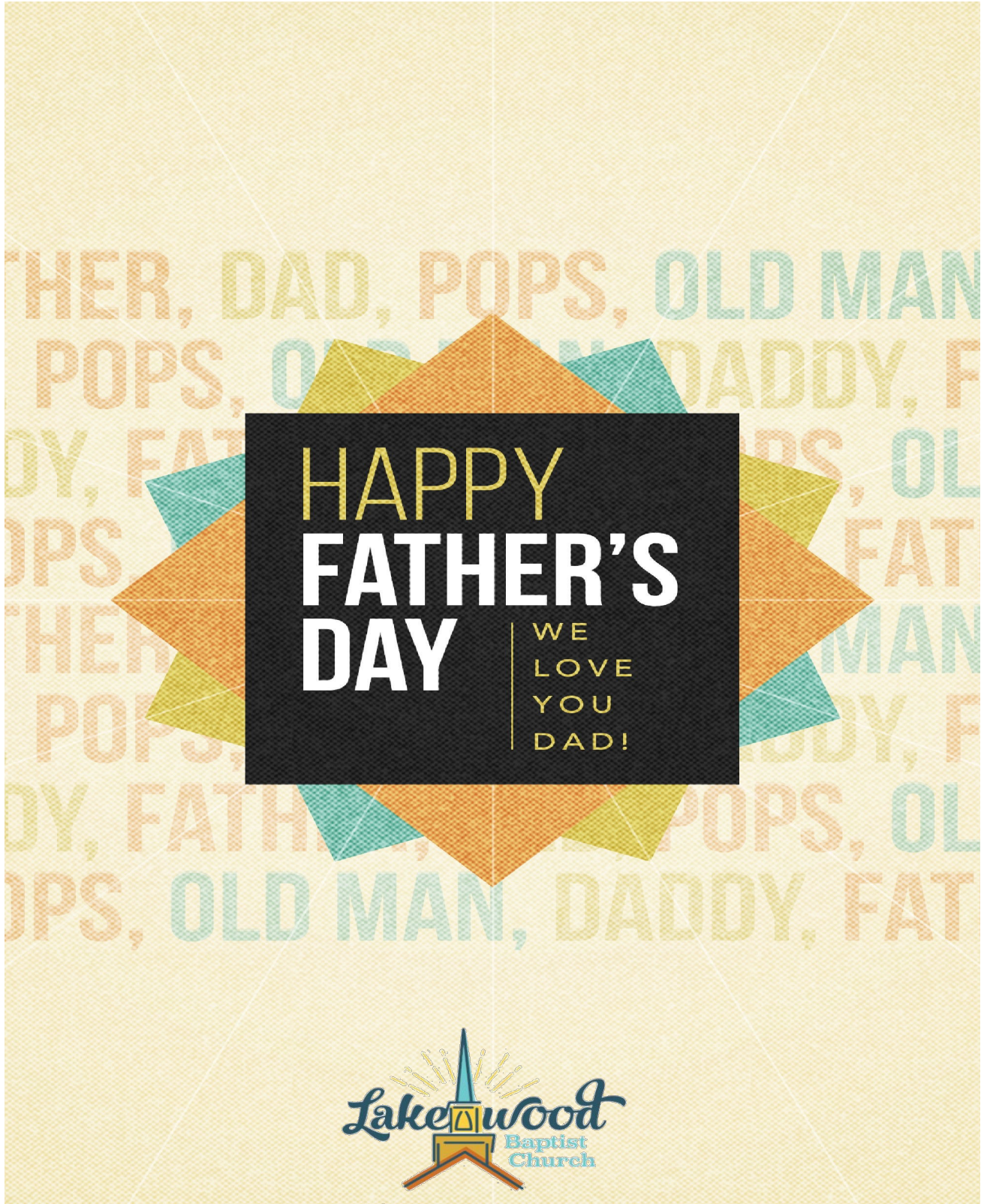


Connections

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

June 2020

VOL X: ISSUE 6 LBCPC.ORG



Welcome Home.



