald
111 N. Carolina Ave. #204
Lexington, NC 27292

Sis. Leslie Williams
2929 Old Franklin Rd
Nashville, TN 37013

Sis. Maggie Roper
Riverview Health and Rehab
1600 West Claiborne Ave.
Greenwood, MS 38930

BIRTHDAYS

MARCH	
1	Dwight Lewis Jamal Robinson
3	DeJuan Foster
	Candice Nunn
4	Tondreona Chandler
5	Vernoris Johnson
	Gerald Schrader
6	Sebastian Daughtdrill Taura McKnight Cheatham
	Lynn Stewart
7	KeShona Chandler
	Keshona Cox
9	Susan Mosley Howard
10	Jonishay Acklin
	Taylor Gentry
11	Doris Dismuke
12	Mai Olive Lusk
13	Kyrah Cruson
14	Willie McGee
	Taylor McFarland
20	Sharanda Smith
22	Scotty Robinson
23	Kimberly Alexander
24	Miriam Currie Frankie Jackson
25	Lyndsey Bass Covington
	Retha Buchanan
26	Tequila Johnson
27	Esther Caudle James Chandler
29	David Ewing William Ewing Sr.
30	Erica Adderly
31	John T. Howse

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March 2022 Readings and Sunday School Lessons

<u>DAY</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>SCRIPTURE</u>
	Babylonian Captivity Ends	
Tuesday, March 1 st	“Being God’s Instrument”	Isaiah 45:1-10
Wednesday, March 2 nd	“God Will Provide for Every Need”	Philippians 4:10-19
Thursday, March 3 rd	“Lift Up Your Eyes to God”	Isaiah 40:12-15, 21-31
Friday, March 4 th	“Live Freely but Responsibly”	1 Peter 2:13-17
Saturday, March 5 th	“Light Dawns for the Righteous”	Psalms 97
Sunday, March 6 th	“Cyrus Permits the Jews to Return Home”	Ezra 1:1-8, 11; 2:64-70
Adult: Resources to Rebuild	Youth: Unexpected Resources	Children: Providing Needed Help
	Freedom to Worship	
Monday, March 7 th	“Rebuilding the Temple and Praising God”	Ezra 3:8-13
Tuesday, March 8 th	“The Jews Are Discouraged from Rebuilding”	Ezra 4:1-5
Wednesday, March 9 th	“Worship in the Heavenly Sanctuary”	Revelation 5
Thursday, March 10 th	“Bowing in Thanksgiving”	Psalms 138
Friday, March 11 th	“The Time to Rebuild Has Come”	Haggai 1
Saturday, March 12 th	“The Temple’s Foundation Is Laid”	Haggai 2:1-9, 15-19
Sunday, March 13 th	“God Provides through King Darius”	Ezra 6:1-12
Adult: Support for Needed Projects	Youth: Powerful Friends	Children: Provisions to Build and to Honor
	Celebrate Passover Liberation	
Monday, March 14 th	“Keep Holy Convocations”	Leviticus 23:4-8
Tuesday, March 15 th	“God Institutes the Passover”	Exodus 12:1-14
Wednesday, March 16 th	“Moses’ Instructions about the Passover”	Exodus 12:21-28, 50-51
Thursday, March 17 th	“Praise the Name of the Lord”	Psalms 113
Friday, March 18 th	“Christ Our Passover”	1 Corinthians 5:7-8; 10:1-4
Saturday, March 19 th	“Praise for God’s Liberation from Egypt”	Psalms 114
Sunday, March 20 th	“Returned Exiles Keep the Passover”	Ezra 6:13-22
Adult: The Celebration of Completion	Youth: Reasons to Celebrate	Children: Celebration of Completion
	Lest We Forget	
Monday, March 21 st	“Remembering God’s Blessings”	Deuteronomy 8:12-20
Tuesday, March 22 nd	“Hear and Act”	James 1:19-27
Wednesday, March 23	“Humble Yourselves and Resist the Adversary”	1 Peter 5:5-9
Thursday, March 24 th	“Bless the Lord, O My Soul”	Psalms 103:1-10
Friday, March 25 th	“God’s Love Is Everlasting”	Psalms 103:11-22
Saturday, March 26 th	“Remember Christ and Endure”	2 Timothy 2:8-13
Sunday, March 27 th	“Keep the Lord’s Commandments”	Deuteronomy 8:1-11
Adult: The Resolve to Remember	Youth: Remember Where you Are From	Children: Remember and Respond
	Babylonian Captivity Ends	
Monday, March 28 th	“Help Comes from the Lord”	Psalms 121
Tuesday, March 29 th	“The First Will Be Last”	Matthew 20:1-16
Wednesday, March 30 th	“The Greatest Must Be a Servant”	Matthew 20:17-28
Thursday, March 31 st	“The Faithful Are Commanded to Appear before God”	Exodus 34:23-27

