



The Connection Newsletter

First Baptist Church

Nickelsville, Virginia

11606 Nickelsville Highway, Nickelsville VA 24271

February 2020

Volume 50 Issue 2

Christians in the Age of Outrage:

How to Bring Out Our Best When the World is At Its Worst

Almost 600 years prior to the birth of Jesus Christ the prophet Ezekiel said, "The word of the Lord came to me: What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel: 'The parents eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?' As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel. For every living soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son - both alike to me. The soul who sins is the one who will die." (Ezek. 18:1-4, NIV).

Now think with me for a moment: The news that permeates our 21st century world seems to be characterized by anger, division, and hostility.



And whether we like it or not the people of the world, ourselves included, seem to be looking for a scapegoat on which we can pin our anger. Someone that's responsible ... someone, that is, beyond ourselves to blame.

As such we say, "I wouldn't act the way I do if it weren't for the way I'm treated by this particular person who knows how to push my buttons. I wouldn't engage in road rage if it weren't for those idiotic drivers who continually cut me off in traffic. I would never engage in heated political discussions on social media if those people would only get a brain." And the list goes on, does it not?

But the truth of the matter is: each of us are responsible for our individual actions. As such we cannot blame others for the way we act or react. Nor can we blame the evil that surrounds us. Did our Father not say, "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. Be on guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues." (Mt. 10:16-17a, NIV).

In other words, in his great foreknowledge Father God knew well the time would arrive when all of the world would be looking at his people to see how we would respond to a world engrossed in outrage. So the question is: how well are we doing? How well do we respond when someone cuts us off in traffic? When someone deliberately belittles us in the public arena? When our motives and ambitions are questioned? When the candidate we publicly supported isn't elected? When someone openly vents

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A "BIG HELLO" To

Lee Long - Carleton, Michigan

Susie Stapleton - Mooresville, NC

From First Baptist Church

UPCOMING ITEMS OF INTEREST AND OPPORTUNITY

- ◆ Deacons Meet- 1st Tuesday every other month unless otherwise noted
- ◆ Baptist Women Meet- 1st Tuesday of each month 6:30 PM
- ◆ GA'S meet- 1st. & 3rd. Tuesday of the month. FLC 3:30-5:00 PM during school months.
- ◆ Feb. 23rd- Baptist Women's Day in both AM Services.
- ◆ Feb. 25th- Dinner Church 4:30-6:30 PM
- ◆ March 24th- Dinner Church 4:30-6:30 PM
- ◆ March 26th - Recycled teens Meet 12 Noon
- ◆ March 29th thru April 2nd- Roanoke Valley Church will be using our FLC for regional book distribution.
- ◆ April 5th- Choir to present Cantata in both AM Services.

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their anger toward our kids or grandkids on the ballcourt? When the referee makes a bad call? When the telemarketers call trying to “save us money on our car insurance” or “offer us an extended warranty agreement” on our car while we’re enjoying dinner with the family? Do we remember his words “... as innocent as doves work for us in moments such as these? Surely Jesus wasn’t talking about moments like these, was he?”

Throughout the months of February and March we’re focusing on these very issues. But we’re also focusing on the voices and influences that shape our daily attitudes and world views. If you’ve been with us in worship you have an idea as to where we are but I also want to share with you where we’re going in this series of message entitled: *Christians in the Age of Outrage: How to Bring Out Our Best When the World is at its Worst*. Here’s where we are: Our first three messages focused on these thoughts:

Message #1– What do We Believe? Understanding How & Why We Forge Our Worldviews.

Message #2 - What is Our Purpose? Embracing Our Identity as Kingdom Ambassadors.

Message #3 - How do We See Others? Developing a Winsome Love for People.

Our last three messages will focus on the following areas:

Message #4 - How do We Respond to Wrongs? Separating Righteous Anger From Worldly Outrage.

Message #5 - How do We Engage the World? Aligning Our Online Life with Gospel Mission.

Message #6 - How do We Engage Our Community? Recognizing the Power of Thinking Locally.

Now let’s get back to our beginning thoughts - there’s no doubt about us living in the age of outrage. It’s true, it seems that a great number of people that we interact with daily wake up and begin their day with their “teeth set on edge.” Yet in such a day our Father continually reminds us that the world is not as it should be. Again, many people in the world are looking for a scapegoat which they can blame for their bad behavior and sin filled lifestyles. But please let me add - let’s make sure we never give them any sand for their spinning wheels or ammunition for their blazing guns.

In the midst of chaos, we must remember that Jesus calls us to join our lives with him and come alongside him where he is working. As such, we must “... follow his lead, repent of our failures, and respond to outrage with radical grace, winsome love, generous compassion, and prayerful hearts that break with the brokenness of the world ...” (Ed Stetzer, *Christians in the Age of Outrage*, 2018 Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., pg. 281).

As Christians we are now God’s adopted children but this hasn’t always been the case. Before we became Jesus followers we were living daily under God’s wrath. As such, the only response from a righteous, perfect, holy God was outrage ... continuous outrage (see Jn. 3:36) against the sin filled lives that we once enjoyed. But in his love for us, God did not leave us there. No, the scripture is quite clear on this - he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to become our scapegoat and in so doing Jesus gladly received the full wrath of Father God that you and I deserved. And in so doing, gladly receives whosoever will as a fully adopted child of his own. Isn’t that a wonderful thought?

Yes, it’s actually a “hallelujah moment” but that’s not the end of Please see “Age of Outrage” on Pg. 3

Our Church Van

Truly God has blessed us with yet another tool for ministry and missions outreach in the form of comfortable and reliable transportation. And it’s getting plenty of use by all groups within our church.

