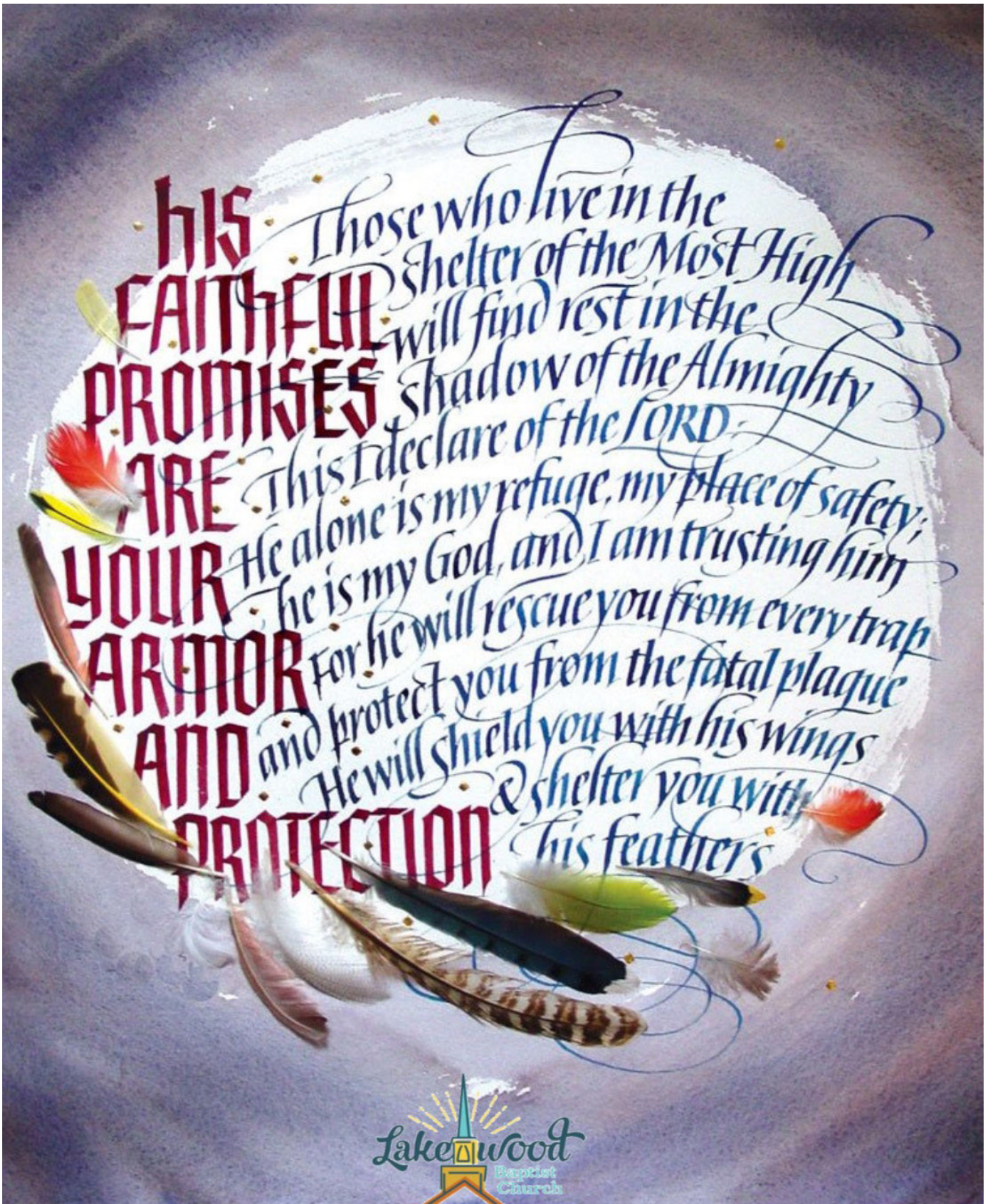


Connections

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

April 2020

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Welcome Home.



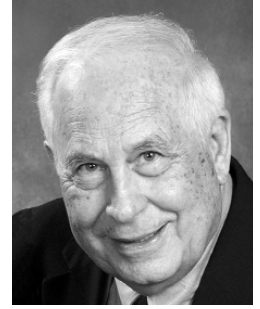
A Message from M.R. Hamilton

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SENIOR PASTOR

April showers bring May flowers! This and many sayings just like it were created to help us see the benefit of events that at the time made life a bit difficult. So to turn the tables on the old Devil let me use one of his most famous questions. Did God really say, “that all things work together for the good to those who love God” and the answer is Yes He did. That promise can be found in Romans 8:28. Probably all of you knew the answer to that question and many of you no doubt were able to quote the verse from memory. For the benefit of us all please allow me to remind you that verse 28 does not start with the words “That all things” it actually starts with “And we know” and oh what a difference just a few small words can make. And we know that April showers bring May flowers and we know it is always darkest just before the dawn and we know God is in the habit of turning what the Devil does for evil into our good. And we know God is good, and we know that God is up to something good, and we know that God is love and He is responding this day in love just like He always does. I know in the very core of my soul that God has a plan to bless us and not to harm us and I know He plans to give us a hope and a future. So I know when all is said and done God will be glorified in this crisis. I feel like He already is when I see the numbers following us on Facebook and our web page. We have gone from reaching a few hundred to reaching thousands. People are suddenly seeking the truth and asking spiritual questions and wanting honest biblical answers.

One of those questions that I hope to answer here today is one I get a lot, and it is an honest question. Where is God and why isn't He doing something? For some it needs to be answered to help them through the pain and suffering that are very real for them. For others it is a reminder to take care not to overlook what God has done because you expect something different. Perhaps a joke is the best way to make this final point. The dam of a large lake was about to give way and orders were given to evacuate but one man refused to go. I am a Christian he proclaimed and God will rescue me so the rescue jeep drove away. Later that day with the water rising a rescue boat came to his house and he proclaimed that God would rescue him. As the dam gave way a helicopter was sent to rescue the man sitting on his roof peak but he once again proclaimed God would rescue Him. Moments later a mighty wave swept him from his roof top and the man drowned. Arriving at Heaven he complained bitterly, “Why didn't you rescue me?” And God answered, son I sent a jeep, a boat and a helicopter. The point of this story is to remind us all that God gave us wisdom and we need to use it. He has supplied us with doctors and health professionals who have told us exactly how to keep our chances of contact with this virus to a minimum. Now it is up to us to use that wisdom and allow God to protect us by listening and doing those things to the best of our ability. Now to those who are suffering in any way from this crisis I could never be more serious and heartbroken for you. I am God's ambassador and I represent Him and He has sent me to be an ever present help to you in any way I can. The church is here for this very reason so to answer your question when you cry out “God, where are you?” I must answer Here I am right here and every Christian everywhere on the Earth must cry out here we are right here. God dwells in His people and we are right here going through it with you and ready and willing to help you. So until this day passes and we enjoy meeting together again in God's house keep the faith. How? By remembering what you know about God and all His promises.

A Message from Dr. Jerry Horner



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MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP & OUTREACH

We have been experiencing a phenomenon unparalleled in the lifetime of any of us. On March 11, the World Health Organization announced the coronavirus, or Covid-19, a pandemic. A pandemic is an outbreak of a disease that spreads across a vast region, such as a continent or, as in this case, the entire globe. On March 13 President Trump announced the coronavirus pandemic to be a national emergency. Within hours schools and universities closed, sporting events and many other scheduled events were canceled, business establishments closed or mandated their employees to work from home, churches either canceled services altogether or livestreamed sermons preached in empty sanctuaries, elections were postponed, travel restrictions were enacted, and grocery stores were stripped of certain commodities. Unscrupulous profiteers seized the opportunity to capitalize on the fears of people by stockpiling and then selling at grossly inflated prices such health related items as hand sanitizers and toilet paper. Toilet paper? For the life of me I have yet to figure out the relationship between a flu virus and TP. When I was a boy in Miston, Tennessee, our toilet paper was free, courtesy of Sears-Roebuck. Nobody had indoor plumbing, and their voluminous catalog was a familiar and much appreciated item in every outhouse.

The health issue and the shortage of TP are not the only factors causing fear and panic among people. What about the trillions of dollars lost by airline and other travel-related industries, such as hotels and cruise companies? What about the lost income of employees of those industries, as well as those who have jobs related to sports, educational institutions, and other businesses affected by the shutdown?

So how are we to react and what are we to do? Millions of people around the globe are in a panic, and I firmly believe that we are witnessing in a small measure the wild trepidation that the world will display when the real trials come in the last days. If a little virus that cannot survive in temperatures exceeding 80 degrees can cause such anxiety, what panic will there be when the destruction of the world is imminent? I offer you three simple suggestions concerning what our attitude as believers in Jesus should be.

First, we are to react with faith rather than fear. I strongly recommend that you read and read again and again Scriptures such as Psalm 91, until your soul is completely at peace with the certainty that whatever comes, you are under God's protection. Fear says, "Can God?" Faith says, "God can!" Having faith does not mean that you deny the seriousness of the situation. It simply means that you are entrusting yourself to a faithful God who has given you His word. Remember, "God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7). Fear can rob you of three essential gifts from God that you desperately need in a critical situation. He gives power to enable you to live a life of faith in difficult times, when it's not easy. He gives love to enable you to focus on others, even when it isn't convenient or if it costs you. He gives a sound mind to enable you to understand things from God's point of view, so that you can experience peace, even when everything seems to be going wrong.

Next, we are to react with wisdom rather than worry. Of course, we are to be prudent and listen to sound advice in taking precautions. Go to www.cdc.gov to learn practical ways to deal with the situation. But worry only adds to panic. In fact, Jesus made it clear in Matthew 6:25-34 that worry is a mark of the pagan world and that it is totally counter-productive. Worry says that you don't believe that God exists, or if He does, He doesn't care or He is powerless. Worry triples your burden, adding yesterday's and tomorrow's problems to the ones you already have today. Remember that God is sovereign and that He is in control of everything. Learn such Scriptures as Romans 8:28 and 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Finally, we are to react with prayer rather than panic. You can pray or you can panic, but you can't do both. Remember how the cynics ridiculed Vice-President Pence for leading the Coronavirus Task Force in prayer? They don't realize that when you panic instead of praying, you are forfeiting your greatest strength. Instead of focusing on the negative reports in the world's media, why not focus on God's positive report, as presented in such Scriptures as Philippians 4:6-7? Pray for divine intervention to stop the spread of this disease. Pray for the healing of those who have been affected. Pray comfort for those who have lost loved ones. Pray direction and discernment for our leaders and for medical researchers.

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, we have the power to choose our response. When we choose faith over fear, wisdom over worry, and prayer over panic, we become the light of Christ in a very dark situation.



A Message from Andrew Spires

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MINISTER OF STUDENTS & SINGLES

Well, the sky is falling, the end is near, and the church is going under. All these (and more) I've heard over the last three weeks or so. These certainly are different times we are living in with unprecedented challenges to our way of life, and changes to our daily schedules. However, I believe these times represent a unique opportunity for all of us who are believers to BE the Church. So often, here at Lakewood, we try to create local, stateside, and international opportunities to encourage our church family to step outside their comfort zone and be the church. Things such as; the food and clothes closet, feeding the homeless, and mission trips have started us down the right path of a missional mindset. However, at this time of social isolation, we must look within our homes and neighborhoods for opportunities to advance the Gospel. Evangelism still must take place. Parents, this should start at home, as all of us have the opportunity (and probably more time) to lead your families spiritually. Men/fathers; this can start with something small, like doing a bible study together or worshipping together as you watch the livestream. You can lead your family in corporate prayer over our nation, our leaders, our church, our missionaries and for those who are sick. You can minister to those living around you, especially those who are elderly and homebound, and seek to meet their needs. It's no surprise to me that God is giving us opportunity to do church in our own homes, after all that's where the New Testament Church was founded, in people's homes. Now, we can choose to do the opposite, and "take a break from church" during this time, or we can grow in our faith as families and in our appreciation and faithfulness to Christ's bride, the Church. I'd ask our families to implement simple steps to aid spiritual growth during this time; keep the Sabbath day holy unto the Lord. Okay, so we're not meeting together corporately at this time, but set aside Sundays as your family's day of worship. Get your family up at a certain time, eat breakfast together, watch the service together by livestream. Sing as if you were in the sanctuary, pull out your bibles and take notes as you follow along with the preacher. We are texting suggested reading plans to our student & young adult families, please use them. If you need other resources, let us know at the church, we'd be glad to help. Also, lead your family to remain faithful in giving, giving God your first fruits shows the depth of your faith. Moms and dads, show your children a lack of panic and fear, and your family will follow your lead. I am convinced that God is up to something BIG during this time. While the future is unknown to us, it is certainly known by God. Lean in towards the cross during this time of hardship. In closing, my heart goes out to all our students but especially our athletes and those high school and college graduates. For our athletes, I can only imagine how disappointing it is to train all offseason for your sport and then for that season to be cancelled or postponed. I remember a hundred years ago, when I played high school sports, and the feelings of disappointment I would have when a single game was postponed or cancelled, I know this is a tough time for you. For our graduates, I know this isn't how you imagined your senior year would end. The senior year is somewhat of a celebration of your time in school all leading to the crescendo of the graduation ceremony. With all of that up in the air, I know you can feel down or depressed, but again I encourage you to lean into the Lord and depend on His strength to get you through. I promise you that you will be celebrated here at the church at an appropriate time. Please pray for our students, some are struggling with online schooling, and some are just going stir crazy at home. Remember, God is in control, He's bigger than this, nothing in all of creation is hidden from Him. Let's remain faithful, let's serve, let's evangelize the lost, and let's wait upon the Lord.

God bless,
drew

A Message from David Stephens

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CHILDREN'S MINISTER



Situation 1

The alarm clock goes off, and we wake up to the promises of a new day, a new opportunity, a new chance to touch a person or a situation for the better. God is large and in charge, he breathes life into the hopeless, and our heart is to be this life giving breath of God to our world. As we begin our day we have this thought 'Be Still and Know, I am God'.

Situation 2

The alarm goes off, and we wake up, now much more in a drugged up stupor. We vaguely remember the dog waking us up barking at 2 in the morning. The child is sick, and now you are sick. But, you don't have time to be sick. The boss is breathing down your neck, deadlines are fast approaching. We drag ourselves to the coffee maker. We fix our food for the day. We feed the animals, begrudgingly as we remember the 2AM wake up. At least this part of our new day is all muscle memory. Now we need to work our way out of our stupor, because we must now drive to work. You're really not sick. It's just a rough morning. Yet, as we begin this new day we have this same thought 'Be Still and Know, I am God'.

What does this mean? How do we do this 'be still and know' thing well?

It is most important for us to remember that in all our circumstances God is present whether we feel it or not in the moment. It is also important for us to remember that this same God has all the power to help us in these moments. And, we must remember that this God knows we are having a good or bad morning. Yet the thought that has entered our space is 'Be Still and Know, I am God'. Is this not challenging in our busy world we live in today? Angry customers, 'Be Still'; Cut off in Traffic, 'Be Still'; Lackluster Co Workers, 'Be Still'; Yelling, Crying Children, 'Be Still'; Burnt Dinner, 'Be Still'; Irritating family member, 'Be Still'; Acute and or Chronic pain, 'Be Still'; Broken Heart, 'Be Still'.

This list can go on and on. This Challenge to 'Be Still and Know' we must face and overcome every day. Granted, there are some days when it is easier to do than others. This is true. We must understand and get to the point where we are able to just, Be. This concept of 'Being Still' must be birthed out of our heart that is filled with overflowing gratitude for the one who has saved us. The Holy Spirit allows us to 'Be Still' in all aspects of our life. It's not a matter of being still and stopping our physical movements, although sometimes that is helpful. It is a stillness of the heart. It is the ability to go into every situation and be what our Lord needs for us to be in that moment. A challenge that I have for myself that I believe will help us all to grow in this concept of 'Being Still' is very simple. Start every day saying to yourself. "God, who do you have for me to encourage today?" I have found that on days that I begin with this framework, I am more other's focused. Surprisingly, I am more productive, and I am able to 'Be' present with others with a stillness of the heart that is above all the 'noise'. It is in these moments when life giving words or actions are given and received.

Be Blessed in April, as we celebrate our Risen Lord!

*** Kids Ministry Calendar will be adjusted accordingly related to our church response to Corona Virus. Stay tuned. ***

Eggstravaganza on April 4 is cancelled
Merge Summer Camp July 13 - 16
3rd - 6th grade Students
Shocco Springs Conference Center
Tuition \$199

VBS

20/20 Vision Seeing Clearly Through Christ
Habakkuk 2: 2-4
May 31 - June 4 (5:30PM - 8:30PM)

In Memory of:

J. P. and Esther Benton for their birthdays for Builders For Christ from Billy and Cathy Greene

Billy Slocumb for Budget from Glenda Medley
Billy Sloucmb for Amen Choir from Mr. & Mrs. Lamar Martin

All Amen Choir members who have passed away for Amen Choir from Peggy Martin
Brenda Robinson Barfield for Annie Armstrong from Charlene Keeter
Carolyn Pruski for Challenge to Build from Charlene Keeter

In Honor of:

Mike Murry for Circles of Influence from Terry and Clara Grimes
Rex and Judy Carter for Food Bank from Brenda Slappey
Charles and Linda Keown for Orchestra from Jim Combs
Cathy Greene and Joyful Servants Bible Fellowship Class for Challenge to Build from Pattee Carroll
Bill and Judy McCarley for Food Bank from Terry and Clara Grimes
Frank and Jackie Dow for Food Bank from Terry and Clara Grimes

Circles of Influence Spotlight



God used Operation Christmas Child to draw children to Christ in Malawi.

In the largely illiterate community of Chigombe, people are prone to alcoholism. Aware of the need in these families, an OCC Ministry Partner named Rose hosted a shoebox outreach event to share the Gospel and deliver shoebox gifts to children. As a result, 48 children put their faith in Jesus Christ. Their parents not only thanked Rose for the precious gifts, but asked if they could learn about Jesus, too! This led nine parents to become believers as well. The Greatest Journey, our 12-lesson follow-up discipleship course, is now being taught to 23 children in the community, and Rose is hosting a Bible study for adult women as well.

Lakewood Happenings

April 2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
ALL ACTIVITIES TO BE ANNOUNCED AS THEY BECOME POSSIBLE			1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					ALL ACTIVITIES TO BE ANNOUNCED AS THEY BECOME POSSIBLE

February Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
2/2	\$20,170.41	\$305.00	\$3,520.05	\$1,281.00	\$25,276.46
2/9	\$18,625.69	\$580.00	\$1,470.74	\$2,021.83	\$22,698.26
2/16	\$12,415.48	\$360.00	\$1,874.06	\$1,290.83	\$15,940.37
2/23	\$28,570.60	\$165.00	\$6,401.85	\$3,404.88	\$38,542.33

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
- 6:30pm Praise Team Rehearsal
- 7:00pm

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

APRIL WEDNESDAY NIGHT SUPPERS

4/1

4/8

4/15

4/22

4/29

WEDNESDAY
NIGHT
SUPPERS WILL
RESUME AS
SOON AS WE
ARE ALLOWED

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

JUSTIN BRASFIELD
DAVID, LESLEY
REBEKAH & CALEB
STEPHENS

April Greeters

Jill Henderson
Myra Currier



We are moving our online giving
provider from Vanco to
Shelbynext
For more info go to LBCPC.org
Click on the rotator about
online giving

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