Sermon Digests

January 9
"The Power in the Possibility"
Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.
[Mark 9:14-27](#)
 Submitted by: Adrienne Fancher

Our world has so many uncertainties, we rely on knowing the power in possibility. For the rest of this year, we must trust in Possibility. We accept new responsibilities trusting that we can accomplish what is required. Nothing is guaranteed. This story in Mark features a father who believed in the power of possibilities: he believed his son could be healed. When Jesus was not available, he trusted that the apostles could heal. When they couldn't, he still believed in the possibility that Jesus could make a difference in his and his son's lives. It is the power in the possibility, not the power of the possibility. Something pushes us forward.

Point 1-There is power in the possibility when we manage our failures. Perhaps the best part of this story is that the disciples could not cast out the demon even though they had done so previously. Just because you could do *it* before doesn't mean you can do it again. What happens when you fail? Failure is inevitable; everyone fails at something. Jesus is there to pick us up when we fail. You are going to fail: what matters is how you manage that failure.

Point 2- There is power in the possibility when we keep spiritual doors open. Jesus scolds his disciples for their unbelief. The father in the story says, "I do believe, but help me with the part of me that doubts." There is a part of us that struggles to believe. There is so much uncertainty already this year (virus, climate); we must leave those spiritual doors open. Leave a way for God to come in: don't shut out God or there will be no resolutions to problems.

Point 3-There is power in the possibility when we are in the hands of Jesus. Jesus decided to heal the son after the father confessed his unbelief. When the demon left, the son appeared dead. [Sometimes demons can control a life such that when help comes, the person appears dead because they are not like they were before.] Jesus then reached out his hand to lift the son. Sometimes the initial treatment is not complete, follow-up treatment is required. It matters whose hands: a basketball in Steph Curry's hands can entertain. Nails in Jesus' hands can fix the world!

What are you trying to handle yourself? I will place all of my troubles in the hands of Jesus and watch what the Lord can do. I may not know what storms are coming, but I trust in the Possibility of the Lord!

January 16
"The Power in the Prayer"
Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.
[Mark 9:28-29](#)
 Submitted by: Kathy Harrell

The story in our text is about a father who pleads with the disciples, and then with Jesus, to heal his demon-possessed son. The unresolved question is why their prayers did not heal the boy. When they were sent by Jesus on an earlier mission, the disciples were successful. So, what was different about this situation? They needed answers if they were to carry on as the chosen leaders after Jesus was gone. Either their character or their ego was in question; either way, they humbled themselves and asked Jesus why their prayers 'failed'. Jesus did not answer with a parable or with a long explanation; He said to them, and by virtue to us, 'there is power *in* the prayer'.

Point 1-The power in the prayer is in our intent.

Too often prayers are about the three most important people in our life: me, myself, and I. The intent is to somehow get God on our side. Some may say to themselves, 'Lord, do this for me, then I will serve you'. You cannot barter with God! Sometimes we may become complacent or content in our prayer life. The intent of our prayers comes from our faith in *believing* that prayers are answered when we are fully absorbed, focused, and express our total dependence on the Lord.

Point 2- The power in the prayer is in our sincerity.

Praying is not about trying to impress others with your words or the length of your prayer. Romans 8:26 *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans"*. Our prayer life is a heart-matter which shows our trueness and spirit about what or who we are praying for. When we are sincere, we have a more intimate encounter with God which allows us to be more in tune with God's will.

Point 3- The power in the prayer is in our openness.

Jesus said "...this kind CAN come out through prayer". The word 'can' suggest that it could happen or that it might not happen. It opens the possibility. Sometimes we pray as if placing orders to God. We must learn to trust God and be open to whatever God's answer is to our prayers. God's will for our lives may be far different from what we want for our lives. When we pray, we should listen and be open to the different 'possibilities' in the ways that God chooses to answer us. And we have to move from praying only for temporary things (job, health, prosperity, family and friends) and pray for those things that have a more permanent value in our lives and living.

MINISTRY OF STEWARDSHIP MANAGEMENT

Sermon Digests

“Divine Disruption”

January
23

Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.

