

The Home Visitor Newsletter



March 2019

North Platte First Baptist Church
100 McDonald Road
North Platte, NE 69101
Worship Hours
Sunday School 9 a.m.
Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.



Pastor Clint

Office Hours
M-Th 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Friday -Closed
308-532-6772
cwalker@fbcnorthplatte.org
www.fbcnorthplatte.org

What Is Church?

It was a hot and sunny morning. Our music minister had taken Sunday morning off because her daughter had just gotten married the day before. She had arranged for one of the teenagers in our congregation to do special music. Hannah was new to church life. She was a foster child of one of our members. Hannah loved singing, and had begun to participate in choir and other facets of our music ministry. It seemed like a good idea to let her sing a solo. I thought she was given oversight and direction on her music selection. She was not supported in this way. And so, she stood up and sang Hozier's "Take Me to Church" for the entire congregation. The song's title at first listen may seem to be a song about ecclesiastical devotion, but in fact if one carefully listens to the song one discovers that it communicates the opposite message. Listeners are encouraged to abandon religious establishment and institutions and replace them with sexual relations with and devotion to one's lover. I do not think I will ever forget that Sunday. As I reflect on it today, I am reminded that we use the word "church" a lot in faith communities and in our broader culture as a whole, but we don't take nearly enough time to think about what the word means biblically and theologically. Especially, because as Scot McKnight says, "a local church really does shape what we think the Christian life is all about"¹

In the New Testament, the word "ekklesia" is translated as "church". The word is most literally translated as "the called-out ones".ⁱ *Ekklesia* had a common usage as a public gathering that citizens were encouraged and sometimes required to attend in the Greco-Roman world.ⁱⁱ The Septuagint uses this noun for the assembling of God's people, and

for the people themselves.ⁱⁱⁱ Thus, as Stanley Grenz says, "The church is a covenant of People"², or as Scot McKnight declares in the title of his book, a "Fellowship of Differents"^{iv}

Popular culture defines the church differently than Scripture does. Many people speak of church as a building instead of a people. Others describe the church as an organization or corporation. More common recently, as demonstrated with the example above, people speak of church as if it were an (often pleasurable) experience of worship of some sort instead of a community of believers.

Although Scripture reflects a diversity of different kinds of gathered persons who call them church, the community is described in some very specific ways. Paul defines the church as a "body" uniquely equipped to embody the presence and carry out the ministry of Christ.^v God's people come from a variety of backgrounds^{vi}, but are united by their shared beliefs and practices of faith in the risen Lord, Jesus Christ.^{vii}

The New Testament people of God share some common goals. Our primary goal is to, as the Westminster Shorter Catechism correctly summarizes, "glorify God, and enjoy him forever."^{viii} The early church did this through some basic practices. They are described as people who were learning about the teachings of Jesus through his apostles, as folks who were gathering together for mutual support, who in the process shared meals and carried out the practice of the Lord's Supper. As a result, they were described as a community that was praying for one another, and in giving praise to God, and helping people in need within their fellowship.^{ix} These practices should be evident in the *ekklesia today as well*.

The early church glorified God through their way of life. A way that rejected many of the sexually and economically abusive practices of the ancient world, and instead called God's people to a way of life that promoted things like love, joy, gentleness, kindness, and self-control.^x In the process, the markers that defined status and hierarchy in the ancient world were overturned in the church.^{xi}

The early church also glorified God through being people on a mission to expand the kingdom of God beyond all boundaries of nation, ethnicity, and culture. According to the gospel of Matthew, Jesus' final directive was to "go and make disciples of all nations".^{xii}

These disciples, as those who followed the way of Jesus, formed into a community where each person had intrinsic the way of Jesus, formed into a community where each person had intrinsic value to God with unique gifts to offer to others in the Christian community. They were defined by the kind of love they experienced through Christ^{xiii}.

As the God's church today, we are called to by God to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth^{xiv}, just like the disciples were called to be back then. Set apart by God to fulfill his purpose, we continue to glorify him by how we live, what we say, and perhaps more importantly, by how we do life together. We are still, "God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do".^{xv}

Let us then have courage to continue the good work we have been doing for almost 150 years, while continuing to find new ways to be church in our changing world and community.

