

First Baptist Church
1600 S. Main Street
Lamar, Colorado 81052
(719) 336-4953
www.lamarfbc.org

The MESSENGER

Volume 56 · February 2023

Non-Profit
Organization
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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 5:30p-7:00p
- ◆ YOUTH GROUP
Wednesdays 6:30p-8:00p



2023

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| February 5 | Mail Night |
| February 12 | Lots of Food Night |
| February 19 | Encourage a Friend |
| February 26 | Fruit of the Spirit Night |

We are looking for 1 or 2 people that could be a back-up in our bus ministry when our regulars are not available. If you are able to give a hand please let the office know.

February Mission Emphasis Care Net Pregnancy Center

Parenthood is filled with blessings and challenges. Without support, new parents can feel overwhelmed or alone. Care Net offers parenting classes, Bible studies, baby supplies and equipment. There is no cost to qualifying parents. Every client that comes through the doors is offered a Bible and is invited to the Bible studies. The parenting classes are offered to both mothers and fathers. The incentive to those that complete the program is a new crib or car seat. Each crib with mattress costs the center \$168, and car seats are \$50 each. If both parents complete the class, they will receive a crib and a car seat. Our goal this month is to help provide Care Net with the funds to purchase Commentary Bibles, car seats and cribs. Your offering to this mission is greatly appreciated.



The Shema. It's pronounced shem-AH like gem, except with a "sh" at the beginning and then the emphasis is on the AH late the end, like you just had a cold drink of water on a hot day. Shema.

The Shema has been called the most fundamental statement of the Jewish faith. As soon as a child can talk, they learn this. One could say that the only thing that would make a dad prouder than hearing "dada" is to hear his child say the Shema. It was, and still is, said every morning and evening by devout Jewish families. It is also every devout Jew's plan to be the last thing they say before passing away. What is this Shema? It's found in Deuteronomy 6.

"Hear O Israel. The Lord, The Lord our God is one.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind."

It's also found in Luke 10, when a Jewish teacher challenged Jesus about what the most important rule was. When Jesus turned the question around, the teacher responded with the Shema and added to it the command to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus affirmed the teacher's answer and did so so convincingly that the teacher felt the need to step back a bit. He and Jesus couldn't agree, could they? So he asked a defining question. "Jesus, who exactly is my neighbor?"

Jesus answered with a story—a story that we are all very familiar with. It was the story of the Good Samaritan. In the story, Jesus goes out of his way to show who was and who wasn't the poor, beaten up and "left for dead" guy's neighbor. It wasn't the religious leaders—the ones that knew and enforced all the rules. In fact, it was their rules that gave them the excuses they needed to not be helpful. A stranger was the guy's neighbor. It was someone whose people didn't like the people the beaten up guy grew up with and identified as. It was the people who the beaten up guy would have avoided in any other circumstance.

I think Jesus made it a point to let us know in the story that the Samaritan never visited the guy in person while he was healing. The reason was simple. The Jew who got beat up would have had a meltdown because someone of the likes of a Samaritan touched him. Yet, the Samaritan was the one who loved his neighbor as himself.

As a culture, we have set aside February as a month to honor and celebrate love with good old Valentines Day. Jesus spent a lot of time talking about love. But I think we often forget what he taught and easily fall back into the way the world thinks about love. Matthew 5:43-48 records Jesus telling us that if you love just your friends, you are no different from the pagans. We are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Jesus also said that the world out there would know that we are his disciples because of our love for one another (John 13:35).

And what we often forget is that our love for God is directly tied to our love for our neighbors—whether they are our friends in need or our enemies. To love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength—as the Shema teaches, means to love what God loves. That includes those who you don't agree with. That includes those who can be hurtful. That includes those who have let you down. Do you have to trust them? No. Trust and love are two different things.

It was love that made the Samaritan stop and help a cultural enemy who was in need. It was love that caused the early church to pool their resources so that people they had never met before could learn more about Christ after Pentecost. It was love that caused Corrie Ten Boom to pray for the soldiers at the concentration camp. It was love that caused Nate Saint to land his plane and approach the Huaorani people and find the tip of their spear before he could say, "Hello." It is love that causes people to give to the Ministerial Alliance or the One Great Hour of Sharing campaigns to fund ways of helping people in need. Is it love for the people or is a love of God that compels such things? The answer is "yes."