[Proverbs 19:21](#)

Submitted by: Beverly M. Brown

Context: Proverbs 19:21 “Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails”.

Explanation and Commentary of Proverbs 19:21: God is sovereign and rules the universe, which He created for his own good purposes and His own glory.

God’s desire is to bless His People. As a result, there are times when He has to disrupt humankind life and living to let us know He is everywhere, no matter where and how we happen to be existing. Several examples were cited such as Moses witnessing the burning bush, Jonah being brought back in the belly of fish, Esther’s willingness to die or lose her life for her people, Ruth’s disruption of her family, or Mary birthing Jesus, etc. God’s disruption in the life of the song writer who wrote Amazing Grace

God/Christ disruption in one’s life can seemingly mess up our lives to change His People or to change the situation for the better. God is always going to come out on top and He is going to have His way in an individual’s life. That is important for the following three reasons/purposes:

Point 1- God/Christ Jesus can see the big picture.

God/Christ Jesus knows how to put the right pieces and parts together in a human being’s life which can support His preferred outcome. We are all a part of a bigger piece, and he knows how to bring us together.

Point 2- God needs to reposition us. God’s purpose will prevail. He has a bigger desire and purpose for each of His people. No one can get to the place where they can be their best without Him. God knows and loves us even as sinners because He can turn us around. Read Romans 5:23 & Romans 5:8. God gave Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for humankind.

Point 3-God wants to put us in spiritual alignment. He knows how to get His People in alignment. He knows how to fine tune an individual. God knows where correction is needed since He can make a way where there does not seem to be a way. God wants to bless us and others.

Amen, Amen and Amen

“The Courage to Continue”

January
30

Minister Christopher Harris

[1 Kings 19:3-7](#)

Submitted by: Sheila R. Littleton

We have points in our lives where we don’t want to continue. We may question if it is worth it to continue during these times. We experience various emotions such as exhaustion, depression, and anxiety. In the most difficult moments, God meets you right where you are in life. In our text, Elijah is running for his life. Previously, he was in a contest with false prophets to show the people who is the living God. After this success, his life is threatened by Queen Jezebel. Elijah finds himself in the wilderness due to this circumstance. We will all face wilderness experiences as well. *How do we find the courage and strength to continue in wilderness experiences?*

Sermon Points:

Point 1- You will wrestle with frustration.

Elijah had reached the point of wanting to give up. After successful experiences such as raising a son from the dead and proving the unworthiness of the false prophets, he reached a point of having enough and prayed for death. These circumstances did not protect him from his point of frustration and exhaustion. Elijah is authentic and acknowledges that he is not ok. It is ok to be honest and vulnerable with God. The church is a place where we cast our burden on the Lord

Point 2- You will receive restoration.

In the scripture, Elijah ate, drank, and then laid down again. After his prayer, he expected for the Lord to let him die, but God gives him provisions to continue his journey. God gives us power to continue even in our weakest moments. Instead of dying, Elijah was restored. God knew he needed rest. If we are going to find the courage to continue, we need rest. Rest is not a reward but a requirement. Even Jesus rested and slept.

Point 3-You will find determination.

The angel touched Elijah and told him to eat again for the journey will be great. Elijah was then strengthened and had the courage to get up and continue. He had to come to himself and was rejuvenated. Life may seem difficult but if we can just get up then we can continue. Just as Jesus got up, we can get up as God gives us the courage to keep going no matter the trial. God will take care of you.

“Walk Together Children”**February
6****Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.**[Ecclesiastes 4:9-12](#)*Submitted by: Deborah Luter*

The spiritual ‘Walk Together Children’ performed by the Jubilee Singers, was written in a style that intentionally made you feel that you were walking along side others. Not a rushed pace, but a steady pace. The walk is to get to the promised land. When Moses and Joshua were leading Israel to the Promised Land they were leading them through the wilderness. In other words, where we are right now is not the place God has promised for us. We are in a wilderness now. The wilderness would have been behind us if we had just walked together. This passage in Ecclesiastes speaks of the value of two or more walking in step with each other.

Point 1-Walking together means we can physically

help. The writer talks about the advantage of having someone else who is with you. The writer states that two are better than one because they can get more work done. Two are better in the event one falls down the other can help him or her back up. Two are better to keep each other warm on cold nights. Two are better because they can defend themselves if they are attacked. All the writer is trying to say is that it is better to have more than one. The nature of who we claim to be makes us helpers anyway.

