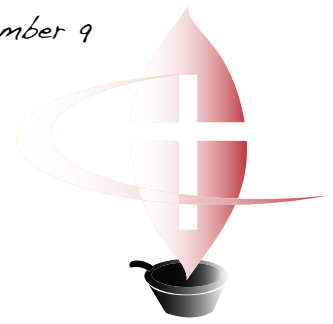


the Lamp

... as a light shining in a dark place. 2 Peter 1:19



Exceeding Expectations



Book of the Month

The Lamp makes some humble reading suggestions ...



Ministry Highlights

A special guest contributor this month.



Calendar of Events

A calendar highlights special dates along with listings of special events and birthdays for the month of September.



Tom Kirklin

1 Thess 1:2 We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. 3 We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

This inspiration that Paul writes about provided the kind of energy that powered Debbie Kovitz, Carol McDaniel and the many volunteers who participated in a successful elementary camp at Camp Mohawk this summer. The campers and counselors both experienced an increase in knowledge and spiritual growth. The fellowship was delightful and all the campers wanted to stay longer.

The participation at the Vacation Bible School was beyond the expectations of Betty Watson, Lori Veatch, Brian Watson, and a host of others. While VBS may not have been High-Tech, it was most certainly High-Voltage. The kids navigated the different stations with excitement and joy. The final night was a great opportunity to meet and encourage the parents of the kids in attendance, some from the community and some from Friendswood Christian School.

The eagerness shown by the many members of the Transition Team and the Minister Search Team as we travel through this time of change has been exciting and encouraging to the congregation and the elders. Their work culminated in Danny Mercer's acceptance of our offer to be our full time pulpit minister. The Mercer family's arrival time will be announced as soon as it is known.

The Wednesday night prayer meeting has been a wonderful blessing and a chance to share in depth the challenges in our lives and the praise reports experienced. Let it be said of us that we are people that call upon the Lord in every matter of our lives.

The elders are extremely grateful to God for the pursuit by this congregation of their faith and hope in Jesus Christ. The elders are convinced that our vision of Knowing and Growing in Christ, produces the love and endurance Paul writes about, and has led to the kind of summer we have experienced. Praise God for this summer it has been encouraging and faith building. The elders are praying for you and are available to share in your concerns and victories.

Ministers

Danny Mercer - Pulpit Minister (coming soon)
Mike Ross, Pastoral CARE

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:00 A.M.
Worship 10:15 A.M.
CARE Groups 6:00 P.M.

Assembly Schedule

Wednesday

Prayer service &
Youth Bible Classes 7:00 P.M.



Todd Smithgall

From Todd Smithgall

As a Deacon here in Friendswood, my focus is on Adult Education. We have a great lineup of Fall classes, and I encourage every one of you to choose one that interests and challenges you. Your faithful participation will be a blessing to you, an encouragement to others, and an honor to the teachers who are working hard to bring valuable lessons from God's word to all of us.

I'm giving the bulk of my space in this month's Lamp to a message from Danny Mercer, the man God has chosen to be our Pulpit Minister. I want us to get to know he and his family, and benefit from his teachings, even before he arrives. With Danny's permission, I've selected a recent writing from his web site – <http://gospelsightings.blogspot.com/>

Resident Aliens

"To the chosen exiles of the Dispersion, destined by God...live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear...as aliens and strangers abstain from sinful desires. 1 Peter 1:1, 17, 2:11

Why has God acted in unprecedented ways to save his people? From the Exodus out of Egypt to the triumphant victory in the resurrection of Christ, God has acted on behalf of his people to redeem them and save them from the oppressive powers of this world. Why has God done this? Is God a mere super hero? The Incredibles taught us that it is hard to be a super hero and be a part of the community. Super heroes are supposed to sweep in and fix our problem, then get out until we need them again. God hasn't just delivered his people as a super hero might sweep in and rescue the damsel in distress and then fly away never to be seen until he is needed again. No, God is creating a people, a community of his very own. He's forming a community of faith that will follow him, obey him, declare his wonders and praises, a people who will point the world to God, to show the world what God is like, a people who will live out their reason for existing. He's creating a community of people who he can point to and say, "now that's what humanity should look like."

God is creating the church to be his contrast community. Jesus didn't come as a super hero... "He is God-man, able to walk on water, turn water into wine, make blind people see with mud he makes from his own spit, able to rescue us from our sins and transport us safely to the other side." Jesus is not some mere super-hero, he is our savior, he is the author of our faith, he is the reason we go to church and join together as a community. God, through Christ, is now creating a community of people who will announce what God has done and is doing by drawing all people to himself. Peter writes to such a community. Peter calls his community "aliens and strangers" in this world. Meaning, our lives should point to something different. The world is watching, and wondering what God is up to. This people that claim to be his people, what makes them so different? Is there a noticeable difference in how we treat each other, how we treat the weak, how we treat the earth, how we treat those outside our community?

