What are the Means of Grace?

As you know, a few months ago we started “Sunday Seconds.” On the second Sunday of each month we have had an Evening Worship Service. This past month I addressed the question, “What are the means of grace?” Or, to ask the question in a slightly different form, “How does a Christian grow?” Or, in yet another form, “What are the ordinary means of growth?” Very briefly, I would like to summarize what was said.

After the Apostle Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, about three thousand people believed the gospel, were baptized, and added to the Church of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41). The question I am sure that the apostles asked each other was: “What do we now do with all these believers? How do we help them grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Peter 3:18)?”
So, what Luke wrote next is very instructive. Luke tells us what the first-century Church did to help Christians grow. Luke writes in Acts 2:42, “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” The rest of the chapter is a description of a remarkable Christian Church, which concludes with the statement in Acts 2:47b, “And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

The Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 88 asks: “What are the outward means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?” And the answer is: “The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances, especially the Word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.”

Summarizing The Westminster Shorter Catechism, Ligon Duncan writes, “These ordinary means of grace are the Word, sacraments, and prayer.”1 Continuing, Duncan writes: “Ordinary means ministry believes that the key things that the church can do in order to help people know God and grow in their knowledge of God are: First, emphasize the public reading and preaching of the Word; second, emphasize the confirming, sanctifying and assuring efficacy of the sacraments, publicly administered; and third, emphasize a life of prayer, especially expressed corporately in the church. These things are central and vital but sadly often under-emphasized, under-appreciated, and undermined.”2

It is the conviction of the Session that the ordinary means of growth for every Christian are the Word, sacraments, and prayer. It is our prayer and desire to see every believer utilize these God-ordained means for his or her spiritual growth in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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1 http://gospelreformation.net/the-ordinary-means-of-growth/.
2 http://gospelreformation.net/the-ordinary-means-of-growth/.
HAPPENING IN MAY

FRIDAY, MAY 4, 5:30 P.M.: TAMPA BAY RAYS VS TORONTO BLUE JAYS BASEBALL GAME – Churchwide outing sponsored by the Men’s Ministry. See details in Men’s Ministry articles on page 6. Bus leaves promptly at 5:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 6:00 P.M.: SUNDAY SECONDS – Please mark your calendar and plan to attend this monthly evening worship service.

MONDAY, MAY 14, 6:30 – 8:00 P.M.: VBS CRAFT & WORK PARTY – Please join in this craft and preparations session for VBS. Childcare will be provided.

SUNDAY, MAY 20, 12:15 P.M.: EMPTYNESTERS LUNCHEON – The EmptyNesters will gather this month for lunch at a location to be announced in a future Sunday bulletin. Looking forward to a great time together of food and fellowship. Contact Randi Mallory at randimallary@gmail.com or 813-513-4400 to reserve or for questions.

SUNDAY, MAY 20, 3:00 – 7:00 P.M.: NEW MEMBER’S CLASS – Anyone interested in learning more about TBPC is welcome to attend this class which includes dinner and childcare. Please write “NMC” on your Welcome Card, contact the Church Office or see Pastor Freddy.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 6:30 – 8:00 P.M.: VBS CRAFT & WORK PARTY – Please join in this craft and preparations session for VBS. Childcare will be provided.

SUNDAY, MAY 28, 12:00 – 3:00 P.M.: MEMORIAL DAY CHURCH PICNIC – Save the date! See details on page 4. Please call Nancy Kirkpatrick at 813-988-8601 for questions or suggestions.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 6:30 – 8:00 P.M.: VBS CRAFT & WORK PARTY – Please join in this craft and preparations session for VBS. Childcare will be provided.

May Birthdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birth Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cole Darbyshire</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Nancy Morrison</td>
<td>May 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jane Tyler</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Bob Morrison</td>
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<td>Jaxon Skopp</td>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Vera Nickoloff</td>
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<td>Anthony Cozzolino</td>
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<td>Daniel Kemp</td>
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<td>Richard Hunter</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Evie Nickoloff</td>
<td>May 18</td>
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<td>Larry Hess</td>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>Christy Almonte</td>
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<td>Joey Cozzolino</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>James Turpen</td>
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MEMORIAL DAY CHURCH PICNIC  
MONDAY MAY 28TH 2018  
12 NOON UNTIL 3PM  

COME SING, EAT AND PLAY GAMES  
at TBPC’s “Old Fashion Picnic.”

- Men’s Ministry will be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs.
- Each family to bring a dessert or salad or fruit.
- Bring your own folding chairs or ground cover.
- Try to set-up just before noon:
  - Families with CHILDREN set up near the front fencing where the children’s games are located.
  - SENIOR Members will setup just off the concrete patio.
- The patio is reserved for the food tables and stage.
- 12:10 The TBPC Men’s Quartet on stage.
- 12:25 Pastor to give thanks.
- 12:30 EAT!
- 1:00 GAMES:
  - CORN HOLE -- adults
  - BEAN BAG -- children
  - GO FISH -- children
- 2:00 THREE-LEGGED RACE -- any twosome
- 2:30 Membership Sing
- 3:00 CLEAN UP

ALL ideas for the Picnic are welcome. Call Nancy Kirkpatrick at 813-988-8601.
Men’s 6th Annual Golf Tournament

The Men’s 6th Annual Golf Tournament took place on Saturday, April 21, 2018 at the Plantation Palms Golf Course in Land O’ Lakes, FL. The weather was a warm 85°F at tee-time at 12:30 p.m. This year the field had six golfers who were vying for bragging rights for the next 12 months. This year’s golfers were Wes Mollard (aka Jack Nicklaus), Rich Thompson (aka California Hotshot), Todd Bayley (aka Longball Bayley), Brian Carrier (aka Brian Carrier), Jeff Montoney (aka Jeff Spieth), and Ken Pothoven (aka Kenny Perry).

