

The Challenger

Ministerial Staff

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Volume 58

February 2023

NO. 02

During the COVID lock-downs, there was a lot of debate about which services, organizations, and businesses were considered essential for the ongoing health of our society and could therefore remain open and which could remain closed. Unfortunately, the church didn't make the essentials list. God's people gathering together for worship, mutual encouragement, spiritual growth, and service was lumped in the same category as going to a hair salon or gym (unless you were a politician, then it was actually placed below the hair salon on the list of priorities). Even bars trumped the church in what our culture said was crucially important.

When we listed God's church as nothing more than an elective activity, an add-on that's not all that important to the health of our culture, we as an American society made a grievous error. And I would argue, God has been letting us reap the results of our poor sense of priorities ever since. Evil has been enjoying its heyday: global entities pursuing a Great Reset using fear, death, and disease as a power-grab opportunity, divisive elections, riots, rampant inflation, gas hikes, LGBTQ+ revolution, skyrocketing levels of depression, anxiety, and suicide even among our young, and political corruption abound. These past times of crisis have not been a happy reflection of the American culture, and if we're being honest, they haven't been a great reflection on the church either. The tumult of 2020-2022 has served as “The Great Distraction” to God's people from our mission that we've been called to.

We are the ones who should not be surprised at what we're seeing around us. Our culture has been experiencing nothing more than what God promised we would experience if we treated Him the way that our nation has been treating Him. He even wrote down what we're seeing in His Word so that His people wouldn't be caught off their guard. I would argue it's all coming true with unnerving accuracy. But He also wrote down our marching orders that remain in place, judging by the fact that we're all still here. Our marching orders are not to be the running commentary about how evil our politicians are or to complain about the price of eggs. And though it is true we are commanded to stand up for justice and fight oppression, our PRIMARY marching orders are not even to work towards maintaining our American freedoms.

Our PRIMARY marching orders are to pass out hope like it's candy in our pocket because we are the stewards of eternal Good News. Yes, we can join in conversations about the gross sins of our culture and its consequences. Yes, we can point out the futility of putting our confidence in corruptible politicians. But our conclusion shouldn't be the same conclusion as everyone else, “The sky is falling and it will keep doing so until a different corruptible politician takes over or until our culture decides to start being moral in its own eyes again.” Our conclusion is Jesus. Our message is, “Want to be secure even when the sky is falling? Want to have direction and meaning even when you don't know who else to trust? Want to belong to something wonderful for eternity? Give your life to Jesus. Pursue a life focusing on Jesus and everything that everyone else is constantly worrying about will fade in comparison.” We as the church are essential. But so is our message. Are we sharing it?

In His Grip,
Pastor Fred

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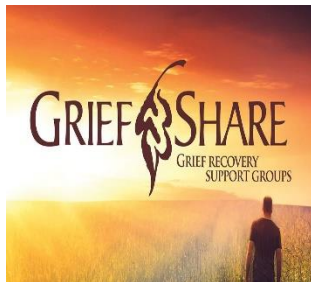
Food Box Distribution is on the
2nd and 4th Thursday.

This is a FREE service to anyone who
needs it - Sponsored by
The Most Excellent Way Bible Study.



**Men's Prayer & Fellowship
Breakfast
Saturday, February 11th
8:00 AM
Activity Center**

**Senior Adult
Lunch/Potluck
Friday, February 17th
11:30 AM
Activity Center**



**Grief Share Support
Group**

will be starting Sunday,
February 12th, at 4PM in
Room 103A.

It will be a 13-week class.
Please contact Pastor Ted
for details.

February 4th, 5th, & 6th, 2023

Frank Figueroa – Reasons For Hope*

Frank L. Figueroa Jr. is a pastor/speaker from Hawaii and part of the online ministry, "Debunked." He is going to be using his story and Scripture to debunk the myths, "Christians Don't Need to Talk about Jesus", "Strong People Don't Need to Fear Drifting Away," "Common Sense Tells Us We Can't Trust the Bible," "Earth is the Result of a Cosmic Accident," and "A Good God Wouldn't Allow Suffering." Come and bring your family and friends for this encouraging time!

