

JANUARY 27, 2021



Embracing God...Today!

By Randy Shepley

One of the phrases we have not gotten to hear or read as much at FBCNN during this pandemic time is our Mission Statement. Perhaps you remember it. We affectionately refer to it as the 3 E's:

Embracing God, Equipping Christ-followers, Engaging Our World

As our staff and lead teams begin planning for our return to the new normal of ministry and church life, I am thinking more and more about these three E's: they are our heartbeat, purpose, and identity, even in a winter of rising COVID cases and positivity rates. They are our core even when very few of us are in the church building. They are the mission of our church because whether we are gathered or scattered, we are still called to be the church.

So, I want to ask you to join me in pondering a question: How are you Embracing God today? I did not ask how long you prayed, what passage of scripture you read in your devotional time, how many church friends you talked to, or how many sermons you have watched or listened to online. As important as these habits can be, you can do all of these practices and actually miss the point: the point of our lives is to Embrace God, join God's mission, and love according to God's command and model in Jesus Christ. How are you Embracing God today?

I miss embracing. I make sure to hug my family even more these days, because we cannot embrace our friends and neighbors. I especially hurt for the ones among us who live alone and have no family to embrace them. I pray that they especially feel God's embrace. Friends, have you thought about the truth today that God longs to embrace you? To hold, reassure, comfort, and strengthen you? Do you remember that God is the loving Father of Luke 15, who even while His son was a long way off, ran forward and wrapped him in a bear hug of an embrace? Friends, this is how God loves you!

When we embrace God, we are responding to God's embrace. We are resting in God's love. We are slowing down enough to allow God's peace to overcome our anxiety.

I read a prayer this morning that I wanted to share with you. It reminds me of how wonderful it is to live in the embrace of God:

*Lord, in union with Your love,
Unite my work with Your great work, and perfect it.
As a drop of water poured into a river
Is taken up into the activities of the river,
So may my labor become part of Your work.
Thus may those among who I love and work
be drawn into Your love.
Amen
(written by Gertrude the Great, 13th century)*

May the work of our hands, minds and hearts join us with the loving embrace of God. May our words, thoughts, and activity invite others into the loving embrace of God...today.

Change in Worship Services Update!

Due to the continuing increase of COVID cases in our area, **worship services will be online only through February.**

PORT

There are still opportunities to prepare and serve dinner and provide breakfast in a bag. Meals will be prepared and served at Temple Baptist on Harpersville Road.

You or your group can sign up by using one of the links below.

[January 14-31, 2021](#)

[February 2021](#)

[March 2021](#)

Souper Bowl Canned Food Collection

February 8-10

We are collecting canned food for our church Food Pantry, and we'd love for you to participate. Please bring your donations to the church office entrance between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. and place them on the carts located outside the door. Should you need help unloading your donations, please call the church office at 757-930-0911 and we will have a staff member come out to your car to get your donations. The items needed for our food pantry are:

- Chicken Noodle Soup (10 3/4 oz.)
- Pork and Beans (10 3/4 oz.)
- Canned Corn (14 1/2 oz.)
- Canned Green Beans (14 1/2 oz.)
- Canned Tuna (5 oz.)



Thank you for participating as we help those in our community!



Red Cross Blood Drive

March 3, 1-6 p.m.

Payne Fellowship Hall

Help the Red Cross help others by supporting in one of three ways:

1. Donate blood. You can sign up online by clicking [here](#) or calling 1-800-Red-Cross and let them know you would like to donate at First Baptist Church Newport News on March 3. All donors will receive a COVID antibody test and the results will be emailed to them within 2 days.
2. Be one of two volunteers needed from our church to assist donors in using the Temperature Kiosk, and sign in and register donors as they arrive. You can sign up to volunteer by clicking the link above or calling 1-800-Red-Cross.
3. Pray for those volunteering, donating, and receiving

Their goal is to receive 30 successful collections. Let's help them reach that goal!
Contact the church office for more information.

Weekly Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship online January 31 at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.! Randy Shepley will be preaching. If you have any technical difficulties watching the services on Facebook Live, please send us a direct message on Facebook so we can help troubleshoot the issue.

The following is a list of weekly events that can be accessed on the First Baptist Church of Newport News Facebook page, youth events that can be accessed on their Instagram page-@fbcnn youth, and young adult events that meet using Microsoft Teams. (The 10:30 Sunday worship service will also be uploaded to the website, fbcnn.org, each Monday, and can be accessed by clicking on the Resources tab.)

- **Sundays:** 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Service
9:30 a.m. Youth Sunday Bible Study
9:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School Grades 1-5
10:00 a.m. Preschool & Kindergarten
Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
12:30 p.m. Hispanic Worship
- **Mondays:** 7:30 p.m. The Bridge Young Adults
- **Tuesdays:** 8:00 p.m. Young Adult Couples

[FBCNN Facebook Live Videos](#)

If you missed Sunday's service and do not have a Facebook account, you can click [here for 8:30](#) or [here for 10:30](#) to watch it on our Vimeo page.

Staff Contact Info

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