



NEWS & NOTES

First Baptist Church of Long Prairie, MN

July, August, September 2020

Deacon's Corner

Good to Great

I received a book several years ago called *Good to Great* by Jim Collins. I started reading it but didn't get far. It must not have been the right time to read it -- I wasn't into it. I kept hearing from podcasts and other books I've been reading that it is a must read. So, I recently gave it another try and now can't put it down. It is about a group of researchers who spent 10+ man years researching thousands of companies who have gone from good companies to great companies. They identified 11 companies who took similar steps to go from good to great.

The chapter I read today was so applicable for today's world. The chapter is titled: *Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith.)* The highlight of the chapter is the story of Admiral Jim Stockdale who was tortured over twenty times during an eight-year period in a prisoner-of-war camp during the Vietnam War. Jim Collins points out that we will all experience disappointments and crushing setbacks for which there is no reason.

The year 2020 is proving to be a year of disappointments and setbacks: COVID-19, the death of George Floyd and the ensuing riots and, closer to home, what Seth is going through. Upon reflection I am reminded that:

1. Life is short. James 4:14 reminds us that we do not know what tomorrow will look like. Our life is like a vapor that appears for a little while and disappears.
2. God is in control. According to Proverbs 19:21, Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails.
3. We need to live by faith. 2 Corinthians says, For we live by faith, not by sight.

The chapter ends with Admiral Stockdale teaching us that what separates people is not the presence or absence of difficulty, but how we deal with the inevitable difficulties of life. In wrestling with life's challenges, what has become known as the Stockdale Paradox (you must retain faith that you will prevail in the end and you must also confront the most brutal facts of your current reality) has proved powerful for coming back from difficulties not weakened, but stronger.

You can learn more about the Stockdale Paradox at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvWWO7F9kQY>

For the Deacons, Scott Bergman

Youth Page

The hand of the LORD was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

I said, "Sovereign LORD, you alone know." – Ezekiel 37:1-3

It really feels like we are living in a time of lifelessness. That we, as Ezekiel had, live in a valley of dry bones. It is mind-blowing to think that 2020 is nearly half over... but that's because it has yet to relent! From Australian brushfires, Middle East missile launches, COVID-19 pandemic, and the killing of George Floyd which has led an oppressed people to cry out for social justice... this time feels devoid of life in so many ways; that God has also "set [us] in the middle of a valley; it [is] full of bones."

But see how Ezekiel responds to God when asked if there's hope for these bones. "... You alone know."

Only God knows what is going to happen in our world. He has given us a few clues through prophecies in Scripture, but we mostly don't know what it's going to look like. *But...* we can take heart.

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. – John 16:33b

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. – Romans 8:28

God has a plan... May these tragedies lead us back to our Savior. Whether sick or healthy, fearful or foolish, white or people of color, all coming to Jesus united as one. God, we trust You!

You turn mourning to dancing
You give beauty for ashes
You turn shame into glory
You're the only one who can

You turn graves into gardens
You turn bones into armies
You turn seas into highways
You're the only one who can

-Graves Into Gardens by Elevation Worship-

Go bless,
Pastor Jonathan Finke

Family Ministries

The arrival of summer marks the end of the 2019-2020 school year, which will go down in history as truly unique. No one could have predicted not meeting in person for almost three months, and it was surely not what anyone would have hoped for. Yet, we can still reflect on this school year and praise God for his faithfulness to us, and to the Family Ministry at FBC Long Prairie.

We had three family nights planned for our Quest Kids ministry this spring. Unfortunately, April and May had to be canceled due to Covid-19. However, before the quarantine craziness started out Quest ministry was able to gather for our March Family night (March 4th), which was a Family Movie Night in the gym! We dressed up in our pajamas and gathered around the big screen to watch Lego Movie 2! Kids were joined by their parents and enjoyed popcorn with the movie. Although we didn't know it at the time, March 18th was our last time gathering in-person for Quest Kids this school year. Thus, began our transition into the unknown of online ministry.

Starting on March 25th we began offering online Quest Kids. The main goals of online Quest where to keep kids engaged, and to help them continue to grow closer to God! The first week was a video I released with a game, bible lesson, verse, and question of the week for the kids. With positive responses from many families, we moved towards a live-stream version of Quest. The live stream added another element of community because it felt a little more like we were really "gathering." Known affectionately as "Quest Live" this live stream ran for seven weeks! The final two weeks of Quest this school year transitioned to a video chat format. This allowed me to "see" the kids face to face and include some new games. The conversations we shared about life and the bible were so much fun! I could not be more thankful for God's faithfulness and grace as we walked through this season of learning on the fly!

Below you can find some pictures from some of the fun games that we played this Spring as a part of our online Quest Ministry. A sincere thank you to all of the parents who helped their kids stay engaged during this season of physical distancing. I can't wait to get started next school year, getting back to in-person ministry. God bless and thank you for your continued support and prayer for our Children's and Family Ministry!

Blessings, Jackson Standafer.



April, May, June

Birthdays & Anniversaries

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

07/06 Harley & Sally Hanson
07/14 Ray & Cheryl Schneider
07/16 Matt & Lori Stacey

JULY BIRTHDAYS

07/01 Cheryl Junkin
07/01 Marcia Sheneberger
07/02 Susan Johnson
07/03 Ella Brynjulfson
07/04 Harley Hanson
07/04 Rebekah Hibbs
07/06 Beth Nelson
07/09 Anna Pastian
07/20 Kim Miller
07/21 Joshua Blanchard
07/23 Ken Stevens
07/24 Emily Stacey
07/26 Marcus Nelson
07/28 Vern Matheson
07/28 Rodene Schultz
07/29 Brandon Puck

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

08/10 Leland & Marcia Sheneberger
08/23 Steve & Sue Calvin
08/23 Dan & Susan Johnson

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

08/03 Lance Larson
08/06 Josiah Finke
08/08 Ann Brunswig
08/10 Noah Koltres
08/10 Jenni Powell
08/10 David Wright
08/11 Julianna Stacey
08/13 Steve Miller
08/16 Barb Bass
08/17 Paul Twist
08/21 Roxanne Larson
08/22 Carol Bennett
08/23 Ross Munson
08/24 Steve Twist
08/26 November ffitich
08/28 Kent Gustafson
08/28 Kelsey Standafer
08/29 Patti Midthun

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

09/01 Jackson & Kelsey Standafer
09/04 Steve & Ann Brunswig
09/06 Jon & Darrah Larson
09/09 Bill & Snookie Noble
09/21 Glenn & Donna Park
09/21 Steve & Jenni Powell

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

09/04 Del Halverson
09/05 Bill Noble
09/10 Vicki Munson
09/10 Kali Panitzke
09/13 Brooke Larson
09/17 Cathy Swanson
09/20 Joe Reinbold
09/23 Jon Larson
09/24 Marshall Larson
09/26 Emili Hibbs
09/27 Taylor Larson
09/27 Anne Rocholl
09/29 Dorie Twist



LABOR DAY

Back to School

