



THE WINDOW

A publication of The First Baptist Church of Ahoskie, North Carolina

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June 9, 2021

No. 11

Strategy

Did you hear what I said in my Pentecost sermon on May 23, 2021? The comment, within the context of the whole sermon, was, perhaps, not overly significant. However, when my words are considered by themselves, it becomes clear that I showed my cards on May 23. In the opening to the sermon, I said, “I am trying to change our church culture.” Wow! It is a bold move to attempt to change some aspect of a congregation’s culture. It is even bolder to just come out and say it. However, since the cat is out of the bag, I would like to expound upon these words from May 23.

As stated, I want to change our church’s overall attitude towards Sunday morning worship gatherings. My desire is to convert our current approach to Sunday morning worship of “I’ll be there if I am in town” to “I’ll be in town so I can participate in Sunday morning worship with *my* church family.” Of course, no one can be present for Sunday morning worship *every* Sunday, myself included. Sickness occurs. Vacations are needed. When grandchildren are baptized, grandparents need to be there. However, a large percentage of our congregation simply misses too much church! I do not know the exact number for when the line is crossed and we then begin to miss too much church. Nonetheless, some time ago I challenged our church membership to miss no more than 12 Sundays in a year. I suspect 12 Sundays is a bit high. However, in light our current secular culture, it is a good start. Take a moment and think about the energy and atmosphere and vitality that would be in our sanctuary on Sunday mornings if all 267 of our resident church members missed, on average, only 1 Sunday a month.

So, my goal is to change our church culture from one of “I’ll be there if I am in town” to “I’ll be in

town so I can participate in Sunday morning worship with *my* church family.” Now, how do I do this? What is my strategy? First, I pray. As I stated in another recent sermon, you are a prayed for congregation. And second, I work hard to pass on to you my understanding of gathered worship. In other words, I want you to have a deep and nuanced understanding of what we do when we worship God, through Christ, together.

To this end, have you noticed that my pastoral sentences have been the same for the past month? We begin worship with these words: “We gather not to be blessed, but to bless. We gather not to receive, but to give. We gather to bless God and to give thanks and praise to God for the life, ministry, death, resurrection, and coming again of Jesus the Christ. Now let us be about our business. Amen.” I have also taught you, again from the Pentecost sermon, that when we gather we fight the powers of evil. The worship of God does great damage to the evil that inspires racism, child abuse, sexual immorality, greed, idolatry, and all other sins against God and our fellow human beings. I continue to lay before you the reality that the gathered worship of God is the most important task the church carries out. Just as no other institution offers the Trinity and baptism to humankind, the church alone is primarily responsible for offering gathered (in person!) worship to God. Indeed, gathered worship is one of the healthiest activities we humans engage in together. It is proper for us to acknowledge that God is God and we are not. If we do not worship God, we will worship something. The worship of anyone or anything other than God is a slippery slope.

It is *imperative* to me that the 267 resident members of FBC Ahoskie gather every Sunday in our sanctuary for the worship of God. We should average over 200 people in worship on Sundays. However, not just for the sake of the number. It is equally

imperative to me that our church membership understand, and believe, why it is so important that we gather every Sunday for the worship of God in our sanctuary. The church, at heart, is a community that worships God together. Simply put, worship is what we do!

In Christ,
Paul R. Gilliam III

Church Conference Voting Results

On Sunday, June 6, a Church Conference was held for the purpose of voting on two questions:

1. What is the congregation's pleasure regarding the number of votes required to pass the recommendation to change the times for Sunday School and worship? A simple majority, i.e. 51%, or a super majority, i.e., 60%?

Voting Results: Super Majority

2. Shall we move the Sunday School time from 10:00 AM to 9:00 AM; and the worship time from 11:00 AM to 10:00 AM?

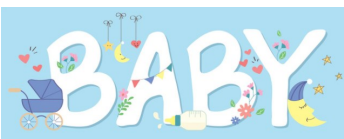
Voting Results: No

Worship Leaders Needed



The church staff is grateful for all the congregants who are willing to serve as worship leaders. Be it children, teens, or adults, our worship experience is enriched by their leadership.

Perhaps some of you would like to serve in this way but have not been asked. If that's you, please let Rev. Thompson know of your interest. We'd love to give every willing person the opportunity.



We would like to offer our congratulations to Elizabeth & David Davis on welcoming their daughter, Virginia Beale Davis, to the world on Tuesday, June 8, 2021. The proud big brother is Pace; and the overjoyed grandparents are Nat & Lou Riddick. May the Lord bless Virginia and her family with His love always.



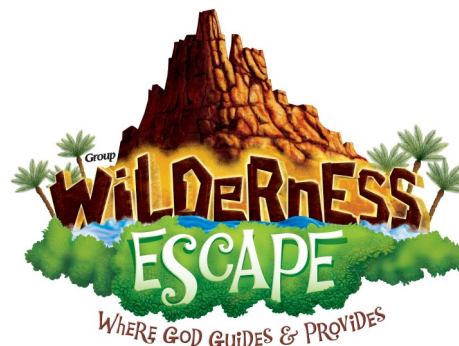
Worshiping Together June 13, 2021

Third Sunday After Pentecost
11:00 AM

When It Happens
Daniel 3:19-27

Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam

Summer Church Camp 2021



July 12-15
5:15 PM – 8:00 PM

Children will . . .

