

Faith Report

Rejoicing: Worship and Life By Stan Long

Worship is about the worthiness of God, ascribing to him with our lips and our lives the glory that He and He alone deserves. All that we do should be for the glory of God and is, in one sense, an act of worship. Romans 12:1-2 says that we are to present our bodies as a “living sacrifice” in light of the mercies that we have in the gospel. We are to depend on God and pray for strength to live each day. Scripture says that we are to pray “without ceasing”. (1 Thes. 5:17)

Whatever our calling is during the week, it is impossible to live every single moment with a conscious, concentrated focus on the Lord’s word and presence. To pray without ceasing does not mean to quit our job, open our Bible and stay on our knees 24/7!

Surgeon, pray while you focus your attention on the patient, the organ and the correct surgical instruments! Mom, pray as you keep your eyes fixed on your crawling, inquisitive toddler! Chauffeur, put your cell phone down, pray, and keep your eyes on the road! Preacher, don’t just pray for an anointed, spontaneous word but pray as you diligently “study to show yourself approved.” (2 Tim. 2:15)

We need to understand that we are serving God and not man, liv-

ing a life that seeks His help, realizing that we need Him and that He is living in us and available to us every moment. Therefore we must fulfill our calling with excellence, realizing that He who has gifted and empowered us with the ability to implement our daily tasks will also be the One who evaluates us. Ultimately, we serve the Lord, not people. This is clearly illustrated in Eph. 6:5-8:

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling... as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord...

Worship also involves focused moments of absolute concentration on the Lord, His word, His character, beauty, holiness and on our call to reflect Him as His people. Our lives should contain such moments of reflection and praise, whether personal or with others, whether formal or spontaneous. This brings us to Sunday morning worship which is “prime time” for the body of Christ.

The song “Only in Your Presence” recently grabbed my attention. Maybe it was because I had been reflecting on Adam and Eve hiding from God’s presence in Genesis 1, or because our covenant group just finished studying

Jonah’s attempt to escape God’s presence by traveling westward to Tarshish instead of eastward to Nineveh. The song speaks of being in the Lord’s presence and humbly, yet boldly, bowing at his feet, which is the highest place of worship. It also speaks of our being undeserving yet welcome, in his house yet alone with him, free yet held within his chamber. Public worship is that special time where God calls a family meeting, a “covenant renewal ceremony.” In this formal event, we, God’s people, are reminded of who God is, who we are and what our obligations are before Him. The Lord reminds us that, though we are under His authority, he graciously invites us into both a Creator-creature and Father-child relationship.

Romans 10 says “everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved.” We cry out to God as we gather in worship. When we gather with His people in a focused manner we are giving him the first fruits of our week. The rest of our week functions as an afterglow of that foundational prime time encounter. When the week ends, we rise up again the following Sunday morning, the Lord’s Day, and start all over, reminding ourselves who He is, who we are before Him, and of his incredible call upon us to be servants and representatives of His presence in this world. ♦



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*United that the
world would
know*

*²⁷All the ends of
the earth shall
remember
and turn to the
LORD,
and all the fami-
lies of the nations
shall worship
before you.
Psalm 22:27*

Introducing Elaine Benner



This month we welcome Elaine Benner as Co-Director of Children's Ministries. Elaine will have responsibility for teacher and parent support.

Elaine graduated from Millersville University with a B.S. in Music Education with saxophone concentration in 2007. She taught third to sixth grade general and choral music in York, Pennsylvania for the last four years. Elaine and her husband, Matthew, met at Millersville University and were married in June, 2010. They joined FCF in October, 2010. In her 'spare' time, Elaine is also planning to start a home school music program in September. Welcome, Elaine and Matt! ♦

Farewell

We bid farewell to several longtime members at FCF:

Dr. Rafik Hanna is transitioning out of Baltimore to work in New York City, where he will be closer to family.

Daniel and Lydia Obeng are moving to Boston, Massachusetts, where Lydia will pursue a MBA at MIT. Daniel just completed his Masters in Biostatistics at Johns Hopkins University and will be working for a biopharmaceutical company.

It is hard to say goodbye to these brothers and sisters in the Lord but we rejoice with them as they move on to new opportunities. We thank God for the many ways they have served at FCF. May the Lord go with you all in this new phase of your journey. We will miss you. ♦

Bits and Pieces

- Congratulations to new members Tim and Sharla Chinniah, and Carsten Valla, who were presented to the church in May. Welcome everyone!
- Congratulations to the following high school graduates: Carrie Sharkey, Allegra Stiles, Peter MacIver and George Tyree.
- Congratulations to Tim and Sharla Chinniah, and big sister Analise, on the arrival of Joshua Michael on May 13.
- Congrats to Andy and Laura Scott on the arrival of Benjamin George on May 11.
- We celebrate with Kyle and Katie Van Arendonk, and big sister Anika the arrival of Amira Jaye on May 4.
- We thank Phil Davis, Director of Youth Ministry, for his work among us and wish him all the best in his new career. We pray too for the safe arrival of his and Bethany's first child in early July.

Covenant Groups

This is a reminder that the current three-year cycle of covenant groups ends this summer with a pot luck banquet at FCF on June 25. Please sign up if you plan to attend. See the bulletin and website for more details. Also, look this summer for details of how to sign up for new covenant groups. ♦

CALENDAR

- Jun. 3** Concert of Prayer, 7 p.m.
- Jun. 7-10** General Assembly at Virginia Beach. Pray for wisdom for the pastors, elders, and ministry leaders attending.
- Jun. 11** PLYP flag football banquet.
- Jun 8.** No Faith Leadership Night
- Jun. 25** Covenant Group Banquet. 6 p.m. (see bulletin for details)