

September Newsletter 2017

To Know Christ,
To Make Him Known,
To Build His Kingdom.

From The Pastor's Desk:

One of our core values is Community. The idea that we should be actively seeking to love and serve one another. To know and to be known. Because we place such a high value on this we will be kicking off community groups later this fall. These will give you the opportunity to gather in small groups and intentionally live in community. The following is adapted from a recent article on community that explains the need for, obstacles to, and the way to experience community.

Community is something we all want. No matter how you're wired—introverted, extrovert, socially adept, or socially awkward—something in your soul longs for meaningful relationships with other humans. We long to know others and be known by them. We treasure friendships that allow us to truly “be ourselves.” Though some of us have never found this sort of community and though others have been deeply wounded by relationships, all of us still long for deep, authentic, real community. How did we get this way? How did this craving, this longing, get hard-wired into us? The Bible answers that question by explaining that we are created in the image of God. God created us for community.

Created for Community

One of the oldest and most cherished doctrines of historic Christian theology is the doctrine of the Trinity. The Trinity means that God Himself is in the community. More accurately, God *is* community: one God, three persons. “Before all worlds”—before any sort of human community existed—there was God, dwelling in perfect, loving harmony in His threefold being. In the biblical account of creation, this Triune God says: “Let us make man in our image” (Genesis 1:26). Human beings are made to the *image* of God, to reflect His likeness. That's why our longing for community

seems so pure and primal. It's how we're made as God's image bearers.

The Fall: Broken Community

If you think for a moment about the nature of your relationships, you'll quickly identify another tendency that's present—something darker and more sinister than your God-given desire for community. It's the tendency to use people to meet your own needs first. It's not hard to see how often we are self-focused, pursuing our own interests and protecting ourselves from people and relationships that will demand too much of us. For example, think of the times you've intentionally avoided someone who bothers you. Or the times you've said what people wanted to hear in order to avoid offending them. These selfish tendencies reveal that something has gone deeply wrong in our pursuit of community. Though made in God's image, we have fallen from our original glory.

Our inherent selfishness is evidence of what the Bible calls “sin.” When we hear the word *sin*, we tend to think of bad behavior. But sin is deeper than external actions. The Bible often talks about sin in terms of **unbelief**. In other words, rather than believing what is true, we believe lies, which obviously leads to bad behavior and negative emotions. Unbelief is not taking God at His word, not believing His promises, not trusting in His goodness. Sin's impact is not just that we *don't* believe, it's that apart from Christ we are *unable* to believe. Sin has turned us in on ourselves and warped our relationships with others. We need Someone who can deliver us from our unbelief and selfishness and restore our capacity for true, deep, lasting community.

Redeemed for Community

This is where the good news of the gospel meets us. The word gospel literally means “good news”—a message, a proclamation, an announcement. One of the paradoxes of this message is that before it can be good news, it must start with bad news: we are sinful, broken people. We are rebels against God. We are mired in lies and self-worship, and we look to things other than God to give us identity and significance. We can't free ourselves, make God happy with us, or do enough good works to make up for our sins. But God, rich in mercy, sent Jesus to earth as our substitute. Jesus

took our place in his life as he obeyed God fully and worshiped him totally, things we failed to do. He substituted himself for us in his death, as he paid the penalty we owed to God for our sin and unbelief. If we humble ourselves, acknowledge our need, and turn to him, God the Holy Spirit will apply Jesus' substitutionary work to us by faith. The Bible calls this redemption, a word that means "to be delivered, ransomed, or set free."

What does Jesus redeem us from? Sin and all its effects. What does Jesus redeem us for? A life that images God and reflects his goodness to the world. In other words, one of the chief things that Jesus accomplishes when he redeems us is to restore our capacity for community. But wait: If Jesus redeems us for community, then why is community still such hard work? Why are relationships still fraught with brokenness, even among Christians? This is the tension we live in. Even though Jesus has delivered us from the penalty and rule of sin, he has not yet eradicated sin from the world. Because of sin's ongoing presence, we are prone to unbelief. We easily forget the good news of the gospel and fall back into lies and self-worship. That's why the Bible encourages us not just to receive the gospel, but to "stand" in it (1 Corinthians 15:1) and to "continue" in it (Colossians 1:23).