- Discover truths straight from Moses—one of the Bible's greatest God-followers.
- Caravan with Moses and the Israelites as they escape Egypt.
- See, hear, touch, and even taste what it might have been like to live in the Bible-times wilderness.

Ages & Grades

Age 3 (by 8/31/21) to Grade 5
(2021-22 school year)

Registration

Registration forms are available in the church office, will be emailed or mailed upon request, or you may register online by copying and pasting the following link.

<https://forms.gle/yMKcYPYk4ikxbAR49>

Registration Deadline

July 5

Volunteer Needs

Speak with Rev. Thompson if you are willing to volunteer.

From the Associate Pastor

As we continue to return to more of our normal church ministries and activities, several of us have had a good chuckle over our difficulty in remembering what we used to do and how we did it! After 14 months of a very different routine, the different became the norm.

Though I'm very glad to see so much of the "normal" returning, I'm trying not to automatically resume a practice or activity just because it's what I use to do. For instance, before the pandemic, I ate a majority of my meals at restaurants. During, I cooked at home and realized that, for the most part, the meals I prepared for myself at home were a good bit healthier. So, I'm still cooking a lot of my meals at home. Before the pandemic I had gotten out of the habit of practicing the piano. During, practicing the piano became a spiritual practice which helped sooth my pandemic laden soul. So far, I'm still practicing!

As we work our way out of the pandemic, I think it would be wise for us as individuals and as a church to try and discern what of the "normal" still works well for us, what doesn't, and what new practices and/or activities we might take on in order to mature as disciples of Christ. Perhaps it would be helpful to ask questions like:

- What resources are available to help me with the discipline of personal bible study?
- How can I nurture a stronger prayer life?
- In what ways can I use my gifts to serve the church? The community?
- What concerns do I have for my community, and how can my faith intersect with those concerns in order to make a difference?
- What resources are available to help establish formative faith practices in my home?
- What new ministries might God be inviting our church to begin?



From September 2020 through May 2021, I participated in a clergy collective whose purpose was to

ask questions like these and so many more. Every time we met the leader would ask us the same question: "Why would you and your church want to return to pre-pandemic practices when those practices were not helping reverse the significant decline of the Christian church in America?" Why, indeed.

Grace & peace,

In Sympathy



We offer our sympathy to the family of Sarah Mizelle who passed away on May 31st. Her funeral was held on June 3, 2021.

Memorial Service



A memorial service for Grady Sumner, late husband of Sophia Sumner, will be held on Sunday, June 20, 2021, at 12:30 PM at First Baptist church of Ahooskie.

Stewardship Statement

June 6, 2021

Weekly Need	\$ 8,755.72
Weekly Offering	\$ 15,938.76
Difference	\$ 7,183.04
YTD Needs	\$ 201,381.56
YTD Offerings	\$ 201,074.07
YTD Difference	\$ -307.49
Capital Campaign Offering	\$ 25,125.00
Benevolence Offering	\$ 435.00

Thank you for your generous gifts!

SERVING IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST

Week of June 13-19, 2021

Minister on Call

Rev. Dr. Trey Gilliam, 398-7321
trey@fbcahoskie.org

Deacons on Call

Don Joyner, 396-1957
Penny Rose, 287-4482

Extended Session - June 13

Babies: Cheryl Slachta & Joyce Leary
Ages 1 & 2: Lyndsay Britt, Leah Woodard
& Isabella Woodard
Ages 3-5: William & Heather Alexander

Ushers - June 13

Heath Britt, Duck Harrell, Camille Pierce,
Pate Pierce, Lane Slachta & Carroll Thompson

Sound System - June 13

Chris Slachta

Floral Offering - June 13

Oliver Fleming & Family

Home Delivered Meals - June 14

Austine Evans & Mary Ann Umphlett

Food Pantry - June 18

Kay Byrd & Vicky Overman

Week of June 20-26, 2021

Minister on Call

Rev. Anita Thompson, 395-0061
anita@fbcahoskie.org

Deacons on Call

Carolyn Arrington, 395-2175
Bill Magette, 209-4676

Extended Session - June 20

Babies: Nancy Cobbs & Judy H. Pierce
Ages 1 & 2: Alex & Sarah Grace Britton
Ages 3-5: Harriet & Avery Byrum

Ushers - June 20

Kay Byrd, Pike Harrington, Nat Riddick,
Peggy Springfield, Justice Zoch & Reagan Zoch

Sound System - June 20

Brandon Zoch

Floral Offering - June 20

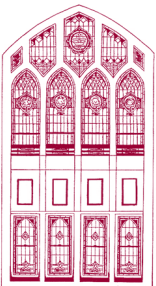
Spencer & Dolores Matthews

Home Delivered Meals - June 21

Noreen Hannon & Joyce Leary

Food Pantry - June 25

Arthur Brown



The Window

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