

# THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

## First Quarter Finances

We have set a monthly tithe goal of \$13,750 to help us see where we need to be to cover our financial responsibilities and also to fund the work of sharing the gospel.

January: \$11, 464.18  
February: \$ 16, 568.00  
March: \$7,430.00  
Total: \$35,462.18 received  
\$41,250.00 budgeted

## Calendar Events

- April 5: Resurrection Sunday
- April 17-18: Men's Retreat
- May 10: Mother's Day
- May 17: Graduate Recognition
- May 17: Baccalaureate Service
- June 6: Widow's Brunch 12 pm
- June 13: Ladies' Brunch 10 am
- June 21: Father's Day



Building on His Word

## Established in the Word

“For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.” Romans 1:11-12

Psalm 133:1 tells of how good and pleasing it is when brothers dwell together in unity and how very true that is. Many parents, especially those blessed with two testosterone fueled sons or more, can attest to just how good and pleasing it is when brothers are getting along. But this is not an article about sibling peace, but on the spiritual brotherhood and its purpose. God created something beautiful through Jesus' completed and accepted sacrifice...the church. The church is the adopted family of God (Rom. 8:15).

This concept of family is something that has crumbled under the unrelenting attacks of the heartless enemy who seeks to destroy all that God has created. The family of God, the church, is a glorious portrayal of the nature and character of God and it was created exactly for that purpose (The Baptist Catechism Q/A 12 & 13; Rev. 4:11). This is most clearly seen when we are gathered together in unity. What is meant by unity though?

*“A godly man is not content with his own salvation, but labors to draw others to heaven; he is both a loadstone and a torch.”*  
Thomas Watson

The Apostle Paul spoke of the church as a body which is united and that seems fairly obvious (Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:12-27). I mean who would want a disunified physical body? How would that even work? It's a disturbing thought to say the least. However, the basic concept still holds true in that unity is a bond. For the church that unity comes from the corporate confession that Jesus is Lord, that He is the Messiah, that He is our savior, that He lived a life of perfect obedience, died in our place as payment for our sin, rose bodily on the third day, and has ascended to the right hand of the Father.

That confession has certain implications because it must work itself out. If we truly believe everything that was just mentioned, then we must hold to the adoption into God's family and the forming of Christ's church. If we hold to that, then we must also hold to being members one of another. And if we hold to that, then we must see that we are to



## Walking by Faith

How should we read the Bible? There are three ways to read God's Word and we should regularly employ all three.

First, read for familiarity. You cannot even attempt to understand what you are not familiar with. This is reading through entire books of the Bible at a time. Utilize Bible reading plans to help with this.

Second, read for study. Get your pen, highlighter, paper, and commentary out for this part. Work on smaller sections of scripture, but really dig in. Ask good questions, take notes, read solid resources when you struggle to understand. Spend days, weeks, months even on a single passage until you have a good grasp.

Finally, read for meditation. Chew on what you read. Take a walk and just let it marinate in your thoughts reflecting on God's goodness as revealed in His Word.



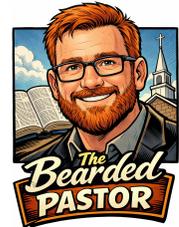
be actively engaging in the work of being “be mutually encouraged by each other's faith”.

Paul eagerly desired to come to the church in Rome for the express purpose of imparting some spiritual gift to them. He wanted to refresh and strengthen them through the active use of his spiritual gifts for their good and ultimately God's glory as well as to be refreshed by the church through the use of their gifts. His main point was that the gospel is not just for salvation (Rom. 1:16) but is also the primary means through which the church matures, is strengthened, and equipped (Gal. 5). Paul understood that just as your physical body needs to work together in order to produce a total strength, so too does the spiritual body need to work together to refresh and strengthen itself.

Paul understood his role in the church, but he also understood that he needed to be refreshed and strengthened by the church. This is why we exist together in God's family and in unity. We must work together to preserve the unity of confession, to encourage, refresh, and strengthen one another. We must come together frequently with the intent of glorifying God, being equipped for God's purposes, and seeking to refresh each other. In this way, it is good and pleasing to our God as we dwell together in unity and reflect His glory.

Soli deo gloria (God's glory alone)

Pastor Patrick



## Sunday Sermon Series

The God Who Governs the Ordinary

Job 38:12-41, 39:1-30, 40:15-41:34

Shall The Faultfinder Contend With The Almighty

Job 40:1-5

Can You Save Yourself

Job 40:6-14

Job's Final Submission

Job 42:1-6

The Glory Is God's Alone

Job 42:7-16

## Next Sermon Series

Letters to the Seven Churches

## Wednesday Nights in April

Typology Study: David and Goliath

Typology Study: Saul and David

Typology Study: Small Group Discussions on