A Message from M.R. Hamilton

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SENIOR PASTOR

As I start to write this note the month of May is coming to an end and the church has just returned to having services. The CDC has just reopened for summer school and the reality that all of our plans were based on wishful thinking concerning the length and effect of the COVID 19 crisis. We felt confident that closing for 10 weeks would certainly bring us past the effect of the virus but yet little has changed. Perhaps the only thing not changing is the continued need to be aware of and to defend against the virus. Please pray that God will speak out against the virus as He did the waters of the sea when He said you shall stop where you are and go no further. I love where God questions Job and ask him where he was when God told the ocean it had to stop and could go no further. I think of this reality every time I visit the ocean and watch it raging against the reality that it can go no further than God has said it could go. Perhaps I like it so much because it reminds me of my own limitations and I too rage against those limits always wanting to be more or different than God intended me to be. In these past few weeks I have been raging like the sea against the limits and restrictions brought upon me by the reality of COVID 19. God is not surprised by anything happening today. He had planned for us to go through this day for a very good reason and I pray we will all understand and experience those good things and praise God for them. God is GOOD and He is up to something good even if I can't see it or understand it from my present perspective. I have to know, and I have to understand, and I have to believe that God is good before I will ever dare to imagine anything good coming from these days. But once I dare to believe this truth then and there I can allow myself to begin to look for the good in it all. Those who look will find and only those who believe it actually exists will begin to start looking. So perhaps this day is a day of reminding ourselves of that which we really know to be true and that truth is that God is Good all the time. If God ever stopped loving He would in fact stop being God, for God is love. And love is good and it always protects and it never fails. So in the midst of all the conflicting messages there is one truth that will never change and that is the fact that God is Good and that His love for you is real. He will never leave us nor forsake us for He is an ever present help in times of trouble. God is doing a really good thing right now and I can't wait to look back on these days to see all the great things God has brought about through it all.

Katie and I are supposed to be leaving for Alaska as you read this note to see Jes and Elizabeth but those plans are on hold as travel to Alaska is restricted. Why God has said to us that we may go this far but no further I don't yet understand. I must admit that my emotions and my heart are raging against it while my mind keeps telling me that God has a good reason for changing my plans. I pray my heart will follow my mind soon and start thanking God for keeping us safe from the enemies' plans by keeping us here. You see a Biblical world view is always better than anything our imagination might dream up. So how about you? How are you getting along with the limitations and frustrations of our present day? Don't be like the sea foaming and raging at the limitations God has placed on us because after all it has to be for our good or God wouldn't allow it. He really is Good all the time!

YOU'RE INVITED

RESPOND LADIES FALL RETREAT

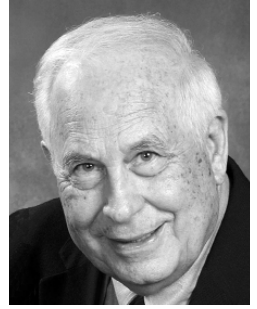
WHEN: 8/28/2020 WHERE: SNOWBIRD WILDERNESS OUTFITTERS

PRICE \$145

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT LESLEY STEPHENS

309-404-3650

A Message from Dr. Jerry Horner



.....
MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP & OUTREACH

All of us as individuals have troubles, but rarely do we see a crisis of such an extreme proportion that the entire world is affected. So far experts from every medical and scientific field have offered no solution, and political and economic leaders have excelled mostly in pointing the finger of blame at one another. The Bible, however, gives us teachings and historical examples to show us where to turn in such times. In every biblical crisis, there is one word that comes through—"providence," which is the hidden hand of God. When Satan does his worse, God does His best. God is always in control, and He is continually working in a mysterious, inexplicable way in our lives and the situations that we face. He is in the shadows, arranging things that we cannot see.

In the midst of the chaos that we have been going through, nothing seems to be making sense. It seems like the devil is pulling the nails from everything we thought we had nailed down, and some people are thinking, "Why did God let this happen? If I were God I would do something about it. Is God still in charge? Is God capricious or has God lost control?"

The longer I live, the more I realize that we do not live by explanations. Life is not a problem to be solved; it is a mystery to be lived. And sometimes we just have to back off and simply respect the hidden hand of God. As I wrote previously, in His wisdom, God mixes things together and works them together for His glory and for our good. Isaiah 55:8-9 tells us that God doesn't always think on the same level that we do, and He doesn't always act the way that we think He should. We cannot live by explanations, because we will never explain God. Instead, we live by promises.

Have you ever wondered why God put vitamins in spinach instead of in ice cream? Why is the grass green and not lavender? Why is the sun yellow instead of pink? We must let God be God and respect the mystery of His providence. Instead of demanding explanations, trust that God knows what He is doing, and "trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6). I encourage you to look deeper into discovering the wonderful hidden hand of God and His providence by reading passages such as the following: Deuteronomy 8:18; 1 Chronicles 29:12; Psalm 23; 34:7-10; 68:6; 107; 136; Proverbs 16:33; Isaiah 45:9; 46:4; 55:10; Ezekiel 36:28-38; Amos 4:7-12; Luke 10:21; Acts 3:17-18; Romans 9:20-21; James 4:14.