Saturday, 02/04, @ 8:30 AM – Breakfast @ Red Sands Christian School – Please RSVP (928) 289-9221
Sunday, 02/05, @ 10:30 AM @ First Baptist Church
Sunday, 02/05, @ 6:00 PM @ First Baptist Church
Monday, 02/06, @ 8:15 AM @ Red Sands Christian School
Monday, 02/06, @ 7:00 PM @ First Baptist Church



Super Bowl Party

**Sunday, February 12th at 4PM in the Activity Center
Wear your favorite jersey and cheer for your team!**

Hope Pregnancy Center is doing a Baby Bottle Fundraiser. You can pick up a Baby Bottle in the foyer and take it home to fill with coins, paper money, and checks. Please return to Pastor Ted or Kathy Patton by February 26th. These funds will help to provide much needed supplies for expecting and young mothers and their babies. Thank you for your generosity!

Come to a **new Men's Bible Study** taught by Dan Cole, Friday mornings at 10 AM in the upstairs Prayer Room, 205B. Starts February 3rd!



Mark your calendar!!

- 02/01 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection
- 02/01 6:00 PM Evening Bible Study – Rm 103A
- 02/01 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 02/02 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 02/03 10:00 AM Men's Bible Study – Rm 205B
- 02/04 8:30 AM Frank Figueroa – Breakfast @ Red Sands Christian School – Please RSVP (928) 289-9221
- 02/04 11:00 AM Youth Sledding Trip
- 02/05 10:30 AM Frank Figueroa – Guest Speaker
- 02/05 6:00 PM Frank Figueroa – Guest Speaker
- 02/05 No Youth University
- 02/06 8:15 AM Frank Figueroa @ Red Sands Christian School
- 02/06 7:00 PM Frank Figueroa – Guest Speaker
- 02/07 9:00 AM Men's Fellowship
- 02/07 9:30 AM Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 02/07 2:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 02/08 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection
- 02/08 6:00 PM Evening Bible Study – Rm 103A
- 02/08 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 02/09 3:00 pm Food Box Distribution
- 02/09 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 02/09 7:00 PM Church Council Meeting
- 02/10 10:00 AM Men's Bible Study – Rm 205B
- 02/11 8:00 AM Men's Prayer & Fellowship Breakfast – Activity Center
- 02/12 4:00 PM Grief Share Support Group – Rm 103A
- 02/12 4:00 PM Super Bowl Party – Activity Center
- 02/12 No Evening Bible Study
- 02/12 No Youth University
- 02/13 6:00 PM Men's Bible Study
- 02/14 Valentine's Day
- 02/14 9:00 AM Men's Fellowship
- 02/14 9:30 AM Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 02/14 2:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 02/15 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection
- 02/15 6:00 PM Evening Bible Study – Rm 103A
- 02/15 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 02/16 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 02/17 10:00 AM Men's Bible Study – Rm 205B
- 02/17 11:30 AM Senior Adult Potluck/Luncheon – Activity Center
- 02/19 3:00 PM Deacons' Meeting
- 02/19 4:00 PM Grief Share Support Group – Rm 103A
- 02/19 5:30 PM TWICE FED RESUMES
- 02/19 6:00 PM Evening Bible Study
- 02/19 6:00 PM Youth University
- 02/20 Presidents' Day – No School WUSD
- 02/20 6:00 PM Men's Bible Study
- 02/21 9:00 AM Men's Fellowship
- 02/21 9:30 AM Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 02/21 2:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 02/22 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection
- 02/22 6:00 PM Evening Bible Study – Rm 103A
- 02/22 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 02/23 3:00 pm Food Box Distribution
- 02/23 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 02/24 10:00 AM Men's Bible Study – Rm 205B
- 02/26 4:00 PM Grief Share Support Group – Rm 103A
- 02/26 5:30 PM Twice Fed
- 02/26 6:00 PM Evening Bible Study
- 02/26 6:00 PM Youth University
- 02/27 6:00 PM Men's Bible Study
- 02/28 9:00 AM Men's Fellowship
- 02/28 9:30 AM Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 02/28 2:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center