



March 2023



Fox River Life



March 2023 Newsletter Article

The following article is written by J. Brandon Meeks and was done in September of 2020, almost 2 1/2 years before the

“Revival” at Asbury College in Kentucky. J. Brandon Meeks (PhD. University of Aberdeen) is a writer, studio musician, and sometime poet. He serves as Theologian-in-Residence at his Anglican Parish in Arkansas. He is the author of The Foolishness of God: Reclaiming Preaching in the Anglican Tradition and is a regular contributor to The North American Anglican.

In His Name & For His Glory,
Pastor Tim

We Don't Need Revival

“We need revival.” ~The Teeming Masses

This phrase, ubiquitous among broad evangelicals, has transmogrified from banal cliché to axiomatic mantra. Having been chanted with such frequency that there is virtually no quarter among popular Christianity where it doesn't reverberate, it has at long last been universalized, memorized, and canonized as the programmatic agenda for all successive ecclesial endeavors. Thus for many, the watchword is now, “revival or ruin.”

The migration from adage to axiom has been a subtle (though predictable) move. If a thing is said long enough, loud enough, and often enough people soon forget to bother asking whether it should be said at all. At the last, the proposition becomes a presupposition. After having become ingrained in the religious psyche of the masses, that notion requires something closer to exorcism than explanation to extricate the

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host from possession. It takes quite a while to convince the entire species of something; it takes even longer to convince them that something is specious. So here I am with a crucifix and half a gallon of holy water; the power of Christ compels me. Shall we renounce the devil and all his works?

I humbly submit to you, patient reader, that the statement “we need revival” is false. It suffers from an odd mix of ambiguity and specificity, which just happens to be the exact recipe for confusion. Who is “we?” How is this “need” necessary? What is this “revival” of which it speaks? These are not difficult questions. They are the simple ones that no one seems to be asking. Once this line of critical enquiry begins, the dubious claim will fall like a well-upholstered woman at a Benny Hinn Tent Crusade.

We need revival. Ten-thousand pulpits, beaten every Sunday like conga drums, thump out the charge that we need revival. Barna statistics are read, Newsweek articles are cited, even the New York Times is drafted into ministerial service in order to press the claim more forcefully upon our minds. Pastors quote headlines and bylines from the saltiest columns and commentators detailing the latest displays of moral mayhem in our culture. Then, with a look of bewilderment in their eyes, they turn to their bemused congregations as if to say, “Have you not read?”

Fingers are pointed, virtues are signaled, better times are remembered—days when milk and honey flowed freely and the Reagans roamed the earth. Every effort is made to emphasize the fact that we are at once the worst generation in human history, and yet the only hope for the future of the world. The undergirding theme? We need revival. If we don't have it then all is lost; maternity wards may as well be shrouded in black curtains embroidered with Dante's somber words, “Abandon hope all ye who enter here.” But if we can somehow get our hands on a revival then civilization may just survive until another Democrat moves into 1600 Pennsylvanian Avenue. Then we will likely need revival yet again.

But do we need revival? Who is we? We cannot be those who are outside of the covenant of grace; those who have neither known God nor named the name of Christ. It wouldn't be a re-vival we needed since there had been no “vival” in the first place. We would need to be born again. So they aren't we.

We are those who have been crucified with Christ, buried with him in baptism, and raised to walk in newness of life. We are those who have been set free from the Powers of death and darkness; liberated from the domain of Sin. We are those who have been washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. We are those who are “now called the sons of God,” who also “shall be like him” in glory. We are those bound by chains of grace, living between the great bookends: “No Condemnation” and “No Separation.” We are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus. We are the ones who have been given “all things that pertain to life and godliness.” We are not of those who draw back, but those who believe to the saving of the soul. We are the grateful recipients of covenant mercies made fresh every morning. We are those who have been filled with the Spirit, made partakers of the divine nature, adopted and appointed as sons of the Most High God, and destined to sit with Christ upon his Father's throne. We are the Church of Christ; his living body and beloved bride. We are more than conquerors through him who loved us! Tell me, does this sound like a motley crew of spiritually bereft souls to you? I think not.

We Need revival. The implication is that there is some intrinsic deficiency in the Christian experience; some void that needs addressing, some gaping hole that only a “new move of God” can fill, something miraculous to offset the monotonous quotidian existence of “ordinary” Christians. This notion is grounded upon the outrageous assumption that the gifts and graces presently at our disposal are both insufficient for the task to which the Church has been called. Namely, that of baptizing the nations and teaching them to obey the commands of Jesus.