And this love doesn't come with strings. It's not a "I scratch your back so someday you can scratch mine." The actions that come from this love begin and end with this statement: "I love ya with the love of the Lord."

There are two things in that Luke passage that really challenge me. The first one is in the Shema itself. "Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, ALL your mind, and ALL your strength." All is a pretty big percentage. Loving someone can take a lot out of a person, especially if they are one of those "difficult to love" people.

(continued...)

All means all. You cannot love God and hate someone that He loves. The second thing that stands out is how easy it is to create rules that protect me from loving people. The priest? Couldn't touch him because that would mean he wouldn't be able to do his job in the temple. Wait a minute! Isn't it his job to be helpful to people? Same thing with the Levite. It was the rules that people made up about their religion that gave them the excuse to avoid loving others. It's the same thing we do. We don't want to "enable," so we leave them hurting in the gutter. We don't want to be associated with "evil" so we give those in need a wide berth. They wouldn't be open to the Gospel, so we are just throwing our money away by helping them. We have to be responsible. If we helped everyone in need, we wouldn't have anything left for ourselves. All "rules" we have created to make us feel better about not being loving.

All of that is true, but this is also true. Can you imagine a world where Christians lived in such a way that they just couldn't wait to love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength by loving others? Can you imagine how many people would find the love of God by experiencing it through the hands, feet and voice of every believer? If we could love like the Samaritan did in Jesus' story...If we could do that consistently...If we all could do it together and cooperatively...What could stand in the way of a massive revival in our world?

And even if there wasn't a massive revival in the land. What about a revival in the poor, beaten up Jew in Jesus' story? You cannot convince me he didn't see Samaritans differently when he found out who his rescuer was. You cannot convince me he didn't see Christ a bit more clearly because of one man's love of a fellow human being played out in real time. We can be world changers with one loving act at a time. And if you can't get past how unlovable the person is that God calls you to love, then don't do it for them. Do it for the God you are to love with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength.

In God's love,

Pasta Dave

Mark your calendars and plan to attend an evening filled with food, fellowship and faith!

GUESS  
Who's Coming to
DINNER 

The church will be hosting its first "Dinner Church" on Tuesday, February 2, 2023. The first gathering will be for families with young children. This group will continue to meet at 6:00pm on the first Thursday of every month. Childcare will be provided.

On the last Thursday of every month, everyone 60 and older is invited to "Dinner Church". Their first gathering will be held on Thursday, February 23, at 6:00pm. We encourage you to invite a neighbor or a friend to join you.

Honorable Mentions in Right Now Media:



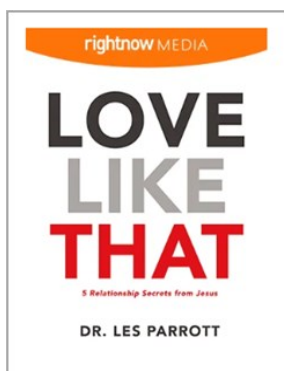
What comes to mind when you think about your neighbors? Maybe you don't know them very well or, if you're honest, maybe you think the lady across the street is a bit weird. For many of us, it can be tempting to keep our distance and mind our own business in our neighborhood. But is that really how God wants us to live?

As followers of Jesus, we've been called to love both God and our neighbors. It's easier said than done, but if we push past the fear, time barriers, and pride that can keep us from engaging with others, we can build deep connections with the people in our neighborhood and, most importantly, please God.

In this four-session series based on their book *The Art of Neighboring*, Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon help us focus on the people within our neighborhood and learn what it means to be a good neighbor. They discuss the importance of pushing through the uncomfortable feelings that come with communicating, investing in, and caring for the people who live near us. What would our communities look like if we took Jesus's command to love our neighbors as ourselves seriously?



What matters in life? We live in a day where we feel busier in our lives than ever and yet, we don't necessarily feel more fulfilled. With so many demands and so much information coming at us, it can be difficult to know WHAT MATTERS. So, what does matter? THIS MATTERS! In this six-week group experience you can discover how to live with purpose and it starts with discovering what matters



Let's be honest. How many times have you fallen short at being a good friend, a wise parent, or a self-giving spouse because you didn't love—truly love—at the highest level? It's tough. We're bound to fail. The bar is so high, especially if you aspire to love like Jesus. But it's not impossible.