In other words, building and enjoying healthy community is going to require us to believe the gospel, to believe that what Jesus did for us has power and relevance for the way we relate to God and others. This requires an intentional focus on our part. It means identifying the unbelief in our hearts that hinders our ability to love and serve others and to receive love from them in turn. It means receiving the healing, liberating truths of the gospel in ways that allow them to soak deep into the core of our being.

And guess where this work of ongoing transformation takes place? In community.

Adapted from an article by Bob Thune and Will Walker

Grace and Peace

Pastor Jason Ford

Sunday Morning Schedule

Worship Service

10:30 - 11:30

Fellowship following service

Due to the Sanctuary updates the Elders decided it best to postpone the start of our second service until October 8th. We are still very excited for the opportunity to reach more people through these services! The services will be at 9:30 and 11:00 with a fellowship at 10:30. Children's ministries will take place during the 11:00 service and Nursery will be available for both services. The trial period will now run from October 8th through December 17th. Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve will both have one joint service.

Worship Schedule

for September 10 - October 1st

One Service at 10:30

**With Nursery (ages 0- 3) and
children's worship (ages 4-7)**

9:45-10:15 Nursery and Children's Bible

School classes:

**Grace Class ~ Preschool/early
elementary**

Gospel Class ~ Older Elementary

Youth Class ~ 7th-12th Grade

Parents would be offered

**coffee/snacks in the Fellowship Hall - No
Adult Class**

Sunday Morning Two Service Schedule (October 8-December 17)

**9:30 am Worship Service – Nursery
Available**

**10:30 am Fellowship
Youth Devotional and Fellowship**

**11:00 am Worship Service - Nursery
Available, Children's Ministry (during
worship service) available for
children ages 4 years-6th grade**

***No adult bible study on Sunday morning,
adult bible study available on Wednesday
night.**

Wednesday Night Bible Study
Bible Study does not meet on the first
Wednesday of the month.

No Bible Study on September 13th

Adult Bible Study

In the Sanctuary at 7:00 **A Study on the Book of Romans**. Join us for a time of prayer, singing, and bible study. Pastor Jason is teaching. Child care available.

Reformation Conference. September

29th and 30th. We will have a weekend

Conference about the lasting spiritual impact of the Reformation.

Join us as we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. The events that Martin Luther set in motion on October 31st, 1517 still, by God's grace, reverberate in the church universal today. The Reformation was really a rediscovery. It was a rediscovery of the scriptures and their primacy. It was a rediscovery of the importance of preaching. It was a rediscovery of the gospel, the gospel that tells us salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. During the Reformation Bible Conference, we will learn more of these events and how they still impact us today. The cost for the conference is **\$30.00** and covers your registration fees as well as breakfast on Saturday morning. If you have questions please call us **210-658-5874**.

Reformation Bible Conference 1517-2017

"The Gospel Rediscovered"

Friday, September 29th, 2017

5:30 p.m. Conference Registration

6:30 p.m. First Address: Dr. Duncan Rankin

7:30 p.m. Sacred Concert

8:00 p.m. Second Address: Rev. John Richter

Saturday, September 30th, 2017

8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast and Coffee

8:45 a.m. Hymn Sing

9:00 a.m. Third Address: Rev. Jim Barnes

10:00 a.m. Break

10:15 a.m. Fourth Address: Dr. Duncan Rankin

11:15 a.m. Question & Answer Session

12:00 p.m. Lunch/ End of Conference

Sunday, October 1st, 2017

10:30 a.m. Worship: Dr. Duncan Rankin

Youth News

The beginning of school for me is always a fresh start to new projects. It's almost like this time of year is January and I've set my new year's resolutions all over again; "I'm going to cook more at home", "We'll all go to bed earlier", etc. In my list of buckling down on my routine, I'm reminded of my need to dig deeper into scripture. I enjoy the pattern of devotion time then something will disrupt it for period, and I find it hard to reset. However, reading scripture on our own is such an important factor in growing in Christ. I read an article from the Gospel Coalition that Pastor Jason had shared and it brought great info and encouragement on the subject. Here are some of the highlights from "4 Key Ingredients in a Devotional Reading of Scripture" by Bruce Ashford.

