

First Baptist Church of Littleton Good Newsletter



“Journeying to God’s Sacred Beat” September 2012

Rally Day Sunday September 16 Who is my Neighbor?

‘Tis the season of political rallies! In that same spirit, we will come together Sunday, September 16 for a time of fellowship and fruits. Join us at 9AM to make a sign that represents the fruit of God’s Spirit which shines from your life. Galatians 5:22-23



9AM muffins, juice, and coffee, and fruits of a different kind.

10AM Worship with music led by the Hudsons, the FBC Choir, and For Higher.

In worship we will ask the question “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) The scriptural basis for this question is found in Matthew 22:36-40, Mark 12: 28-34, and Luke 10:25-37, the scripture that Jesus said was more important *than any other*. We will also be using the following welcome message, found in the bulletin at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Community in Texas. This community made a list of everyone they would welcome. Who would we welcome? We will imagine what FBC might say in our bulletin, and it will be a jumping off point for the discussions that will take place in our church this fall. Here how the church in Texas answered that same question:

“We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, gay, filthy rich,

crying new-borns, skinny as a rail or could afford to lose a few pounds.

We welcome you if you can sing like Andrea Bocelli or like our pastor who can’t carry a note in a bucket. You’re welcome here if you’re “just browsing,” just woke up or just got out of jail. We don’t care if you’re more

Catholic than the Pope, or haven’t been in church since little Joey’s Baptism.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome soccer moms, NASCAR dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk-food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you’re having problems or you’re down in the dumps or if you don’t like “organized religion,” we’ve been there too.

If you blew all your offering money at the dog track, you’re welcome here. We offer a special welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don’t work, can’t spell, or because grandma is in town and wanted to go to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced or both. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down your throat as a kid or got lost in traffic and wound up here by mistake. We welcome tourists, seekers and doubters, bleeding hearts ... and you!”

Retrieved 9/4/2012 from:

<http://www.jonacuff.com/stuffchristianslike/2012/07/how-to-welcome-people-to-your-church/>

Bible Study/ Forum #1 on the issue of homosexuality, the church and our faith.

The same session – offered twice. Please sign up on the Kiosk.

- **Sunday, September 30 at 12 Noon.**
Bring a sandwich and a Bible.
- **Monday, October 1 at 7:00pm** Bring a Bible (and a sandwich if you would like!)

Leadership Dinner, September 15

There will be an Advisory Council *dinner* at the home of Charlie & Anne Lee Ellis on Saturday, September 15 at 16 Elizabeth Street Littleton, for those that are involved in a leadership area of the church – or would like to be more involved. Join us for a kick-off gathering, dinner and time of fellowship. Please RSVP by emailing Anne Lee or Charlie at

charlieandannelee@gmail.com or calling 978-486-4075. We will schedule the next Advisory Council meeting at that time.

Sunday School classes begin Sunday, September 23

9AM Sunday School classes for all ages, including adults who will continue to use the FaithLink curriculum that addresses our faith in light of current events.

Junior Church

Carol Accettullo has generously agreed to coordinate junior church, and Barbie Goodhue has signed up for a number of the Sundays. We need your help though and appreciate those who are able to take a turn for our youngest church goers. Junior Church is for children up to Second Grade.

See the chart in fellowship hall on the kiosk and talk to or email Carol if you are able to help.

A Thank You to the Church

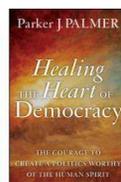
from Jennifer Craig who lost many of her belongings, and daughter Hannah's, in an apartment fire.

FBC Littleton. Thank you all for the gift. I cannot thank you enough for thinking of us. Hannah will be so happy as I will be getting her a bed with you gift. Thank you and God Bless. Jennifer Craig.

Coming in October

Healing the Heart of the Democracy Parker Palmer

Three sessions Sundays after church at Noon



1. October 21
2. October 28
3. November 4

Please sign up on the kiosk. You may order your own book on Amazon.com, or I would be glad to order one for you. The cost is \$15.