What is it that we have that is deemed to be so woefully ineffectual? We have the personal presence of the Triune God operating as both vanguard and rearguard as we march beneath the banner of the crucified and risen Christ. We have the delegated authority of the One who left death cold and lifeless in the grave. We have the very Spirit which raised Jesus working in us, upon us, with us, and for us. We have Moses and the prophets,” that is to say, we have the

VIDA Diaper Drive

It's time for our first biannual collection for Vida in 2023. We will begin collecting diapers, pull-ups, and wipes starting on March 5. The collection will last through Sunday, March 19. The specific items Vida is requesting are as follows:

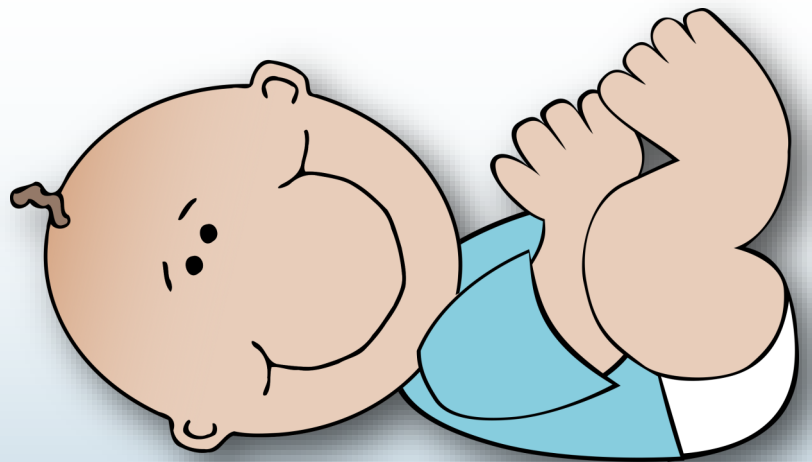
Size 4 diapers,

Size 6 diapers,

Boys/Girls 3t-4t pull-ups,

Boys/Girls 4t-5t pull-ups

Wipes.



The items may be placed in the Pack-n-Play, as usual. We are so thankful for your generosity.

Word of God—quick and powerful—unbound and unbridled. We have treasure in earthen vessels. We have meat to eat about which the world has never heard. We have the infinite power of creaturely weakness imbued with the sufficiency of God's own Self. We have baptismal water that cleanses the conscience, confirms our faith, assures our hearts, and testifies to the faithfulness of our God. We have tangible promises; promises which we can eat and drink—promises that grab eternity by both ends and bring them into the present in the presence of Christ. We have lives we can live and deaths we can die for the glory of God so that there is no scenario in which a life cannot be offered in sacrificial service for the sake of Christ.

We have enough. And enough is enough. To say that we need revival is to say that the presence of God among his people is not enough. To say that we need revival is to say that the Word of God has lost its generative potency. To say that we need revival is to say the kerygma of the cross has lost its ancient power. To say that we need revival is to entomb the Church of God in an already evacuated grave. To say that we need revival is to say that two-thousand years of Christus Victor has been more regress than progress. To say that we need revival is to say that the Body of Christ is blind, halt, maimed, lame, or dead. To say that we need revival is to say that the fervent prayers of righteous men are ineffectual and avail nothing. To say that we need revival is to denigrate the blood of martyrs, devalue the sacrifices of persecuted brothers, and deny the worth of quiet fidelity. To say that we need revival is to err by knowing neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. Enough is enough.

What, then, is this "revival" that we need? It cannot be the presence of God, we already have that. It cannot be an infallible witness of God's revelation of himself, we already have that too. It cannot be anything that pertains to life and godliness, we already have that.

This is where the waters usually get murky. Those who make the claim rarely have a coherent definition of this necessary revival. It usually ends up being described as something of a divine do-over; a redemptive-historical repeat. Those who argue along these lines can often be heard saying things like "we need another Pentecost," or "you can have your own private Pentecost," or still yet, "have you had an Upper Room experience?" Please don't get the wrong idea here. I don't reject such sentiments because I harbor some disbelief in the power of Pentecost; I reject such cavalier expressions because they deny the power of Pentecost.

Pentecost, like Calvary, was a singular epochal event in redemptive history. Like the cross, it was an historical moment of such potency and significance that it can rightly be described as trans-historical. That is, though it is rooted in a particular time and place, its effects are such that they burst the bonds of our normal notions of time and space. Even in the book of Acts, the effectuality of Pentecost was perpetual, while all of the accompanying phenomena were not.

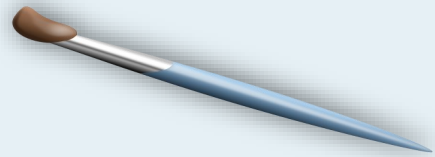
Just as we need not have a repetition of Calvary in order for atonement to be made for sinners not yet born in the first century A.D., just as Jesus need not rise a second time from the grave in order to vindicate himself and his people before his Father, neither must there be another Pentecost in which the Spirit is made available in power to the people of God. To suggest that we need revival, if revival is conceived of as being a "fresh Pentecost," is to make hash of the words of Peter, Paul, the Four Evangelists, and anyone else who may have mentioned the cross or the Spirit in the canonical Scriptures.

However, if by "revival" they simply mean that we need Christians to be what we already are, use what we already have, and do what we are already able to do by the help of God, then I have no objections. I have no objections because there is now no "revival" of which to speak.

