

# THE FEED





# Welcome Bergmans!

## LETTER FROM JOHNNY MCCALLISTER

**Over** the last year, our elders began to pray about a God-glorifying path for our church and for the ongoing leadership needs that we see as we look ahead. Our discernment and the clear direction we have sensed as a group has been the need for an Executive Pastor to help lead our church and even restructure our staff.

After praying, the leadership team affirmed to create the position for a new Executive Pastor and a list of qualifications for that role. The Executive Pastor's primary focus is to partner with the Senior

Pastor to establish, communicate, and implement the church's ministry, vision, mission, strategies, and goals. The Executive Pastor will provide general management of day-to-day church operations, including strategic planning, implementing the key initiatives, and charting the course to implement the church's vision. Over the past couple of months, the elders, staff committee and leadership team have affirmed a candidate we believe God has brought our way.

We are excited to announce that we have extended a call to Rob Bergman to become the new Executive Pastor, and he has accepted. His first Sunday will be March 28. Rob and Rachel (Couch) are both originally from here in Whitley County. After graduating from Asbury College, Rob spent 5 years in Indianapolis as a Youth Pastor. He then transitioned into his present ministry over 14 years ago to The Crossing, a multi-campus church in St. Louis, MO, that has averaged over 8,000 each weekend historically. Rob first served as the Youth Pastor and has been one of the Campus Pastors for the past 3+ years. Rob and Rachel have two teens, Caden (15) and Claire (13).

We are thankful for God's timing in all of this. Rob and Rachel are very excited about the opportunity to come and serve at a church they love. Rob brings a wealth of talent, skill, passion and experience to our staff team. Adding him will broaden our leadership base to meet the needs of a growing congregation.

Let's pray for the Bergmans in the days ahead as they say goodbye and begin this transition. Let's make plans now to celebrate in the next couple of weeks and say to this family, "Welcome Back!"



**Johnny McCallister**  
Senior Pastor

## Q&A with Rob

### **Tell us about your family.**

Rachel and I have been married for 20 years. We met in high school while working at Richard's Restaurant. We always say we fell in love over blueberry pie! Our son Caden will turn 16 in May, and our daughter Claire is 13. Caden has been playing water polo the last several years and also loves music. Claire has been a figure skater since she was 7 years old.

### **What have you missed most about Columbia City?**

Family. Friends. Roots that run deep. Relationships that go back decades.  
The Nook. Pizza King.

### **What do you like to do for fun?**

We love to hike, run, and explore new cities. We play a lot of games – Monopoly, Phase 10, and any other random game we discover. We're a pretty competitive bunch! We also love to cook and try new restaurants.

### **How can we pray for you?**

Pray that our goodbyes are sweet, and our hellos come quickly. We can't wait to be with you all, but we also know the monumental task of relocating! Pray for a smooth transition for Caden and Claire into new schools, and for Rachel as she wraps up her real estate business in St. Louis and starts it fresh in Indiana.



**EASTER**  
SUNDAY

**APRIL 4**

**In Person: 9 & 10:30 AM**

**Online: 9 AM**



## **MARCH 28**

**9 & 10:30 AM**

Check page 8 for information about how children can get involved in the 9 AM service!



## **APRIL 1**

We will be providing an online experience for you to share with your family, your small group or your neighbors. It will walk through the night that Jesus was betrayed and remember his final moments before his death.

**Participate by heading to [firstchurchconnect.com/easter](https://firstchurchconnect.com/easter) or locating the "Holy Thursday" video on YouTube.**



## **APRIL 2**

**7 PM // Worship Center**

This service will focus on the cross and sacrifice that Jesus made for our salvation through song and communion.

# The High Cost of Living On Purpose

Malick, Salah and Achille\* have been serving with Africans Reaching Africa, one of our mission partners. They have been sharing the Gospel in M\*, a country along the Western coast of Africa. In this Isla\*ic nation, it is illegal to convert to Christianity or be a part of leading someone to Christ.

Since mid-January, the Holy Spirit has drawn almost 20 people to Jesus through the work of Malick, Salah and Achille. These new believers are reading the Bible and even gathering together in Jesus' name. An audio recording that references Malick was made by someone in a neighboring region who had heard of the activity. In the recording, the person threatened Malick and said he was dangerous and leading many people away from Is\*am.