As most of you know the initial cost of our church van was approximately \$44,000 of which we paid \$20,000 out of donations and savings. To date donations totaling an additional \$14,000.00 have been given toward the retirement of our indebtedness. This includes \$6,000.00 that was given toward our elevator project that we redirected toward this project. With this said, the amount needed to pay our van off is \$10,000.00.

May the Lord give each of us his good guidance in what our gift might be to retire our indebtedness. Thanks so much for your support and encouragement.

In addition, Salem Baptist Church which is a sister church in Sparta, Virginia recently donated one of their buses to Wise County Christian School. This testifies of the power of partnerships with other churches and organizations throughout Virginia and beyond. Thanks so much Pastor Kevin James for the generosity of your people in helping this Christian school!

Vacation Bible School 2020



The dates for VBS this year are Sunday, June 21st - Friday, June 26th. Our theme is Concrete Cranes. So let’s make sure we grab a hardhat and tool-belt as we explore a world of

concrete and cranes, rivets and rebar, bulldozers and backhoes. Together we will learn to build our faith on Jesus Christ by uncovering the truth about him.

Our theme verse will be Philippians 1:6 which says, “I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.” (CSB). *Our motto* is: Jesus! Our strong foundation! And *our Christ connection* is: The foundation of the gospel is faith. Jesus lived a perfect life and died the death that we deserve. By grace, God saves everyone who trusts in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Throughout the week teachers will lead students to build their faith on the foundation laid by Christ himself.

Karianne Counts, who is our VBS Director, will share more with our teachers and staff soon.

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the story. In fact, it’s only the beginning. As his children he has given us a new nature and it’s a gospel centered nature, hence the gospel centered worldview. But he’s also appointed us as his representatives (ambassadors) in his redemptive work of reconciliation. But he went beyond this and gave us unimaginable power (the Holy Spirit) that lives within us. What role does he play? He empowers us to speak and live a love life that is pleasing and powerful - to God and others.

But the best is yet to come! The Good News that changed us from outraged spectators to grace-filled participants in God’s redemptive plan is something that God wants to share with every human being on planet earth. And you and I are those instruments through whom God chooses to work.

So instead of retreating to the safety of our homes and church communities let us go out into the age of outrage. Let us leave behind our angry nationalism, our pitiful excuses, our unloving tribalism, our prideful social media posts, and confront the world head-on with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We have the Holy Spirit operating within us, empowering us, and enabling us to live on mission for the glory of God. In a world at its worst, let us live out our calling as Christians to be at our best even in the age of outrage.

Blessings to each of you!

Bro. Steve



Electronic Giving Portal

Supporting God’s work through our church in her mission endeavors is fast and easy for each of us. And one of the ways we can do this is through our electronic giving portal which can be accessed through e-mail or on our Church Facebook page. Or, if you’re viewing this newsletter electronically all you have to do is click on the link below and follow the instructions.

And please know this: Regardless of the way we choose to support the ministry and mission of our church it is greatly appreciated by everyone. Thanks so much for your generosity in advancing the Kingdom! And please, feel good about your generosity - God is very much at work through each of us to touch the lives of many and change their circumstances. Rich blessings to you and yours!



Online Giving Portal.htm

Youth / Adult Summer Mission Trip



(Picture from our 2019 Mission Trip)

The tentative date for our 2020 Summer Mission Trip is Sunday, June 7th - Friday, June 12th so please mark your calendars. As of now, we’re still working on our destination for this venture and additional details will be forthcoming as quickly as possible.

Our 2020 “Great Offering”

Several years ago when we were purchasing neighboring property and buildings for our church God inspired an idea within our church that we called a “Great Offering.” Since its inception this time of sacrificial giving has proven to be a tremendous blessing to everyone in our church, community, and beyond.

What began as little more than an idea has morphed into the financial backbone of our Youth / Adult Missions Programs and touched the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of people on the receiving end of our mission endeavors.

Throughout the years we have traveled across Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, and numerous other places assisting those who were displaced through times of natural disaster.

This year we are again asking you to give beyond your normal gifts and give sacrificially to support the mission endeavors of our church.

Everything you give beyond our weekly budgeted amount will go to support our missions outreach. Thanks so much for your continued and much-needed support!



Worship Opportunities

SUNDAY MORNING

8:45 AM - Early Worship

10:00 AM - Life Groups (all ages)

11:00 AM Morning Worship

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WEDNESDAY EVENING

Choir Practice 6:00 PM

Adult and Children Bible Studies 7:00 PM

Worldwide Missions Unlimited

- Our first Dinner church on January 28th was well attended. We will have this event every month on the 4th Tuesday. We thank everyone for all your support.
- Baptist Women's Day will be on February 23rd in both AM Worship Services.
- GA'S meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. Invite all your friends.
- Baptist Men's Day on January 26th the men had wonderful testimonies and songs.

EASTER EGG HUNT

April 5, During Sunday School we will have an Easter Egg Hunt if it rains we will do it on Easter Sunday which is the 12th. We will have drawings for a boy and girl gifts. Please bring candy for this event by March 29th and leave at the back entrance of the church.



Losses of Loved Ones

- Remember the family of Reeda Kegley, she went home to be with the Lord.
- Remember the family of Johnnie Culbertson, he went home to be with the Lord.
- Remember the family of Buddy Dixon, he went home to be with the Lord.
- Remember the family of Timmy Stallard, he went home to be with the Lord.

"Holy Humor"

