



1600 S. Main Street
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 www.lamarfbc.org

The MESSENGER

Volume 57– April 2024

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Return Service Requested

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday

- ◆ 8:45a Sunday School for all ages
- ◆ 10:00a Sunday Worship

(We also offer live streaming at lamarfbc.org)

BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesday

- ◆ 11:30a Wednesday Ladies Bible Study
- ◆ 6:30p Wednesday Adult Bible Study

PROGRAMS

- ◆ AWANA CLUBS
 Sunday 5:00p-6:30p
- ◆ YOUTH GROUP
 Wednesdays 6:30p-8:00p



AWANA Calendar

- | | |
|----------|------------------|
| April 7 | Camp Fire Night |
| April 14 | Pajama Night |
| April 21 | Wonderfully Made |
| April 28 | Carnival Night |

Have a great



The AWANA Grand Prix event started at 5:00 on March 17th. Parents, children, and leaders enjoyed a wonderful breakfast for dinner prepared largely by Tonya

Epperson and Tori with help from Christen Gersick and Roger Stagner and the pancake hot plates. We started racing cars from the Pre-K age group and moved our way up to middle school and high school age; awarding prizes for speed, design, and theme. The children excitedly cheered for the races, while the parents watched as their children's cars competed against each other. The event was a large success due to the many volunteers that made the event run smoothly. The Mortimeyer family along with Andy Flint maned the new timing system. Chad Sailors and Jeff Flint worked to check in the cars and prepare them for the race track. Diane Pendleton helped with awards and several other volunteers found ways to make the event run smoothly. I am blessed to see how God is working in our lives and bringing us together in ministries like AWANA.

AWANA Commander, John Gersick



I received an email from my growing-up pastor not too long ago. He's retired, enjoying his grandkids and whatever traveling he can fit in. Occasionally, he writes a devotional and sends it out. They are always delightful and challenging at the same time. This email came one early morning, asking if I had an Amazon account. I thought perhaps he had written a book and wanted to let me know how to get one. Instead, he said that he was having problems with his bank and needed to send some gift cards over the internet to a friend whose birthday was that day. He wanted me to buy them and send them on his behalf. He wanted to be \$200 generous with this birthday gift as well. Translation? Someone hacked his account. Someone figured out his password, stole his account, and was now sending out emails to scam his friends and colleagues.

I don't know if we pastors are being targeted or as a profession we are too trusting with easy passwords. He's the 5th pastor that month that I have received such a request from. One pastor (whom I know to be in a nursing home right now) "emailed" me, telling me he was in jail in Italy and needed bail money. I can't tell you how many overseas princes or orphanages I could help while getting thousands of dollars for myself if I just sent up front money, too. If they

So before I go any further here, just for future reference: I will never ask for money or something like it for any reason in an email, in a text message, or even in a phone call. With artificial intelligence growing at exponential rates and with deep fake creations, it might even sound like me. If I'm asking for money or gift cards or anything like it, it's not me. The church has always been generous to my care and if I ended up with a need, it would be most ethical to take that need to the Deacons, not to individuals in the church. That even includes missions type giving or specific needs within the church. Never unsolicited to an individual for church purposes and never ever ever would I approach an individual congregant to help meet a personal financial need of mine.

were real, I'd be a millionaire in an afternoon.

But why am I really telling you this? Because I believe that as things like inflation continue to rise and hope and morality continue to dwindle, scammers like this will increase. And this can even include people we know and love—trying to hold our relationship hostage, demanding money and resources because, "Grandma, this next thing is going to be what sets me up." Or "Grandpa, If I don't get this money, I'm going to jail." Or "Dad/Mom, if you love me, you'll tap into your retirement and help me out here." We, as believers, are called to be generous. We care called to give sacrificially. We are called to love one another as Christ loves the church. What do we do with people who claim need but really just don't want to work? And before I go too far there, there are people who claim to need help *and really need it, too*. We are not to judge. We are to be discerning, though.

How do we do that, though?

I think the first thing is to identify the genuine need. The most important need that every single human being has is a need for a personal relationship with God. A person can go around 3 weeks without food. Three days without water. Around three weeks minutes without air. But they can't spend a single eternal second in Heaven without Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, the life. No one comes unto the Father except through me. (John 14:6)"

Sometimes God sets up some pretty tough circumstances to get people to a place where they can only turn to Him. When we jump in and "rescue" them, we can get in God's way. No one wants to see someone suffer. But it is often in our suffering when we see our need for God the clearest. **So question #1 is this: Is my help here going to impede this person's relationship with God?** If they are scamming you, the answer is automatically "Yes, it's going to get in the way." If they are guilting you, the answer is automatically, "Yes, it is going to get in the way."

