

FIRST FOCUS

“LORD I BELIEVE; HELP MY UNBELIEF”

The Gospel of Mark tells the story of a father whose son was demon-possessed. While the inner circle of disciples was watching Jesus' transfiguration, the other disciples were in the valley dealing with a routine request for a healing. The father had tried to take the child to Jesus' disciples. Jesus trained them to handle problems like this. (Even some people who didn't follow Jesus could get rid of demons.) But Jesus' disciples failed. They couldn't exorcise the demon; and in response, the disciples and the other religious leaders became argumentative. Instead of taking their concerns to Jesus, they took their frustrations out on each other. In the midst of their gridlock, the father turned to God. Standing in front of him was God himself—Jesus. Exasperated with his own followers and the paralysis of the people, Jesus told the father to bring the convulsing boy to him. After a thorough examination of the boy's condition, Jesus declared to the father, “Anything is possible for him who believes.” The father replied, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief.”

I think the experience of the father is a parable for the world around us here in Tallahassee. Torn apart by the effects of sin, our lives wither, writhe, and foam from the captivity of the evil one. Certainly not all disease is the result of moral failure; but this exorcism reflects a spiritual battle that many people are undergoing. Unfortunately, religious types and Christians are often paralyzed by our own failures and arguments. Like normal disciples, our attention is easily diverted from the ones who need us most.

Jesus shows his disciples how to trust him when circumstances are beyond their control or expertise. The God who called Israelites out of Egypt and a church out of Pentecost continues to call us to trust him with the fathers and sons in front of us. As Archbishop William Temple is often quoted as saying, “The church is the only society that exists for the benefit of those who are not in its membership.” In one brief moment, the disciples learned how to be this kind of church when their options were exhausted and their Lord was exasperated. Jesus taught disciples to turn away from argumentativeness and turn to those who needed them the most. He showed them how to reach out to those like this father and son and trust Jesus with their inabilities to heal him. When unable to provide the cure, Jesus said that we can turn our fears, failures, and children over to him and trust him for the outcome. To break through the grip of death, we need the faith of the father. He says, “Lord I believe; help my unbelief.”

For 10 weeks, we are going to be brave enough to admit we have some unbeliefs. That despite everything we've tried to accomplish, we still have areas of our Christian lives that need practice and are beyond our control. We have some doubts about some of the core beliefs of the Christian life. By trusting Jesus with what we don't know, he begins to show us the who and how of faith. Who do we trust in? Jesus. How do we believe in him? By giving our hearts to him and modeling this life for others. We become the church. We learn as the disciples did that the kind of issues we are facing can only come out by prayer. For the first time, the disciples saw someone who had the courage to pray not just with Jesus—but to Jesus. The Father prayed to God, “Lord I believe, help my unbelief.” So will you join me in prayer?



THIS WEEK

WEEK OF PRAYER/2015 MAGUIRE STATE MISSION OFFERING

September 6 - 12 is the Week of Prayer for Florida Missions, and an opportunity to contribute to mission work in Florida. Offering envelopes will be available in the Connect Center. On September 8, all ladies of the church are invited to join WOM groups in the church parlor at 9:30 am for a time of fellowship, followed by a program in the chapel at 10 am.

WOMEN'S WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Begins THIS WEDNESDAY – Believing God: A Fresh Exploration of Faith, by Beth Moore. Do you just believe IN God or do you believe God? This 10-week study, based on Isaiah 43:10, explores what it means to believe God. Looking at the lives of Abraham, Moses, and others from Hebrews 11 as examples of persons who believed God, Beth encourages women to deepen their own trust in God and receive a fresh word from Him. The study takes place on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. and is led by Patsy Faircloth at the home of Betty Gardner. All women of all ages are welcome! Participant books are \$15.00. Registration will take place at the first session. Contact Patsy Faircloth at ptfaircloth1946@comcast.net.

COLLEGE STUDENTS

Join us for some community building events over the next several Fridays. Get to know some new friends in the College Ministry & make some fun memories!

Our Friday Parks & Recreation series:

8/28: Madison Blue Springs State Park (bring your bathing suit, towel, clothes & money for dinner...we'll leave from the FSU BCM at 4pm)

9/4: Wakulla Springs State Park (bring your bathing suit, towel, clothes & money for dinner...we'll leave from the FSU BCM at 4pm)

9/11: Aggressive Dinner (bring your appetite & knowledge of random trivia in this battle of guys versus girls...meet at the FSU BCM at 7pm)

9/18: FSU vs Boston College watch party (join us at the Ragans' house to eat wings & watch the Seminoles put a hurting on the Eagles)

9/25: Sportsfest at Tom Brown Park (a conglomeration of games will be played & then we'll head to dinner afterwards)

We hope you will join us for these exciting events! For more information, contact Zach Allen (zach@fbctlh.org).

