

First Baptist Church of Peoria
Engaging Minds and Hearts
FIRST BAPTIST NEWS



AUGUST 14, 2018

ABOUT WAR

By Dr. Rodney Kennedy

During the Civil War battle at Vicksburg, Mississippi, my ancestor, General (his name not his rank,) sent a letter home to his mother. In graphic details he described the horrors of war and said what millions have said: "War is hell." I still have that letter, not because I have any lingering romanticism about the "Lost Cause," but because General was family and just as importantly, he told the truth about war.

With the advent of 24/7 news coverage, war has lost its sense of reality. During the Iraq War we watched precision smart-bombs drop on Iraqi homes. A sense of detachment dominated our minds, followed by a sense of boredom. Television seamlessly morphs news of war with reality shows and whatever the Kardashians are doing this week. The horror of war has been replaced with its entertainment value. Unless one of our family members is actually in the war, we are mostly unaffected. War never enters the living room where we sit in a recliner, drink Bud Light and announce to no one how much better a job we could do running the country.

I have risked boring you with talk of war attitudes because there's a biblical analogy. The New Testament writers warn us that we are engaged in a cosmic war between good and evil. The symbolic language that is used, known as apocalyptic, stretches the bounds of human imagination to get our attention. By and large, we live and act as if the war is just between the pages of the Bible. In other words, we might as well be watching it on television, where we can't tell the difference between actual reporting of battles and a war movie.

Perhaps we shy away from the triumphalism of the Gospel or the Johannine and Pauline imagery of spiritual and cosmic warfare. Don't we tend to leave all that emotionalism to the Pentecostals? After all, we are an educated, sophisticated people who keep our religion private and don't get carried away. We don't want anyone thinking that we didn't go to a good school.

Someone needs to turn off the television and realize what is happening around us. We are a church, like the one in the book of Revelation, that needs to wake up. There is conflict between a sphere of created autonomy that strives against God on the one hand and the saving love of God in time on the other. If we remain mostly apathetic to the evil that surrounds us, we will not notice that the age is ruled by spiritual and terrestrial "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" (Colossians 1:16, I Corinthians 2:8, Ephesians 1:21; 3:10), by "the elements of the world" (Galatians 4:3), and by "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). These forces contend against us. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

The cosmos is divided into two forces: the community of life, light and truth versus the community of death, darkness and lies. Whatever we make of these visions, and I hope we will easily discard the silly literalism that often attaches to these New Testament writings, we should see this as a wake-up call to jar us from any vestiges of what the ancient church called ACEDIA (sloth and indifference). As we do our Christian work, let us do it with full awareness that we are striking blows for life, light, and truth. When we bake a cake, weed a flower bed, cut down a tree, visit a neighbor, care for the sick, provide for the poor, care for children, assist with the education of others, make a gift of money, teach a class, worship God in spirit and truth, when we do all this and a thousand other Christian practices, let us do it in awareness that we are fighting the good fight and keeping the faith. We are throwing the light of the world into the face of the encroaching darkness. We show up on Sunday morning to worship God so that the light might shine in the darkness of violence. This is one reason why it is so necessary for us to worship God faithfully. We can't fight the good fight if we refuse to even show up for roll call.

I read about a small country church that had a huge plywood panel behind and to the side of the pulpit. The panel was filled with light sockets, and under each socket was a church member's name. When a church member came to church, she would take a light bulb and place it in the socket above her name. At the start of the service the pastor would hit a switch and the lights would pop on. Those who were absent didn't have a light.

Now do you understand what's at stake here? On Sunday, August 26th, in my sermon on cosmic war, I will do everything in my power to help you grasp what is at stake and why you need to be involved in every possible way. There will be no plywood contraption in our chancel, but I will expect to see you there.

Contact Us:

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WORSHIP SERVICES

10:00 A.M. WORSHIP & CHILDREN'S SS ■ 11:00 A.M. FELLOWSHIP TIME

AUGUST 19, 2018, 13TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST "BREAD AS WORD AND SACRAMENT "

John 6:51-58

Reading John 6 has always challenged Baptists and Catholics. At times Jesus seems to say that the bread is the bread of Holy Communion. At other times he seems to say that the bread is the word from God. With our usual sense of either/or we have squared off in "holy" battle about this idea for as long as there have been Baptists and Catholics. What if Jesus meant both word and sacrament? What if the problem is not with what Jesus says but with how we have read Jesus?

Music: "Even If" —Higher Ground

Welcome Center: Richard & Barb Petroski

AUGUST 26, 2018, 14TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST "A COSMIC BATTLE BIGGER THAN STAR WARS"

Ephesians 6:10-20

The New Testament writers insist that we are at war — a cosmic war — that determines the fate of the universe. Why are we so attracted to movie thrillers like Star Wars and yet so detached from New Testament apocalyptic scenarios? Rather than read the New Testament texts literally, we are going to read them metaphorically and symbolically. There is a cosmic war, and too many church members are casualties of that war. Let's see what we can do to get back on track.

Music: "Abide In Me" —Praise Band

Welcome Center: Bonna Zimmerman

PRAYER CONCERNS

Bruce Ingersoll	Betty Frank	Sharon Stanard
Dottie White	Rose Kimpling	Ruth Turner
Pam Orrill	Jim Ashton	Marvin Olson
Rosemary Walk	Alyssa Russell	Wally Webber
Mary Hinch	Jacquelyn Kellogg	June Fredell

Don Middleton (Jim Middleton's son)
Dick Sternberg (Jo Sternberg's husband)
Peter (Grandson of Brenda Shay)
Stephanie George (Brenda Shay's daughter)

DINING OUT

The Dining Out Group will meet on Friday, August 31st (date change), at 6:30 p.m. at Pizza Ranch, 4114 N. Brandywine Dr., Peoria. Please let John and Jen Dusek know if you will attend:

Cell Ph: (309) 231-6389

E-Mail: the_j_family@yahoo.com

A MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

On Sunday, August 12th, we welcomed the Reverend Dr. Robert Collins as leader of our worship service.

