

# CONNECTIONS

May 2020



May 10, 2020

## THE PASTOR'S DESK

### *Our Vision:*

To glorify God  
through loving  
Him and serving  
others

### *Our Mission Statement:*

A Faith Family  
helping to make  
and develop  
mature disciples

As we move through week six of “social distancing” and I prepare to preach my seventh sermon to an empty sanctuary I must admit that things are wearing a little on me. I’m beyond grateful to be surrounded daily by loving family and neighbors who are encouraging and active. Social distancing for me has not been isolating at all. But, I know for many of you it likely has been. Know that I am praying for you. Know that I am praying that this season ends sooner rather than later. Know that I miss seeing each of you dearly.

Over the past six weeks I have seen much more clearly the importance of community. I have come to recognize that the most important and most cherished things we have are our relationships—our relationship with Christ and with one another. And, while I already knew this to be true, this season of social distancing has highlighted the importance of these relationships. Relationships are essential to our well-being. In fact, I would say relationships rank high on the list of necessities alongside food, water, and shelter. They are critical to our psyche and our emotional health.

As I reflect on this in light of the scriptures I am reminded of the many glimpses we get of the New Testament church in scripture. Luke tells us in Acts 2:44 that “all the believers were together and had everything in common” (NIV). Throughout Acts we see that togetherness is common amongst the growing church. Paul reminds us in Romans that we are all part of the Body of Christ saying, “In Christ we, though many, form one body” (NIV). Paul continues this theme in his letters to Corinth, Ephesus, and Colossae. Togetherness is critical to our well-being and to our growth.

So, as we continue to move through this season, praying that it comes to an end sooner rather than later, I pray that we continue to mourn our inability to gather. I pray that we develop a yearning to come back together in worship, fellowship, and service together. Because as we mourn the loss of our weekly gatherings, and as we yearn for the day of our communal gathering, we become more aware of the necessity of our corporate gatherings. There is no denying that we truly do need one another.

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*  
~ Hebrews 10:24-25, NIV

*Press on!*  
Carson

# Church News

## FINANCIALS

as of April 25, 2020

Actual Expenses YTD \$113,278

Actual Received YTD \$131,278

## Deacon of the Month

Ken Sweatman

706-799-6304

## VBS

### UPDATE

The new *tentative* dates for this years Vacation Bible School will be June 28th– July 1st.

## Happy Anniversary

05-07 Amy & Mark Williamson  
05-17 Shannon & Duane Starrenburg

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

05-01 Marcus Lovett  
05-01 Tara Cooper  
05-02 Kevin Allen  
05-04 Brenna Cook  
05-05 Jason Truitt  
05-08 Mickey Lonergan  
05-10 Kelsi Barrs  
05-13 Jim Clark  
05-13 Gatha Owens  
05-14 Luci Smith  
05-15 Ray Fulcher  
05-18 Rob Lewis  
05-20 Barry Fleming  
05-21 Susan Camp  
05-21 Peyton Perdue  
05-22 Margie Smith  
05-29 Lynda Adams  
05-31 Holly Laughery

# YOUTH:

Since the shelter-in-place order due to the outbreak of COVID-19, I have been spending a lot more time outside. Ironic, I know, because the intent of the governmental order is to keep us all *in-doors*, but as many have found/realized, there is only so much time you can spend within the confines of your own home. And besides, being in nature by yourself still isn't a threat to anyone's health. For the past 6 weeks, Bailey and I have taken numerous long walks just around our neighborhood in Dearing. Just getting out in space and enjoying nature and the outdoors. It's amazing what you begin noticing when you take the time to observe all that is going on around you. I know it sounds crazy, but I have been blown away by some of the beauty that surrounds us right in our own backyard. And it's not like Katie and I have invested much in the way of beautifying our yard – it's just the natural growth and evolution of God's bounty in the created world. From the pecan trees to the azalea and hydrangea bushes to just the way that fresh cut grass looks and smells, especially when the sun begins to set around 7 o'clock and the first shadows begin breaking up the sunshine. And when a cool breeze is blowing... I'm telling you what, the outdoors – the beauty, the quiet, and the solitude that has accompanied it – has been my companion in recent months.

It occurred to me this weekend (while on another long walk with our dog, Bailey) that God has *literally* given me/us all the time to "stop and smell the roses". We have heard so much (and continue to hear from everywhere, all the time, without ceasing) about what has been lost because of the pandemic... and it's true. We have lost. But we have also gained. We have gained time, and the opportunity to re-find wonder in everyday life. To be moved to awe by the beauty of God's creation. To see God's glory and peace through His secret, hidden blessings. And to find peace in simple living. Let us embrace this time, for we do not know how long it will be before we are given this opportunity again.

-Evan

## Music Ministry:

I heard it once said that, "Mom sets the mood in the home." I've never forgotten that statement, that as a mother I might have a strong influence on my loved ones, just by being in a cranky or angry mood. My more difficult days – when I feel like the walls are closing in on me if I have to stay in this house one more minute! – they seem to affect my family so negatively. But as I observe this in myself, I've noticed that...it wasn't just me! It wasn't just mom – it was everyone. Anyone of my family members (or others I came in contact with) who was in a funk very often ended up affecting the mood of those around them. One person's attitude can affect *everyone* around them. Ever sat down to a dinner with a group and one person's oppressive bad mood killed the vibe of friendliness around the whole table?

With these human observations in mind during this time of quarantine and social distancing, we as Christians *have* to be on our A-game when it comes to our attitude and behavior. Whether it is at home with our family or waiting in line at the store, we need to be the ones setting the examples of grace, patience, and calm as we go about our lives in this new and unique environment. Jesus said it plainly, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). While He was talking about the church, how much more does our love to complete strangers affect their moods and attitudes, when they wonder how we can so at rest in this present state? Does your daily attitude with your kids and with your neighbors reflect one of "perfect peace" because your mind is stayed on the Lord (Isaiah 26:3)? I'm not saying be fake, to pretend to have a good attitude. I'm saying we should be so centered in our walk and communication with God (and if we are not, we need to get there with our prayer and Bible reading and worship) that our automatic response is to be loving towards others. You, Believer, can set the mood in the home. In the workplace. In public. Be the one who makes everyone's mood better.

-Rebekah