Question #2 is this: Have I prayed about it? I am reminded of Joshua in the Old Testament—Joshua 9, to be exact. The Gibeonite people tricked Joshua into believing they were a people far, far away. They looked like they were telling the truth. They sounded the part. Everything checked out, except Joshua and the leadership didn't check it out with God. The result was that the people who were supposed to be far, far away were in the next town and escaped God's judgment because Joshua thought he didn't need God to make this decision. Pray about it. If someone doesn't give you the time to pray about it for a couple of days, it's not a good sign.

One passage I use to pray through frequently when I get stuck on what God wants me to do is James 3:17. I walk myself down the list in prayer asking, is what I am being asked to do pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere? But I also must remind myself that I am not God sent to solve people's problems. I am an ambassador that serves *the God who could solve their problems* and God can say, "No." He told Paul "No" when Paul asked to be released from his thorn. Jesus told Peter, "No" when he tried to take on the Jewish Temple guards with a fish scaler.

Continued...

The Father even told Jesus “No” when He asked for the cup of his death to pass him by. When it comes from God, “No” is a complete and godly sentence. Nothing to be ashamed of, regardless of whatever fall out might happen next. It’s OK to say, “No” when it’s the right answer.

Question #3 is this: Have I sought godly counsel on this? The second wisest man ever to walk the planet once wrote, “A cord of three strands is not easily broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:12)” King Solomon was referring to the need to get wise counsel before making a decision. He also said, “With many counselors, there is victory. (Proverbs 11:14, 15:22)” What often happens with people who are trying to scam you is that they make it an emergency that has to be solved yesterday. That’s just plain manipulation. There are actually very few problems that cannot wait until tomorrow, especially when there are sizable sums of money involved. As a pastor, I see many people from the community come into my office wanting me to help them with their utilities or rent. They hand me a service-disconnection notice or an eviction notice, usually dated a month previous. They attempt to create a crisis that makes me feel like I have to solve right there. That crisis can cloud wisdom in action. The question becomes, “How fast can I fix this?” rather than “Is this God’s will?” The switching of questions will throw you off course every time. Telling them I need to talk with some people and will get back to them in a day or two doesn’t make them happy, but the ones in genuine crisis will understand. Know this: The deacons and I can be that counsel if you need someone to bounce something off of. An outside godly voice is important here.

For those who might seek to take advantage of us, we need to keep reminding ourselves that they are slaves of the evil one, or at least influenced by him. They are to be prayed for, not people to hate (John 8:44, 2 Corinthians 4:4). I’m not saying you have to engage them. Don’t continue the conversation with them, but maybe start a conversation *about* them with Someone else. What I am saying is at least pray for them. You cannot fix them. You cannot save them. But God can. Pray for them. Forgive them. Stick to your boundaries, but don’t let their attempt to use you plant a seed of bitterness. Don’t buy into the lie that you have to give them what they want so that eventually you can reach them. God has a wonderful plan for them. If He can turn Saul the persecutor into Paul the missionary, He can do the same for them. Pray for that outcome.

And finally, don’t let such attempts dampen your hope. Don’t let it callous your generosity. God has blessed us to bless others. Remind yourself when someone attacks, that “Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. (1 John 4:4)” Remind yourself that you are more than a conqueror through Him who loves you so. (Romans 8:37) Yes, our broken world is falling apart, but this isn’t our world. We have a citizenship elsewhere. And we have a God who will carry us through to that point. This is just a “light and momentary trouble that is achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. (2 Cor 4:17)”

In Christ,



April Mission Emphasis 2024

Summer Camp

Camp is a great way for your children to challenge themselves, learn about God, and build great friendships all in a safe environment. This is a place where staff truly care about each and every one of your children and will do their best to get them closer to God. There are also many activities to keep your children entertained, rope courses, hiking, outside games, and inside games.

One week that can change your life. This is a camp slogan that is very true. There have been quite a few kids who have accepted God through camp. Camp is a great way for kids to find more people to be a part of their support system, “It takes a village to raise a child.”