Communion Offerings

A reminder from the Diaconate Board that the Deacon's offering will continue to be received on Communion Sundays. Please use one of the envelopes marked *Communion Offering* and place your gift in with the regular offering. Thank you!

We are looking for an Editor-in-Chief

of this *newsletter* as well as someone to take over the *website*. If you are interested in either of these important ministries of communication please speak to Pastor Debbie. New ideas and formats for both are welcome!

Pastoral Daze

Will Our Children Have Wisdom?

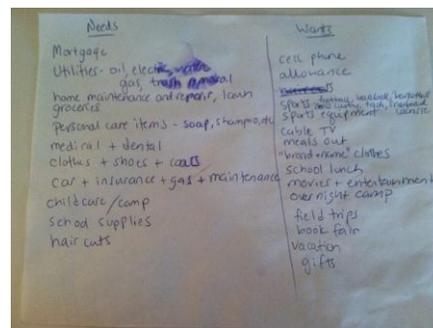
Let's Talk.

In a previous blog I asked the question, "Will our children have faith?" Citing the Shema, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, an extremely important Biblical text, I stated that the most important aspect in the development of faith was, and always will be, relationships between one another. It is in the mentoring, modeling and discipling of one another that each person, young or old, develops their own faith. Those types of deep relationships are built when people spend time with one another talking, listening, and reasoning things out. This is how *wisdom*, the ability to choose wisely in life and stand on one's own two feet, is developed. I know that as a mother I give thanks for my two adult daughters, whom I love with my whole heart, and who are creative women with a good head on their shoulders, hard workers, and who are both wise beyond their years.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 points to the development of relationships when it instructs us to talk with one another ALL the time. We are to talk as we "sit at home, walk along the way, when we go to sleep, and when we rise," or in other words all the time! That is a lot of talking, and there a few families and people in the path of my life where I see Deuteronomy 6:4-9 being modeled or demonstrated.

One family talks with their two children, now youth, all the time. They are well read, thoughtful young people who are able to carry on a conversation with adults about politics, the environment, religion or faith. Another friend, a mother with three boys, talks to her children all the time, engages them in conversations and encourages them to think and reason things out. She

isn't trying to just shove content down their throats, or trying to get them to obey her, instead she is helping them understand and practice the lessons in life one needs. She is helping them see how learning matters, and will make a difference in their life as they grow. I have another friend, a chemistry teacher, who teaches that same way. She does of course teach content, but also purposefully brings in every day examples of chemistry-at-work in order for students to see that chemistry matters. Who knew about the chemistry involved in the sinking of the Titanic? Her students did. All involved are learning wisdom.



Needs vs. Wants

Will our children have wisdom? It takes time and creativity to parent well and recently my friend Caroline, the mother of the three boys I mentioned earlier, engaged her children in a lesson on the difference between "needs" and "wants," or the love of money. (1Timothy 6:10) This lesson occurred while they were talking, and were engaged in a typical daily activity of putting away the groceries. They were practicing the Deuteronomy passage, talking as they "sat at home, walked along the way, were going to sleep, and getting up for a new day." In other words they talked all the time.

You may read about it and their conversation in this newsletter or on her blog, Boy to the World! The article is entitled [Moneyfesto](#).

What do you think?

In their conversation I see her teaching them wisdom, or the ability to reason things out and take the best course. Wisdom is the ability to think ahead about the consequences of a decision and then take the sensible course, and not to act rashly. No YOLO (You Only Live Once) thinking, which is the new acronym and current philosophy du jour. King Solomon asked for wisdom when God gave him the opportunity to ask for *anything* that he wanted.

The basic lesson/discussion is about money and the difference between “wants vs. needs” however it covers, without them know it, budgeting, planning, power, choice, hard work, self-sufficiency, nutrition, gratitude and appreciation. There is a lot going on within their conversation, which would be repeated at other times and in other contexts, and would reinforce the lesson helping them remember and practice it. There are many other influences that will affect their lives, but I look forward to watching them mature over the years.

All of this is no guarantee that our children will turn out the way we want them to. But that isn't the point of parenting. The hope of parenting is that our children will be able to make their own way in the world, stand on their own two feet, find a sense of purpose, love and be loved, find and own their own faith.

