

FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH

September 11, 2020

Volume 1, Issue 6

Pastor's Word

The word for September is "nearer".

As we enter into September we are nearer to Christmas 2020 than we have been all year. Christmas is less than 112 days away.

I believe we are nearer to reopening the church as well. I have seen the CDC report of August 20, 2020 and have been watching the numbers (the percentages) concerning Covid-19 in Tulare County and there is reason for hope.

I also have been following the court cases challenging the churches constitutional rights to meet and the government's orders restricting the church from meeting (indoors). In California, some churches have been fined thousands of dollars for ignoring the government orders restricting meeting indoors. Some have received threats of further legal actions if they continue to meet indoors from either their city, county, and/or the state governments. I am waiting to see the outcome of the Grace Community Church (Pastor Dr. John MacArthur) case.

As we wait we need to be drawing nearer to God, on our knees, praying for His protection to rest on His church. Asking for His guidance and wisdom as the church navigates through these challenging times. This is the counsel we find in James 4:1-10. Here is a portion of the counsel James gives: (my emphasis in **bold**)

"But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
⁷Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸**Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. ⁹Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."

James 4:6-10 (NKJV)

As we wait on God, we wait in faith, we wait in prayer; submitting ourselves to Him, resisting the devil's temptations, instead choosing to draw near to God, with a repentant heart, confessing our sin, humbled before Him. Waiting for His hand to lift us up for His glory.

"I am Thine, O Lord, I have heard Thy voice,
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith
And be closer drawn to Thee.

Draw me near, nearer blessed Lord,
To the cross where Thou hast died;
Draw me nearer, nearer, nearer blessed Lord,
To Thy precious, bleeding side."

(Fanny Crosby "I Am Thine Oh Lord")

Have hope, draw nearer to the Lord, He is our Hope.

Pastor Jerry

September Verses of the Month

"Have you never heard?
Have you never understood?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of all the earth.
He never grows weak or weary.
No one can measure the depths of his understanding.
He gives power to the weak
and strength to the powerless.
Even youths will become weak and tired,
and young men will fall in exhaustion.
But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength.
They will soar high on wings like eagles.
They will run and not grow weary.
They will walk and not faint."



Isaiah 40:28-31 NLT

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Office Hours are Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon

North American Mission Board

Prayer Calendar - September 2020

Will and Eryn Cole
Church Planter
Bridge City Church
Mars, PA



Pray that God would increase our influence, make new disciples, call existing disciples to join us and multiply our people all over the North Hills.

Chase and Lauren Feindel
Church Planter
Anthem Church
Vista, CA



Pray for God to open hearts and doors for the gospel. Our city is beautiful but with it comes apathy, so pray for people to encounter Jesus and experience life to the full.

Xavier and Neysha Torrado
Church Planter
Iglesia Gracia Redentora
Bajadero, PR



Pray for wisdom to lead my family and the church.

Dan and Natika Nichols
Church Planter
Redeemer Church
Roseville, MN



Pray God would graciously equip Redeemer Church for the work of making disciples who love Jesus together in the North Central Twin Cities of Minnesota.

We are still offering the following on the church's Facebook page at **First Southern Baptist Church**:

- "Worship and Word" broadcast at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays by Pastor Jerry; upon viewing you are encouraged to **Share** and **Like** so that it will be available to your friends on FB
- Livestreaming of Wednesday's Bible study at 6:00 p.m. led by Pastor Jerry and/or Janice Lanford.

The church family is encouraged to continue to mail in their tithes and offerings, or drop them off at the church office during the hours listed. Thank you so much for your faithfulness in giving.

The **Open Windows** devotional books are available and can be picked up at the church office.



PRAYERS FOR CALIFORNIA

Join us in praying for California. Join us as we pray for:

- Victims
- Firefighters
- First Responders
- Volunteers
- God to send RAIN