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

8:00AM Median Adult III Bible Study, Parlor

9:00AM Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

10:00AM Churchwide Bible Study Options

11:15AM Contemporary Worship, Sanctuary

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Labor Day - Church Office CLOSED

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

9:30AM Homebound Visitation, Connect Center

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

11:00AM Senior Ladies' Bible Study, Large Meeting Room

4:45PM Fellowship Meal, Fellowship Hall

6:00PM Childcare, Duval 1st Floor

6:00PM Preschool Class, Duval 1st Floor

6:00PM Elementary Music & Missions, Duval 2nd Floor

6:00PM Youth Collide, CLC 2nd Floor

6:00PM Adult Bible Study, Sanctuary

6:00PM Moms Connect, Adams Basement

6:00PM Women's Bible Study, Adams 301

7:00PM Youth Praise Team, Adams 211

7:00PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Chason 2201

7:00PM Chamber Players Rehearsal, Adams 200

7:15PM Praise Team Rehearsal, Sanctuary

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

COMING SOON

COLLEGE STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS

As contemporary cultural norms continue to drift further from traditional biblical standards, today's Christians must be able to apply robust theology to the unique challenges of our culture. On the first Wednesday of each month, college students and young adults are invited to gather for a time of dinner and discussion as we explore the intersection of theology and culture. We will begin this series by looking at the perceived conflict between science and religion. Can you hold the Bible as God's written revelation while still accepting the results of modern scientific inquiry? Bring your questions and be ready for a great discussion...and the chance to win some free stuff, too. Dinner is served at 7:30 in the fellowship hall, and the discussion begins at 8:00. For more info and upcoming topics, go to fbctlh.org/events/theology-culture-science.

GRIEFSHARE

Help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member, or friend. This is a thirteen week series that incorporates the use of a facilitator, video, discussion and a workbook. Join us starting Sunday, September 13 from 3:00-4:30PM for our Fall series. Contact Lindsey (lindsey@fbctlh.org) for more information.

DIVORCECARE

Help spread the word! Someone you know may be hurting...make sure they know about DivorceCare, a weekly seminar and support group for people who are separated or divorced. It incorporates the use of a facilitator, videos, discussion, and a workbook. Anyone may join the group at any time during the 12 weeks. The next series at FBCTLH begins this Wednesday, September 16, in Adams 315 from 6:00-7:30PM. Contact Lindsey (lindsey@fbctlh.org) for more information.

OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN CHOIR

Our Sanctuary Choir is open to all adults, college-age through senior adults, and meets on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 pm in C-2201. This active choir performs a wide variety of challenging and inspiring music and leads our congregation in worship most every Sunday at the 9:00 traditional service. We are gearing up to kick off the fall with special music on August 23 to welcome our college students back, and on September 13 to launch the Think, Act, Be series. Then on Wednesday, September 16, we will introduce and sing through our Christmas Musical program (to be presented December 13). We invite you to join the Sanctuary Choir just for Christmas, or for all year round. For more information, contact Penny (penny@fbctlh.org) or Lenoir (lbrewer@fbctlh.org).

If you are retired or semi-retired, First Joy Choir may be the right fit for you. We meet on Monday mornings, 10:30-12:00 in C-2201, and spend our time enjoying snacks, planning activities, having a time of prayer and devotion, and of course, singing our hearts out! We are primarily an outreach choir, enjoying monthly "sing-outs" in various locations around the Big Bend, including Assisted Living and Retirement Facilities. We are planning to be a performing choir at The Celebrating Grace National *Inspire!* Choral Festival in Jacksonville next April 14-16. We need to take 50 singers, so now is a good time to get involved and learn the music with us!

BECOME A FOSTER PARENT

Is God calling you to be a foster parent to one of the hundreds of children in need of foster homes in Florida? Are you ready to show God's love to these children? Florida Baptist Children's Homes has an opportunity for you! Start by joining us for an orientation. For more information contact Jennifer at Jennifer.Register@FBCHomes.org or call (850)878-1458

SERVE

FLORIDA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

For the month of September, we will join the Children's Home in providing boxed tissues, hand sanitizer, and toilet paper. Collection bins are in the College Avenue foyer, the welcome center, by the elevator on the first floor of the Adams building, and in the main office.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TALLAHASSEE

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PERIODICALS
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THE VISION NEWSLETTER

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For submissions, address corrections, or to unsubscribe, contact x132 or hello@fbctlh.org.

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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

September 9 - country fried steak, mashed potatoes, gravy, field peas, biscuit, salad bar, dessert

FINANCIALS

YTD budget: \$ 1,921,972
Budget Receipts On 8/30/15: \$ 30,759
YTD receipts: \$ 1,655,808
Winter Mission Offering: \$355

DEACON SCHEDULE

Deacon of the Day – Wayne Tedder

Deacons of the Week

- 9AM Rigsby Jones
- 10AM Ryan Stokes
- 11AM Daryle Gray

SECURITY SCHEDULE

Sunday, September 6

- 8AM Lorne Shackelford
- 10AM Jeff Crew
- 11AM Keith Burnsed

Wednesday, September 9

- 6PM Wayne Connor

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

9:00AM

BIBLE STUDY

10:00AM

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

11:15AM

THE JESUS REVOLUTION

Romans 12:1-4