What do you think? In light of the decline of our Sunday School programs and the general decline in the importance of the organized church, what do you think about the faith of our children? What about wisdom? How do we teach it and practice

it? Will our children have wisdom? Will they have faith? I am ready to listen. Let's talk.

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Boy to the World!

Moneyfest

By Caroline Poser

Things I heard a lot as a kid, yet try really hard not to say to my kids include “We can't afford that” and “Do you think money grows on trees?”

First of all, some things that we don't buy, we could easily “afford” if we didn't pay some of our bills or chose to carry a credit card balance. So technically, while I might feel like we can't afford something, I want to be clear that “I choose not to allocate our budget that way.”

Secondly, paper money does indeed come from trees, my checkbook still has checks in it, and all you have to do is go to the ATM and stick your card in the machine and – like magic – out comes money. Duh! So how can I, or anyone, ever be out of money? That is about what kids know until we teach them otherwise.

Money is not the root of all evil; it's the love of money that is, as the saying goes. This means that if you put the pursuit of money above all else, that is where things can get ugly. But money itself is power – not in the sense of the “wallet bully,” i.e., he who has the money has control. I mean that if you have money you are empowered with choices and freedoms. At the very most basic level, you can choose what to buy at the supermarket. At the other end of the spectrum, you can choose to take a vacation and where to go on vacation. You

are also free to live without the oppressive burden of debt.

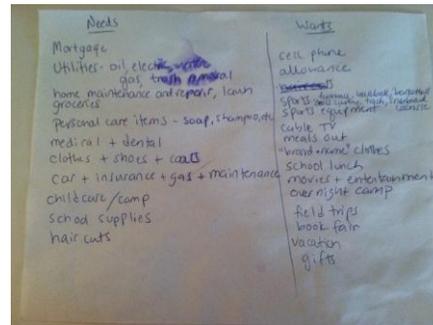
My kids get allowance and it is tied to chores. While I think it is important to contribute to the family and to know how to do things around the house. There will be a period in their lives (starting about now) where no one is consistently going to hand all their meals to them on plates, pick up their dirty clothes and towels and wash them, or clean up the bathroom after them and “of course I am sure your girlfriend or wife will appreciate it very much if you already know how to do these things when you meet her.”

I need leverage to get them to do said chores. That is partially what allowance is for. The other part is so they learn how to budget, plan, sacrifice, trade off, delay gratification, and regardless of the amount one earns, spend less, invest the rest, and watch it grow.

I do get tired of hearing my kids say “all my friends have swimming pools,” and “our backyard is way too small” and “I wish I had my own room!” All I can say tell them is some people have more than us, and some people have less. Everyone can’t be the same. You’re right, life isn’t fair. Some people are happy with more or less. Those that are not ought to be motivated to make a change.

To illustrate to my kids that they have it pretty good, I made a list of needs and wants and left it on the kitchen counter near the cereal and cracker cabinet. Items in the need category included shelter, utilities (not including cable), property maintenance, clothes, and groceries. Items in the want category were things like allowance, sports, sports equipment, school lunch/meals out, and “brand-name” clothes. The list stayed there for a few days,

with no comment. After I had gone grocery shopping one day, I hauled out items from the bags one by one before putting them away.



Needs vs. Wants

“Kids, milk: luxury or necessity?”

“Necessity,” my middle son answered. He probably drinks two gallons a week himself. “Yuck,” my youngest said. He prefers yogurt or cheese from that food group.

“Bread: luxury or necessity?”

“Necessity,” my older two chimed in. “Chicken tenderloins.”

“Necessity.”

“Well, not so fast – you can get protein from other sources, right?”

“Oh, well, yeah...”

“Beef jerky,” I continued.

“Necessity,” my oldest stated.

“Well, again...you don’t need meat for protein, and couldn’t you make your own beef jerky?”

“You can?”

“Sure, Uncle does.” I went on, “Chicken nuggets.”

My youngest perked up and said, “What’s a luxury again?”

“Something you want, not something you need” his brothers answered, in almost-unison.