God Bless,
Pastor Clint

- ¹ Scot McKnight, *Fellowship of Differents*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 12.
¹ Stanley Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, (Nashville, Broadman and Holman, 1994), 605.
¹ Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhout, Tremper Longman III, Colin Duriez, Douglas Penney, Daniel G. Reid eds., "Church". *The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, (Downers Grove, Intervarsity Press, 1998), 147.
¹ J.D. Douglas and Merrill C. Tenney, "Church", NIV Dictionary of the Bible, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 121.
¹ Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, (Nashville, Broadman and Holman, 1994), 605.
¹ McKnight, *Fellowship of Differents*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014).
¹ I Corinthians 12: 12-31.
¹ Gal. 3:28
¹ Eph. 4:5
¹ "Westminster Shorter Catechism: Question 1", *The Book of Confessions*, (Louisville: Office of the General Assembly, 2002), 175.
¹ Acts 2: 42-47
¹ Galatians 5: 13-26
¹ Colossians 3:11
¹ Matthew 28:19, NIV
¹ I Cor. 13
¹ Acts 1:8
¹ Ephesians 2:10, NIV.

Agape Group



March 9th
6:30 p.m.
Agape Room
Bring a finger
food
IN THE COLOR OF
GREEN

DON'T FORGET TO WEAR **GREEN!!**

Please RSVP to Chris Conner at 534-5617



March 10th at 2 a.m. Daylight Savings Time begins. Set your clock one hour ahead before you go to bed on March 9th!

Thank You

Thank you to my church friends at First Baptist of North Platte for remembering my 100th birthday on February 16th! May God Bless You!

Alice Hutchinson

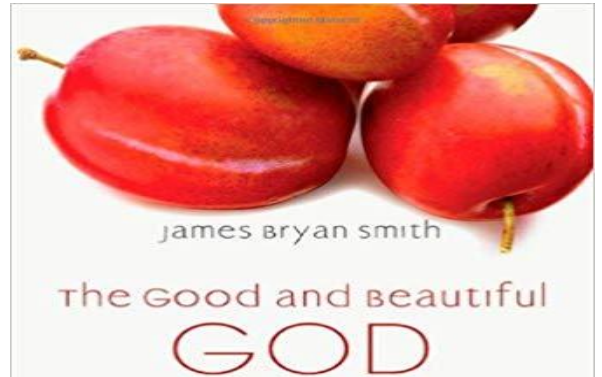


Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent in the Church. It is a time of active learning, where we walk with Jesus to the cross, learning more about what it means to truly make him Lord of our lives. Many people chose to add a spiritual discipline during Lent, either by abstaining from something they enjoy or by choosing form a new habit in their lives during the Lenten Season. Please join us in walking with Christ on this path for the next several weeks.

**Ash Wednesday Service is on
Wednesday, March 6th
at 6:15 p.m.**



**The following is the
Small Groups schedule:**



The Good & Beautiful God

Wednesday (FBC) 6:15 p.m.-7:45 p.m.
w/Pastor Clint

Sunday (Parsonage) 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
w/Pastor Clint (limited seating)

Growing Strong in God's Family

Sunday (FBC) 6:30-8:00 p.m.
w/ Allen Huff



ABW

Evening ABW will meet March 5 at 7 p.m. in the Agape Room.

Those attending are asked to bring one or two pairs of "fun stockings" to hold small gifts for the kids without a home at the high school. Please bring a variety of small gifts, such as hand lotion, lip balm, shampoos, hand sanitizers, etc. Everything will be divided up so each stocking will hold a variety of items.

Jen Walker is in charge of the project, so contact her if you have questions.



Christian Year: What Is Lent and Why Do It?

I grew up in a variety of evangelical and fundamentalist church circles. None of them practiced Lent. Until a few decades ago, the practice was not common among some mainline churches either. Recently, that has changed. Now I often encounter people who haven't attended church for years, but want to practice Lent. Why? What is Lent? What value does it have for us? Lent is a season of fasting that goes from Ash Wednesday until Easter. It is a time when we either take on a spiritual practice, or fast from something or some behavior for a season in order to draw closer to God. Often, as one practices Lent, one realizes how dependent we have become on other things instead of the Lord. Other times we begin to have our eyes open to how healthier habits can transform our lives.

Lent is a time when we symbolically journey toward the cross with Jesus. It is a time to repent of sin, and open our hearts to the love of Jesus demonstrated by his suffering and death.

