

# FBC Connect: Loving God and Neighbor

## Devotional Reflections



### **Worship: How can we, as a church, love God through worship?**

- We Love God Through Worship...
  - By the authenticity of our hearts
  - By our confession of sin
  - By our spirit of community
  - Through proclamation of God's word, our musical offerings
- By opening our hearts and minds for God to speak to us and through us
- We can love God through worship by participating actively in worship, whether it is by singing, praying, or reading scripture
- Clear our minds and focus on the words of the music/hymns
- "We may not have a song in our heart today—sing anyway."
- I believe we do this through physically gathering together to express our thanks and praise to God. It's loving God by way of reading Scripture, offering prayers, and singing hymns of thanksgiving.
- Through faithful attendance in worship service.
- Participate in group activities as we worship.
- We can sing and praise Him. We can also just love and be kind to others.
- The Christmas Eve service is so meaningful to me. Christmas carols, the communion, and the expressions of holiday greetings to attenders helps make Christmas more meaningful. I love lighting of candles and singing in the candlelight. The real reason for the season comes true.
- Meaningful worship
- Children/youth bringing in elements of worship (candle, Bible, etc.)
- Most meaningful worship experience: Tenebrae, Liturgical Calendar, Use of Lectionary
- One experience that I remember is all worshipers singing acapella the last verse of the invitation hymn—very worshipful!
- Never give up! Hope is eternal! Not our will but His! Be still and wait for God's Grace!
- Worship God by taking an ACTIVE role in worship services: Sing hymns, Read the scripture, Listen, Watch, Be open
- By clearing our minds of outside thoughts and distractions to truly focus on worship.
- Praise and adoration to God

- Our worshipful time for me is Wednesday night choir rehearsal. Richard calls our attention to the words of the anthem and how they are leading us to commune with God and to lead in worship. Then our prayer time is so special. Hopefully the congregation worships with us as we sing on Sundays.
- Love God as a church:
  1. Theme of worship: stay focused on God
  2. Participating through worship: singing with the hymns, responsive readings
  3. Loving spirit of acceptance

## **Care: How can we, as a church, love others through care?**

- By loving each other, accepting each other, supporting each other.
- Sending cards to members of our church telling him/her how much we miss them and that we are praying for God's healing hands.
- I would like to see a lay led organized visitation plan/ministry for our shut-ins and sick. I am thankful for our ministry in taking food to our members in need.
- We love others when ...
  - we share our time as volunteers in our medical clinic
  - we visit the sick or homebound—giving away something of ourselves
  - we share our practical skills helping persons in need at Owsley County (household repairs)
- We are blessed when we take food to shut-ins or our church serving lunch after a funeral

## **Prayer: How can we, as a church, love God through prayer?**

- When 9/11 occurred, the tragedy of it was overwhelming. Prayer was so important to all of us. We prayed for the families of victims. We prayed for the safety of our country. We prayed for the leaders of our country to know how to protect us.
- Prayer is certainly part of our “spiritual worship”
- Members in crisis appreciate knowing they are on our prayer list and remembered in prayer on Wednesdays. Many count on this, especially when facing surgery, grieving the loss of a loved one, or waiting for test results.
- Prayer has been the pivotal point for all of FBC's missions. Who would have thought 20 years ago that FBC would house and help staff a medical/dental clinic? And what about helping our neighbors with becoming more financially secure with our Pay Day Loan Ministry? There are so many things in common...prayer and our faith have made them possible.
- Prayer has been the answer to filling staff positions from people already in our membership and others. Praises!
- Prayers answered have helped 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist continue, like Mission Clinic, the clothes closet, Payday Lending, the Toy Store and other mission endeavors.
- Prayer have brought us a wonderful Christian staff to serve as our leaders.
- By remembering those in our prayer list daily! Also staying in touch with cards and phone calls!

## **Missions: How can we, as a church, love others through missions?**

- Seeing Christ in those we serve
- Clothes Closet
- Payday ministry
- Watching over neighbors
- Medical/Dental Clinic
- Helping the least of these
- Benevolence
- Transportation
- Network of social services
- Support each other in the church
- Missions are one way to show God's Love and also to spread the word of God!
- We receive a blessing when we serve others through our Mission Clinic, clothes closet, working at the Soup Kitchen, take meals to shut-ins.
- As we serve others we bring glory to God which is our reason for existence. Our church does so much in our missions program, plus outreach in our Sunday School classes. As we walk with our Lord, we experience inner peace.

## **Spiritual Formation: How can we, as a church, love God through spiritual formation?**

- Keep seeking the Christ way each day
- To attend our worship services and have fellowship with one another will help us to grow spiritually. To offer ourselves to work in one of our missions is also a great spiritual experience.
- Definition: "Spiritual Formation is being transformed in the image of Christ for the sake of others." In other words, it's the journey of the Spirit changing us to love God and others as Jesus did and does.
- Spiritual Formation is a wonderful way to keep learning more and more about our Lord! Also to share with others!

## **Witness: How can we, as a church, love others by being a witness?**

- You must always show love and kindness if you want to be a witness of Jesus
- Every day we are presented with opportunities to witness—by our actions, our kindness to those hurting, our sharing experiences, encouragement to those we meet and inviting them to worship services at FBC. Also, being a good listener.
- Missionary work through FBC
- Our church can be a witness by sharing His love—through missions, loving others, telling the gospel, caring for fellow Christians, "Letting our light shine" that others will see Jesus in us.
- We bear witness in our Mission Outreach.
- You are a witness everyday by your daily habits. People observe what you do.
- By missions (clothes, soup, etc.) and by our friendliness to all.

- Love others
  - Welcoming to visitors
  - Love like Christ loves
  - With our many ministries
- Witness to the Resurrection
  - Actions—show love to others and then share the “Good News.”
- Witness in Words
  - Live stream the services
  - Worship service is focused on praise
  - Reading of the scripture in services
  - Bible studies
  - Significant “lay” involvement
  - Still have Sunday School
- Our Unity as a congregation is a witness
- Make visible our reason for doing what we do. For example: when we help others, the way we make decisions, how we spend our money
- Your light shining
- Do things that help the people
- If it is not true that Christ is with us, how do we get through life’s difficulties?
- I am a witness to what Christ has done in my life and to the church
- Serve because we love Jesus
- When Jesus gave his life for us he showed unconditional love. We as a church should show unconditional love.