



## What Does EMBRACE Mean?

Embrace. . . it is a word that has been a part of our church mission statement for years. Embracing God, Equipping Christ-followers, Engaging our world. This mission God has given us, it all begins with Embracing.

However, since my sabbatical last year, I have wrestled with and embraced (!) a formative truth: our life as a church family centers on embracing. We are called to Embrace God, Embrace one another, and Embrace our neighbor.

The word “embrace” can literally mean physically hugging or holding someone. While healthy, appropriate hugs (with permission!) are good for people, most people do not hug everyone. Hugs and holding are reserved for the most intimate relationships. What I mean by “our church family’s life centers on embracing” is that we must extend the full open-armed welcome of God to all people. We must accept others in the same way God has accepted us. It is simple, really: God embraces us with God’s love. Therefore, we embrace others with God’s love.

Of course, it’s not very simple at all. Excluding others is much easier than embracing them, particularly if we don’t understand them. It is so easy to exclude and turn away from people who do or believe truths we do not like. It is so much easier to embrace the clarity of our beliefs than it is to embrace people. We live in a culture that readily labels, judges, and casts others aside. We excel at division. We champion exclusion.

At FBCNN, we have a different calling. In a world that prioritizes isolation and exclusion, we have the opportunity to embrace (!) a better way: the way of opened arm welcome. The way of love. The way of embrace.

Embrace is the hard, most excellent way. Have you ever tried to embrace and forgive someone who hurts you, who leaves you, who wounds you? This is part of what Jesus means when he tells us to love our enemies. The way of Embrace is the most challenging way. It is also the Jesus way.

Starting on October 6 with our Combined Sunday service, we will begin a new sermon series simply called, “Embrace.” But friends, this is so much more than a sermon series. You will be invited to embrace a deep season of prayer. You will be invited to embrace a new way of living, being church, and following Jesus. Our church will be invited deeper into the mission of Embracing: to Embrace God, Embrace One Another, and Embrace Our Neighbors.

By the way, over the next few weeks, be on the lookout for persons who will ask you “What does embrace mean?” We can’t wait to hear your answers! We can’t wait to embrace (!) this season of EMBRACE!

- Pastor Randy



## Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Virginia (CBFVA) General Assembly

What a wonderful turnout we had for the CBFVA General Assembly in spite of the weather. There were a variety of speakers from all over Virginia that spoke about topics impacting churches today. Thank you to our wonderful hosts, Jim and Jeanette Lystlund, Sue Swain, and Jane Satchell, and all of their help to make this a warm and welcoming time!

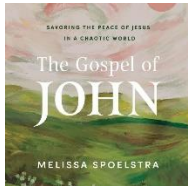
### Young Adult Lunch at Chihuahua's

College students from Christopher Newport University and Virginia Peninsula Community College enjoyed food and fellowship with Randy last Sunday. These students are regular attendees at the 11am worship service. Please continue to keep each of these college students and the ones from our congregation that are currently away at college in your prayers.



## Ladies Fall Bible Study Wednesdays

October 9-November 20  
9:30-11:30am  
in Room 144



This will be a 7-week study written by Melissa Spoelstra on the Gospel of John. To sign up, please contact Georgia Mann at 757-595-3990 or [mann.georgia@aol.com](mailto:mann.georgia@aol.com) by Wednesday, September 25th. (Cost is \$15.)

## PERFORMING ARTS STUDIO

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
NEWPORT NEWS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY

LESSONS AVAILABLE IN:  
• BRASS  
• VOCAL  
• PIANO  
• WOODWINDS



## Performing Arts Studio

Registration has begun for the Fall Term of our Performing Arts Studio. We are excited to accept students in Middle through High School and adults. For more information and to sign up please follow the link to the form, [here](#).

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Lesley Spitzer ([lspitzer@fbcnn.org](mailto:lspitzer@fbcnn.org)) or John Irving ([jirving@fbcnn.org](mailto:jirving@fbcnn.org)).

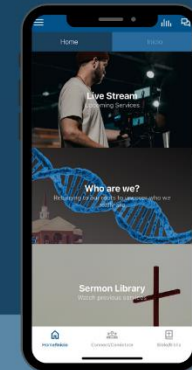
## Upcoming Events

**October 6** - Mark your calendars! One Combined Worship Service at 11am, all three worship services will be worshipping one God together. A delicious lunch will follow in Payne Fellowship Hall.

## Download Our App

Stay connected  
with your  
church family!

Download Now



Available on the Apple, Android,  
Amazon, and Roku App Stores



## Weekly Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in person or online Sunday, September 22 at 8:30am & 11am! Randy Shepley will be leading us in worship.

The Sunday worship services are streamed directly to our [website](#) and can be accessed by clicking on **Upcoming Live Stream** tab located on the home page. If you miss a service, you can click on **Sermon Library** in the **Resources** tab to select the service you missed. (Services are listed in chronological order with the most recent on top.)

The following is a list of weekly events. Learn more about children's events on Facebook and youth events on their Instagram page-@fbcnnyouth.



## Digital Ministry Team Needs You!

Our tech team provides outreach to our community and to our homebound members through broadcasting each service. This team also enhances our in-person worship by running our sound and projection systems. For this worthy ministry to continue, we need your help. We will train you, no experience required! For more information, contact Lesley Spitzer, [lsplitzer@fbcnn.org](mailto:lsplitzer@fbcnn.org).

**Make a financial  
contribution to FBCNN  
today by clicking on the  
Donate link.**

**DONATE**

### Sundays

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship  
9:45 a.m. Adult Bible Study  
9:45 a.m. Children's Bible Study  
9:45 a.m. Infant-Preschool Bible Study  
9:45 a.m. Youth Bible Study  
11:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
11:00 a.m. Extended Session - infants through age 4  
11:00 a.m. Hispanic Bible Study  
12:30 p.m. Hispanic Worship

### Mondays

7:00 p.m. Young Single Adults

### Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal (resume 9/11)  
6:30 p.m. K-Motion & Youth  
6:30 p.m. Hispanic Prayer and Bible Study  
7:30 p.m. Adult Choir Rehearsal

### Thursdays

10:00 a.m. Swingin' Singers

Click on the link below to watch the service from 8:30am and 11am this past Sunday.

[September 15](#)

## Staff Contact Info

Randy Shepley, Senior Pastor, [rshepley@fbcnn.org](mailto:rshepley@fbcnn.org)  
Juan Garcia, Associate Pastor Hispanics, [jgarcia@fbcnn.org](mailto:jgarcia@fbcnn.org)  
Walter Satchell, Associate Pastor Pastoral Care, [wsatchell@fbcnn.org](mailto:wsatchell@fbcnn.org)  
Lesley Spitzer, Associate Pastor Worship and Creative Arts, [lsplitzer@fbcnn.org](mailto:lsplitzer@fbcnn.org)  
Monica Garcia, Financial Coordinator, [monica@fbcnn.org](mailto:monica@fbcnn.org)  
Sharon Hertzler, Director of Children and Preschool Ministry, [shertzler@fbcnn.org](mailto:shertzler@fbcnn.org)  
John Irving, Director of Choral Ministry, [jirving@fbcnn.org](mailto:jirving@fbcnn.org)  
Nikki Reid, Executive Assistant, [nikki@fbcnn.org](mailto:nikki@fbcnn.org)  
Lindsay Rew, Preschool Director, [preschool@fbcnn.org](mailto:preschool@fbcnn.org)

Church Office: 757-930-0911

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NEWPORT NEWS | [fbcnn.org](http://fbcnn.org)

