

June 2019

## Why Should We Pray? *By Pastor Jon Pickens*

*5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

**-Matthew 6:5-8 (ESV)**

Recently, I challenged our congregation to 42 days of prayer using a guide I put together. My main motivation for issuing this challenge comes from a desire to see our church exercise a deep dependence upon God and foster a more intimate relationship with Christ. Prayer is a way we express our belief that He is really God and we desperately need Him. It is an expression of faith and dependence. Yet sometimes the act of prayer can be a self-serving expression of piety. "Hey, look at me! I'm praying! Aren't I so spiritual?" This is about the total opposite semblance of dependence. A self-serving expression of piety communicates to those around you that you have it all together. Self-serving prayer focuses on the shortcomings of others without any thought to our own deeply flawed self. Self-serving prayer tends to be judgmental and full of pride. "Lord, thank you that I am not like this tax collector or sinner." No! Genuine prayer is motivated by the exact antithesis of something self-serving. So Jesus says, go into your closet. Jesus was teaching His disciples that prayer was a deeply intimate connection with the Father, which He will reward. If our "acts of righteousness" are motivated by a desire to be seen by men in such a way that he or she is glorified, rather than God, then it is not prayer. At that point, you are not trying to communicate with God, you are simply leveraging prayer to communicate to others how special you are! Prayer is designed to express dependence... meaning that we do not have it all together, we fall short of God's glory, and that apart from Him we have nothing to offer. ***Prayer is an expression of our faith in Christ and our deep dependence upon Him to align our thoughts and actions with His.*** The prayer guide was put together with this in mind. I don't know of a better example of this definition than the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6.

**"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name"** - We express to God by faith that He is set apart from all creation. His Name is hallowed. He is our Father! We believe that God has adopted us into His family and we are forever His.

**"Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."** - We express to God our desire to see His sovereign will in heaven to be the same on earth. We want to see heaven brought down to earth. It is an expression of our desire to align our own actions in a way that advances the will of God on earth.

*Continued from the front page*

**“Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”** - We express to God our need for Him to provide for our physical and spiritual needs. It is an expression of contentment with what God has provided for us. It is an expression of our need for God’s mercy and grace.

**“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”** - We express to God our need for His protection and deliverance from evil. We live in a world saturated with evil desires. Any desire that stands against the glory of God is evil. It is impossible not to step in a pile of evil dung as you walk through this life, so we express to God our need for Him to lead us away from these piles of smelly nastiness, yet when we do step in it, we need His deliverance.

Bottom line... WE ARE DESPERATELY DEPENDENT UPON GOD! This is why I challenged our body to 42 days of prayer. As I write this article we are in week two of this six week challenge. My suspicion is that many of you have already missed a few days and are tempted to raise your hands in defeat. That is exactly how the enemy works. My encouragement to you, is to jump back in the challenge and pray! If you miss a day or two, don’t let that rob you of the opportunity to connect with God and develop this very important discipline in your life. Put away your pride, laziness, and self-defeatism and call upon the Name of the Lord. Apart from Him we can do nothing!

## **Possible Income Tax Savings with a Qualified Charitable Deduction**

You may be able to lower your income taxes using a Qualified Charitable Deduction to FBC Lowell from your IRA

As a matter of good stewardship, it is important to take advantage of tax savings opportunities allowed by the IRS under current tax rules. For those age 70 ½ and older taking distributions from a traditional IRA, donations may be made directly from the IRA for a possible tax savings. Money given from an IRA to a qualified non-profit organization, like FBC Lowell, can be considered part of the required minimum distribution (RMD) but is not included in taxable income. This is called a Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) and could provide the following advantages:

- The donated tax-free portion of the distribution is not included in the adjusted gross (AGI) for tax reporting purposes.
- This avoids the need to itemize deductions to receive a tax advantage for gifts given as a Qualified Charitable Deduction.
- This may provide a benefit for state taxes as well.

