



Hallelujah Herald Newsletter
February & March 2012
First Baptist Church of Laurelton
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JESUS IS LIKE A ROLLS ROYCE

Pastor Jim W. King

Herb Miller, a well known church growth expert in Texas, tells in one of his books about a rich man who went shopping for an automobile. The car he really like was a Rolls Royce, so he bought it. On his drive home, he sensed that he'd made a good decision.

When the man arrived at his mansion, however, it dawned on him that he had never asked how much horsepower was in his 1996 Rolls Royce. When he called the dealership, the salesman didn't know either. But, he promised to find out. Later the salesman called the car owner with an answer from the Rolls Royce factory. He was told smugly, "the horsepower is adequate."

I don't want to be flip, but here is an analogy. Jesus is like a Rolls Royce in that He has lots of horsepower, too. Our Lord is indeed adequate in helping us to enjoy lives which are rich and full. Let me be more specific.

Jesus is adequate to **take away our sin**. Sadly, we are unworthy of a Holy God. As St Paul put it, "*the evil we don't want to do, we do; the good we would do, we don't*" (Rom 7:19). That sin notwithstanding, Jesus counts our sin for naught. By faith, through grace, Jesus blocks out our sins (Eph 2:6-8). It is as if our sin never existed. St Paul spoke these encouraging words: "*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves...but our sufficiency is from God*" (2 Cor 3:5).

Jesus is adequate to give us **vision**. Our Lord gives us a vision of a better life, so we purpose to live according to His plan. Jesus gives us a vision of a happy family, so we commit ourselves to loved ones. Even when we are disappointed, we "turn the other cheek." Jesus gives us a vision of a better world, so we work for peace. War-mongers are summarily rejected. Violent and vile talk is ruled-out. Jesus gives us a vision of a strong and vibrant church, so we keep on teaching and preaching.

Thankfully, it is the Lord gives us a vision. We'd be lost without it. The Bible says, "*Where there is no vision, the people perish*" (Prov. 29:10). For this reason, I agree with the words of an 8th century Irish song: "*Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart—Naught be all else to me save that Thou art; Thou my best thought by day or by night--Walking or sleeping. Thy presence my light.*"

Jesus is adequate—more than adequate—to give us **strength** for our daily trails. Everybody experiences troubles, right? For some there is the trial of bad health. For others, they never get the right breaks. Promotions aren't forthcoming; the timing is always "off." The point is that we

all have our struggles. However, there is Good News. Jesus gives us strength. Martin Luther, the famous 16th century reformer, put it this way: "*A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing; Our helper He amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.... Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing, but there is one who takes our side, the one of God's own choosing. You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he with mighty power to save...*"

Our God is adequate to bring **comfort** to our hearts, too. Life brings lots of hurts. From time to time, we are alone and discouraged. But the wonderful news is that God is closer than our breathing. He is always available. Jesus promised: "*If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love... I am praying for you...and I come to you that you may have My joy*" (John 15:10; 17:9, 13).

Finally, our God is adequate in putting **meaning** in our lives. How is this? The answer is the Lord God *is* our meaning. We are put on this earth to know him and enjoy Him forever, as the theologian John Calvin wrote. Beyond that, we are called to enjoy ourselves. We are called to embrace the pleasures of personal growth and maturity. We are called to enjoy our work and life-achievements.

In a sense, we are called to enjoy even suffering. The reason is that suffering and disappointment teach us about ourselves. In our suffering, "*deep calls unto deep,*" as the psalmist wrote (42:7).

The poet Kahlil Gibran agrees that suffering has its good side. He wrote these haunting words: "*The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain. Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven? And is not the lute that soothes your spirit, the very wood that was hollowed with knives? When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight. Some of you say, 'Joy is greater than sorrow,' and others say, 'Nay sorrow is the greater.'* But I say unto you, *joy and sorrow are inseparable.*"

These are challenge times. For some, it is not easy to get through the dark and cold days of winter. For others, the challenge is about personal loss and loneliness. For still others, the problem is a lack of employment, and worries about financial security. Whatever your challenge, I submit there is divine horsepower available. Jesus is like a Rolls Royce. His help is *more* than adequate.

✠ **Interested in Church Membership** ✠
Seekers Group to Meet – March 11, 18 & 25th
Baptisms – April 1 – Palm Sunday

Are you interested in joining the Church? Everyone is welcome to explore Church Membership. If you believe and accept Jesus as your personal Savior, you may join our Church.

