

FIRST FOCUS

CHRIST'S BRIDE COMES HOME

Households today are a complicated mix of success and failure. Divorce rates are lower than the previous generation. Individuals who do marry are waiting longer to get married and to have children. Christian marriages appear to be doing better and are lasting longer than ever. At the same time there are challenges. In Leon County, 40% of households with children are parented by a single parent. Though publicly visible in recent days, domestic violence and abuse continue to plague many households. In the state of Florida, 19,000 children are in some form of foster care; and 808 are available for adoption. Many state and federal courts are granting marriage licenses to same-gendered partners, and the appeals process in the other states will continue. What's a believer at First Baptist Church to think, say, and do?

In Matthew 19-20, Jesus offers a compassionate model for household living as the bride of Christ. When we become believers, we wear a robe when we are baptized signifying our new status as Christ's bride. To borrow the metaphor, we are married to Christ in covenant with him. In so doing, we are then trained by the church to become that bride. Rooted in Genesis 1-2, a Christian household claims that each person is created in the image of God. When they convert to Christ, they receive a new identity—an orientation in Christ. Each household takes on many forms as the bride of Christ. Some are gifted with individuals who have the gift of friendship, virginity, and celibacy. Some households have Christian marriages, where a man and a woman do not “fall in love,” or “find the right one,” but instead are given to love one another. Here a man leaves his father and mother, clings to his wife, and the two become one flesh. By so doing, they become an institution that bears witness to the church and the world of the kind of sacrificial relationship that Christ has for the church. They do not lord their authority over each other but submit to one another under the Lordship of Christ. If we are blessed with children, parents and grandparents show and demonstrate the same kind of sacrificial love to each other and become the primary means for training Christ-followers.

No matter what kind of Christian household, the most important one we are a part of is the church. As the body of Christ and the bride of Christ, we commit to each other through our finances and our workplaces. We live a different kind of lifestyle as parents and grandparents. We care for children and the least of these. We demonstrate hospitality to guests, sinners, saints, and anyone along the way. We show God's love on mission, loving our neighbors as ourselves, even when our neighbors and children live lifestyles outside the boundaries that Christ gave us.

THIS WEEK

FEED THE HOMELESS

This Sunday, October 12, we will be collecting full grocery bags as a part of our ongoing partnership with ECHO. If you missed last Sunday, the grocery list is below, and posted online at fbctlh.org/serve. You may also bring your filled bag to the FBCTLH office any time this week, before the 12th. Please consider how you can help those in need in our community.

- 1 - box cereal
- 3 - soup or Ramen noodles
- 1 - jar peanut butter
- 1 - can tuna
- 1 - can meat
- 4 - cans green vegetables
- 2 - cans fruit
- 1 - box spaghetti
- 1 - box mac & cheese

WOMEN ON MISSION

Women on Mission groups will meet this Tuesday, October 14. All women of the church are invited to attend. For more information, contact a group leader or WOM Coordinator Donna Heald (224.3940).

- **Group 1:** Patsy Faircloth and Gloria Dowden | Time: 9:00AM | Location: ECHO - sorting groceries
- **Group 2:** Glenda Verhine | Time: 9:00AM | Location: 1525 Kuhlacres Drive | Program: Tanya Wilkins from Life Connectors, a ministry mentoring foster children
- **Group 3:** Maurine Wagner | Time: 9:30AM - refreshments, 10:00AM - program | Location: Westminster Oaks Pool House | Program: "Visiting the Holy City"



LAST WEEK TO REGISTER!
Sign up at fbctlh.org/firstlove or in the welcome center by this Sunday!

If you have items you would like to donate for First Love, please see the needs listed at fbctlh.org/serve.

FIRST LOVE
Saturday, October 25

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 8:00AM Median Adult III Bible Study, Parlor
- 9:00AM Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
- 10:00AM Churchwide Bible Study Options
- 11:00AM Wofford Reception, Welcome Center
- 11:15AM Contemporary Worship, Sanctuary
- 12:15PM Wofford Reception, Welcome Center
- 3:00PM GriefShare, Adams 301
- 4:00PM American Sign Language Class, Conference Room
- 6:00PM Youth Life Group, CLC Game Room

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13

- 9:30AM Homebound Visitation, Conference Room
- 6:30PM Newlywed Seminar, Cooke Home

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14

- 6:00PM Childcare for Internationals, Duval 1st Floor
- 6:30PM Internationals English Classes, Chason 2201