God has always been creating a people for himself, setting them apart from the world given to them on a daily basis. These "resident aliens," as Hauerwas and Willimon call us, are to live as exemplary aliens in a land that does not welcome them. Yet, they are to live in such a way that they are different, but not in conflict with the dominant culture. They are to return good for evil, blessing for slander, hope when there is no hope. This is the community Peter is writing to, a community that is finding itself more and more on the margins. There isn't organized persecution at this point, but the marginalization has begun.

For the past 1600 years our world could be drawn like this: Christianity at the center. From the time of Constantine, Christianity has been at the center of our existence. However, this privilege Christianity has had in Western culture is dying. Christianity is being pushed to the margins.

It doesn't die easy, however. Even today we struggle with how much we should be involved with politics. Countless para-church organizations are lobbying the government to legislate the Christian ethic on all of us. Some of it is good and holy and right. Some of it is a Christian power-grab. My question, though, is this: Where is Christianity meant to exist? Is Christianity to exist in the center of society? Is it where we should be moving? If we are in the center, is it where we should dig in our heels and stay? I believe Christianity functions best on the margins.

This is where Peter finds his communities of faith, sitting on the margins. It is here that Christianity stands or falls. When Christianity is in power, it exists out of privilege. But, when it is marginalized, it exists out of its radical claims of Jesus Christ, and his call for the church to live as aliens and strangers in the land. It is when Christians embrace their marginal status, live faithful lives as disciples of Jesus, that the world sees them and "glorifies God in heaven."

Danny Mercer



September 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6 <i>10 - 11:30 am Ladies Class Resumes</i>	7	8
9	10 ←	11 <i>Meals on Wheels</i>	12 →	13	14	15
16	17	18 <i>6 - 7 am Community Prayer Breakfast @ the FHS Cafeteria</i>	19 <i>Noon Chow for Coogs U of H Student Luncheon</i>	20	21	22 <i>God's Plan for Healthy Sexuality Seminar 22nd - 23rd</i>
23 <i>30 Fellow- ship Meal</i>	24	25	26	27	28	29

Happy Birthday Happy Birthday Happy Birthday

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 - Charles Kirklin | 10 - Weldon Womack | 20 - Cathy Erminger |
| 4 - Anel Sacramento | 11 - Leigh Ann Adair | 23 - Cole Scanlan |
| 5 - Kristin Foulk, Irene Hart | 14 - Susan Cox | 24 - Shelly Kelly |
| 6 - Peggy Guiliams | 15 - Diane Bailey | 27 - Tyler Adair |
| 7 - Nik Kovitz, Becky Wooley | 16 - Glenda Duncan | 28 - Sandra Harrell |
| 8 - Nancy Smotherman | 18 - Dawn Uceda, David Veatch | 30 - Ann Taft |
| 9 - Jeff Thomas, Amy Bruner | 19 - Connie Young | |

★ Announcements ★

Ladies Bible Class - Resumes for the Fall Thursday September 6th. Class will be from 10:00-11:30am, with nursery provided. Our study focus for the fall will be "Acts—More than History". Nancy Thomas will teach/facilitate this examination of the early days of our Lord's church.

Meals on Wheels - September 10th thru 14th we will serve Meals on Wheels.

Friendswood Community Prayer Breakfast - Tuesday, September 18th at 6:00 - 7:00 a.m. at the FHS Cafeteria. The speaker will be Margaret Limmer of FCA Ministries. Her topic will be "Honoring FHS Fall Sports." The cost is \$5. Reserve your breakfast by contacting Ed Hoskins.

Chow for Coogs Wednesday September 19th !!! - It's time for the fall UH luncheon where we have the opportunity to serve lunch to students at the central campus. The central campus is a melting pot of cultures and what a privilege it is to reach out in the name of Christ. There's a sign up sheet in the lobby. See Melissa Vowell for details.

September 22nd - 23rd - God's Plan for Healthy Sexuality Seminar. Contact the church office for details.

Fellowship Meal September 30th - Join us after services for a Mexican Fiesta lunch.

Thanks to all of you who supported the hundreds of dollars worth of school supplies for the Mathis family. Every year you come through to support this ministry without hesitation, and it is very much appreciated.



Contribution Counters
Jerry Scott & Weldon Womack

Communion Preparers
The Bryan Watson Family



*the heavens declare
the glory of God*

Book of the Month • Book of the Month • Book of the Month

This month's suggestion from the Lamp is Ashamed of the Gospel, When the Church Becomes Like the World by John McArthur Jr. He is the well known pastor at Grace Community Church in California with the long running "Grace to You" radio program. First printed in 1993, the warning it brings against compromising the gospel message is still very relevant today. An excerpt from the book jacket reads ... "Pastors have turned to the marketing industry to help them draw people in rather than relying on the sovereign power of God ... until we return to our calling to go into all the world and preach the Gospel without shame – the church is in danger of losing its impact on society." Thought provoking and worth reading.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
IN FRIENDSWOOD



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