



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FAIRDALE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026



If you don't know, April is Volunteer Appreciation Month. Many nonprofits and organizations around the world depend on volunteer support to fully function. The church is no different – only a small percentage of those who work in our church are paid for their labor. So much of the week in and week out ministry of our church is done by those who are volunteering their time and energy. For our Easter Egg Hunt, we had around 75 volunteers; our Food Pantry runs with about 20 people working every week. The nursery ministry requires about 50 volunteers a month, and there are countless other ways our church works hard - kids & youth ministry, Sunday school, meals, VBS, music &

media, security & safety, committees, visitation and benevolence, and so much more!

It is important to remember that the work that we do for our church is much more than merely volunteering. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul compares the church to a physical body, reminding his readers that everyone who is in Christ plays an important role in the functioning of the whole – “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (v. 26). In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul again refers to the church as a body, telling us that those who do the work of the ministry are doing so for “building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12)

and that “each part...working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love” (Eph. 4:16). Our labor within the church is ultimately for building up the body of Christ – expanding the reach of the gospel and strengthening and encouraging those who are in Christ to the glory of our Savior

So thank you – for the work and many hours you put into serving our church, and ultimately serving the Lord through these various ministries..

**“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”  
1 Corinthians 15:58**

# Man's Holiness or God's Holiness?

Josh Wamble | Pastor

I wonder what comes to your mind when you think of the word "holy." What images or ideas appear in your imagination. What does that word mean to you? In the gospels there are many confrontations between Jesus and the Pharisees. The main issue at stake in that relationship is what it means to be holy. The Pharisees thought of holiness in terms of legalism and authority. They thought that they were the guardians of the law and the self-appointed standard of God's holiness. They were proud of how "holy" they were and looked down on those who didn't measure up in their opinion of themselves.

I hope that is now how you think about being holy!

In Matt. 5:20, Jesus said, "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." We might read that and think Jesus is using the Pharisees to set a high bar. Maybe he is saying something like, "Look at how righteous the Pharisees are. You are to be even more righteous than them." That may be how his Jewish hearers would have heard it, but that is not the case. He didn't say this because the Pharisees were so righteous but because they weren't. They had a false righteousness, and Jesus's followers are to be truly righteous or holy.

In Col. 3:12, Paul gives a very different description of holiness than the one the Pharisees had. "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience"

The last thing a truly holy person should be is proud - especially proud of themselves! Instead, truly holy followers of Jesus are marked by compassion, kindness, humility or lowliness, meekness, and patience. In the next verses (Col. 3:13-15), he says we are to bear with one another, forgive those that we have a complaint against ju-

st like the Lord has forgiven us, above all be marked by love so that we would live in harmony with one another, be ruled by the peace of Christ, and be thankful.

The Pharisees thought of holiness as something for them to accomplish. They thought they could obtain holiness by following the outward requirements of the law - and they thought they did. In reality, God has obtained holiness for us in Jesus's work of living and obeying and dying and resurrecting. The gospel doesn't say go to the law and work. The gospel says come to Jesus and rest in what He has done for you.

Sadly, the Pharisees are not the only ones who think of holiness in this way. Throughout the history of the church, believers have fallen back into this way of thinking over and over again, from the early believers in Galatia to people and churches in our own denomination over the years. Resting in Jesus doesn't mean there are no standards of holiness. The law lays out the standard, but we cannot meet that standard by following the law. Instead, God works holiness and righteousness in us by the working of the Holy Spirit.

Which view of holiness describes you?

What are you marked by?

# What We Sing Matters: Theology in our Hymns

Andrew Crawford | Minister of Music

## “Death in vain forbid Him rise.”

These six words from Charles Wesley's hymn “Christ the Lord is Risen Today” ring true each and every day. But on Easter Sunday, we take time to sing and reflect on this theological truth; that Christ has defeated death, and the grave could not hold Him.

When we sing of death's vain attempt to hold Christ down, we are proclaiming that Christ - not death - has the final authority and power. Scripture makes this clear. Christ laid down His life willingly and rose triumphantly with all power and authority.

Christ's work is both definite and effective. When Christ declares “it is finished,” he is declaring that the full wrath of God has been taken on by Him who knew no sin. When the Father raises the Son, he is declaring that the payment for sin has been fully accepted. On the cross, he secured the salvation of His people. And in the resurrection, that finished work is publicly vindicated. John Calvin wrote that the resurrection is the “sure pledge of our own resurrection;” the proof that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient and complete.

Christ's defeat of death is not hypothetical but actual. Christ's resurrection is not symbolic but bodily. So when we sing, “death in vain forbid Him rise,” we are not picturing a close battle. We are proclaiming a definitive victory that was foreknown and ordained in the eternal will of God. Death did not almost win. It never stood a chance.

Theology matters. And the theology that we sing matters. When we sing together these rich theological truths, we ponder together the depth and the mystery of the Gospel. What amazing mystery it is, that Christ should die in our place. Death could not hold Him. He rose again in power, victory, and authority. And we now have the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. Just as the apostle Paul writes in Romans 4:25, the Lord Jesus was “delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.”

The resurrection gives purpose. Death labors in vain against Christ.

Alleluia.

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!  
Earth and heaven in chorus say, Alleluia!  
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!  
Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!  
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!  
Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia!  
Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia!  
Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia!  
Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia!  
Where's thy victory, boasting grave? Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!  
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!  
Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia!  
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Hail the Lord of earth and heaven, Alleluia!  
Praise to thee by both be given, Alleluia!  
Thee we greet triumphant now, Alleluia!  
Hail the Resurrection, thou, Alleluia!

King of glory, soul of bliss, Alleluia!  
Everlasting life is this, Alleluia!  
Thee to know, thy power to prove, Alleluia!  
Thus to sing, and thus to love, Alleluia!