
The Beacon

The Newsletter of Pine Street Baptist Church

Thoughts on Thirty Years

It is hard to believe that when I first stepped into the pulpit of Pine Street that I was only 26 years old, fresh out of seminary and ready to begin my ministry. At a young age, I can remember sensing God calling me to preach. The good news that I accepted as a young boy needed to be shared. I didn't understand everything this calling meant, but I knew a story was to be told. From that moment on, I sought to focus my life on fulfilling this call. Hence, when I arrived at Pine Street in 1991, I knew that I was doing exactly what God had called me to do: telling the story of Jesus' love. For the last 30 years, I have sought to be faithful to this task.

A lot has changed in these 30 years. Jennifer and I went from newlyweds to parents of two grown daughters. Both Lindsey and Hannah grew up nourished and supported by a loving church family. They grew up not only in Pine Street but as part of the Oregon Hill Community. Jennifer and I knew early on in our ministry that we wanted to raise our girls in the place where we would live out our ministry. It is still one of the best decisions that we made. Both of them were exposed to parts of our world and society that they may have missed growing up elsewhere. They tell us today how grateful they are for their Oregon Hill roots.

For the past 30 years, Jennifer and I have been able to work and serve side by side. For five years, Jennifer served on the staff of Pine Street Baptist Church and for the last 25 years as Community Missionary for the Oregon Hill Baptist Center. After meeting in seminary, neither one of us ever imagined that we would serve together in the same place in our ministries. We just assumed we would be in different areas and with different communities of faith. Yet, God has blessed us in allowing us to serve together. Jennifer is a far better minister than I am, and who I am as a pastor is because of her love, support, and encouragement.

The church family of Pine Street has been a rich and wonderful blessing in our lives. When we reflect on our Pine Street family, those we serve with today, as well as those who now worship God around the throne in heaven, we are forever indebted to these individuals and the love that has been and continues to be shared. I have had the privilege of pastoring some of the finest individuals God ever placed upon this earth. I would not trade the gift of these relationships for anything. In recent years, however, it has been difficult to walk with those who leave the shores of this world to arrive at the Kingdom of Heaven. Every time I have to say goodbye in the passing of one of our saints, it feels as though I lose a part of myself as well. Yet, even in the grief, I look forward to the day when we shall all gather around the throne of God in heaven in a reunion unlike any other.

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The saints of Pine Street have been unbelievably supportive of me over the years. They have allowed me to be myself, accepted me as I am, been patient with my shortcomings, encouraged me in my calling, and loved me unconditionally. The minister I have become over these 30 years has been shaped by my relationships within the Pine Street family. I have learned from you what following Christ is all about; sacrifice, faithfulness, steadfastness, and grace. These lessons have been more valuable than anything seminary was ever able to teach me.

My 30th year has given me plenty of time to reflect on my calling as a pastor. The COVID pandemic brought life to a standstill for all of us. 2020 has undoubtedly been my most challenging year of ministry. None of us knew that when the virus arrived in the spring of 2020 that over a year would pass with it playing such a prominent role in our everyday living. With respect to church life, everything came to a screeching halt, and when we were able to return to some aspects of church life, it was much different than anything we have ever known. Even today, we are still dealing with the residual effects of the pandemic. We have navigated uncharted waters during this time. Some things we did well, while others fell well short. At times I found myself down and depleted with little energy for the work of the pastor. I ask for your forgiveness in the times and places I have let you down. Yet, I have felt your love and support during these days, and I am grateful that life is returning to somewhat familiar waters.

However, there are still many challenges ahead of us as we move forward. Where are we heading, and what is our mission? For this reason, I will be leading the church in a time of discernment in the next several months. Who is God calling us to be at this time in the life of our church as well as my pastorate? As Pine Street has since its beginning, we will seek to follow God's will as we move into the future. As long as God is leading us, we will be going in the right direction, wherever God may take us. None of us know what the future holds for our lives or our church, but we know who holds our future.

Thank you so much for allowing me to journey with you these last thirty years. I cannot imagine my life without the special people of Pine Street. You have blessed me with relationships that will stay with me the rest of my life and which will be sealed forever in the eternity of God's heaven. But until that day, we keep moving forward, loving and supporting one another, worshipping with heart and soul, and serving sacrificially together. May God bless us as we go forward together.

With love and gratitude,

Philip



With overwhelming gratitude to our Pastor, from his congregation.

I Thessalonians 5:12-13 says: “And now, friends, we ask you to honor those leaders, who work so hard for you, who have been given the responsibility of urging and guiding you along in your obedience. Overwhelm them with appreciation and love.”

As the above verse of scripture shows, pastors are saddled with great but delicate responsibilities. They are those who guide us in our walk with God as well as all the matters of the church. July 1, 2021 marks the 30th anniversary of ministry at Pine Street Baptist Church for our pastor, Dr. Philip Turner. We have been blessed to have him as our leader, counselor, advocate, teacher and friend. After a particularly difficult year, let us express our overwhelming gratitude to Dr. Turner for his love and relentless effort to keep us connected to God and each other. It is truly evident that Dr. Turner was called by God into ministry and we look prayerfully forward to many more years of his leadership.



Please be in prayer for the 14 teenagers, Philip and Jennifer Turner who will be attending FUSION Camp at Ferrum College July 12-16. This is the largest group we have taken in some time! We are excited to have the opportunity to go this summer after the camp was canceled last year due to COVID. Be assured that safety precautions are being taken this year to keep everyone safe!



Several of our church and community children will be attending Camp Alkulana this summer in Millboro Springs, VA. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers as they enjoy God’s beautiful creation through hiking, swimming, crafts, campfires, worship, Bible study, etc. Many of you have had the joy of going to Camp Alkulana as a camper or counselor, and you know what an impact it can have in the life of a child.



Church Business Meeting
Wednesday, July 21st
7:00 p.m.

Deacon's Meeting
Monday, July 26th
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday Night Cookout
July 7 @ 6:00 pm

Join your church family for an outdoor cookout and picnic on Wednesday, July 7 at 6:00 pm under the shade tree in Pleasants Park behind the church. The church will provide the hamburgers, fixings, and beverages. Please bring a dish to share as well as your chair. Please sign up on the second floor foyer table or call the church office to let us know you will be attending.



Movie Nights in the Park

Pleasant's Park at Dusk
Movie, hot dogs, and beverage.

July 9th
July 23rd



- 1: Meaghan Thacker
- 5: Justin Kirby
- 13: Jack Vipperman
- 18: Lindsey Land
- 22: Carla Vipperman
- Blake Jones