

CONGREGATIONAL CHRONICLES

Declaring the Good News to all.



Notes from the Undershepherd's Heart

By Pastor Ben Spera

"I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people," - 1 Timothy 2:1

G-d calls us to pray for other people, but all too often, it is hard to think of people to pray for. Let me suggest that you should always have two specific people you are praying for regularly. I'm not saying that you shouldn't pray for other people, and I am not saying that you should pray for these same two people indefinitely. But you should have two individuals you regularly pray for by name that fit into two specific categories.

First, you should have someone in your church whom you regularly pray for. When you become a member, you agree to live out the things the Bible calls us to do as members of one body. James tells us to pray for one another (James 5:17). So, one of the things we ought to be doing is praying for one another. I encourage you to have one person in the church you are praying for regularly by name. Pray that they grow to love Jesus more, pray for their family, and pray for their health & well-being. But ultimately pray for Christ to work in them and through them for their good and His glory.

Second, you should have someone who you want to see come to faith. All of us have people in our lives who are not Christ followers, maybe they're family members, or people we work with, or a friend from school. 2 Corinthians 4 tells us that the beauty of G-d is veiled to some people and encourages us to preach (and pray) that they might see the light. It is a work of G-d for someone to be converted, so ask G-d that he will give them eyes to see him and open their heart that they may believe on Jesus for their salvation. You should regularly pray by name for an unbeliever in your life, praying that G-d would open their eyes to see Jesus and accept him as their Lord and savior.

So who are your two people?

Sunday Service

Every Sunday
10:00-11:00 am

Ministries for Youth

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

- **September 7th:**
Mark 14:1-11 - Isaiah 54:1-10
- **September 14th:**
Mark 14:12-25 - Isaiah 54:11-17
- **September 21st:**
Mark 14:26-52 - Isaiah 55:1-13
- **September 28th:**
Mark 14:53-72 - Isaiah 56:1-8

Prayer Emphasis

This month, let us join together in
praying for our EVANGELISM -
Pray that our church members
would be bold and faithful to tell
other people about Jesus.
Pray that we would tell people
about what Jesus did for them and
invite them to give their lives to
Him.

Hymn of the Month

Take my Life and Let it Be #380

The writer of this hymn, Frances R. Havergal once explained "Perhaps you will be interested to know the origin of the consecration hymn, "Take my life." I went for a little visit of five days. There were ten persons in the house, some unconverted and long prayed for, some converted but not rejoicing Christians. He gave me the prayer, "Lord, give me all in this house!" And He just did! Before I left the house everyone had got a blessing. The last night of my visit I was too happy to sleep and passed most of the night in praise and renewal of my own consecration, and these little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another, till they finished with, "Ever, ONLY, ALL for Thee!"

Havergal wrote this hymn to be a pledge, where she would consecrate herself and all she had to help others know Jesus. Sometimes this can feel daunting and impossible, but these words paint a picture of the life we should aspire to as Christians. A life set apart and consecrated to Jesus. As we sing this hymn, make it your prayer that G-d would use you to bless others by helping them know the Savior.



Seasons Change, God Remains

The Daily Grace Co.

My weekly planner is usually filled to the edges with reminders and notes of things to do, meetings to attend, projects to finish, phone calls to make, emails to send. I can get to the end of the week and feel either elated or crushed by my level of productivity. Either way, I tend to live like I'm in charge of my life and everything I touch. But I'm not. I need rest and help like every other person because I cannot hold everything together. There is only One who is sovereign, and it's not me.

The changing of seasons reminds us that we are not in control. "For says to the snow, 'Fall to the earth,' and the torrential rains, his mighty torrential rains, serve as his sign to all mankind, so that all men may know His work" (Job 37:6-7). We can't add things to our calendars that will have any bearing on the shift from summer to fall. Nothing in our abilities can tell the snow clouds to release their flakes in winter. We might bemoan the frigid temperatures in February or bask in the warmth of a May morning, but we can't give the earth instructions. That ability belongs only to God who "changes the times and seasons; he removes kings and establishes kings. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding" (Daniel 2:21).

