

Men of FCOB

A Newsletter to Connect Men of Christ

The Vision

We are the men of faith in Jesus Christ; encouraging one another to live out the Gospel in real time, wherever we have been placed.



What's been going on!

FCOB Men's Breakfast, December 2016 & January, 2017. Scott Schiffhauer and Jeremiah Kelly

The Men's Ministry continues to hold monthly men's prayer breakfasts where nearly 30 men convene each month to hear a speaker and teacher, share brotherly fellowship, and pray for one another. And don't forget the great breakfast buffet!

On December 17, local historian Robert Dudley was invited to speak on the topic of Sam Smith: Man of Faith, Man of Action. Mr. Dudley is the author of several books on General Sam Smith, including Sam Smith, Star-Spangled Hero: The Unsung Patriot Who Saved Baltimore & Helped Win the War of 1812 and "Sam Smith: The Man Who Saved America." Mr. Dudley spoke about the influence of Sam Smith's faith in Christ as he went to become one of the most important, yet, unappreciated, members of our country's Founding Generation. Sam Smith was a hero of the American Revolution & Man of Valor recipient; successful in the Baltimore shipping business, served 40 years in Congress (the longest of any of the Founding generation), helped build the U.S. Navy and Marines at West Point, opposed the First American Central Bank, which was the final straw that triggered the War of 1812, was the Military Architect of the Defense of Baltimore during the War of 1812 and the Battle of Baltimore in 1814. Finally, Sam Smith became the Mayor of Baltimore in his 80's. His funeral in April 1839 was the largest ever seen in Baltimore. