

Connections

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

October 2020

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\$6,000 MATCHING GRANT FOR AWANA

HELP AWANA BUILD MORE SHOEBOXES THAN EVER BEFORE



Welcome Home.



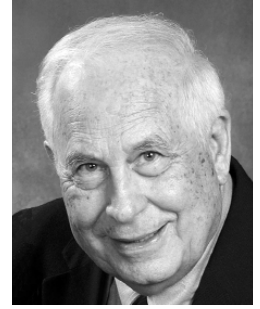
A Message from M.R. Hamilton

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SENIOR PASTOR

October! I actually had a hard time believing it could possibly be October as I am still back at March 15th when I preached about the year of Jubilee and how I had been here 7 years and we were going to cancel all debts and regrets and start all over again brand new. Once again I must admit that I had no idea what I saying and I had no idea that God really meant we were going to be starting all over again. The very next week the COVID 19 crisis and all the mandates began and as I write this note 7 months have passed and we are slowly trying to start all over again. This is the month we hope to see children's church again as our worship attendance continues to slowly rise. Our Bible Fellowship classes are now open and running at about 60%. As we continue to deal with the reality of 2020 I call derved if you do and derved if you don't. We want people to attend but we don't want a crowd which makes no sense at all when you say it but yet you understand because this is 2020. We long for the familiar while we understand that everything has changed. I have moved from my "Fear Not" series of messages and my "Experiencing God" series to preach on Joshua who was led on a path he had never gone before. So from now until the holidays I will be focused on messages of encouragement that I have been reminding myself of through this all to keep up my own spirits up. One thing that I am certain of is that God is moving with great power in our midst. Every nation on the Earth is feeling it but few are recognizing it for what it really is. Some say it is political while others call it a pandemic and yet others blame it all on climate change while I say it is God trying to get our attention. All the things the world trust in are being shaken but our faith is in a God who is good and never changes. While the world cries out the sky is falling, stay at home, I am challenging you to stop and look around for the blessing God promised you.

God has a plan for you and it is not to curse you but to bless you and it is His desire that you live a life full of hope because you trust in God for your future. The Nations of the world will rise and fall as they have from the beginning of time while the Kingdom Of God stands strong just as it has from the beginning. Through it all I have found that I have a very real identity crisis. From time to time I cry out that I am an American citizen and I have rights. I have freedoms for which I have sacrificed and I want to stand my ground until I come to my senses. I am 1st and foremost a Christian and this world is not my home. I am a Christian who lives in America and my primary duty is to the Kingdom of God. I am taken back to Romans chapter 12. "If it is possible as much as it depends on you live at peace with all men. Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good." So as the world runs to hide from God let us go out and greet Him because we know He is good and He is moving to bless us. As they run in fear of Him and for good reason we have nothing to fear for God is for us and if God is for us who can stand against us. When you look around and nothing makes sense remember we serve a mysterious God and His ways are not our ways, His thoughts they are not our thoughts and it is going just the way He planned it and His way is good. Then when you see me remind me of this very same thing because if anything is clear it is the fact that change is here to stay.

A Message from Dr. Jerry Horner



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MINISTER OF DISCIPLESHIP & OUTREACH

The Covid-19 crisis has affected churches around the world, and people have reacted in various ways. Unfortunately, many church members have decided that they have outgrown a need for active church participation, and they are content with their new lifestyle, at least as it relates to their spiritual life. Perhaps we ought to have a healthy reminder that we need the church in all seasons of life, especially at this season.

We need to realize that **we need the church for worship**, not entertainment or performance. The first description of the church, found in Acts 2:42-47, vividly pictures a worshiping church. The focus was on the Word of God, and the people responded in a life that reverberated with the rhythm of worship. You don't see them looking for services lasting a limited length of time or featuring a particular type of music or led by a certain type of personality. You don't see them using the church for a performance outlet to satisfy their narcissistic appetite to be seen, heard, and to perform. You see a people who are gathered to worship the sovereign God who spoke the universe into existence from nothing and rescued them through the blood of Christ. In other words, they felt the need to express their gratitude in corporate worship.

We need the church for spiritual development. The Bible clearly teaches that the calling of the church is to live holy lives that exalt God (1 Thess. 3:12-4:12). Fulfilling that call requires the church laboring together in the effort to sharpen one another (Prov. 27:17) and to hold one another accountable. Most certainly spiritual development in the church also requires a people who are committed to church discipline (see Matthew 18). The Bible explicitly teaches that God's will is never for the Christian to develop spiritually in a vacuum, isolated from fellow believers. On the contrary, we need one another, and the Bible knows nothing of a solitary Christianity. Through the community of a local church, as God's people exercise their spiritual gifts together, they "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). Everyone in the church matters! The church is not a building; it's a people who are called out for God's glory. It's impossible to be a vital part of God's church without immersing yourself into a local body of Christ followers.