1. Read the Scriptures – Read the bible in a non-hurried way and realize God is communicating with you through them.
2. Reflect on the Scriptures- Soak up the scriptures you are reading in view of the whole context of the Bible, not just one story.
3. Pray the Scriptures- Since the scriptures and prayer go hand in hand, always include reading scripture (or reciting out loud) in your daily prayer routine.

4. Obey the Scriptures- Realize and live out what you are reading daily with your actions and the actions towards others. Read, reflect, pray, obey- This pattern isn't anything magical, however it's one that has worked for our earliest Christians and hopefully will encourage your spiritual growth as well.

I thought Dr. Ashford had a great list of "ingredients" for devotional reading and I hope you find encouragement from them as well. Blessings on a great school year!

Stephanie Ford

Upcoming Events

Offices Closed ~ In observance of Labor Day the church offices will be closed Monday, September 4th.

1908 Night ~ Tuesday, September 5th at 7:30 pm. Ladies are invited to come enjoy fellowship at the new 1908 House of Wine & Ale.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Wednesday, September 6th at 6:00 pm.

Women's Fellowship ~. Thursday, September 7th at noon. Pot luck meal. Discussion of upcoming events. Outing to Silver Tree, Bake Sale in November and Christmas luncheon.

Theology on Tap ~ September 8th and 22th. Locations to be announced soon.

Ladies Night Bunco and More ~ Friday, September 8th at 6:00 pm.

Faithful for Four Sunday: September 10th
Back several months ago, as you know, we began a campaign called Faithful for Four. The idea is to pray for our friends, neighbors, coworkers and family and engage them in meaningful conversations, with the intent of eventually inviting them to church. On September 10th, we will have a special service to give you the opportunity to do just that. Invite your Four and anyone else you have been

thinking about inviting to worship with us. We will have a special evangelistic service tailored to visitors. This service will also be a trial run for the musical style for our 11:00 service coming up on October 8th.

Bible School Begins Sunday, September 10th

The Sewing Sisters ~ September 14th and 28th. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month in the parsonage from 9-11 am. All are welcome to come and enjoy good fellowship and ministry.

Fall Festival Action Team Meeting ~ Sunday, September 17th after worship.

Youth Lunch & Bowling ~ Sunday, September 17th after worship.

Council Meeting ~ Monday, September 18th at 7:00 pm.

Ladies Book Club ~ Tuesday, September 19th at 7:30 pm.

Second Service Begins ~ Sunday, October 8th.

General Announcements

Liturgy Sign Up ~ If you would like to contribute to the worship service by reading the liturgy, there is a sign-up sheet on the table in the hallway.

Ushers and Greeters ~ If you can help usher on Sunday mornings, please sign up on the sheet in the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Service Opportunity ~ If you are looking for a way to serve the church and like working with computers, we have the perfect spot for you. The A/V Team runs the computer and sound for the service on Sunday mornings. You would be able to serve the church and not miss worship. Please consider sitting upstairs for a

Sunday or two, to find out what all is involved. For more information, please contact Beth Johnson at 210-658-5874 or by e-mail at BethJ@StPaulCibolo.com.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Community Outreach
Preparing and serving a meal for the needy of the community once a month on the first Wednesday. Donations as well as volunteers are always welcome.