If God is working in a way that you cannot see or understand, it doesn't mean that He is not working. If it looks like evil is succeeding, just remember that the success of evil is only temporary. Instead of focusing on the problem, focus on the Lord, and ask yourself, "Is God big enough to handle this problem?" Isaiah 26:3-4 says: "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Roll every crisis on the Lord. No matter how big it is, God has peace to give you in exchange. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7).

Here are some things to remember in the midst of any difficulty: Don't demand to understand. You will never figure it out. Take everything to God in prayer, your greatest resource. Focus on the Lord and rest in His love. Expect God to move powerfully in His own time and in His own way.



A Message from Andrew Spires

.....
MINISTER OF STUDENTS & SINGLES

The end is near!?! The uproar over the virus has now shifted to arguments amongst political parties as to whether or not certain actions were/are best. The truth is, we don't know whether we've seen the end of the COVID virus, or whether it'll return seasonally, like the flu? We do absolutely know that our God is sovereign over and above all, and that nothing escapes His view and grasp. He is in control, He is bigger than this, and His will...will be done! While we certainly grieve with those who lost loved ones, and with those whose lives have been impacted by loss of jobs and sickness, there are many questions left to be answered. What is the new norm? Will people wear masks and gloves forever? Are the days of shaking hands, and hugging necks gone? Will people return to work? Will school start on time in the Fall? Will the Church return to full strength? In truth, I don't know the answers to these questions, only God does. I've been spending some time talking with other student ministers in our community over the past few weeks and I'm hearing a common theme, they are all expressing concern over the ability of their students to feed themselves spiritually during this time of separation. In fact, as many churches have begun the process of re-opening their doors, many of my ministry friends are expecting a hard restart of their groups. In other words, they believe the virus has been so damaging to the makeup of their student ministries, that they will have to rebuild and start over. Many were hopeful that as soon as in person meetings were once again available, that their students would rush back in, having taken for granted the freedom to meet at church weekly, but for many, so far, this has not been the case. Many are saying their students started off okay with livestreaming and things such as Zoom meetings, but quickly lost interest. Some of their best and most committed students seemed to drift away, and even began to enjoy the time away from church. I too, sense some of the same things here within our group. It's always easy to let someone else feed you. It's always easier not to put in the effort of fostering spiritual disciplines yourself. It's always easier to coast along. However, spiritual apathy is infectious, it spreads like a cancer within our souls, until it turns into rebellion against the Lord. We've already begun the process of rebuilding our group, though I don't think we will have a hard restart like some expect. For the next several weeks, on Wednesday nights, we are asking a simple yet deep question; is your faith genuine? Are you secure in the arms of Christ, with our faith resting solely on the substitutionary death and atonement of Christ Jesus leading to our confession, repentance, and belief or are we self-deceived into thinking that mere head knowledge about Christ constitutes a saving faith? Is our faith proven out by our walk, our spiritual growth, and our passionate desire to love and serve others through good deeds? Or is our "faith" dead, without fruit on the vine, ineffectual, self-serving, dispassionate, and counterfeit? We believe the answers to all these questions will be answered in the coming weeks. This summer will definitely be a different kind of summer for us, but we know this is God's plan for us, and we cannot wait to see what God will do in and through us. We are so exceedingly grateful to those church members who helped sponsor a student for summer camp in late June. Thank you for making camp a possibility for so many of our families! Please join me in praying for our students and young adults.

God bless,
drew

A Message from David Stephens

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CHILDREN'S MINISTER



Plant Good Seeds

After the winter thaw the farmer begins to prepare the soil for the new planting season. The farmer will plant the seeds and wait. There is a lot of work and much patience that goes into the reaping of a great harvest. The soil of our spiritual field is rich. It is full of nutrients and water. We don't even realize it, but we are planting in our field every day. Everything we plant is going to grow and produce a harvest. We must ask ourselves continually; What am I planting today? What was planted in the meeting at work or the conversation with my child? What about my interaction with the gas station clerk?

"A man reaps what he sows, the one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:7-9)

Every day we are given the opportunity to plant new seeds. The compassion of the Lord never fails they are new every morning. We are also given the choice as to what seeds we are planting. Are we planting seeds of forgiveness, compassion, mercy, hope and trust? Are we planting seeds of love, purity and worship that will lead to a harvest that glorifies the Lord?

There are other seeds that we may be planting; seeds of lies, selfishness and pride. It is unfortunate, but it seems that when these sinful seeds are planted they can grow really fast and become strong weeds that can rise up to dominate our harvest field. We must become a gardener and pull the weeds out, and we must pull them out by the roots.

We must remember that as we are planting seeds into our field we are planting seeds into the field of those we are around. The amount of time we spend with a person correlates to the amount of seeds we plant. The people that we spend the most time with is our family. Our family and especially our spouses are getting the most of our seeds, and they are the closest in view of our personal fields as well. Let's plant seeds first in ourselves and our homes that speak life not death, and the natural outflowing of these seeds will spill out into our local church, our community, our city, our world.

