



An American Baptist Congregation Making God's Love Known in Los Angeles Since 1874  
*International • Intercultural • Ecumenical*

## IMPORTANT CHURCH UPDATE FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST

Faith and Perseverance  
A reflection by Rev. Dr. Scott Arnold

*1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. (Hebrews 12:1-2a)*

In August we have begun a new series, "Xtreme Faith", looking at Biblical examples of faith from Hebrews 11-12. (This series will take us into October). What can we learn from the "Ancients"? What does Paul teach us about having a faith that grows in the journey and marathon of life? How can we develop an extreme faith for the extreme times we are living in? Singer/songwriter Toby Mac wrote a song "Extreme Days" to illustrate that Christians must have an extreme faith to hand the extremes of our times. There are extreme pressures, extreme concerns, extremes in politics, extremes in disparity of economic realities, extremes of experiences between people, extremes in reactions of concern, extremes in weather and climate, extremes in religious perspectives, extremes in educational disparities, extremes in beliefs about the Bible, extremes in views toward the value of people, race, and diversity. What we need is a faith that is not simply reactive, extreme in a negative sense, but a faith that is a response as a positive witness that is extremely loving, faithful, caring, compassionate, discerning, and transformative. Too often we have heard Christians declare culture wars to the waywardness of the human condition. Instead of playing into judgmental inclinations, I believe God is calling Christians to receive and reveal the grace and truth of being disciples of Jesus Christ and live out the evidence of the Gospel of God's Kingdom through simple and hopeful actions and expressions of kindness, patience, hospitality, grace, mercy, honesty, purity, and extreme faithfulness. When Paul finished naming his list of those in the Bible's Hall of Faith, he postulated: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. Let us run with perseverance..."

May we learn to develop a God-centered, Christ-like, Holy Spirit empowered, faith by learning from those who have gone before us, from those who found God's strength to throw off "everything that hinders" and "sin" which can so "easily entangle". Recently, our dog Teddy needed to have his tail hair de-tangled. He could not de-tangle it himself, he needed Marilyn and I to help him. After the bath, it took the two of us to do the work. There are other things in life that get tangled, not just hair, traffic, or electrical cords. There are tangled webs of messed up relationships, messed up government bureaucracy, messed up confusion in leadership, legal entanglements, social and racial prejudice, and misunderstandings based on false and messed up assumptions people make. The reality of "systemic sin" is just as real as "personal sin". The antidote or remedy is faith in God's power to redeem, forgive, unhinder, detangle, and reconcile us.

This time of the Corona-Virus (COVID-19) pandemic has revealed how messed up and tangled our world is. Sin has been exposed in the rebellious denial of many who want to simply ignore the evidence of Science or act with foolish and selfish defiance toward the need of wearing facial coverings and being compliant in special distancing. We can only "throw off" the Corona Virus with a coordinated and united effort. A facial mask may seem like a "hinderance" to breathing, but it is in fact a shield to stop the virus from spreading. We must persevere through the steps of precaution and run this race at this time by taking those precautions that are necessary, no matter how inconvenient and frustrating they may seem. Persevere and prevail, run the race with faith, hope, and love.

Pastor Scott Arnold

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**Xtreme Faith (Hebrews 11-12)**  
Worship Plan:

FOR THE MONTH OF  
AUGUST

August 2, 2020 "Faith in God's Presence". Hebrews 11:1-7 Part 1 in series: "Xtreme Faith"

August 9, 2020 "Faith in God's Promise and Provision" Hebrews 11:8-12 Part 2 "Xtreme Faith"

August 16, 2020 "Faith in God for Something Better" Hebrews 11:13-16 Part 3 in "Xtreme Faith"

August 23, 2020 "Faith of Abraham, Extreme Trust" Hebrews 11:17-19 Part 4 in "Xtreme Faith"

(Begin outdoor in-person worship)  
(prepared online worship will also continue)

August 30, 2020 "Faith of Jacob, Wrestling with God" Hebrews 11:20-21 Part 5 in "Xtreme Faith"



STAY CONNECTED,  
WORSHIP FROM HOME

BIBLE STUDY: WEDNESDAY 11AM on Facebook

SUNDAY SCHOOL (pre recorded)  
AVAILABLE EARLY SUNDAY

SUNDAY WORSHIP: 10:30AM on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/fbcoflaWC/>

<https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCLgVR6Z8BFAslm3ulJMq4g>

Zoom Bible Studies will continue with 2pm Studies on The Psalms and 7pm studies on the Sunday sermon previous Sunday (Hebrews 11-12).

## COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES

### Moderator -

David McFadden

### Vice- Moderator-

Amy Shellmire

### Treasurer-

Ann Brodie

### Clerk-

Gerald Gubatan

### Council Members at Large:

Ben Marte

Zuleima Argumedo

Greg Spruell

Nalis Mercier

Santiago Morales

## CHURCH UPDATE

After much prayerful deliberations, the FBCLA Church Council has authorized installation of a decorative perimeter fence surrounding the church building plaza at Westmoreland Avenue and Leeward Avenue. First Baptist Church affirms its identity as a multicultural congregation whose doors are open to the rich diversity of Los Angeles, a welcome table, called to manifest the love of Christ and share the caring Christ with the community. Today we are blessed to inherit an amazing historic edifice as a tool of God's ministry.

The church edifice has not been immune to the encroachment of unauthorized individuals experiencing homelessness sleeping and in fact living on the church plaza near the front doors. Additionally, there have been numerous complaints about noise and other disturbances. While as people of faith, we ought not to ignore human need and suffering, so too we have a responsibility to be stewards of God's resources. Indeed, the open plaza at Westmoreland Avenue and Leeward Avenue is the church building's symbolic and physical "front door" – it should be a safe, clean, welcoming and beautiful space announcing to the world that FBCLA is a witness for justice, healing and transformation.

With this in mind, the Church Council has commissioned a general contractor to install a decorative fence whose design, color and aesthetics will be attractive and compatible with the building's historic architecture. Fence gates will be wide open during the church's hours of operation and during special events, and secured at other times. Landscaping could even be added to provide greenery. Future opportunities for programming the open plaza are endless!

The general contractor is currently in the process of securing city permits. Please stay tuned for more information on the construction schedule.

### COVID -19 UPDATE: New Details for Worship for the Month of August

**New Worship Format and Time:** Starting August 23, at 9:00am., the church is planning to resume in-person worship outdoors in the church parking lot (or plaza when the fence is eventually built). Continuation of registration, mask-wearing, sanitization, and social distancing will still be required; however, we believe it is important to take careful and responsible steps forward as a faith community. We encourage you to bring your own lawn chairs if you can, and we will also provide chairs as needed. Canopies will be set up to help provide some shade. We will need volunteers to help set up and take down, register people, take temperatures, provide sanitization, pass out one-time use song sheets/bulletins and hand out guest cards/information.

The format of this worship will be simple, involving reading of Scripture, Prayer, Singing of hymns and praise songs, and a Sermon. Setup for worship will begin at 8:15am and Worship will begin promptly at 9:00am and will aim to conclude around 9:50 am. Please contact the church office (Wendy Morales and Lisa Thomas) or Pastor Scott to register to come or to volunteer. There will be a Zoom conference call to coordinate all volunteers on Tuesday night, August 18th at 7:00pm. (Join the Tuesday night zoom conference call as noted through our e-newsletter).



Happy Retirement, Marilyn Arnold!

On July 26, 2020, members joined Pastor Scott and Marilyn Arnold in a virtual "Zoom Party" to celebrate Marilyn's retirement after an impressive career in health care throughout the United States. Marilyn retired as a nurse after serving in positions in Chicago, Providence, Rhode Island, Michigan, Massachusetts, and Los Angeles. Despite being physically apart, the partygoers connected in good spirits over food, beverages and colorful decorations. Two of the three Arnold sons - one from Texas, the other from Northern California - "dropped in" to wish their mother well and share in the festivities. The First Baptist Church family wishes Marilyn God's blessings as you retire into a new phase in life.



### Dear Church Family,

The Church Family extends its deepest Christian Sympathy to the Family of Ivette Loaisiga mother of Angie Loaisiga. Deceased Tuesday, July 28, 2020 due to Diabetes.

Below you will find Angie's contact information as well as a Donation Link to a Go Fund Me page the Family has set up.

1235 Dewey Ave Apt 5  
Los Angeles, CA 90006  
213-273-5608

Fundraiser by Angie Loaisiga : Ivette Loaisiga's  
Funeral