Of course the proper word for the activity described above is obedience. Faithfulness is supernatural insofar as it is birthed in us by grace and worked out through us by the Spirit, but it isn't the sort of thing that requires sawdust and gospel quartets. I have a sneaking suspicion that one of the real reasons that Christians have been so quick to parrot the phrase in question is that it is much easier than admitting that we are lazy. If we have a mandate, the resources, and a field in which to labor, we can't very well blame our slothfulness on a breakdown somewhere in the supply line. We can't blame God for not sending us the revival we needed to get the job done. As long as "we need revival" to do virtually anything meaningful for the kingdom, we are pretty much free to sit on our pious rears and pray for the kingdom to come. I say enough is enough.

On Saturday, March 4, Women's Bible Study will be starting the study of the book of 1 Corinthians. Please come and study with us. We meet in the conference room at 8:00 a.m. and are finished at 9:30. We look forward to having you join us.

Time for another craft fellowship for the ladies of FRBC. We look forward to getting together for a painting craft which will celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior. The activity will take place Saturday, March 11 at 10:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. We will provide all needed supplies, and the cost will be \$5.00. Please sign up at the welcome counter if you would like to participate.



We are doing things a little differently in Children's Church. We will be focusing on teaching foundational scriptures and helping the kids to memorize them so they can, "Hide God's word in their hearts so that they might not sin against Him."

Since we primarily have pre-K students we are keeping the lessons short and simple and incorporating various "playtime" activities to reinforce the lesson.



DISCIPLESHIP

Men & Women's Bible Studies

All three of our Bible Studies are going very well. The Ladies on Thursday afternoon are working their way through the Epistles of John. The Saturday morning Ladies are just about to wrap up Hebrews and will begin to look at 1 & 2 Corinthians here in a couple of weeks. The Men's Saturday morning Bible study is over halfway through the book of Revelation. If I may say a word on the Bible Studies, no matter where they are in the study do not allow that to be a hindrance to you joining one of the groups. Whenever you join and wherever we are in the study, God will bless your time and study in His Word with your brothers and sisters.

Sunday School

The Sunday School is continuing the study of the last week of Jesus' life on earth. It has been a rich study and well taught by our multiple teachers. Once again do not allow the fact that we are over half way done keep you from attending. Finally with regards to all our teachers and leaders I am eternally grateful for your faithfulness, service, and gifting...we are so richly blessed.

In His Name & For His Glory, Pastor Tim

Church Library :

Value all books in proportion as they are agreeable to Scripture. Those that are nearest to it are the best, and those that are farthest from it, and most contrary to it, the worst.

- J. C. Ryle



Sunday Evening Services Schedule

March 5—Ask Pastor Tim @ 5:00 pm

March 12—Prayer @ 5:00 pm

March 19—Sola Christos @ 5:00 pm

March 26—Prayer @ 5:00 pm



Financial Update 2023
Budget needed weekly: \$ 2,340.00
Received: \$ 3,214.80 per week
Contact Mark Wildenberg with questions.



Women's Prayer
Wednesdays at 9:30am

Women's Bible Study
Thursdays at 1:00pm

Men's & Women's
Bible Study
Saturdays at 8am

Connect
WITH OUR
CHURCH FAMILY



March 5
Ryan Smith

March 12
Christopher Smith

March 19
Ray Rudzinski

March 26
Jeffery Smith



Please contact Carol Smith at
(920) 788-9795
to volunteer for Nursery
ministry. There is a sign-up
sheet at the front desk.

Missions

“Go Ye into all the World, and preach
the Gospel to every creature.”
Mark 16:15

MISSIONS BOARD

Missions Board will meet April 3 to review the Yearly Update forms which have been returned by each of our missionaries. We hope to have good highlights for you in the upcoming Missions Spotlights.

Young at Heart will be conducting worship services at Care Partners on March 2 and at Frontida Assisted Living on March 14. If you haven't participated before, but would like to, please contact Lynn Abitz.

We will also be holding our next Praise Connection on March 10, 6:30 pm, at the Rudzinski home, 4987 W Woods Creek Lane, Appleton. Join us for singing and fellowship



FRBC Vision Statement

We desire that everyone who enters Fox River Baptist Church grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and grow in authentic, loving, familial relationships to make the name of Christ known in our community and world, all for the glory of God and joy of all.



6—Howard Schimke

14—Lynn Abitz

18—Doris Olsen

19—Pat Groff

20—Anna Dohms

Fox River Baptist Church

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E-mail: office@foxriverbaptist.com

Website: foxriverbaptist.com

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday
& Thursday - 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm



Here at FRBC, we have a prayer chain meant for the sharing of prayer request needs and for sharing praise for the awesome & mighty work God does in our lives. Please feel free to share any praise or request at our new Prayer request email address:

Care to be part of the prayer chain?

Email or call Becky Godfrey at
becl.godfrey@gmail.com —
(920) 277-1526