

April 22, 2020

the SPIRE

First Baptist Church
columbia



New Zoom Information

This week, all of our recurring Zoom calls have a new link and Zoom ID. The old links will no longer work, so if you have them saved into your Zoom account you will want to delete them. All of our new links can be found at <http://fbc-columbia.org/get-involved/online-gatherings/> and an email with all of the links will be sent out this week.



Below is a list of the online gatherings being offered this week. If you have any questions about any of the gatherings, contact Brittany, Pastor of Families and Spiritual Formation.

- Sunday
 - 10:15 am Sunday Morning Bible Study
 - 10:15 am Connections Small Group
 - 10:15 am Discussions Class
 - 10:15 am Youth Small Group
 - 2:30 pm Awakening Praise Band Gathering
 - 6:00 pm Young Adult Check-in
- Tuesday
 - 8:30 am Coffee Hour with Pastor Brittany
 - 1:00 pm Crafty Critters
 - 4:00 pm First Kids Connect
- Wednesday
 - 12:00 pm Zoom at Noon with Pastor Carol
 - 6:00 pm The Calling Online
 - 6:30 pm Chancel Bells Weekly Gathering



When will we resume in-person gatherings?

I know you are all wondering when we might begin meeting in-person again. The short answer is we still do not know. At this point, we are still under a stay at home order and we will continue to comply with state guidelines and the Center for Disease Control recommendations. When the stay at home order expires, we may have the option of resuming in-person gatherings, but that does not mean we will do so immediately. We want to make a wise and loving decision.

We are continuing to think and plan carefully, so we do not endanger people simply by letting our guard down and believing that the COVID-19 crisis has passed. The decision to resume in-person gatherings, like the decision to suspend in-person gatherings, will be made by the Church Council and the ministerial staff.

In addition, I am mindful that when we resume in-person gatherings, we will not be able to pick-up right where we left off. Here are some precautions we are thinking through before we consider resuming: we may need to increase the number of worship services we are holding in order to limit the number of people attending each service. We will probably need to adjust how we practice communion and taking up the offering in order to avoid passing the plates. We may need to require everyone to wear masks and sit six feet apart. We probably will not be able to resume First Kids Sunday School immediately because kids just do not social distance well.

While we do look forward to the day we can worship together in person, we cannot let the excitement of finally coming back together cloud our judgment. We want to make the decision to resume in-person gatherings thoughtfully and prayerfully. Until then, know that we miss seeing you in-person and we are grateful for the support and care that you are giving one another.

Carl McEntyre



First Baptist Quarterly Financial Update & Opportunity for Financial Assistance for Those Affected by COVID-19

First Baptist continues to be blessed by the generosity of current and historic givers. We want to thank you for continuing to give to support the ministry of our church. Stephen Hoell, the Chair of our Finance Committee, has reported that we have received about \$60,500 in pledged and unpledged gifts through the month of March (our goal for budgeted income for the first quarter would be \$87,322).

In these difficult times, we recognize the challenges families face financially. If you can continue to support the work of First Baptist through your giving, we encourage you to do so. If your economic prospects are uncertain at the moment and finding room to give is a challenge, we understand.

If you have found yourself in need of financial assistance in this disruptive time of a global pandemic, please reach out to any of our pastors (by phone or email) to notify us of your need. We have a Benevolence Fund, which can respond in times such as these. The Missions Council has also set aside additional funds to provide relief and the church is considering further ways in which we can be of greater assistance. Please know that all such requests are confidential. We will get through this together!

Sincerely,
Your First Baptist Family

Administrative Updates Regarding Actions in Response to COVID-19

Greetings church,

I wanted to take the opportunity to make you aware of several administrative actions concerning our staff and finances that have been put in place at First Baptist in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and the shutdown of our normal church and CDC activities.

To comply with the guidelines for social distancing, we have asked most of our staff to work from home or to schedule separate days or times in the office to reduce contact and risk of spreading illness. As you can see in our worship service broadcasts on Sundays, we operate our webcast with the least number of people possible, always staying below 10 individuals and keeping plenty of distance between people while they are in the building. We are grateful that the city has given us permission to continue this important ministry in these difficult days.

Concerning the employment of our staff, the Personnel Committee has voted to continue to pay all of our staff as budgeted. This includes paying our nursery workers through June 15 based on their previous

average monthly hours, and our scholarship singers through the month of May (additional pay will be reviewed at that time).

The Church Council has approved a request from the Child Development Center to cover the needed deficit in order to pay their staff salaries through May, or until funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act is obtained to secure payroll expenses. Future needs will then be evaluated.

Subsequently, the Church Council approved the application for funding from the CARES Act through the Paycheck Protection Program in efforts to maintain full employment of our CDC and church staff during this difficult period. This decision came after careful consideration and conversation of our valued belief in the separation of Church and State and was informed by the work of the Baptist Joint Committee. The Church Council believes that the CARES Act does not violate the Constitution's No Establishment Clause, as it is made equally available to all religions in order to maintain payroll and safeguard against unemployment. Ken Hammann, our Church Treasurer, has done extensive research on this process and assures that, "These funds come to us with no obligations other than to continue to pay our staff and continue our good work." Charles Hunter, our Chair of Personnel, has stated that, "If staffing levels are maintained through June 30, the funds are provided as a grant. If staffing is reduced, a prorated amount is converted to a low-percentage loan." We are thankful for these assurances.

