

CONGREGATIONAL CHRONICLES

Declaring the Good News to all.



Notes from the Undershepherd's Heart

By Pastor Ben Spera

"Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!"
Psalm 149:1

Have you ever wondered why we sing at church? You don't go to other places and sing together like you do at church. You might go to a concert to sing with a band you like, but church isn't a concert. You might sing with a crowd at Christmas or something, but at Church you sing together. Why?

Well, the short answer is, because that is what the Bible teaches us to do. Colossians 3:15 says "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." - Much could be said from this verse, but the thing I want you to see is that part of the reason we sing together is to "teach and admonish one another". As Christians, we don't just sing to make ourselves have a personal experience with G-d; we sing to help other people experience G-d. When we sing, we are actually teaching people around us to follow Jesus better.

This means we need you to sing. It doesn't matter if you like singing or hate it, it doesn't matter if you are a great singer or if you can't even carry a tune; we need to hear you praise G-d so we can learn to do the same. We sing for the person next to us who doesn't know if they still believe, for the child in front of us who doesn't know Jesus yet, and we sing for the person four pews back who is struggling with depression and needs us to encourage them. Christians are a singing people, and there are a lot of good reasons to sing praises to G-d, but one reason we sing together is to teach and admonish one another in the L-rd. So sing with us!

Sunday Service

Every Sunday
10:00-11:00 am

Ministries for Youth

Every Sunday during service,
from September - May.
For children PreK - 5th grade.

Ministries for Teens

Every Sunday during service,
from September - May
For teens 6th - 12th grade.

Women's Fellowship

A gathering of women to share
in service to God. Meetings are
held monthly on the third
Tuesday, at 10:15 am.

Upcoming Scripture Readings

- **August 3rd:**
Genesis 9:12-17 - Isaiah 51:17-23
- **August 10th:**
Genesis 9:18-29 - Isaiah 52:1-6
- **August 17th:**
Genesis 10:1-32 - Isaiah 52:7-12
- **August 24th:**
Genesis 11:1-9 - Isaiah 52:13-53:12
- **August 31st:**
Genesis 11:10-32 - Isaiah 54:1-10

Prayer Emphasis

This month, let us join together in
praying for our Church - Pray that G-d
continues to work in our Church, that
we will continue to grow together in
Christ, and that G-d will be glorified by
Baxter Congregational.

Hymn of the Month

All People that on Earth Do Dwell #53

This month's hymn is a familiar song with perhaps an even more familiar tune; the traditional melody is the same tune we sing when we sing the doxology. Sometimes referred to as the Old One Hundredth, All People that on Earth do Dwell is a version of the 100th Psalm set to music. We often forget that the book of Psalms is a kind of hymn book in our Bible, and throughout Church History (and even further back in Judaism), people sang the Psalms regularly. Paul exhorts us in both Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 to "sing Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs", which means even in the New Testament Church, we are encouraged to sing psalms. Throughout the Christian tradition, many have translated and compiled the biblical Psalms to be sung. Since All People that on Earth do Dwell appeared in a mid-16th-century English Psalter, it has become a classic hymn in many Christian traditions. As we sing this old hymn together, remember that we are singing Scripture to one another, joining in a psalm that has been sung through the centuries, and praising G-d with the very words he has given us to praise Him.

Spiritually Preparing for Back to School

In the mad dash to prepare for a new school year, don't forget to be intentional about preparing to pray for your children's school year. The year will undoubtedly hold joys, trials, and growth. Let's face it, the school makes a massive impression on kids. As parents, we can't always control what happens at school, but we can regularly uplift our children to the Father through prayer. And God hears our prayers and responds according to His perfect will.

(1 John 5:14)

I am committing to pray diligently for my children this school year, and I hope you will too!

Here's my simple prayer plan, and I encourage you to try it out this year, too. Here's how to do it:

1. Choose five main topics of prayer for your kids. You will pray about one of these topics each day of the school week, Monday through Friday. Here's what I chose:
 - a. Monday - Faith
 - b. Tuesday - Friends
 - c. Wednesday - Academics
 - d. Thursday - Character
 - e. Friday - Safety and Success
2. For each main topic of prayer, write four specific prayers for your children. Feel free to include verses you want to pray over them as well.
3. You now have 20 personal prayer prompts for your children! I am going to add reminders to pray these prayers into our calendar as well.
4. Repeat this process!



A Word From Women's Fellowship

By Marlys Colyn

Phyllis J. led devotions for the July 15th meeting of the Women's Fellowship. Seven ladies were present. Her topic was "Hope" with the message that you either rest the hope of your life in the hands of the Creator, or you look to the creation for your hope.

The Discover Hope collection was delivered on June 30th. The opportunity to receive not-recently-used Good News Bibles from the church, to put in the men's bags, was welcomed. On another date, 40 Bibles were delivered.

With the help of many, the Fun Days lunch went very well. We served 145 lunches. That number was 10 less than last year, but with so many food trucks and other food stands in town, it seemed to be a good number. Thanks to all that made this possible! Prior to the event, it was announced that profits from the event would be sent to the Texas Flood Relief efforts. Our profit was \$1,284.19. An additional \$235 was collected at the Community Church service on Sunday. After researching several possibilities, it was decided to send the \$1,520 to Samaritan's Purse since they provide physical and spiritual support as well as clean-up, mud-outs and other necessary tasks. This is the same organization that handles the Christmas Shoe Boxes that we have done for many years. (Billy Graham's son, Franklin, is the CEO.)

At the Fun Days Community Church service, we served coffee, juice and rolls.

There will be no August Meeting. The next meeting will be September 16th.



Test Your Knowledge!

