

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA

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Mark Rambo, Senior Pastor  
Caroline Lehman, Visitation Pastor  
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Darrell Born, Choir Director  
Lela DePaolo, Secretary  
Gary Rogers, Caretaker

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Olympia WA  
Permit No. 198

Return Service Requested

## August 2020 Preaching Schedule First Baptist Church

August 2nd:  
Unity in Community through Servanthood  
Romans 15:1-13

August 9th:  
Love Will Keep Us Together  
I Corinthians 13

August 16th:  
Remix  
2 Corinthians 5:11-21

August 23rd:  
The Both/And Tango  
Galatians 2:1-10, 15-21

August 30th:  
Fleshy Fruit  
Galatians 5:16-26

God created you  
to do amazing things!  
-Ephesians 2:10

AUGUST 2020

# WINDOWS

## First Baptist Church Olympia

Inside this  
issue:

Front Page:

PASTOR MARK:  
THE THIN PLACE

MISSION BOARD  
GIVING 2

CLASS OF 2020  
GRADUATES 3

GUIDE FOR  
RESPECTFUL  
CONVERSATION  
& DIFFERENCES 4

CENTER INSERT:  
RESPECTFUL  
COMMUNICATION  
GUIDELINES

MISSION BOARD:  
CHRISTIAN  
CITIZEN ARTICLE  
ON MARTIN  
LUTHER KING 5

SARAH JEAN  
(NASH) MATOS  
DRIVE-THRU  
WEDDING  
SHOWER  
& BIRTHDAYS 6

SPIRITUAL  
FORMATION  
DURING  
A PANDEMIC 7

ABW &  
MODERATOR  
REPORT  
JEAN HEIDAL 8

SANCTUARY  
POP-UP EVENTS 9

## The Thin Place:

### Where the Sacred & Ordinary Collide!

After 24 years, it feels appropriate to retire “Mark’s Meanderings,” and introduce something new. The term *The Thin Place*, comes from Celtic Christian spirituality that refer to those spaces/places where the distance between heaven & earth collapses. In other words, the sacred and the ordinary collide, intersect, and are loosely joined together.

### Welcome to the Thin Place!

August 15<sup>th</sup> will mark the 5-month anniversary of the last time we were together as a community of faith, gathered in Worship. It has been a journey that impacts us individually, as family units, at our jobs and workplaces, as a faith community, differently and uniquely. We have tried to place the well-being of the whole over our personal opinions and feelings about this virus and the risks it carries. We have been *prayerful, patient*, while always focusing on *concern for our neighbor*. Church leadership has done a wonderful and thorough job of keeping the church operational during uncertain and difficult times. The Deacons and church staff have been touching base with folks within the congregation, offering prayer, support and kind words and actions, when called upon. Mostly, however, this time has put the spotlight on you, the congregation. This virus has reminded ALL OF US, that the church is a PEOPLE. Buildings are great! They provide a wonderful base for mission and ministry to happen. But Covid-19 has shown that Olympia First Baptist is about PEOPLE, you and me and all those we care about and love! You have been prayerful, patient and full of encouragement towards me, the staff, the leadership and again, and most importantly, toward each other. Well done, good and faithful servants! You rock! Thank you!

### Stewardship

August is the month when boards and committees, led by the Board of Trustees, begin prayerfully putting together budget considerations and requests for 2021. You need to pray for them, pray for us, as a church community, for wisdom, as we go forward. Stewardship is about “taking care.” For us Jesus followers, it focuses on how we are caring for one another and others with our time, talents and money/wealth; all of which are given and used for the service of God and God’s Reign/kingdom.

Continued on page 2...

The Thin Place cont ...

I want to be honest and transparent with you. We are struggling, financially. Our giving is down significantly compared to the last few years. I think most of us contribute this to the Covid-19 virus. During times of crisis & uncertainty, it is normal to hold back, to make sure there are contingencies in place, financially and other ways. I say this, not to shame, guilt and/or wag a finger, but to acknowledge our current reality. That plain and that simple. Where do we go from there?

We are looking at trends and patterns concerning our giving the last few years. We are doing our best to hold down our expenses. The Trustees under Rex Comstock's leadership in conjunction with Carolyn Adams, our church Treasurer, do a great job of staying on top of the overall financial health of the church as well as monitoring the difficulties we face. Prayers for them and church leadership is needed and appreciated!

What can you do? Pray. No, seriously! Pray! I don't know how you decide what to give to the church financially. I don't know if you see it as a donation to an organization or institution, like giving to your favorite charity. I don't know if you see it as a tithe, a gift to God, where you give a certain percentage of your net income. I don't know if you give every week, or once a month, or once every year. I don't know if you even give, anything. All I can do is ask you to pray. See what God lays on your heart. God gives to us in a variety of ways, big and small. Pray how you can give back to God, just a portion of the blessings you have received in your lifetime. Take the month of August, to pray and then respond in the way(s) God is leading you.

We'll talk more about it when September rolls around!