First Baptist Church has been notified that our application for the Paycheck Protection Program has been approved and we are awaiting final paperwork for the release of funds. I am grateful for the work of Ken Hammann, Stephen Hoell, Misty Phillips, Sheila Brooks, Charles Hunter, and our Church Council for their leadership and guidance in helping to secure this opportunity.

While this funding will help our church and CDC staff through this difficult period, it will also allow our congregation the opportunity to focus its continued generosity and financial support in a way that will make a greater impact on our community and local ministry partnerships. Our Serving Team has already taken action to allocate more funding to our benevolence ministry in efforts to assist with the coming needs anticipated in our church family and community. We have also been in contact with two of our ministry partners, Love INC and Voluntary Action Center to notify them that we have funding available to help if community needs arise.

First Baptist is continuing to do good work and ministry, even as our faith community is apart. We are grateful to each of you and for the gift you are in the life of our church family. We covet your prayers and commitment as we walk this path together.

Thank you,



Michael McEntyre
Pastor of Youth, Missions, and Administration

A background image of several shelves filled with books of various colors and sizes, creating a library-like atmosphere.

FIRST BAPTIST
 **book club**

The Sacred Enneagram
BY CHRISTOPHER HEURTZ
6:30 PM
ZOOM CHECK-IN | **MAY 12**

First Baptist Book Club

The next book for the First Baptist Book Club has been selected! Join us in reading *The Sacred Enneagram: Finding Your Unique Path to Spiritual Growth*, by Christopher Heurtz. *The Sacred Enneagram* is a trustworthy, richly insightful guide applying the practical wisdom of the Enneagram for a life transformed. Lies about who we think we are keep us trapped in loops of self-defeat. But this book explores how the enneagram is more than a personality test and offers a bright path to cutting through the internal clutter and finding our way back to God and to our true identity as God created us. The group will have a midpoint check-in on May 12 over Zoom to discuss the first section of the book.

Additionally, FBBC has now launched a Facebook group!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/firstbaptistbookclub>

or search First Baptist CoMo Book Club for weekly discussion questions, fun polls, and current information about meetings.

Brittany McDonald-Null





Virtual Coffee Hour – Tuesdays at 8:30 am

On Tuesdays from 8:30-9:30 am, Pastor Brittany McDonald Null will be hosting a Virtual Coffee Hour. These gatherings will have no agenda other than to drop in and say hello! Bring your favorite warm beverage to keep you cozy as we chat awhile. It is come as you are, and leave when you need!

Visitors and Prayer Requests

If you are visiting with us online, we are so glad to have you with us! If you would like to receive more information about First Baptist and our ministries, let us know you are with us today by texting “guest” to 573-326-9490. If you are in need of prayer, text “prayer” to 573-326-9490 and Brittany, our Pastor of Families and Spiritual Formation will connect with you.

Attention all Graduates, High School, College, and Beyond!

While we understand that our schools and colleges have had to forego the remainder of their academic year, First Baptist would still like to honor all of our high school and college graduates in a meaningful way. We are asking that all graduates (or parents of graduates) send your graduation information to Michael McEntyre by email (mmcentyre@fbc-columbia.org) as soon as possible, but no later than Sunday May 3. For high school students, this includes your name, senior photo, school from which you are graduating, and future plans. For our college and post college grads, please include your name, recent photo, parent’s names, school from which you are graduating, degree, and future plans.



For all graduates, we are asking that you include a mailing address that can be made available to our congregation to send cards and notes of congratulations. We will feature this information in the Spire and are working on the best way to recognize our graduates during an upcoming webcast.

We do not want to miss celebrating any of our graduates' accomplishments, so please help us honor all the graduates within our congregation by sending in this important information as soon as possible. In a time when we have missed out on so much, we are asking our church to help us properly recognize this important milestone in the lives of our graduates.

First Baptist Scholarships

First Baptist Church is fortunate to have endowments specifically to help with post-high school education expenses. If you are currently enrolled in a course of study and would like to be considered for support, application forms are on our website under the Forms, Policies, and Payments section on the Resources page or by calling the church office. Please email applications to the church office at churchinfo@fbc-columbia.org by May 1. Specific scholarships are designated for women in ministry, the helping sciences, and science and engineering, in addition to support for areas outside of those designated.

Child Development Center Update

The Child Development Center has been physically closed since March 19 due to safety reasons, low attendance, and because we have very few parents who are considered essential workers. The Director provides weekly emails to families which include



program updates and resources that may be of assistance during the closure. The teachers are continuing to work by providing connections and activities via Zoom, Facebook, and email. The teachers have a set scheduled Zoom time to meet with each class and Ms. Colleen is providing music live on Facebook every Friday morning. In addition to the set times, the teachers stay in touch via emails and Facebook. We've received positive feedback from parents that this process is working well, and they appreciate the teachers staying connected to the children while we are closed.