1. What was the name of Noah's father?
2. How long was Noah's ark?
3. What was Noah's ark made out of?
4. How many pairs of each 'clean' animal did Noah take on the ark?
5. How old was Noah when the flood started?
6. What did the dove bring back to Noah?
7. On which mountain range did the ark rest?
8. How many people were saved in the ark?
9. What did Noah build when he came out of the ark?
10. What was the sign of the covenant between God & Noah?

Psst! You can find answers at the bottom of the last page, or your Bible!

18 Things to Pray for Your Church

Christian Living - Jonathan Leeman

Have you ever been reading your Bible and noticed how Paul prays such rich, kingdom-saturated prayers for churches?

- For the church in Thessalonica:

“To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power” (**2 Thess. 1:11**).

- For the church in Colossae:

“We have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (**Col. 1:9–10**).

- For the church in Ephesus:

“I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him” (**Eph. 1:16–17**; see also **3:14–21**).

- For the church in Rome (**Rom. 15:14–33**) and the church in Philippi (**Phil. 1:9–11**).

Of course, there’s far more where this came from. See Don Carson’s excellent book on the topic, *Praying with Paul: A Call to Spiritual Reformation* (Baker), as well as TGC’s corresponding eight-session group study curriculum (LifeWay).

LEADING THE CHARGE

It’s comparatively easy for you and me to pray for ourselves, our families, and our friends.

But how can we learn how to pray more fervently and consistently for our local churches?

For one, we just need to start doing it—and encouraging others to do so.

To help with that, here are 18 things you can pray for your church.

They aren’t as rich as Paul’s since I wanted to keep them simple and Twitter-length. (Also, because I’m not inspired.)

Still, perhaps you could print out this article and pray two or three of the points below per day for the next week

—maybe in your quiet time, maybe at the family dinner table.

Also, consider copying and pasting your favorite prayers below into Twitter or Facebook, led by the phrase “Pray for your church: . . .”

Use your social media platform to encourage others to pray for their church.

Who knows? . . .

One day in glory, perhaps we’ll see all the good accomplished from believers being more deliberate about praying for their churches.

WHAT TO PRAY FOR

1. That we would have unity amid diversity—loving those with whom we have nothing in common but the gospel.
2. That a culture of discipling would form in which making disciples is viewed as an ordinary part of the Christian life.
3. That faithful elders would use Scripture to train members to do the work of ministry.
4. That a hunger for studying the gospel would form among members so that they can guide and guard one another in it.
5. That transparent, meaningful relationships would become normal and remaining anonymous strange.
6. The preaching of God’s Word—that it would be biblically careful and Holy Spirit imbued.
7. That elders would remain above reproach, kept from temptation, complacency, idols, and worldliness.
8. That the church’s songs would teach members to biblically confess, lament, and praise.
9. That the church’s prayers would be infused with biblical ambitions, honesty, and humility.
10. That adult members would work to disciple teenagers and not just leave it to programming.
11. That the church’s primary teachers grow in dedication to God’s Word even when no one’s watching.
12. That it would grow in being distinct from the world in love and holiness, even as it engages outsiders.
13. That members would share the gospel this week—and see more conversions!
14. That members would be prepared for persecution, remembering to love, not curse, their persecutors.
15. That hopes for political change would be outstretched by the hope of heaven.
16. That giving would be faithful, as well as joyful, consistent, and sacrificial.
17. That more members would use their careers to take the gospel to places it’s never been.
18. That members would be good and do good in their workplaces this week.

Can you think of something I didn’t include? Then pray it and share it! This is hardly the “official list” of the 18 most important things to pray. They’re simply what one guy thought of while sitting in his office chair.

The point is for all of us to start praying more intentionally for our churches, and to encourage others to do the same.

Sunday School Sessions



A new year of learning & growing is about to start!

Make sure you've got all of your supplies in order and remember to ask God for wisdom in all things (James 1:5) Have a great school year! We will resume Sunday School in September.



- Stick close to Jesus this school year.
When things get tough, you can do all things in Christ!
(Philippians 4:13)



- Trust God's plans. He has written your story!
(Psalm 139:16)



- Remember mistakes happen, but God's mercies are new every morning!
(Lamentations 3:22-23)



- Color your school year bright by letting the light of Jesus shine through you. So, they may see your good deeds and know about God's goodness.
(Matthew 5:16)



- Let God's Word highlight your path.
(Psalm 119:105)



- Work hard and treat others how you want to be treated, because the measure you give is the measure you will receive.
(Luke 6:38)

Upcoming Meetings

- **Women's Group:**
No August Meeting
- **Council:**
8/26/25 at 6:30 pm
- **Women's Group:**
9/16/25 at 10:15 am

Talk To Us

Main Office

(641) 227-3382

office@baxtercongregational.com

218 S Main St

Baxter, IA 50208

www.baxtercongregational.com

www.facebook.com/BaxterCongregational

Contact Pastor Ben

(641) 840-1102

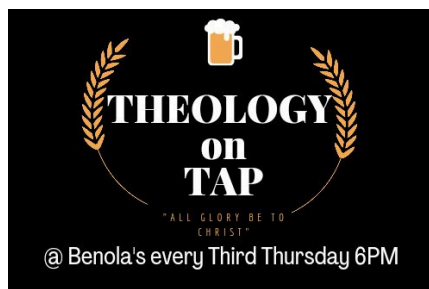
bspera@baxtercongregational.com

Upcoming Events



Midweek Bible Study

With Pastor Ben
Every Wednesday at the Church
6:00 - 7:00 pm



Theology on Tap

With Pastor Ben
Every Third Thursday at Benola's
6:00 - 7:00 pm



Friday Prayer Meetings

With Pastor Ben
Every Friday at the Church
10:30 - 11:30 am