Women's Fellowship Recycled Card Program ~ In Support for St. Jude's Children's Homes ~ Used greeting cards, front cover only, can be dropped off in the designated box located in the Fellowship Hall. They will then be sent to St. Jude's Children's Home, for use by Kids' Corp. The children participate in making the new cards by attaching a new back and then selling them. For information on purchasing of cards go to http://www.stjudesranch.org/help_card.php.

Prayer Team ~ If you are willing to receive e-mails or phone tree messages with prayer requests, please give Pastor Willie Stratemann your e-mail address or phone number.

Women's Fellowship Cookbooks Available
The cookbooks are available in the church office or after church in the Fellowship Hall. They are \$15.00 each and have over 800 recipes. They would make a wonderful gift for family and friends.

GREAT NEWS!! RACAP now has a new drop off location for nonperishable food donations!! Schertz Cibolo Emergency Clinic, 4825 FM 3009, Ste. 200 Schertz, TX 78154, On 3009 next to Bush's Chicken.

R.A.C.A.P. Pantry Needs ~ Urgent Need ~
Meat Helpers (like Hamburger Helper) /
Canned Fruits / Macaroni & Cheese (boxed)
Tomato Products

Reminder: Due to health regulations R.A.C.A.P. is not allowed to accept any donations that are

not in their original container or have been opened.

Notification of Events - If you would like to be notified of St. Paul events, via Google calendar alerts, please send your e-mail to admin@stpaulcibolo.com with a notation for e-mail alerts.

If your church organization needs an announcement put into the Newsletter, the cutoff date is the 23rd of the month and if you need an announcement put into the bulletin, the cutoff date is Tuesday of that week at noon.

Church Office Hours ~ Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 12:00 pm

Heidelberg Catechism

121 Q. WHY THE WORDS, "WHO ART IN HEAVEN"?

A. These words teach us not to think of God's heavenly majesty as something earthly, and to expect everything for body and soul from his almighty power.

LORD'S DAY 47

122 Q. WHAT DOES THE FIRST REQUEST MEAN?

A. *Hallowed be thy name* means, Help us to really know you, to bless, worship, and praise you for all your works and for all that shines forth from them: your almighty power, wisdom, kindness, justice, mercy, and truth. And it means, Help us to direct all our living-what we think, say, and do-so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us but always honored and praised.

LORD'S DAY 48

123 Q. WHAT DOES THE SECOND REQUEST MEAN?

A. *Thy kingdom come* means, Rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way that more and more we submit to you. Keep your church strong, and add to it. Destroy the devil's work;

destroy every force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your Word. Do this until your kingdom is so complete and perfect that in it you are all in all.

LORD'S DAY 49

124 Q. WHAT DOES THE THIRD REQUEST MEAN?

A. *Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven* means, Help us and all men to reject our own wills and to obey your will without any back talk. Your will alone is good. Help everyone carry out the work he is called to as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.

Read Through the Bible in a Year program
from Tabletalk daily devotional
(Tabletalk is \$23/year and can be ordered at 1-800-435-4343)

September

Old Testament: Palms 148 – Isaiah 23
New Testament: 1 Cor. 11:17- Ephesians 3

October

Old Testament: Isaiah 24 – Jeremiah 30
New Testament: Ephesians 4 – Titus 1

St. Paul Staff

Jason Ford, Pastor

Jason@stpaulcibolo.com

Stephanie Ford,

Ministries Coordinator

Youth, Children & Women's

Stephanie@stpaulcibolo.com

Elaine McIntyre, Organist

tindo@gvec.net

Brian Parks,

Ministries Coordinator

Music & Youth

Brian@stpaulcibolo.com

Beth Johnson,

Administrative Assistant

Bethj@stpaulcibolo.com

Robert Webb, Custodian

Webbsondra@yahoo.com

Serving the Lord since 1876

A mission-focused, kingdom-building family of Christ-followers seeking to be faithful to
Jesus' Great Commission {Go and make disciples ...} Matthew 28:19 and
His Great Commandment {Love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself.}

Luke 10:27