There are a few requirements to take advantage of this IRS tax benefit, such as the age requirement, and the need to have the donation check written by the institution holding the IRA directly to FBC Lowell. If you would like to know more about this, please contact the FBC Lowell financial office or someone on the staff.

## [ Dis · ci · ple ]

*“Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children”*

— Ephesians 5:1

We pray for things that we prioritize. What matters to us is what we bring to God. So we learn about Paul’s greatest priorities by reading his prayers. One such prayer is written for the church in Thessalonica: “May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you...” (1 Thess. 3:12).

This is a remarkable prayer because of what was already going on in the church. After starting the church in Thessalonica, Paul had to leave the city sooner than he would have liked. He was concerned for them and longed to see them. At the same time, this church was suffering persecution because of their commitment to Jesus. So Paul sent Timothy to visit the church, and Timothy reported back to Paul the “good news of [their] faith and love.” It is clear that, despite persecution, they remained committed to following Jesus and loving one another. This church was a powerful example of a Spirit-filled community defined by faith and love. So wasn’t that good enough for Paul? Why does he pray that God would make their love increase and abound for one another?



We can always show greater love. It always has room to grow. Love can only exist in the context of relationships, which take time and intentionality to create and develop. The primary way we foster relationships at FBC is through Life Groups. Based on Paul’s prayer, it is always appropriate for us to evaluate the extent of our love for one another by evaluating the strength of our relationships.

Tim Chester and Steve Timmis provide some helpful reflection questions to gauge how well we are intentionally fostering relationships. The following is adapted from their book, *Everyday Church* (pg. 107).

- How often do you have conversations with people in your Life Group outside of regular meetings?
- How often are people from your Life Group in your home or you in theirs?
- How often do people in your Life Group talk about how the Holy Spirit has been speaking to them through God’s Word?
- Are the prayers of your Life Group gospel centered? Do you pray regularly for: one another’s godliness, gospel opportunities, boldness to speak of Christ, the conversion of the lost, the spread of the gospel around the world?

I encourage you to reflect on these questions and ask God to reveal how you can create stronger connections within your Life Group. My prayer for FBC is the same as Paul’s for Thessalonica: May the Lord make us increase and abound in love for one another.

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



This month at the Faith@Home Center - the Family Take Away is designed to help you stay intentional with your family this summer, while having fun. The Family Take Away this summer is a "BINGO" board. The board is designed to help your family spend time in God's word, memorize scripture and spend time together as a family. At the end of the summer, bring your completed board into Children's Ministry for a special surprise!

Additional resources are also available at the Faith@Home Center that you can use to further help your family deepen their relationship with Christ. The books are for you to borrow and return, so that other families can enjoy them. All the pamphlets are available for you to take home and keep or share with others.

## **Summer Programing for Elementary Kids**



This summer, starting June 9, our elementary aged children will worship with their families during morning worship. During the Life Group hour elementary children will be learning about the Armor of God. We will have two seperate classes for the kids. Kids will find out which class they will be in, on Sunday June 9.

# FBC Youth

Ignited by Change - Fueled by Faith - Led by Passion

Hello church family,

The 2018-19 school year is quickly coming to a close. It has been a year of significant transition for our student ministry. It has been a transition as I discern how I can best lead and equip the adult leaders to disciple our students. It has also been a transition for our leaders, who have had to take on greater responsibilities. And all of this means that youth group has changed for our students as well. Despite these changes, and the challenges that come along with them, I am excited about the future direction of our student ministry.

We will take a break from our normal programming for the summer. Alayna Sullivan and Lauren Swain have been working hard to plan an exciting Summer Kick-Off Celebration for the first Monday evening of our summer schedule. This summer we will also have a couple nights when students can hang out at the homes of families in our church. The full schedule is given below. We plan to focus this summer on having fun together and building relationships among the students.