Point 2-Walking together means we can emotionally

support. It is not always what you do. Sometimes you just need to be there. You may not be able to name all 12 disciples, because they had no significant role mentioned in scripture. But their presence was still important. The important thing is to know that someone stands with you.

Point 3 -Walking together means we can spiritually

bond. In each of the previous illustrations the writer talks about two. Now the writer talks of a strong cord of three. In Daniel 3:25 beyond Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Nebuchadnezzar saw a fourth person who looked like the son of the gods. Matthew 18:20 - wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I will be with them. I don’t think the world is designed to get us. But the world has a greater chance of getting you if you always try to tackle things on your own. The only one who can handle things on his/her own is God. The rest of us need help. Marriages are stronger when there are three: husband, wife, and Jesus. Relationships are stronger when there are three: you, your friend and Jesus. You can handle your job better when it is you, your co-workers and Jesus. Three cords are not easily broken.

“The Mark of a Year”**February
13****Pastor Kelly M. Smith, Jr.**[Isaiah 6:1-8](#)*Submitted by: Adrienne Fancher*

Many of us felt that the year 2022 could not come soon enough. We struggled through 2021. Actually, it has been almost two whole years of struggle. We figure that in 2022 things are going to change. But many of the things that challenged us in 2021 don’t follow calendars. We didn’t go to bed New Year’s Eve and wake up New Year’s Day with everything being better. There are things that must happen to make it a better year. The new year is controlled by how we approach the year. There are things that will happen because of our being connected with God.

Isaiah says it was the year that ‘King Uzziah died that I saw the Lord’...; but what really marked his year was the experience he had in the Temple.

Point 1-Mark it as the year we see God staying in the midst of our situation.

Times were hard for Isaiah and the people of Israel. Uzziah who was a good king had died. Ahaz who was a bad king was on the throne. Enemies around Isaiah began to strengthen in power. Isaiah comes into the Temple and had an experience that was like none he had had before. Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up... Though times had changed, and the situation was rough, God showed Isaiah that HE was still there in the midst of it all. We need to see that as being our saving grace. Just to know that God is there matters. God’s presence tells us that all hope is not lost.

Point 2-Mark it as the year we see counterproductive strongholds broken.

Every genuine encounter with God ought to cause us to feel differently. We don’t come into God’s presence and leave the same way. Isaiah saw the Lord which caused him to make the assessment of his own unworthiness to be in the presence of the Lord. Isaiah seems to have some strongholds in his life that kept him from being who it is God needed him to be.

Point 3-Mark it as the year we see ourselves recommitting to the Lord.

Life has a way of knocking us down or out of our groove. When we start on our life’s journey, we have high hopes and pure ambitions. But this chapter in Isaiah should remind us how God can work. Look at the process. God shows us. God fixes us. We need not forget that God blesses us to bless others. Isaiah was asked the question by God who can I send, who will go for me? Isaiah responded, here I am . Send me. Send me to be your hands, feet, heart, love.

We don’t know what the future of 2022 holds, but we do know who holds the future.....Amen

First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill

625 Rosa L. Parks Boulevard at Nelson Merry Street | Nashville, TN 37203

www.firstbaptistcapitolhill.org

Kelly M. Smith Jr., Pastor

Our Mission

First Baptist Church, Capitol Hill is Building, Restoring, and Revitalizing lives through Jesus Christ.

Our Vision

Love God, Make Disciples, Serve Community

Looking for a Church Home?

If you are looking for a church home, we encourage you to come and visit us! There are several ways to become a member of FBCCH.

Baptism - when a person is willing to initially express a belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and is willing to live one's life according to His will. Baptism is the symbolic initiation into the Christian faith.

Christian Experience - when a person who has previously been a member of another church chooses to unite with FBCCH, believing this to be the place for one's spiritual nurturing. These people have already been baptized and have committed a faith relationship with Jesus Christ.

Watchcare - when a person wishes to have his or her membership with FBCCH while he or she is temporarily living in the city.

Associate - when a person who has a membership in another church wishes to have a membership in FBCCH.

Restoration - when a former member chooses to rejoin FBCCH.

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Scheduling Access to Church Buildings

To all groups needing entry and use of the church, sanctuary, and Ennix-Jones Center during the week, please call the church office at 615-255-8757 in advance of your event. This is to ensure personnel are available to allow entry and to have a record for security purposes. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Please send all electronic correspondence to: fbcch13@gmail.com.