Some helpful practices for you to engage in during Lent might be:

- Attending worship every Sunday during the season
- Choosing to eliminate a bad habit from your life for the season, depending on God to see you through the difficult season of letting go
- Taking on a regular devotional practice during Lent
- Eliminating a garbage sack full of junk that you have accumulated that you don't need, giving away things of value and throwing away things that may not have value to others.
- The ideas are endless.

We also do things as a community during this season. During Lent at First Baptist we do the following:

- We practice **Extravagant Generosity** through receiving our annual missions offering. 20 percent of this offering goes to global, interdenominational relief efforts through One Great Hour of Sharing. 40 percent of the offering goes to home missions, and 40 percent of the offering goes to global missions.
- We take a step deeper in **Passionate Worship** through two special services. Ash Wednesday March 6th at 6:15pm, and a Maundy Thursday Service on April 18 at 6:15pm. We will also have the prayer stations outside of the prayer tower during Holy Week, and perhaps have a 24 hour prayer vigil in April as well.
- Our spring small groups meet before and after Lent, but they are designed to span the Lenten season. This year, with our theme of Jumping in the Deep End, we are focusing on diving deeper in the life of discipleship through two unique options for spiritual growth. We are also engaging in **Intentional Spiritual Transformation** through a sermon series.

Please be encouraged to join our congregation's Lenten journey, and expect to grow in unexpected and sometimes uncomfortable ways.

Upcoming Event!!!



**You are invited to the ABC NE Region Expo 2019
First Baptist Church of North Platte, April 26-27**

An Expo is an event where ideas, resources, and practices are exchanged. Join us for the 2019 Region Expo. We will exchange resources with one another as ABC/NE Churches and Leaders share their best ministry stories and resources with one another in a variety of break out sessions. We will share best practices for mission and ministry with one another through our exhibits, conversations, and fellowship.

See you at the 2019 Region Expo

American Baptist Churches
of Nebraska



First Baptist Church
North Platte

April 26-27, 2019

March 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 OFFICE CLOSED	2 Agape Room Reserved
3 <i>Communion Sunday</i> 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:15a.m. Worship 5:00 Small G. 6:30 Small G 6:30 p.m. Epicenter	4 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts	5 7 p.m. ABW 9:30 p.m. Ladies Bible Study	6 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 9:30 a.m. Ladies Bible Study 3:45 p.m. Discover Kids 5:30 p.m. Wed Supper 6:15 p.m. Ash Service	7 7 a.m. Men's Bible Study 8 a.m. Men's B-fast 9 a.m. Ladies B-fast 1 p.m. Mission Quilt 6:30 p.m. Adult Night	8 OFFICE CLOSED	9 6:30 p.m. Agape Group (Agape Room – FBC) WEAR GREEN!!
10 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 worship 5:00 Small G. 6:30 Small G. 6:30 p.m. Epicenter	11 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts 7p.m. Deacons	12 9:30 p.m. Ladies Bible Study	13 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 9:30 a.m. Ladies Bible Study 3:45 p.m. Discover Kids 5:30 p.m. Wed Supper 6:15 p.m. Bible Study	14 7 a.m. Men's Bible Study 8 a.m. Men's B-fast 1 p.m. Mission Quilt 6:30 p.m. Adult Night	15 OFFICE CLOSED	16
17 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 Worship 3 p.m. Centennial 5:00 Small G 6:30 Small G 6:30 p.m. Epicenter	18 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts	19 9:30 p.m. Ladies Bible Study	20 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 9:30 a.m. Ladies Bible Study 3:45 p.m. Dis Kids 5:30 p.m. Wed Supper 6:15 p.m. Bible Study	21 7 a.m. Men's Bible Study 8 a.m. Men's B-fast 1 p.m. ABW 6:30 p.m. Adult Night	22 OFFICE CLOSED	23
24 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship 5:00 Small G 6:30 Small G 6:30 p.m. Epicenter	25 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts	26 7 p.m. Executive Board 9:30 p.m. Ladies Bible Study	27 8:15 a.m. Prayer Walk 9:30 a.m. Ladies Bible Study 3:45 p.m. Dis Kids 5:30 p.m. Wed Supper 6:15 p.m. Bible Study	28 7 a.m. Men's Bible Study 8 a.m. Men's B-fast 6:30 p.m. Adult Night	29 OFFICE CLOSED	30
31 9 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 Worship 5:00 Small G 6:30 Small G 6:30 p.m. Epicenter	Time springs forward on March 10th at 2 a.m.!! Change your clocks 1 hour ahead before you go to bed on March 9th!!!					