As followers of Jesus, we were meant to radically love those around us and give the world a glimpse of what God is like. But this is easier said than done. What does it actually mean to love like Jesus? And why do we so quickly get bogged down in our own selfishness, sin, and futile efforts?

In this 6-part Bible study series, Dr. Les Parrott examines Jesus's life and character traits to give practical definition to what it means to love like Jesus. The Holy Spirit invites us to trade detachment, exclusivity, judgment, fear, and self-concern for mindfulness, approachability, grace, boldness, and self-giving. He empowers us to love like Jesus, and frees us to experience genuine joy.

Aren't signed up for Right Now Media? It's free and easy. Call the church office at 719-336-4953 and provide us with an email address. We'll send you a link and you'll be on your way. You will have access to over 20,000 Biblical videos. Videos pertaining to marriage, parenting, youth, recovery, leadership, finances, and much more. All media can be accessed 24/7, on any device. You will have the ability to download resources and use them anywhere. If you like to listen to audio books when you travel, Right Now Media has you covered there too!

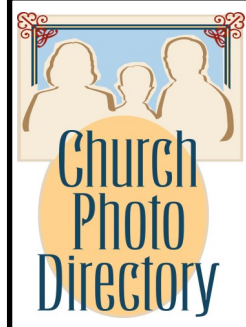


**Last
Month
at Our
Church**



Jeff and Crystal Flint have come seeking membership as baptized believers.
Welcome Jeff and Crystal to the First Baptist Family.

January 1	
Awana Clubs.....	0
Sunday School.....	0
In Person Worship.....	66
Online.....	64
Total	130
January 8	
Awana Clubs.....	45
Sunday School.....	42
In Person Worship.....	107
Online.....	64
Total	171
January 15	
Awana Clubs.....	47
Sunday School.....	37
In Person Worship.....	135
Online.....	30
Total	165
January 22	
Awana Clubs.....	49
Sunday School.....	30
In Person Worship.....	90
Online.....	66
Total	156
January 29	
Not recorded at time of publication.	



We are publishing a new church directory. John Gersick and Emily Garcia will be taking pictures after church on January 29th and February 5th. There will be no cost for the directory photo. You will also have the option to take another individual or family photo for yourself. This too will be done at no charge but a donation to the youth program will be accepted. Call the church to get signed up.

If you are not able to come to the church, you can email a photo of your choice to be put in the directory.
You can also call the church to have John or Emily stop by and take a photo of you.
Call the church at 719-336-4953 or email to fbclamar@hotmail.com.

We are looking for someone interested in taking over the Operation Christmas Child Coordinator position. We must have someone in place to continue as this areas drop off location. Call Kammie for more info.

Evan Mendenhall is organizing a sound board training. If you are interested in learning a little bit about the sound board operations please contact Evan or the church office. A training date will be announced soon.

To First Baptist Church,
Thank you so much for your support to the Kodiak Baptist Mission.
Johnny Walker, Director

To the First Baptist Church,
Care net would like to thank our church family for their support for the many years they have helped with our ministry. We are very appreciative of the giving, mission support, the many baby bottles filled with money, the support with community events, prayers, and the willingness to help whenever we ask. Blessings to each of you for assisting us!
Sincerely,
Care Net Pregnancy Center



S E V E I L E B D E R L Y
 O T H E R G Q N V G E A L
 R O M A N S A E Y O H N P
 N Y F G X M R A O D T R E
 G S E Q M Y V Z U B O E E
 H A N O T H E R M Z R T D
 L S C H J R Z B Z Q B E N
 D U I S B R E V O R P H W
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 W F L I I P I R L O V E D
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 D O O G G F W J O D F W G

LOVE

John 15:12: My **command** is this: Love each **other** as I have loved you.

Luke 6:31: Do to others as **you** would have them do to you.

Corinthians 16:14: Do **everything** in love.

Proverbs 17:17: A **friend** loves at all times, and a **brother** is born for adversity.

John 3:16: For God so **loved** the **world**, that he gave his only Son, that whoever **believes** in him should not **perish** but have **eternal** life.

1 John 4:7: Dear friends, let us love one **another**, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been **born** of God and knows **God**.

1 John 4:8: **Whoever** does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 Peter 4:8: Above all, love each other **deeply**, because love covers over a multitude of **sins**.

Romans 12:9: Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; **cling** to what is **good**.