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This is the day the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Blessings and Joy!

Pastor Mark

(Rev)

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**Thank you for your generous giving for this ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING campaign during the month of July 2020.**

Our total giving is \$764.41

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**Sanctuary Pop-Up Event(s)**



We know many of you are longing to be able to gather in the sanctuary once again. For the month of August, we would like to try something different that falls within the parameters of the Governor's statewide phases and guidelines.

A Pop-Up is a short, temporary space/event that offers the participants an opportunity to experience something familiar yet different; exclusive, but still community oriented.

We want to thank Mike Cooper for forwarding this idea while on vacation, from one of our American Baptist sister churches in Oregon.



We are scheduling 3 Pop Ups on 3 consecutive Saturdays in August, from 10:30—11:00 a.m.

**August 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, & 29<sup>th</sup>**

Limit, 10 people, per "pop up," based upon the Governor's current guidelines.

***Reserve your spot with the church office.***

Enter by the Ramp Door, by the back of the Sanctuary.

You'll be asked three health related questions and a temperature check

Masks and Social Distancing will be in place

30 minutes of Music, Scripture Readings with Prayer/Prayer Stations

If you have any questions, contact Pastor Mark

These are fluid times for all of us. As Rev. Mylinda reminds folks:

"we hold our plans lightly."

We will do so with this as well!



Blessings and Joy!

## Women's Ministry

Jean Heidal

### MANY Thanks

To all who sewed masks for the Wheaton College project. Sarah Jean (Nash) Matos has reported that she and her missionary friends were able to deliver 10,033 masks and will receive the \$10,000 for their mission station in Bolivia, the House of Hope. I am grateful to the several women from our church who helped by sewing masks.

### REGION NEWS

The region women's board elected Gail Aita as our president at a recent board meeting. With the cancellation of Women's Conference this year, the board moved to conduct business in this way. Janice Holcomb will continue as treasurer. Dates for Conference have been set for next year. Save the dates April 29 - May 1 in Yakima at the Howard Johnson Hotel.

### UNCERTAINTY

At this time plans for fall are not available. We will have to wait patiently to see what we can do in September and beyond.

We know that God is faithful and will guide us through this current pandemic.

## Moderator Moments

Jean Heidal

The council had a zoom meeting in July as we have done for the past few months. Pastor Mark had been working with two teams to complete the Guidelines For Respectful Conversation and to review the steps we would have to implement to reopen the church for worship and other gatherings. The teams were successful and both documents were approved by the council. A copy of the Conversation information is being distributed to the congregation.

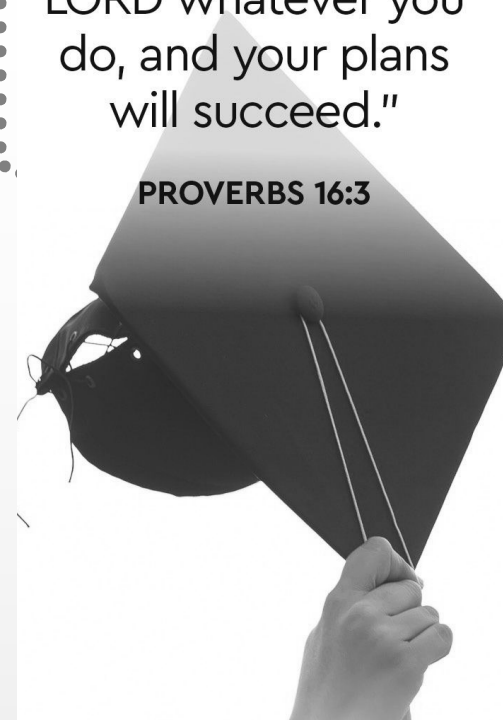
So many things have been happening with regard to maintenance and upkeep of the building and grounds. Hans Stoker is taking the lead to provide better visual/audio to our worship services with new equipment. It's a learning curve for everyone, so please be patient. He and Roy Spaulding are putting in many hours to make this happen. Many volunteers have shown up to weed, trim, move furniture and many other tasks.

Some have expressed concern about the possible damage to the building during the downtown protests. Just so you know, our caretaker, Gary Rogers, comes every morning to check on the building and do cleaning. Even though the building is closed people are still coming on an individual basis so Gary cleans the bathrooms, wipes down door handles and stair railings.

Finances are always a concern for us. Expenses are down because of Covid but giving is down as well. Your faithful support makes our missions and ministries happen. Please give as you are able -- your support is vital. Thank you!

"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."

PROVERBS 16:3



Karen & Frank Wilson's grandson Ron Wilson, son of Frank & Melinda, earned his degree in Masters of Science (applied mathematics) from Univ of Washington. He's now hoping to find work.

From Rex & Julie Comstock Fox Comstock, Son of Brad & Kelly Comstock, grandson of Rex & Julie Comstock. Received his AA Degree from Whatcom Community College, Bellingham

Quinn Comstock, Son of Brad & Kelly Comstock, grandson of Rex & Julie Comstock. Received a Bachelors Degree from Western Washington University, Bellingham, with a major in Political Science/Philosophy/Economics and a minor in Spanish.