- Pastor Andrew

## *FBC Youth Summer Schedule*

June 3	Summer Kick-Off (6:30-8:30)
June 10	No Youth Group (VBS)
June 17	Youth Group at FBC
June 24	Small Group Night*
July 1	Youth Group at FBC
July 8	No Youth Group (4th of July Weekend)
July 15	Small Group Night*
July 22	Serve for "Love Week"
July 29	Youth Group at FBC
*MS/HS Boys/Girls respectively will meet at families' homes. Locations TBA	





## **MISSIONARY CORNER**

In Memory of Dr. John Edward Vanden Akker

Dr. John Edward Vanden Akker went to be with the Lord on Thursday, May 23. He was 86 years old.

John was born on June 19, 1932 in the Heeg, Netherlands, the son of Joe and Ida (Visser) Vanden Akker and emigrated to Grand Rapids, Michigan with the family in 1949. He was a 1952 graduate of Union High School in Grand Rapids and graduated from Grand Rapids Baptist Theological Seminary in the spring of 1960. He married the love of his life Marilyn R. Mol on September 7, 1956 in Grand Rapids. John spent over 40 years in Liberia, West Africa as a missionary devoted to teaching students for the pastorate and developing leaders. His work continued here in the U.S. in Easley, South Carolina for 16 years as he led Rogma International (now Christian Discipleship International), which serves more than 50 countries in Easley, South Carolina. John was also instrumental in developing the curriculum and writing courses for Jake Memorial College, based in Monrovia, Liberia, from his Roanoke home. His favorite life-guiding Bible verse has been Colossians 1:18c "...that in all things, Christ might have the preeminence."

Please keep Marilyn and the family in your prayers!

It would be nice to send Marilyn a note to let her know that you are praying over her and her family below is her information:

**Marilyn Vanden Akker**  
**965 Kilsoquah Ct.,**  
**Roanoke, IN 46783**

**marilynvand101@aol.com**



## Building and Grounds

Hello from Building and Grounds!

It has been a crazy start to the warm weather season this year. It seems as if every other day offers us some liquid sunshine that keeps the grass and plants standing tall and looking vibrant. Between all of those moments of rain I've been blessed to have many volunteers show up to help maintain the parking islands and the flower beds around the church property. The help is much appreciated and our volunteers are wonderfully meticulous in making the areas look great. Thank you so much!

As summer comes into full view and everyone becomes active, your help keeping the facilities looking clean and ready for ministry is an important part in things running smooth here at FBC. Please pick up any trash or wrappers, turn off lights when rooms are not in use, and report anything that is broken or not functioning as it should. I'll do my best to see that it gets taken care of!

If you plan on using church facilities please don't forget to fill out the facilities use request form and give us time to process it. It allows us to ensure your areas are prepped and ready for your use!

Enjoy the flowers blooming everywhere and that smell of fresh cut grass. I do believe the snow is gone for a bit!

Sincerely,

Russ Race – Building and Grounds.



### May Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:14-16

“14 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.  
15 See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; 16 that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal.” (ESV)

## June Reading Plan

<b>Week 1</b> <i>Starting on June 3</i>	<b>Week 2</b> <i>Starting on June 10</i>	<b>Week 3</b> <i>Starting on June 17</i>	<b>Week 4</b> <i>Starting on June 25</i>
Day 1: Heb. 12:14-15	Day 1: Heb. 12:16-17	Day 1: Heb. 12:18-25	Day 1: Heb. 12:26-29
Day 2: Rom. 12:9-21	Day 2: Gen. 25:19-34	Day 2: Ex. 19:1-25	Day 2: Hag. 2:1-9
Day 3: Lev. 19:1-37	Day 3: Rom. 1:18-32	Day 3: Ex. 20:1-21	Day 3: Luke 19:11-27
Day 4: 1 Peter 1:13-2:3	Day 4: 1 Thess. 4:1-8	Day 4: Psalm 68	Day 4: 2 Pet. 3:1-14
Day 5: Deut. 29:10-29	Day 5: Eph. 5:1-21	Day 5: Rev. 21:1-22:5	Day 5: Deut. 4:1-24