We need the church for Christ-centered fellowship. Long before John Bunyan wrote Pilgrim's Progress, the Bible taught the need for companionship along the journey of faith. We are not intended to hike our way to the Celestial City alone. Christ has graciously given us fellow pilgrims and it would be a soul-damaging decision to attempt life without Christ-centered friendship. This is true for all members of the church, weak or strong, young or old. Christian friendship enables us to receive counsel, be accountable, stay grounded in the faith, and spur one another onward to love and good works (Heb. 10:24-25). If the people in your church don't know you, you're not really a member of the church.

We need the church for biblical leadership. A self-guided tour of Christianity doesn't exist. It's not an option for the true believer. God has sovereignly designed His church with faithful leaders who are called to shepherd the people (see 1 Pet. 5:1-11 and Heb. 13:17). Just as it would be utterly foolish for an inexperienced data analyst to leave his cubicle in New York and embark on a self-guided ascent of Mount Everest, so it is with those who think they can navigate through this harsh and fallen world without submitting to their pastors. In a day when YouTube and Google serve up whatever recipe or how-to video we can imagine, we need to remember that God has not called Google or YouTube to serve as our pastors.

We need the church for missions. As Christ was leaving this earth, He commissioned His followers to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). The words that He spoke were not a suggestion, but a command, and that command cannot be fulfilled alone. The Lord gave the command to the church, and it must be accomplished through the obedience of the New Testament church.

The church is not an option for some Christians; it's a mandate for all Christians. To be a Christian involves participation in the local church. Charles Spurgeon once remarked, "Nobody can do as much damage to the church of God as the man who is within its walls, but not within its life." As we pass through this challenging season, I pray that people will not succumb to the arrogant and self-dependent ideology of a spiritual autonomy that says we don't need the church. That attitude doesn't end well.



A Message from Andrew Spires

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MINISTER OF STUDENTS & SINGLES

I found myself in an unusual situation a few weeks ago. I was asked by a mutual friend to go and share the Gospel with an 86 year old woman who was near death. It's not often that a student & young adult pastor gets called to minister to an octogenarian, but such was the case. I knew very few details about the woman, only that she was not a Christ follower, she had once attended a church somewhat regularly, and that she had sincere doubts. When asked, I thanked God for the opportunity (even though I knew I would be out of my normal comfort zone), and scheduled a time to go by her home. The next day I received a call saying the woman had to be hospitalized, and that if she came home from the hospital, then they would call to reschedule. Sure enough, a few days passed, I received another call that she was back at home but not out of the woods. So, on a Monday, I went to her home over in Columbus, where I found the woman bedridden and under constant nursing care. Several of her family members and a friend were present along with the two nurses. Apparently this woman had been very successful in life, running her own chain of local businesses after her husband's death, but until now, had not been all that concerned about her eternal destination. As her health began to fail, her family recounted a change in her state of mind, and she told them of her original profession of faith. At age 15, she and her sister had walked an aisle in a small country Methodist church because (in her own words) the minister was handsome, and although she was baptized she assured her family that she was not born-again. As I arrived that day I asked her to tell me her story. She recounted growing up on a family farm, where she worked picking cotton, and how much she didn't like it. At age 18 she left the farm eventually getting married and settling in Columbus. She also told me her original confession/profession story and she told me that she knew that it was not authentic. Over the next few moments I shared with her two consecutive stories from John chapters 3 & 4 about the Pharisee Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman at the well. These two stories were fresh on my mind because I've been teaching through the Gospel of John on Wednesday nights with the students for a couple of months now. As I