If you would like to be baptized as Jesus was baptized you are invited. If you have been baptized in another Church, we recognize this baptism and you may join our Church by Letter or Christian Experience.

March 11, 18, & 25th Rev. Jim King will lead the Seekers' Group in Gloria Glide Hall at 11:30 AM. If you wish to be baptized, a Service of Believers' Baptism will happen April 1 Palm Sunday.

Missions

America For Christ Offering will be received Sunday, March 11. The Board of Missions will promote this offering during the month of March with a special Coffee Hour March 25. This offering stays in US and Puerto Rico to help with educational ministries, new church development, after school care, aid to the homeless, soup kitchens and so much more.

Campbell Soup Labels – The Board of Missions collects labels for missions, so don't forget when you are enjoying soup on these cold winter days, to bring in the labels and education box tops to the Ivy Hall kitchen collection box. Thanks for your help!

Tent City – Please bring in any warm winter clothes to donate to Tent City by Sunday, Feb. 19. The collection box is in Ivy Hall and Feb. 19 the Church will bring the clothes and soup to those 80 people living in Tent City (Lakewood) at Noon. Thank you for your support.

Pantry – If you need food or know someone in need of food our Pantry is open Wednesdays 10:00 AM – 12 Noon. One of the deacons will be there to assist you. All requests are confidential. The Pantry presently needs peanut butter, jelly, mayonnaise, toilet tissue and paper towels.

Interfaith Hospitality Network – This Network helps homeless families in Ocean Co. Our Board of Deacons, through the Fellowship Offering, gives \$200 per year. The Board of Missions is exploring making personal care kits and cleaning supply pails for these families.

Stop Hunger Now – Sunday, March 11 at 2 PM – 4 PM - Volunteers from Brick Churches will gather and work together at Brick Presbyterian Church, 111 Drum Point Rd., Brick to assemble packets that would feed 10,000 people. Stop Hunger Now is an international relief organization that distributes food and other life saving aid around the world. Its concern is that one billion people of the world do not have enough to eat.

Congregations are being asked to donate a minimum of \$200. or more. Our Church will participate and a donor has offered \$250 from FBCL for the project. We will need 8-9 volunteers. Interested in helping? - please call Pastor King #732-840-1505 or #732-949-9159.

Camp Lebanon Scholarships – Love Gift - The Board of Christian Ed. reports that the Martha Downey Camp Fund has been used up. In order to offer children in need assistance to go to Camp Lebanon we will receive a "Love Gift Offering" Sunday, February 12. Baptist Camp Lebanon is a beautiful location and offers a summer week of Christian Camp. Children enjoy Bible Study, devotions, living in cabins with children their own age, swimming,

hiking, music, arts and crafts with all meals provided. The average cost is around \$365 for the week. All donations big or small are greatly appreciated. *Thank You – Board of Christian Ed.*

Annual Meeting – Sunday, Feb. 12, 2012

This is an important Business Meeting of our Church. After the Morning Worship Service we will gather in Ivy Hall. The 2011 Annual Report and Directory of members will be available. Come share in a Soup Luncheon hosted by the Board of Finance.

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Valentines for Hope

UTC “Under The Cross” Youth Group will bring the love of Christ to the shut-ins of FBCL.

The weekend of Feb. 11 or 12th we will pack bags of goodies and small gifts which we will share with others within our Church to bring the hope and the peace of Christ to those in our community of faith we do not often get to see. We want to show that at a time of year that love is a theme that Christ’s love is the greatest of all!

*Bruce Wood, Ashley Leoni, Daniel Vitello
Youth Group Leaders*

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“Tent City” – Feb. 19 Visit

FBCL will once again reach out to the homeless in Tent City, Lakewood. Sunday, February 19 at Noon everyone (including UTC members) will gather at Ivy Hall to take Soup and clothing to Tent City.

In partnership with Pastor Jim King and deacon Dan Vitello, UTC will be encouraged to reach out to those who are most in need and show the love and ministry of Jesus Christ in the lives of others. Rev. King will lead a worship service.

Dec. 3 FBCL visited “Tent City” with soup and clothing and a worship service lead by Rev. King. We pray for those who live in Tent City and all homeless people.