This is a new day, with new opportunities. We must NOT grow weary of planting that which will draw us closer to God. We must pluck out the weeds. We must plant seeds of truth. "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think of such things" (Philippians 4:8). This is what we MUST plant daily!

This will bring a harvest that glorifies God.

It is an honor to serve you and your family.

This will be a different summer, but it will be a 'Good' different.

Please know that I care very much for you, and if there is a need for counseling, or just to talk my door is open. Reach out to the church, and we can work out a time.

I will be starting up a **GriefShare class Monday night June 8 from 7PM – 9PM**. This is a great class that I have seen help many working through grief of all kinds.

See Important info about VBS at bottom of Memory page

In Memory of:

J.P. Benton for Builders for Christ:

Pattee Carroll

The Girlfriends Book Club

Fran Loftin

Brady and Tracey Benton

Kimberly Smith

J. D. and Diane Whitehead

Billy and Vicki Benton

Gail Brantley for Lottie Moon

Myra Currier for Student Missions

Clara Jean Watson for Homebound Ministry

Joyful Servants for Circles of Influence

Billy and Cathy Greene for Benevolence

J. P. & Esther Benton for Benevolence from Jean Tedder

Buster DeLuca for Orchestra from Pat Holland

Buster DeLuca for Homebound Ministry from Clara Jean Watson

Esther Benton for Student Missions from Myra Currier

Frances Baker for Student Missions from Myra Currier

Billy Slocumb for Homebound Ministry from Clara Jean Watson

Rilda Martin for Homebound Ministry from Clara Jean Watson

Rilda Martin for Budget from J. D. and Diane Whitehead

Rodney Gray for Homebound Ministry from Clara Jean Watson

Rodney Gray for Budget from Fran Loftin

Maggie Mae Taunton for Food Closet from Janet Turner

George Maxwell for Budget from J. D. and Diane Whitehead

Judy Harden for Budget from Fran Loftin

In Honor of:

LBC Staff from Margaret Wilson

Frank and Jackie Dow for Food Closet from Terry and Clara Grimes

Betty Burrows for Homebound Ministry:

Janet Turner

Malinda Wilkes

*****Kids Ministry Calendar*****

VBS

20/20 Vision Seeing Clearly Through Christ

Habakkuk 2:2-4

July 12 – July 16 (5:30PM – 8:30PM)

Team leads are established

Help is needed! Please reach out to me to help with VBS this year, it will be AMAZING

Lakewood Happenings

June 2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
ALL ACTIVITIES TO BE ANNOUNCED AS THEY BECOME POSSIBLE	1	2	3	4	5	6
Resume Regular Sunday Schedule	7-9pm GriefShare					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
5:00pm Deacons Meet	7-9pm GriefShare	6:30pm Alleluia Choir				
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Father's Day	7-9pm GriefShare	6:30pm Alleluia Choir				10:00am AWANA Celebration Outdoor Event
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	7-9pm GriefShare	6:30pm Alleluia Choir				
28	29	30				

April Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
4/5	\$29,059.48	\$550.00	\$1,031.68	\$153.05	\$30,794.21
4/12	\$15,745.44	\$320.00	\$2,133.96	\$259.73	\$18,459.13
4/19	\$15,254.00	\$135.00	\$1,115.96	\$310.00	\$16,814.96
4/26	\$12,187.33	\$370.00	\$1,950.03	\$588.25	\$15,095.61

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

SUNDAY

- 9:00am Contemporary Worship
- 9:00am Kidz Worship
- 10:00am Bible Fellowship
- 11:00am Blended Worship
- 11:15am Kidz Worship
- 6:00pm Evening Worship
- 6:00pm Young Adult Bible Study/FAC

WEDNESDAY

- 5:00pm Family Night Supper
- 5:45pm AWANA/FLYTE
- 6:00pm Orchestra Rehearsal
- Adult Prayer & Bible Study
- Youth Worship
- Praise Team Rehearsal

Only \$5 per adult meal,
\$2.50 per child meal with a maximum
\$15 per family!

Let's Eat!

Dinner is
served from
5:00-6:00pm

MAY WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPERS

7/7

7/14

7/21

7/28

WNS WILL RESUME SOON

To make dinner reservations, email Carol at carol@lbcpc.org or call 334.298.6433.

June Greeters

Roy McHargue
Gail Brantley

WELCOME
NEW MEMBER

SANDY CLIFFORD



For more info go to LBCPC.org
Click on the rotator about
online giving

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FRI 8:30AM-12PM

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