described and contrasted these two stories/characters for her, and talked about their transformations, she began to cry, especially when I discussed the details of the Samaritan woman's immoral life. As you know, the Samaritan woman had been married five times and was now living with a sixth man who was not her husband when Jesus came and rescued her. She was a half-Jewish, half-Gentile outcast who no one valued. She had lived a life of sin, yet before her stood the Great I Am who offered her living water. As I spoke of the Samaritan woman's sin again this poor woman began to sob and muttered the words "so much sin". Sensing her conviction and shame, over her life of sin, I reminded her of one more biblical story; the repentant thief on the cross (Luke 23:32-43). I assured her that the thief never had opportunity to do good works, or to seek personal holiness after his conversion, but in an instant he put his faith in Christ alone and Jesus Himself assured him of eternity. I reminded her that it is not about us holding on to God, but instead it is God holding on to us! As she continued to sob, I asked her if she believed in Jesus as her Savior and Lord, if she was ready to repent of her sins, and if she wanted to put her faith and hope in Christ alone? Through tears she responded yes and we prayed. Once we finished praying, she told us how much better she felt and how confident she now was that she now belonged to Him. Almost a week later, God called her home and I received another phone call. It was the daughter-in law, calling on behalf of the family, asking me to do the funeral. Just a few days ago now her body was laid to rest, and I had the opportunity to share this story with her family and friends. I told those in attendance that day of the change in their dearly departed loved one, and I thought I'd share with you as well. I am so thankful God gave me the opportunity to speak the Truth to this woman and that she responded in faith. My prayer is that each one of us will respond to the call when a divine appointment becomes apparent. If you put yourselves out there for the sake of the Gospel, God will always use you to advance His kingdom.

God bless,
drew

A Message from David Stephens

CHILDREN'S MINISTER



It's FALL! This is my favorite time of the year. My children have never experienced fall like this before. Coming from the desert of Arizona, they will be blown away by the fall colors.

FALL FESTIVAL IS A GO!!

Sunday October 25 from 12PM -2PM

We will be having a Hotdog sale and Silent Auction Bake Sale to raise money for Operation Christmas Child. Please see Patrick and Carole Thornton if interested in helping.

We will have fun and safe activities for children in our community spread out over our entire front lawn. **Please, if you have been involved with Fall Festival, supplying games, hayride, crafts, etc. I want to talk to you.** Let's have a festival like none other!



Back in the Saddle!

AWANA is back! We had a very successful start. We are meeting Wednesday from 5:45PM – 7:00PM.

10AM Bible Fellowship is back for all grades.

October 4 we will be starting our 9AM Children's Worship service in our new worship room!



David Stephens; david@lbcpc.org; 309-404-3647



Ladies Ministry

Kick-Off Lunch

October 11th

(immediately following the 2nd service)

Please RSVP by calling office or 706-326-5344

or sign up on bulletin board

Thursday, October 15th @ 6pm

Saturday, October 24th @ 10am

DRIVE-THRU *Prayer Experience*

PRAY WITH US FROM YOUR CAR

Portico in back of church

Sponsored by the Ladies Ministry

Lakewood Happenings

October 2020

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
			10:30am VK/WMU			3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ladies Ministry Kick-Off Lunch After 2nd service			7:00pm Deacons Meet	6:00pm Drive Thru Prayer at back portico		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			7:00pm Finance Team meets	6:30pm JEG/BW F/H		10:00am Drive Thru Prayer at back portico
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
12:00pm Fall Festival & Bake Sale Loaf Bags Delivered			Loaf Bag Pickup			11:00am FTH
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
8/2	\$20,625.83	\$405.00	\$1,020.96	\$437.00	\$22,488.79
8/9	\$21,055.96	\$465.00	\$975.77	\$546.00	\$23,042.73
8/16	\$15,114.09	\$455.00	\$1,529.80	\$446.26	\$17,545.15
8/23	\$11,190.61	\$75.00	\$185.96	\$ 594.10	\$12,045.67
8/30	\$19,873.06	\$350.00	\$1,103.98	\$420.00	\$21,747.04

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

SUNDAY

- 9:00am Contemporary Worship
- 10:00am Bible Fellowship
- 11:00am Blended Worship

WEDNESDAY

- 5:45pm AWANA/FLYTE
- 6:00pm Prayer Meeting
- 7:00pm Youth Worship

In Memory of:

Don Heath for Budget from Glenda Medley

J. P. Benton for Benevolence from Kaye Hall

Paul Winberg for Amen Choir from Norman Davis

Pat Thornton:

For Circles of Influence from Bill and July McCarley

For Food Closet from Glenn and Daphne Hughes

Bobby Walls:

For Food Closet from Bill and July McCarley

For Food Closet from Terry and Clara Grimes

For Budget from Lucy Jones

In Honor of:

Carol Walls for Budget from Lucy Jones

WE NEED CANDY

FOR OUR FALL FESTIVAL

OCT. 25TH

DROP BY CHURCH OFFICE

FOR CHURCH NEWS
OR ?S

Visit LBCPC.org

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