Hymn Sing And Covered Dish Supper



Sunday, February 26, 2012 – 4:30 PM

Everyone is invited to share in a special Hymn Sing here at FBCL with Gary Cuccurullo, Music Director of FBCL and organized by Bruce & Lindsey Wood. Our FBCL Praise Band will play. Come enjoy this special fellowship! A Covered Dish Dinner will follow. Please see your Bulletins and make your reservations. Bring a covered dish, family and friends.

All Welcome!



Our Pastoral Search Committee

Our Pastoral Search Committee is continuing the search for a pastor for this congregation. We have sent out contact letters to all candidates who have shown an interest in our Church for Pastoral Duties. I have personally phoned all of the candidates that have shown interest. Our deadline to receive letters of interest is February 1, 2012. We will move forward with our search after that date. Our next meeting will be Thursday, Feb. 2.

Pray for God's guidance, wisdom, and will as we interview candidates. If anyone has any questions or concerns please contact members of Pastoral Search Committee: Michael Allen, Ginny Horner, Al Luthringer, Grace Van Buren, and Daniel Vitello.

*Michael Allen,
Search Committee Chair*

Lent

Lent begins February 22 on Ash Wednesday. Our Lenten emphasis will be the Thursday Evening Bible Study. Come share soup and Lenten study.

Palm Sunday we will have Palms for everyone and a Service of Believer's Baptism. Our Maundy Thursday Service will be a 7 PM in the Church. Good Friday Service will be at 12 Noon.

COAL – ABCNJ Leadership Training Sessions Workshops for Deacons, Trustees, & other Church Leaders Sat., March 24 or March 31

Locations (North or South Jersey), Times and Costs will be announced. Watch your Bulletins for more information. Please call the Church #732-840-1505.

Our Church Family

Our Sympathy to Linda & Al Luthringer and Family upon the death of Linda's mother, Eleanor Fischer in December.

Our sympathy to Doris Braen upon the deaths in her family.

Our sympathy to Tom Burke, Beverly Burke, Sheri Diehl Sabo & Family upon the death of Mary "Betty" Burke. Betty was laid to rest in the Havens Circle of the Laurelton Baptist Cemetery Dec. 27, 2011. Tom & Betty Burke, Beverly, Sheri and Betty's mother Pearl Masiarella have been long time Church members.

Our sympathy to Katja, Gary, Kaitlyn & Amber Hauser and Family upon the death of Katja's father Vincent Wagenhoffer.

PRAYER CONCERNS: Anthony Boccuzzi, Bonnie Feldman, June Grantham & Berentes Family, LaVerne Ford, Christopher Gianotto, Bea Haines & Family, The Hauser Family, Eileen Hodic, Kathy Hoffman, Horner Family & Alana, Bill & Barbara Hughes & Family, John Masluck & Family, Carolyn Norton, Rutigliano Family, Mildred Strand, Minnie Swayer, The Vitello Family, Donna Volinski, The Walters Family, Our Pastor, Church & Search Committee.

Parish Nursing

Parish nursing is an idea born out of the understanding of the healing ministry of the church. The Parish nurse focuses on the whole person to emphasize wellness, prevention and health promotion.

In our Church we have two Registered Professional Nurses who function as parish nurses. They are Ginny Horner and Lorraine Vitello. The program is sponsored by the Board of Deacons and the Board of Missions.

The parish nurses focus on the spiritual, emotional and physical dimensions of our congregation as they strive to achieve wellness and to manage their illness. Ginny and Lorraine have developed a practice in response to the unique needs of our congregation and its members across the life span. They function as educators, counselors, referral agents and advocates.

For those who wish, our Parish Nurse program is responsible for taking the blood pressure of members of our congregation. This is done periodically, as indicated in our worship bulletin insert, after our Sunday worship program.

OOOOOO Flowers OOOOOO

Thank you to everyone who provided poinsettias at Christmas time. The display Lorraine Vitello and Rosalie King made with the Nativity and candles was beautiful Christmas Eve.

Sandi & Bill Erhard took advantage of the warm winter weather and planted many spring bulbs. Watch for the beautiful display.

Anyone who would like to provide an Easter Lily to decorate the Sanctuary, please use the flower offering envelope by April 1 (Palm Sunday). Cost is \$12 per plant.

If you would like to furnish flowers for Sunday Morning Worship, please sign up on the Flower Calendar. Lorraine Vitello is available if you need help with that (732-892-3988).