Bryce Comstock, Son of Phil & Linnea Comstock, grandson of Rex & Julie Comstock will start Medical School at Mayo Alex School of Medicine in Rochester, Minnesota in July.

From Carolyn Adams My youngest granddaughter, Lindsey Blankenship, just graduated from Olympia High School with honors. She plans to go to Pierce College in the fall and then to Evergreen State University. Lindsey is my daughter's Bobbi's daughter.

From Caroline Lehman Caroline's granddaughter Ashley McBride graduated from Pepperdine University in California with a B.S. in Sports Medicine. She is currently working at DaVita dialysis.

From Sheryl Bowman Emily Saeger, Granddaughter of Sheryl Bowman, daughter of Becky Bridges and Chris Saeger, also the great granddaughter of the late Alma Clark, graduated from Shelton High school. She will be attending SPSCC pursuing nursing.

### Guide for Respectful Conversations & Differences

Every Sunday, at the close of worship, the benediction includes the following:

**Walk Humbly! Love Completely! Live Differently!**

Those are more than words. They are more than words we could put on a bumper sticker.

Those words summarize the call that Jesus places on us, each and every day that we draw breath. They are words that require action and intention on our part! We live in a world and a time where the culture and society around us struggle with humility, love, kindness. If ever there was a time for us to live differently, as Christians, now is such a time. One very practical way is in how we interact with one another in our conversations and discussions, especially when we have differences of opinion and strongly held positions.

With that in mind, Church Leadership has tapped into some of the tools that our new region, Evergreen Association of Baptist, has been using throughout their organizational life together. We have taken some of their components and incorporated it with our own ministry context as well as our understanding of scripture. What you have is a simple, straightforward brochure that will serve as a:

### **Guide for Respectful Conversations and Differences**

This is not policy. This is not a passive-aggressive way to say that there are problems within the congregation. This is our way of saying, let us be mindful about how we talk to one another in board and committee meetings. Let us deal with our differences in a respectful and kind manner. When we come together as a congregation to make decisions, we do so in the spirit of Christ and we do it with humility and love.

We think the world is watching. Let us show the world, show ourselves, that the way of Christ and how we deal with differences and talk to one another is indeed different from what is being modeled in our world today.

Thanks to the Executive Council for their leadership and consensus making in putting this before the congregation. Special thanks to Betty Utter and Hans Stoker for their collaborative work on fine-tuning this guide, with Pastor Mark! Sarah Nance is responsible for the design and format of the brochure. Thanks Sarah!

If you have questions about the guide itself or the process, please contact Pastor Mark Rambo at your earliest convenience.

### Spiritual Formation During a Pandemic

One of the challenges we face as a faith community is staying connected to one another as well as continuing to grow in our faith. Many of our spiritual formation opportunities are done with others. Sunday school classes, small groups, bible study, choir, Table Grace, Women's ministries, etc., are just some of the ways we traditionally have provided avenues for spiritual growth and maturity. All of those normal pathways came to a screeching halt with the arrival of Covid-19. We are fortunate and privileged to have the technology to overcome some of the barriers the pandemic creates. Reality, however, is that not everyone has access to technology. Not everyone is comfortable with computers and the like. So, what can we do? What is one way we can stay connected and grow in our faith as a congregation/community?

### **Welcome to the Olympia First Baptist Book Club!**

Here's how it will work:

Below you will see 3 Book Options to choose from. Choose which one you will read for the month of August. You can order them from Amazon, or see if you can find an audio-file and listen to them. There are lots of options—paperback, Kindle, Audibles, etc.

Here are the options for you to consider:

#### ***Canoeing the Mountains*** by Tod Bolsinger

This is a book that Roger von Gohren was promoting for a small group study before the pandemic. This is a book on church leadership but one that any church member could benefit from. It can give one insight into the challenge leaders and leadership teams face from the "way we've always done it," to new ways of being "church."

#### ***Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*** by Bryan Stevenson

This is a book that's timely as issues around a broken justice system, mass incarcerations and racial injustice are under our societal microscope. Just Mercy is a part of the author's story and experience as a lawyer and advocate for those caught in the web of poverty and injustice. Stevenson is also a Christian. A devoted follower of Christ. His story, this story, is an important one for us to read.

#### ***Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*** by C.S. Lewis

This is a spiritual memoir, in which Lewis recounts his early life and eventual conversion to Christianity. As Lewis recounts his lifelong search for joy, he demonstrates its role in guiding him to find God.

Those are your choices. Pick one, find the book and start reading at your own pace. You have the whole month of August! Our hope is that in September, we will have opportunities to have some small group gatherings to talk about our book choice and share the ways it encouraged us and/or stretched us in regards to our spiritual journey and faith.

If you have any questions or trouble finding a book, audio-file, etc., contact Pastor Mark at:

**markrambo44@gmail.com**