The recording was shared with extremists, who shared it with a related group in France, who then sent it back to someone in Malick's area. Ironically, that person is a former Jihadist who has now become a follower of Jesus. This man warned Malick, who has left his country and is now at a safe house in a neighboring country.

*\*Names have been altered or changed entirely for security purposes.*

Your generosity helps equip, train and support individuals like Malick, Salah, and Achille as they take the Good News about Jesus to difficult places. Your prayers (for them, their families, and others on the ARA team) can be part of their perseverance in suffering, their comfort and peace in the midst of trials, their protection, and for the Lord to be glorified through this situation.

And your life here, you choosing to live your life On Purpose here, where opposition to the Gospel looks so different, is all part of God's great kingdom work. Your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers, everyone you encounter, needs good news about Jesus. And here's the really cool thing - they get to experience His love and grace and truth, His forgiveness and mercy and generosity . . . through you.

I'd love to hear more stories of how you are living On Purpose!

**Email me at [brad@firstchurchconnect.com](mailto:brad@firstchurchconnect.com)**



**Brad Miller**  
Missions &  
Discipleship

# NEW BEGINNINGS

BY DEBBIE REINICHE

We are committed to intentionally sharing God's Word, His love and His plan for each child every Sunday morning.

As Christians, our ultimate goal is to spend eternity with our Savior and bring others along. Our ministry to children on Sundays gives us an excellent opportunity to partner with you, as parents, in the spiritual development of your children, with the goal for you to be standing beside your children in heaven someday.

Spirituality is not something that happens – “someday when they are older,” it happens every day from the time they come home from the hospital because of being intentional and seizing the everyday moments.

Our Children's team intentionally teaches in every class, every service, every week. Beginning April 11<sup>th</sup>, Preschool and Elementary students will be learning God's attributes and discovering who He is through a 9-week study of the life of David; meeting the crazy scientist, Dr. Beaker and doing some hands-on experiments during the large group

time at 9 AM. K- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will meet in the Children's Worship Room, and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will meet in the Middle School Room for their own worship time. During the 10:30 AM hour, children will be in Small Groups, in age-based classrooms where they will continue learning about God in a small group age-based setting.

This series is the first of three purposeful steps in helping our children understand how magnificent God really is, how much He loves them, and how to use their Bibles to learn more about Him and His Son, Jesus.

We will be giving one copy of the hardcover devotional book, 'How Great is our God', by Lou Giglio to families with elementary-aged children. This book is intended to be used by families at home, during the weekly devotions, to help promote and support discussion from the Sunday Children's Worship Lessons. Books will be available on Sunday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at the children's check-in area.



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## SUNDAY PM

**April 25**

For the final Sunday PM of the year, we are having a fun-filled family night. Information will be sent home with children in the near future!

## SUNDAY MORNINGS

We are grateful for the team of volunteers who have been ministering to our children before and during COVID, and the new volunteers who have joined the team in the past few weeks. Because of them, we were able to open ministry to children five years and younger during the 10:30 AM hour on March 7<sup>th</sup>! We look forward to all of Children Ministries being open, both services, beginning on Easter Sunday!

## PALM SUNDAY

**March 28 // 9 AM**

Children 2 years and older may participate in a portion of our Sunday morning Worship Service where they will walk through the Main Worship Center waving palm branches.

Check your child in and bring them to the age-designated area in the Gym no later than 8:55 AM. They will march during the opening music and return to their classrooms.

## SUMMER BLAST

**June 6 – 10 // 6 - 8 PM**

Summer Blast 2021 is currently being planned and we are excited for a new look and the opportunity to offer five days of ministry to children this summer! Watch the website for further updates and information as we plan to share, “Treasured” where kids learn they are priceless to God!



**Debbie Reiniche**  
Children Ministries  
Pastor



# Everyday Worship



**Holly Parks**  
Worship Pastor

A.W. Tozer says, “There is no such thing known in heaven as Sunday worship unless it is accompanied by Monday worship and Tuesday worship and so on.”

Worshipping on Sundays is easy! We set time aside. We make plans to be there by 9:00 or 10:30. The songs are selected. The environment has limited distractions. We include prayer, Scripture, praise, communion and offering all in an hour. Then we leave and head into a world of distractions. Our worship the rest of the week gets lost in the busy pace and noise of our day-to-day world.

