



Cross & Spire

Newsletter of First Baptist Church

Interim Pastor: Rick Pinilla

P. O. Box 331, 11 School St. Lebanon, NH 03766

Phone: 603-448-5618 Email: office@lebfirstrbaptist.com www.lebfirstrbaptist.com

February 2018 Volume 35, No. 2

Upcoming Events:

Women 2
Women,
Saturday,
February 10 at
2:00pm

Men's Breakfast,
Saturday,
February 10 at
7:30am

Food Pantry
Wednesday,
February 7 at
5:00pm &
Saturday,
February 24 at
10:00am

Youth Group
Valentine's
Dessert Buffet
Sunday,
February 18 at
11:30am

A Word from our Interim Pastor
Africans will say every European or American has a watch on his or her wrist; but Africans have time. This little witticism illustrates a profound difference in culture. Africa is still a pre-clock culture. People in the modern world live enslaved to the clock. The problem with culture is that we aren't aware of it. We get it the way we catch a cold. We are in the wrong place at the wrong time. So Americans live by the clock without thought or choice.

I wear a watch and I'm not trying to shame anyone for being punctual or caring about time management. Caring about time management is often caring about people or about important work. Rather, I am asking a question about priorities. I want us to think about what matters and what we may be missing by not thinking about assumptions we make about time that may keep us from all that God wants to give us.

I will give three examples that have to do with the Bible and the experience of God. Consider Paul's statement to Timothy: "Think about what I am saying, for the Lord will give you understanding into everything (2Timothy 2:7)." Here is a plain promise of the experience of Jesus coming to us to clarify life for us. Imagine if we could get Jesus to come to us to help us understand some things that are confusing us, or causing us sadness, or keeping us from effective ministry. Paul says that is what he does, but there is a condition to the promise: "Think about what I say." Paul is writing a letter to Timothy. He knows that as Christ's apostle his teaching is God's Word. So the principle is think about God's word and Jesus himself will give us understanding. This is a promise of the direct experience of Christ; but it requires the discipline of thought. We must carefully apply our minds to Scripture. Read it, study it, then reflect on it. This takes time. In fact, it takes time given until we get the understanding. I spent about three years studying and thinking about the issue of prayer because of the corrosive effect of unanswered prayer on my faith. The result was insight into God's way in my life that was life changing, but it took time and thought.

Psalm 46 is a Psalm for people in trouble. There are a series of affirmations of God's character and commitment to us in trouble that would set our hearts at ease if we took them seriously; no matter how terrible the trouble. But toward the end of the Psalm God says, "Be still and know that I am God." Be still here means stop striving and acting and planning and doing, and..... All the affirmations of the Psalm about God are true for us as believers no matter what we believe or do; but we can miss it all if we don't carve out time for quiet, stillness and reflection. We need to be still long enough to know that he is God, even now!

The Lord told the exiles in Babylon, through Jeremiah, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." We recognize the call to wholehearted sincerity in this text. God isn't interested in meeting with hypocrites. But the word "seek" is one modern Christians don't use much. It means intentional, disciplined effort over time: hours, days, weeks?.... Maybe. But the reward is great. We find God.

(Continued on Next Page)

(Continued from first page)

In the modern world we live at a frenetic pace. A good bit of it is unavoidable. We can't get the whole international economy to slow down for us. But we can carve out time for God. Time with space to linger without a watch. The reward is worth it.

Your Partner in the Great Work,
Rick Pinilla

MEN'S BREAKFAST

The next Men's breakfast will be held on Saturday, February 10 at 7:30am. Please see Jim Newcomb or Chris Scholtz for more information. We hope to see you there.

WOMEN 2 WOMEN

"Is any pleasure on earth as great as a circle of Christian friends by a good fire?"

-C.S. Lewis

Ladies! You won't want to miss our next W2W event on **Saturday, Feb. 10, 2-4:30 PM** at the Parsonage. It will be a very special time of fellowship, as we focus on "FRIENDSHIP" and share in a special activity (that part is a surprise). We'll have yummy snacks and lots of time to enjoy each other's company and get to know each other better – you know, become good *friends!*

This would be a great afternoon to invite a friend to come along! Questions? Ask Karen Scholtz, Anne Pinilla or Ruth Newcomb.



Adult Sunday School

"The Real Heaven" with Chip Ingram
Starting Sunday, **February 4 at 9:00**

We recently enjoyed Pastor Ingram's study entitled "Culture Shock". Come join him and the Adult Sunday School class as we explore the much misunderstood reality of our eternal future.

What comes to mind when you think of heaven? Clouds? Harps? Angels? Singing? Now, honestly, does that really sound like a great way to spend eternity? The good news is, that is NOT what heaven is like. And when you discover what really awaits you there, it will radically change your view of your future and of heaven. In this 3-part series from Living on the Edge, Chip Ingram digs into

scripture to reveal what our heavenly home will be like, what we'll do there, what we'll experience, and how we're to prepare for eternity today. If you've secretly thought that heaven sounded kind of boring, well, think again. In this series, you will discover the amazing truth of what awaits you there.

BOARD OF DEACONS UPDATE

Greetings Fellow Congregants,

I pray you all enjoyed a meaningful and powerful worship experience this past Christmas season and that 2018 is off to a wonderful start for everyone. I believe the Lord has great things in store for First Baptist Church in the New Year as we break ground for our new house of worship.

The deacons continue to be very busy with our service schedule, which includes set up and break down of our worship service as well as duties throughout our services. We also spend quite a bit of time on our Community Care Team which deals with taking care of our members; their spiritual, financial and/or health needs. It is an honor to be part of a family who takes such wonderful care of their own. In addition, the deacons ran Sunday afternoon worship services at Genesis for the month of December which is a most fulfilling experience.

Over the past few months, Pastor Rick has been working on a proposal for updating our Constitution. With rapid changes of the culture in which we now live, Pastor Rick feels the need for more specificity to our constitution in the hope of avoiding conflicts in the future. He has been presenting scripture to us to support and clarify said specificity. With his guidance and leadership, we have been looking at several scriptures to help make the constitution clearer in today's culture. We have worked closely with him on this proposal and look forward to presenting it to the church body at the annual meeting.

Many thanks to all of you who help out and volunteer week after week with our services and within our community. And a special thank you for the building committee who are working so very hard on the plans of our future house of worship.

I Chronicles 16:11 ESV

Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!

Prayerfully submitted by Marjorie Olson