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 9:30AM Women's Bible Study, Gardner Home
- 11:00AM Senior Ladies' Bible Study, Large Meeting Room
- 4:45PM Fellowship Meal, Fellowship Hall
- 6:00PM Childcare, Duval 1st Floor
- 6:00PM Children's Music & Missions, Duval 2nd Floor
- 6:00PM Youth Choir, Adams 211
- 6:00PM Adult Bible Study, Sanctuary
- 6:00PM DivorceCare, Adams 315
- 6:00PM Women's Bible Study, Adams 301
- 6:45PM RAs and GAs, Duval 2nd Floor
- 7:00PM Youth Collide, CLC 2nd Floor
- 7:00PM Christmas Choir Rehearsal, Chason 2201
- 7:00PM Chamber Players Rehearsal, Adams 200
- 7:15PM Praise Team Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 7:15PM Young Adults Veritas, Adams 317

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16

- 9:00AM Childcare for Internationals, Duval 1st Floor
- 9:30AM Internationals English Classes, Chason 2201
- 5:30PM First Brass Rehearsal, Adams 200
- 5:30PM First Love Committee, Conference Room

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17

- 5:30PM YA2 Shelter Meal, Fellowship Hall Kitchen

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18

- 9:00AM CLC Gym - open until 1:00PM

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Beginning October 12-November 16, I'll be preaching a series of messages on these timely issues. The theme is "Christ's Bride Comes Home: Life in a Christian Household." This Sunday, we'll start with the easy one: wealth, then continue with sexual intimacy and promiscuity, mission, work, parents, and guests.

On October 19, we'll have a family conversation about sexual intimacy and promiscuity from Matthew 19:1-20. Because of the nature of the topic, we'll have a special worship service at 9:00 and 11:15 for children grades 1-5. At 9:00, children will go to the Children's area in Duval. After SMBS, children grades 1-5 will go to the Quad. Parents are encouraged to pick them up following the 11:15 service. Regular extended session, preschool choirs, and mission friends will also be offered. I will also offer an informal Question-and-Answer dialogue in the sanctuary following the 11:15 service only for anyone who would like to address specific questions about these important issues.

These topics are always personal, biblical, and pastoral. Because we are sinners, we are broken people. Each one of us stands equally at the cross dependent on God's forgiveness and redemption. None of us pretend to be experts, just witnesses. No one is perfect, and no person has been given the privilege to be God other than Jesus Christ. We trust him to take us as we are and form us into the person he wants us to be. Most families I talk with today have at least one family member who has struggled with at least one of the issues of anger, lust, divorce, adultery, or homosexual practices. Through my experience as a pastor, the Bible speaks to all of these issues, just not usually in a way that leaves any of us comfortable. In fact, most of us would prefer to leave these topics at the kitchen table rather than address them around the communion table. However, that's not the world we live in any more.

We're not the first church to do this kind of thing. In Acts 15, the Jerusalem church wrestled with similar issues around the subject of porneia (promiscuity) and found a way to work together under God's grace, obedience, and redemption. At First Baptist, we will continue to do the same. But occasionally, we do need to talk about these topics about as often as the Bible speaks to them. The church is a safe place to have honest conversations with scripture and each other that we can take back to the kitchen table and share with our friends. I hope we can leave more informed, compassionate, and committed people to the cause of Christ and to the relationships that we have been given. My prayer is that our church will be a place where we people can come "just as I am," and by God's grace grow and be disciplined into the kind of mature followers that Christ calls us to be. To that end, it requires information as well as conversation. Join me these next few weeks in prayer as we study together. Households today are looking for the kind of hope, grace, and love that the church offers to broken people. Let's share that hope together.





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SERVICE RECORDINGS

fbctlh.org/sermons

Our Traditional Worship service is broadcast on Comcast Channel 21 at 11:00AM each Sunday.

Contact x215 or lee@fbctlh.org with questions.

If you are homebound and would like to be on our mailing list to receive a free DVD of our worship services each week, please contact x201 or lenoir@fbctlh.org. All other requests are \$5, and can be made at the front desk or online at fbctlh.org/contact.

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

October 15 - Breakfast for dinner: grits, scrambled eggs, bacon or sausage, pancakes, spiced apples, biscuit, and dessert
**for kids: pizza or hot dog with chips*

FINANCIALS

YTD budget: \$2,073,748
Receipts 10/05: \$55,679
YTD receipts: \$1,985,076
Winter Missions Offering: \$5,886

DEACON SCHEDULE

Deacon of the Day – Tom Fernald

Deacons of the Week

- 9AM Tim Barry
- 10AM Jim Cooke
- 11AM Seth Ablordeppey

SECURITY SCHEDULE

Sunday, October 12

- 8AM Lorne Shackelford
- 10AM Jim Croushorn
- 11AM Erik Eikeland

Wednesday, October 15

- 6PM Charles Maynard

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP	9:00AM
BIBLE STUDY	10:00AM
CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP	11:15AM

WHAT YOU
CAN LIVE
WITHOUT

Matthew 19:16-30