If we are going to live on purpose, we have to take steps toward worshipping on Monday afternoon. If we are going to be intentional, we have to direct our thoughts to heaven on Wednesday mornings. For some, this is easy. It may already be part of your daily routine. For others, this idea might be new to you.

Our worship team wants to help if we can! If you head over to our Instagram account (**fcogworship**), we will be talking about what it might look like to worship during the week. We will be sharing devotionals and meditations; live worship and prayer;

new songs, discussions and ideas for turning our attention to Jesus. Join us as we step out of the traffic and noise and learn to worship during the week. We are excited to connect with you in this new way.



# SPIRIT LED

**F**ollowing God is never complicated, but rarely easy. There are a simple set of steps we can take to live on purpose and honor God, but that doesn't mean walking the steps out will always be easy. One of the things that holds us back from living lives full of reconciliation and freedom is our sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

I would love to see us grow in how we sense promptings from the Spirit and then act on those leadings. I believe that by doing this, we would experience a move of God that would baffle us. Again, it's not a complicated concept, but that doesn't mean its practicality isn't hard. So what does it look like to join in with what the Holy Spirit is doing?

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”

ROMANS 8:5-6

If I took a poll, most everyone reading this would say that they want to follow God. So, why is it so hard for us to set our minds on the “things of the Spirit”? One issue I see is the margin that is left in our lives; specifically the lack of margin in our schedules, although other areas could be addressed. If we wake up in the morning and hastily jump in the car to head off to our first thing, then quickly on to the next, then grab the kids, run to practices, throw dinner in the oven, work on projects around the house, watch a couple of episodes and then crash in bed to do it all again tomorrow, our lives will have been consumed with lesser things or “things of the flesh.”

I do not want to condemn making a living or finding hobbies, but Jesus says, “where our treasure is, there our heart will be also.” So if we are ordering our lives around temporary things of the flesh, we will experience the “death” Paul is talking about in Romans. A life lived left without time for God shows a life that does not treasure God. Jesus promised that he came to offer us “Life, and life in abundance.” By slowing down and opening up our schedules’ margins, I believe that we will begin to feel the Holy Spirit occupy whatever space is created.

Have you felt tired, exhausted, or burnt out? Maybe it is time to make room in your life to allow the Holy Spirit to energize you, give you purpose, and give you focus and direction for the mission of your life. This week, take a walk without headphones, leave the TV off for an evening, spend time seeking God through His Word. I think you will be amazed by what happens as God helps transform your mind to focus on the things of the Spirit.

After you have made room for the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you, what is next? What does it look like to practically hear from God and live according to His purposes? In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul is talking about the different spiritual gifts each believer has. In verse 7 he says, **“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”** That means the purpose of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling in the lives of the believer is to make the body of Christ more Christlike. We are to use the manifestation of the Spirit in our lives to lift one another up and point them towards Christ.

I don’t have a formula for you here, but I can give some suggestions on what this might look like. Often, I will have a brother or sister in Christ that comes to mind seemingly out of nowhere. I believe these to be promptings

from the Spirit to reach out to them. Think for yourself about the last time something like this has happened to you. We can have a thought like that come to mind and then go, “well, that was weird,” and move on with our day. But what would it look like if we were a people who, when prompted by the Holy Spirit, reached out to check in on, encourage, and lift one another up in prayer? The Spirit is present in our lives “for the common good.” Our gathering will look more like God’s design and intention if we begin to, by promptings of the Spirit, spur one another on towards God.

Now, you might ask yourself, “What if this isn’t from the Spirit?” Because the Spirit was given for the common good, the things we speak to one another should be life-giving. When you reach out, it should be to encourage, not condemn. That means by some stretch of the imagination if you call someone that comes to mind, and it isn’t from the Spirit (which probably isn’t the case), the worst that will happen is a believer will be lifting another believer in prayer, which is honoring to God! We can’t mess this up!

So continue to live On Purpose. Even if your next step is a small one, take it. What a joy it will be to see the fruit of our body beginning to lean into how God is leading them.



**Jordan Chapple**  
Student Pastor

**[firstchurchconnect.com](http://firstchurchconnect.com)**