## Birthdays and Anniversaries June 2019

Birthdays		Birthdays		Anniversaries	
Alonzo Bruinekool	6/01	Kathy Stiver	6/17	Drew & Julianne Dusendang	6/02
Teresa Buckingham	6/03	Jennifer Ziegler	6/17	Phil & Becky VanLaan	6/03
Cade VanLaan	6/03	Amelia Berrington	6/18	Dave & Michelle Bosscher	6/12
Mark Schmaltz	6/04	Cindy Wyant	6/18	Stephen & Samanthe Mills	6/13
Mary Riegling	6/05	Hannah Onan	6/22	Sam & Betty Morlock	6/14
Judy Rosenberger	6/05	Pat Raimer	6/22	Steve & Kaily VanLaan	6/14
Jackson Haner	6/06	Roger Moore	6/24	Curtis & Rachel Benjamin	6/17
Jared McQueen	6/06	Randy Fleenor	6/25	Trieu & Wendy Pham	6/17
Kelsi Smith	6/06	Heather Sullivan	6/25	Pastor Lee & Bev Taylor	6/17
Geoffrey Fleenor	6/07	Ian Berrington	6/26	*Brian & Sherri Jenks	6/18
Ellen Kammeraad	6/07	Levi Blanchard	6/28	Davidpaul & Sheila Lemmen	6/19
Phil Gerard	6/08	Doug Corlis	6/28	Brian & Lynn Mitchell	6/22
Dianne Kennedy	6/08	Evie Crain	6/29	Ray & Melody Kastanek	6/25
Trieu Pham	6/10	*Noah Farmer (M.K.)	6/29	Jim & Dorothy Rhoades	6/25
*Paula Dannenberg	6/11	Davidpaul Lemmen	6/29	*Mike & Monica Pasquale	6/27
Henry Gerard	6/12	Payton Mills	6/30	Dick & Eileen Beach	6/28
Anthony Haner	6/13	Bonnie Sinning	6/30	*Eric & Shirley Hossack	6/30
JR Cramer	6/15	Sandy Smiley	6/30		
Zachary Ritchie	6/16				
Darlene Good	6/17				
				* Missionary	



# FBC Calendar: June

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1						
						7:00am: Basketball
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:30am: Morning Service  Jared McQueen Open House-Gym 2:00pm-5:00pm  Seniors Banquet Upper Room 6:30pm - 8:00pm	6:15pm: Youth Group (Grade 6-12)	7:00am: Basketball  6pm: Tae Kwon Do	4:00pm Missions Team meeting - Cafe	7:00am: Basketball  5:30 pm Family Matters Team  7:00pm Children's Ministry Team		7:00am: Basketball  Callie Ingram Open House - Gym 11:00am - 2:00pm
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9:30am: Morning Service  6:00pm - 8:30pm Vacation Bible School	6:00pm - 8:30pm Vacation Bible School	7:00am: Basketball  6:00pm - 8:30pm Vacation Bible School	6:00pm - 8:30pm Vacation Bible School	7:00am: Basketball  6:00pm - 8:30pm Vacation Bible School		7:00am: Basketball
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9:30am: Morning Service	6:15pm: Youth Group (Grade 6-12)	7:00am: Basketball  6pm: Tae Kwon Do  .		7:00am: Basketball  Baby Shower for Tori Runstrom Cafe 6:30pm - 8:00pm		7:00am: Basketball
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9:30am: Morning Service  <hr/> <b>30</b> 9:30am: Morning Service	6:15pm: Youth Group (Grade 6-12)	7:00am: Basketball  6pm: Tae Kwon Do  6:30pm: Elder Bd Mtg.		7:00am: Basketball  6:30pm - 9:00pm Coffee Break - Cafe		7:00am: Basketball