The competition, as always, was fierce but friendly. Winners included: Ken Pothoven (closest to the pin) and Wes Mollard (longest drive). Team one beat team two.

Brian Carrier did a great job organizing the tournament. He did such a good job that he handily won a five-year contract as Men’s Golf Tournament Organizer. So, great things can be expected for the future.
Missing this year from the tournament was Freddy Fritz, who has played in the tournament for many years. He wanted to play this year, but his medical team did not grant him a medical clearance to compete in the tournament. (He believes that the rest of the field may have conspired with his medical team to keep him out of the tournament so that their chances of winning would be increased!) Oh well! There is always next time! (And isn’t that the motto of every golfer?)

Congratulations to all the men who participated in the Men’s 6th Annual Golf Tournament!

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The Men’s Ministry Invites Everyone to Attend the Tampa Bay Rays

**Game on Friday May 4, 2018 Against the Toronto Blue Jays**

We have hired a large 47 passenger bus for this event and we want to fill the bus with Rays fans. The cost for this event will be $40.00 and will include a bus ride to the game, a ticket in the lower section of the stadium and food and drinks on the bus. This is a great time for all members of any age. You may also invite guests or family members to attend. The bus will leave sharply at 5:30 p.m. in order to make it to the game by 7:05 p.m. This has been a lot of fun in the past for everyone and we have pre-purchased 40 tickets. If we sell out quickly, there will still be room for 7 more to ride on the bus. If you want to purchase a game ticket only you can purchase that ticket for $17.00. If you have any questions contact Brian Carrier at 813-841-9146 or brian@bcaflorida.com.
Vacation Bible School is here again. June 18-22, will be a noisy hectic week in the life of Tampa Bay Presbyterian. We hope it is a week that will that will bring glory and joy to our Father. Ultimately, it is his program.

Would You Pray?

**Preparation & Needs**
- Financial gifts to cover costs
- Volunteers for remaining needs: memory work, Bible teacher, guide

**Unchurched**
- Ears to hear and eyes to see
- Families to be attached to the gospel

**100 Boys & Girls**
- God would use VBS to bring salvation to his little ones
- The faith of the littlest believers would be strengthened

**Congregant Members**
- Grow in wisdom
- Be good hosts

**Staff**
- Good health
- Spirit of truth
- Heart for kids

**ADDITIONAL WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT VBS**

**JOIN THE VBS PRAYER TEAM:** We will pray for the needs of VBS, the volunteers, the children and most importantly for God to be glorified through this ministry. Please write “VBS Prayer Team” on your Welcome Card or contact Melissa Bayley at melbay4@gmail.com.

**ATTEND THE VBS CRAFT & WORK PARTIES:** Monday, May 14, 6:30-8:00 pm, Wednesday, May 23, 6:30-8:00 pm, Wednesday, May 30, 6:30-8:00 pm, and Sunday, June 17, 1:00-5:00 pm. Work parties are a mix of crafts and preparation with a party vibe. If you cannot join us the week of VBS, this is a great way to help. Childcare will be provided.

**DONATE:** Your dollars help offset the cost of VBS. Each dollar helps us purchase Bibles, beads, graham crackers, etc. for our campers. Donations are accepted from the TBPC VBS webpage or by check and cash. Donation envelopes are available in the narthex and can be placed in the offering plate or left with the church office.

**QUESTIONS?** Email Holly at vbs@tampabaypresbyterian.org or call 813-360-2077
**Sister to Sister: A Little Edgy, A Little Sweet**

The April 14 Sister to Sister social event was very successful. The edgy part was an opportunity to try our hand at making leather vases. The sweet part included lots of savory side dishes to enjoy. Coleen Knecht led the devotional on “The Joy of Self-Denial” taken from John Calvin’s excerpt in the book, *Devotional Classics*. Coleen also assisted everyone in the creative craft session. Our thanks to Coleen, our Sister to Sister coordinator, and to Ashleigh Kemp for hosting this lovely event for women to fellowship. Stay tuned for our next one in July. We hope to see you there.

### May Anniversaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jason &amp; Rebekah Skopp</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>9 years</td>
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<td>Todd &amp; Cathy Gartman</td>
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<td>Joe &amp; Nancy Kirkpatrick</td>
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<td>Brett &amp; Eve Thomas</td>
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<td>John &amp; Lesley Schmidt</td>
<td>May 30</td>
<td>26 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>John &amp; Amber Dixon</td>
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<td>10 years</td>
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**Sister to Sister: A Little Edgy, A Little Sweet**

By Suzanne Swenson

![Sister to Sister event image]

Coleen Knecht & Ashleigh Kemp

![Sister to Sister event image]

Sheri Nies & Fay Reichert are pleased with their leather vases