God brings about the changes in season because He created the seasons. The Creator sovereignly holds all things together. We are relieved of any pretense that we're in control. Snowstorms, spring blossoms, fall temperatures—they're His. He holds the entire physical universe together, so you can be sure He is sovereignly in control of your life, too. It's not too much for Him. As we watch the seasons change, we can be comforted by the fact that the One who made everything is still in control of everything.

140th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, November 2nd 2025, from 12 - 2 pm

Baxter Congregational's 140th Anniversary is quickly approaching! With that being said, we wanted to send out a reminder to all of our families, friends, and community members to join us as we celebrate 140 years of God's faithfulness here at Baxter Congregational Church.

We will gather on Sunday, November 2nd, after service, from 12-2pm. We will be having a potluck style lunch, as we enjoy fellowship and reminisce over the past 140 years. This will be a time of reunion, stories, and reflection of what this church has meant to this community over the years, as well as what it means to us now and in the days to come.

Members, please bring a dish to share and extended the invitation to those who would be interested in joining in on the celebration. We look forward to seeing everyone!

"Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me." - Isaiah 46:9



Test Your Knowledge!

The Tower of Babel

- Why was it easy for people to work together to build the tower of Babel?
- How high did they plan to build the tower?
- What materials did the people use to build the tower?
- What did the people think the tower would protect them from?
- Who came down to see the tower?
- How did God stop their work?
- Why did the people stop building the tower?
- What was the name of the place where they tried to build the tower?
- What does the biblical name Babel mean?
- What happened to the people?

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

Creating Community

By Beth White



One of the many benefits of the Christian life is that we get to live it alongside others. As summer comes to an end, this is a great time to start thinking about getting plugged into a community of believers at your local church if you aren't already. For some, however, the thought of this can be intimidating. You may feel nervous about whether people will like you or whether they will judge you. You may be afraid of getting hurt. Doing life with others is not always immediately easy, but the benefits far outweigh the cost. The Bible describes the Church as the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12). We are one body with many members. Doing the Christian life alone is like being a hand detached from the rest of the body. We need the Church and the Church needs us to function at its full capacity.

A recent study found that 56% of Christians describe their faith life as "private." This statistic means that many Christians do not have a Christian community to link arms with through the peaks and valleys of our lives. How do we flip this statistic and re-establish gospel-centered friendships? As Christians, we can wield the skill of invitation to introduce others to the love of Christ. We can make the first move to love others because Jesus first loved us.

What keeps us from making the first move?

Are you terrified to make the first move in friendship? You are not alone. The fear of man creeps into our minds to fill us with doubts. We fear rejection. We fear not knowing enough about the Bible. We fear our lives aren't clean enough or put together enough. We are scared to be seen. These fears keep our faith lives behind closed doors, exactly where we are left most vulnerable to sin.

What does the Bible say about these fears? The narrative of Scripture reminds us that God is our comfort and strength in fear (Isaiah 51:12). He promises to exchange our worries for His perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3). Even when we face rejection, even when they don't text us back, even when we are uninvited, God's love for us remains steady and true.

We also hesitate to extend an invitation because we are waiting for an invitation of our own. When we are invited, our value is affirmed. We feel wanted, called upon, and loved. Friend, we do not need to wait on an invitation from others to define our worth. Jesus secured our value when He died on the cross, rose to glory, and called us sons and daughters of God. We can extend invitations because we have been so graciously invited into God's family.

If you desire to make genuine and meaningful relationships with other Christians, but aren't sure where to start, here are some practical tips for cultivating relationships as you go into the fall.