Sunday School

Don't forget Sunday School! Sunday mornings Adult Bible Study begins at 9 AM with Bruce Wood, Palmer Seminary Intern.

All children are invited to Sunday School which begins in Church at 10 AM. After the "Time With The Children" children go to the Hall for Bible Study.

Kids' Club is very popular. Children in 1st – 7th Grade meet the first and third Fridays at 4:30 PM for a fun time of Arts and Crafts, snack, and devotion. Thank you to Joy Berentes, Superintendent; Lynn Masluck, Jill Herrmann and Katja Hauser for "Kids' Club". Check out their bulletin board in Ivy Hall. The children plan to pass out their "Valentines" to the congregation Feb. 12th showing their Christian Love for their neighbors.



Easter Egg Hunt

Sat., March 31 at 1:00 PM

All children Infant – 4th Grade

Older Youth will come earlier to hide eggs

Refreshments

Come join the fun!

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Calendars

February

- 1 Choir 7 PM
- 2 Bible Study & Soup 6 PM
Search Committee 6:30 PM
- 3 Kids' Club
- 5 Adult Bible Study 9 AM, Worship & SS 10 AM
Birthday, Nicole Herrmann
- 6 Internship Committee Mtg. 7 PM, Parsonage
- 7 Birthday, Rosalie King
Board of Trustees Mtg. 7 PM
- 8 Brick Ministerium Mtg. 12 Noon
Choir 7 PM
- 9 Bible Study & Soup 6 PM
- 10 Joy Guardino-Rutigliano
- 11 Valentines for Hope Weekend
- 12 Annual Meeting & Soup Lunch
Adult Bible Study 9 AM, Worship & SS 10 AM
Love Gift Offering for Camp Lebanon
- 14 Deacons' Meeting 6:30 PM
Anniversary, Lynn & John Masluck
- 15 Choir 7 PM
- 16 Bible Study & Soup 6 PM
Search Committee Mtg. 6:30 PM
Anniversary, George & Diane Brown
- 17 Kids' Club 4:30 PM
- 19 Adult Bible Study 9 AM, Worship & SS 10 AM
Christian Ed. Mtg. 11:30 AM
FBCL visits Tent City (Lakewood) 12 Noon
- 20 Presidents' Day Holiday
- 22 Choir 7 PM
Ash Wednesday (no service at FBCL)
Birthday, Bob Shannon turns 94
- 23 Lenten Bible Study & Soup 6 PM
- 26 Adult Bible Study 9 AM, Worship & SS 10 AM
Hymn Sing & Covered Dish Supper 4:30 PM
- 27 Board of Mission Mtg. 12 Noon
- 28 Advisory Council Mtg. 6:30 PM
- 29 Choir 7 PM

March

- 1 Lenten Study & Soup 6 PM
Birthday, Dorothy George
- 2 Kids' Club 4:30 PM
- 4 Adult Bible Study 9 AM
- 4 Worship & SS 10 AM
- 5 Birthday, Rev. Harding
- 6 Trustees Mtg. 7 PM
- 7 Choir 7 PM
Birthday, Gary Hauser
- 8 Lenten Study & Soup 6 PM
- 10 UTC Winter Party 2 PM
- 11 Adult Bible Study 9 AM
Worship & SS 10 AM
America For Christ Offering
Seekers' Group 11:30 AM
- 13 Deacons' Mtg. 6:30 PM
- 14 Choir 7 PM
Birthday, Marta Burns
- 15 Lenten Study & Soup 6 PM
Birthday, Linda Luthringer
- 13 Deacons' Mtg. 6:30 PM
- 14 Noon Ministers' Meeting
Bible Study 2 PM
- 15 Bible Study 6 PM
- 16 Kids' Club 4:30 PM
UTC Christmas Party 6 PM
- 18 Bible Study 9 AM
Worship & SS 10 AM
- 19 Noon Mission Meeting
- 21 Choir 7 PM
- 22 Lenten Study & Soup 6 PM
Birthday, Grace Van Buren
- 23 Birthday, Michael Allen
- 25 Adult Bible Study 9 AM
Worship & SS 10 AM
Seekers' Group 11:30 AM
Birthday, Ginny Dahl
- 26 Noon Mission Mtg.
- 27 Advisory Council 7 PM
- 28 Choir 7 PM
- 29 Lenten Study & Soup 6 PM
- 31 Easter Egg Hunt 1 PM