“Necessity,” he answered affirmatively. He would eat chicken nuggets at every meal if he could.

We all laughed. “Of course *he* would say that,” my middle son commented.

My oldest said, “You really need to try new foods” which is very true, and something Grandma always said, but not the topic du jour.

I refocused them. “Kids, Honey Nut Cheerios®: luxury or necessity?”

“Well, is it the bag or the box?” my middle son asked (the bag would be the store brand).

“It’s the box, they were on sale.”

“Then it’s a necessity.”

“Hmmm, are you sure? They are pre-sweetened. Isn’t it a luxury to have someone else put the sugar on your cereal, when I could be buying plain oat rings and we have a sugar bowl right here?”

“Mom, is this what that list is all about?”
My oldest asked

“Yeah, basically.”

“Well, about that list. Mom,” my middle son interjected. “You gotta take haircuts out of the want column – I need haircuts and I need to go to a professional.”

(Ultimately I moved it, even though I really do think I could recreate his buzz cut with the Conair® clipper set we have tucked away, and not wanting to get too far into the economic theory of specialization: given that I am already their chief cook and bottlewasher, should I be expected to be their hairdresser, too?)

My oldest asked, “Yeah, on the list you put ‘car’ in the need column. Is a car really a need?”

“For us it is, but it wouldn’t be in a city. I lived in Boston for five years with no car. We had the T. There is no public transportation here, so how would you get to football practice?” (*Wait ‘til he is old enough to drive... I thought. I am sure he wouldn’t doubt the need for a car then!*)

We continued our conversation as we – they had come into the kitchen to help me unearth the latest wants and needs from the shopping bags – put the groceries away. We talked about how many people’s needs are others’ wants and vice versa, and how it isn’t up to us to make that decision for them; and how some people wouldn’t want or need some of the things we want/need, like vegetarians, who don’t need or want chicken tenderloins, chicken nuggets or any kind of chicken at all, never mind beef jerky.

We remembered that it’s important to be grateful for what you have otherwise you’ll constantly be focused on what you don’t have. We agreed that it’s okay to want more, but not to expect it to be handed to you: the world doesn’t owe you a living. I informed them that parents aren’t obligated to provide more than food, clothing, and shelter for their kids with the caveat that hopefully parents want to, and hopefully kids will appreciate it. I inferred, with my holey and squeaking sneakers, that

sometimes parents put their own needs aside for their kids needs or wants.

“Ooh, you got Fenway Fudge ice cream – can we have some?”

“Luxury or necessity,” I asked.

“Luxury,” my older two shouted.

“Sure, you can have luxury – ice cream – after dinner – necessity. Needs should always come before wants.” I turned on the oven to preheat it for cooking the chicken nuggets.

“Thanks, Mom!”

“Yeah, thanks.”

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www.carolineposer.com



VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

From time to time bags of used clothing appear in the Goldsmith Street entrance and they really need to be disposed of properly. If someone can spare a few hours' time occasionally, these clothes need to be taken to Loaves and Fishes on Monday mornings.

Larry Fisher spends a few mornings a week collecting food from various drop-off sites

and delivering it to Loaves and Fishes, along with donated food from the church. He'd be happy to take the clothes, too, but the receiving days for clothes are different from the receiving days for food, so that would mean another special trip to L&F just for the clothes. Also, L&F cannot accept most donated clothing items because they don't have the manpower to mend rips, lost buttons, etc. As they say, all clothes need to be "clean, rack ready, in season." Because of these limitations, only about 30 percent of donated clothing can be used. All others have to be taken to a Goodwill box, or otherwise disposed of, by L&F.

Larry has been dropping the bags of clothing into the local Salvation Army dropoff boxes, just to get them out of the church building, but would love to see them delivered to L&F, if someone would be willing to do that task.

If you have clothes and can't spare the time to get them to Loaves & Fishes, you could drop them off yourself at either the Goodwill collection box in the Donelan's parking lot or at the Middle School parking lot for the benefit of the Littleton Boosters Club.

Please contact Larry at 978-486-4932, or LarryF77@verizon.net to learn of more particulars of this task.



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