Caring Adults

Activities that your kids will remember

More the merrier, everyone has a place with God at camp

Positive! This is a great place for kids to build a positive relationship with Jesus



The last couple of weeks have been busy at FBC.

The Passover meal held on March 23 was well attended. Chris and Jim Steinmeyer did a wonderful job setting the scene for this Jewish celebration. Chris has published a book called "Revealed, The Passover Seder Haggadah". Pastor Darren has copies in his library if anyone would like to check one out.

Sunday March 24th was Palm Sunday. The children of the church led the service with the traditional waving of the palms, a narrated skit, scripture, and music. They did a wonderful job! (A big thanks to John Gersick for pulling this all together.)

March 29th was Good Friday. FBC hosted this years Community Good Friday Service.

Easter morning we celebrated with a joyous sunrise service which was held under our new church pavilion. Easter brunch provided a time of fellowship and celebration, which continued over to our 10 o'clock morning service. We celebrated, for on that day Christ arose from the grave. HALLELUJAH!



Congratulations Pastor Evan!

Evan Mendenhall has been involved with our church since he was a child. Growing up he knew he wanted to become a pastor. After high school he attended college and began working to make that dream come true. The Lamar First Baptist Church locally licensed Evan in 2021. He became our Digital Ministry Pastor, and is currently leading a Sunday school class. He continued with his schooling and graduated in December.

Evan recently shared with us that he has been called to serve as the Senior Pastor at the Flagler Baptist Church in Flagler, Colorado. He and his family will begin transitioning to Flagler over the next couple of months. He will start his new job the first part of June.

Evan, although we are sad you will be leaving us, we are so proud of your accomplishments. Take the love you have for the Lord and "Go give 'em Heaven."
Your church family will be praying for you as you start this new journey.



March 3
 Sunday School.....38
 In Person Worship.....136
 Online.....46
Total 170

Awana Club.....63

March 10
 Sunday School.....39
 In Person Worship.....109
 Online.....45
Total 154

Awana Club..... 49

March 17
 Sunday School.....41
 In Person Worship.....111
 Online.....41
Total 152

Awana Club.....64

March 24
 Sunday School.....52
 In Person Worship.....167
 Online.....40
Total 207

Awana Club.....55

March 31
 Not recorded at time of publication.



2024 Delivery Dates

April 10-12
 May 8-10
 June 12-14
 July 10-12
 August 14-16
 September 11-13
 October 9-11
 November 13-15
 December 11-13

Meals on Wheels is in need of delivery drivers and subs. If you have 1 1/2 hours one day a month please give Anita Larrick a call at 719-940-1266

To the First Baptist Church,
 God bless each one of you that contributed to bless neighbors in need- whether through the Deacon's fund, missions offering, or Awana's food drive. Sparrow House is celebrating the tenth year of ministry and that has been possible only by the grace of God and the outpouring of love from the community.

Galatians 6:2 **"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ".**

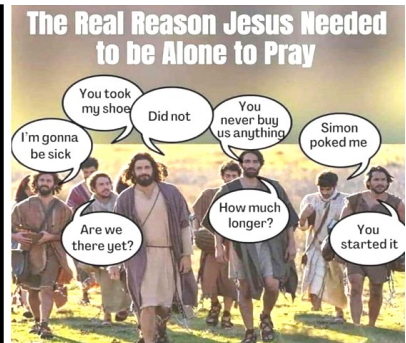
May He be glorified in Lamar by our love for each other.

Thank you!
 From all of us at Sparrow House Ministries



To my First Baptist Church Family,
 I would like to say hello and thank you for the cards you send to me. I have been gone a long time but appreciate being remembered. I miss all of you so much.

Cheryl Adkins



There is always something exciting going on at FBC. Use the QR code FBC Lamar App to access past sermons, or download a sermon to listen to offline later. Keep up to date on announcements, events and prayer concerns.

First Baptist Church



The QR code Offering Plate takes you directly to our online giving site. Give a one time offering or set up recurring giving.



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Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in **spirit**, for theirs is the **kingdom** of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the **meek**, for they will **inherit** the **earth**. Blessed are those who **hunger** and **thirst** for righteousness, for they will be **filled**. Blessed are the **merciful**, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in **heart**, for they will see God. **Blessed** are the **peacemakers**, for they will be called **children** of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of **heaven**. Blessed are you when **people** insult you, **persecute** you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. **Rejoice** and be glad, because **great** is your **reward** in heaven, for in the **same** way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.