After worship on Sunday, August 19th, the congregation will meet and vote on calling Dr. Collins to become Senior Pastor for First Baptist Church of Peoria.

Any member unable to attend worship on August 12th can listen to Dr. Collins' sermon by visiting the church office during regular office hours. An audio file of the sermon is available on the church's website, fbcpeoria.org. Any member unable to attend the meeting on August 19th may obtain an absentee ballot from the church office during the week of August 13 through 17 during office hours. All absentee ballots should be returned to the church office before the August 19th meeting.

Wayne Nowlan
Moderator

FBC NIGHT OUT WITH THE PEORIA CHIEFS

Join us for a fun night of baseball at Dozer Park on Thursday, August 30th. Game time is 7:00 p.m., but don't be late. Our own Dr. Kennedy will throw out the first pitch! Dr. Rod played college and professional baseball when he was a young lad.

Tickets are \$10 and will be purchased at the box office. However, since only 30 tickets are available, we ask that you call the church office (309) 682-5491 and make reservations. Seats are directly behind the Chiefs dugout.

Fireworks immediately follow the game [They are fabulous!]

See you at the ball game!

Wayne Nowlan & Paul Grove

DISH PAK MINISTRY

It's time to begin our annual Dish Pak Ministry. We will once again be preparing boxes of dishes and kitchen utensils for those starting a new home or rebuilding after the loss of their home.

Your assistance is needed in the form of donated kitchen items, newspapers for packing and, as always, your time to help pack the boxes.

We will meet in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, September 12th, and Thursday, September 13th, to pack the boxes. Please support this ministry with your donations and time.

Thank you,
Deb McGlothlen



Yasmin Tadros

By Barb Drake

Yasmin Tadros is unique. It seems safe to say that no one at First Baptist Church has taken the same path to membership she has.

That path began in her home in Amman, Jordan, where she started a church that grew and eventually affiliated with the Brethren Assembly. When her journey detoured to Peoria nearly two years ago, she very much wanted to be part of a church because, she says, "It gives me comfort to be with believer people." She tried another church but left it because it celebrated communion by breaking bread too infrequently. At First Baptist she found a church that shares her beliefs, has good people and breaks bread monthly. She received the right hand of fellowship on August 5, 2018.

Among Yasmin's happiest memories of life in Amman is the work she did with refugee children for the Goethe Institut Jordanian, a German refugee support group, and the global humanitarian organization CARE. "I help kids," she recalls. "I make him feel happy. I give him toys. I read a story." The children she worked with were primarily from Syria and Iraq, and many had seen their parents or siblings killed. "They love me so much; always when they see me they hug me," she says. The work she did with the children was "the only thing I hate to leave" when her husband accepted a job in the United States. Thirty years later Jordan still deals with massive numbers of refugees from Middle East conflicts.

Yasmin was a young mother of one son when the family moved in 1989 to New Jersey, where they stayed three years. Then it was to Chicago just briefly, then Arkansas, then Florida and, in 1997, back to Jordan. "I don't want to go back," she recalls. "I want to stay here."

More than 20 years later she is here. She returned to the United States because she wanted to get away from Jordan and chose Peoria because two of her sons were living and working here. They were born in the United States and are citizens, as is a third son who now lives in the United Arab Emirates. She shares a home with her Peoria sons and her estranged husband, and that's not easy. She works a couple of hours daily at Chef Moussa, the restaurant on East Lake Street, where a group of our members enjoyed lunch earlier this summer. In her free time she loves to walk. She's working on improving her English – a skill she developed the first time she came to the United States but largely forgot over the two decades she then spent in Jordan.

Next month she heads back to Jordan, where she will help her oldest son's family when her second grandchild is born. This will be an especially momentous occasion, as she will be the first girl born into the next two generations of the Tadros family. She also will help a brother who is having heart surgery; she plans to stay about two months.

But she will be back to Peoria, she promises, hoping to find a job that will allow her to live on her own. And she intends for her unusual journey to continue through First Baptist Church.

This profile is part of a series on First Baptist Church's newest members and those who have held membership the longest. The series is the work of a church committee headed by Barb Drake. Please let her know if anyone has been overlooked.


First Baptist Church
OF PEORIA
Gathered in God's Word, Scattered to God's World
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THE MISSION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO MINISTER TO OUR CONGREGATION, THE COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD, SO THAT ALL MAY EXPERIENCE THE LOVE AND GRACE OF GOD.



The starting line-up (and injured reserve) of the final game of the softball season. The full team included 19 players this year.

FBC SOFTBALL 2018

The FBC Softball Season has come to a close, as we were eliminated from the playoffs on July 30. It was a very fun season, and we thank everyone who came out and supported the team!

—Mark Grizzard

FANTASY FOOTBALL SEASON BEGINS

The Annual Fantasy Football League begins in September! This online group consists of creating a fantasy team of NFL players, and then tracking their success in the real world as you compete against other fantasy teams. Sports expertise is a negligible factor. If you are interested in participating, please contact Mark Grizzard at markg@mtco.com.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Church Women United will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, September 7th, at the University United Methodist Church, 2818 N. University, Peoria. Please bring school supplies for the Church World Service bags.

Thelma Hopwood

SAVE THE DATE

Senior Net will hold their open house and registration on Saturday, August 25th, in Fellowship Hall, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It's a great time to look over their computer, smart phone and camera offerings and sign up for a class. Senior Net Classes are held here at the church and are free of charge to FBC members.