- [Join a small group](#)

The best and simplest way to build community is to find and join a regularly scheduled small group. Depending on the church, small groups will often be broken up based on location, availability, or stage of life. Getting plugged into a small group or Bible study is a great form of community accountability. The group typically meets at the same time(s) each week, so it removes the step of having to reach out weekly and coordinate meeting up with other Christians. Every small group is slightly different, but they all provide a place for you to spend time with other Christians, study the Bible together, and pray with one another.

- [Look for opportunities to serve](#)

One of the best ways to get plugged into a community is through service. Nothing is as unifying as working with another person to accomplish a task or fulfill a mission. Maybe your church has opportunities for serving on Sunday mornings with kids or with newcomers. Or maybe there are service opportunities throughout the week that you can get involved in.

- [Keep it simple](#)

As with most things, community is something we tend to overthink. But it doesn't need to be overcomplicated. If you enjoy a conversation with someone in your small group, get their phone number and schedule a coffee date. If you already have friendships within your church, cultivate them by sending your friends encouragement or prayer over text. If you want to hang out with church friends more but feel too busy, invite them to go grocery shopping with you. Keep it simple and creative. Not every hang-out needs to be a Bible study or prayer time. Feel free to just do life together!

- [Do a Bible study on friendship](#)

A Bible Study is a great way to dig deeper into what Scripture has to say about the importance of community and friendship for the Christian life. Understanding God's vision for the Church can encourage us as we set out to build lasting relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ. You could even gather a few people from your church to go through the study with you.

Who is someone you admire? Who is someone who may need some encouragement? Who have you been wanting to invite to church? A simple conversation can change the course of your faith life, or even open the door to a friend's salvation. The invitation doesn't have to be formal. The activity doesn't have to be elaborate. What matters most is the intentionality behind better seeing and knowing those around us so that they may better see and know Jesus. The fear may be temporary, but the reward is eternal.

Sunday School Sessions

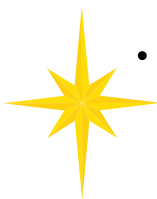
Welcome back to Sunday School!

We would like to start out by reintroducing our Sunday School program to you. Our youth program will begin again on Sunday, September 7th and is held during service, downstairs in the fellowship hall. This program is for children PreK - 5th grade. Older children are encouraged to sit upstairs and participate in Sunday service with their parents.

Our teachers this year will be Juila Spera and Joyce Christianson.
Additional teachers may potentially step in as needed.

For the month of September, the children will be jumping back into the Jesus Storybook Bible.
Here are the lessons plans for this month:

Monthly Memory Verse: John 1:29



- **September 7th:**
 - He's Here! (Luke 1-2)
 - The Nativity
- **September 14th:**
 - Heaven Breaks Through (Matthew 3; Luke 1, 3; John 1)
 - The Story of John the Baptist
- **September 21st:**
 - Let's Go! (Matthew 4; Mark 1; Luke 4-6)
 - Jesus is tempted in the desert & chooses his helpers.
- **September 28th:**
 - A Little Girl and A Poor Frail Lady (Luke 8)
 - The story of Jairus' daughter.



Upcoming Meetings

- **Members Meeting:**
9/7/25 Brief Recap After Service
- **Women's Group:**
9/16/25 at 10:15 am
- **New Members Class:**
9/21/25 After Service
- **Women's Group:**
10/21/25 at 10:15 am
- **Diaconate / Pastor Parish:**
10/27/25 at 5:15 pm
- **Council:**
10/28/25 at 6:30 pm

Talk To Us

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Upcoming Events

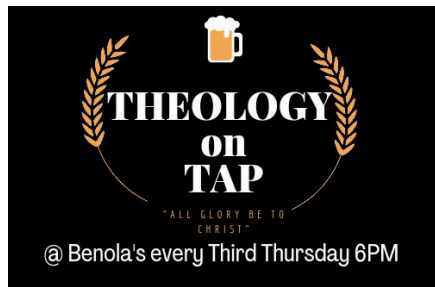


Midweek Bible Study

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