Donations:

The CDC values its staff and is continuing to pay staff during this closure. The CDC also values the families that it serves and is waiving tuition for parents while the program is closed, as we know that many families are facing financial challenges during this time. The closure is also a financial hardship

on the Child Development Center, so if you would like to make a donation to the Child Development Center, please mail your donation to Child Development Center, Attention: Misty Phillips, 1112 East Broadway, Columbia, MO 65201.

Enrollment:

CDC is still enrolling! If you have questions about the CDC schedule or are interested in enrolling, please email Misty at ccddirector@fbc-columbia.org.





ForColumbia Update

On Saturday, April 25, our church was supposed to join with more than 50 other churches and over 2,000 Christians around our community to participate in ForColumbia, an annual city-wide day of service. The goal of ForColumbia has always been to share the love of Christ, with no strings attached. While this corporate event is not going to be possible this year due to the COVID-19 restrictions, I want to encourage our First Baptist family to keep the spirit of ForColumbia alive. This Saturday, I am asking that you, either individually or as a family, intentionally look for a way to share Christ's love with someone, with no strings attached. Be creative and be sure to share pictures of what you came up with on our church Facebook page with a description and #ForColumbia2020. You can also email pictures to me at mmcentyre@fbc-columbia.org. Blessings on being the hands and feet of Christ this weekend.



Thank you,

Michael McEntyre
Pastor of Youth, Missions, and Administration



Prayer & Concerns

- ❖ Barry Kausler as he continues to receive treatment for cancer. He has been in the hospital but will hopefully be coming home this week.
 - ❖ Lisa Lang who will have surgery on her foot this week.
 - ❖ For all those who have lost jobs due to COVID-19.
 - ❖ For medical professionals and all front line workers risking their own safety in the service of others.
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- ❖ For parents who are struggling to take care of children and work from home.
 - ❖ For all those who are lonely during this time of physical distancing.

Encourager Church

News From Keith Holmes & Mary VanRheenen

Irritation or Opportunity?

Does this scenario ring a bell? Everyone suddenly confined at home 24/7. Spouse working in the living room. Children "studying" upstairs or at the table. All of you tripping over each other in a space that feels smaller by the day? That's life for my friend Marleen, too. Yes, it disrupts her usual routine. Yes, all that activity in the house gets on her nerves. What does she do? She sees a ministry opportunity. At a time like this, she thinks, all of those parents with younger children at home could really use Davar games.



Marleen, an experienced preschool teacher, launched the development of these games which teach pre-reading, pre-writing, and pre-math skills. I'm part of the DAVAR team, too. Few if any materials are required. Our friend Zoltan has been adding a game to his Bible club in a Romanian Romany village for some time now. The kids love them. Marleen's first ministry idea was to have a contest. Dutch kids, American kids, any kids could video themselves playing a Davar game, posted on a members-only Facebook page, and we could regularly reward winning videos. While we were making a few sample videos, this idea evolved into something broader and potentially more effective. We could make instructional videos of the games, dub them into different languages, and make the Davar Games available on YouTube.

You see, Zoltan (and probably you, too, since you are reading this) come from literate cultures. We take in and process a lot of information that is written. Many people around the world, including Romany, come from primarily oral cultures. They learn best by seeing and hearing, not by reading. These videos will make it easier for them to also add a game or two to a Bible club, a regular community gathering, or an extended period of sheltering at home. We're hoping to have instructional videos from many different types of people—old, young, here, there—so that many different people can identify with the games. Would you and your family be interested in helping? Let us know, and we'll send more details. And please, feel free to pass the idea on to other families who might want to use the games while they are all stuck in the same house together!

Still praying (and sometimes playing),
Mary VanRheenen & Keith Holmes

Thankful for:

- *Safe travel back to the Netherlands, March 23-24; opportunity to shelter in place in our own place!
- *recent dedication of the audio New Testament in Papiamento, now available on www.Bible.Is;
- *ministry opportunities, including potential children's video series in Kalderash Romani;
- *everyone who continues to give—to their churches, to the Offering for Global Missions, to their neighbors and home and around the globe.

Request prayer for:

*creation and use of Davar instructional videos;

*employment opportunities for Romany who usually work abroad as seasonal laborers;

*day-laborers around the globe like Domari-speakers in the Middle East, who cannot work due to the pandemic and who are running out of food (contact us for ways to help)

Contributions to the Offering for Global Missions (OGM) provide for the *presence* of all field personnel, including Keith and Mary (online giving: www.cbf.net/offering-for-global-missions). Contributions to Keith and Mary's programming fund their specific ministry (online: Keith Holmes and Mary VanRheenen programming). Or mail to: Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, P.O. Box 102972, Atlanta, GA 30368-2972, checks clearly marked for either OGM or Holmes/VanRheenen Programming.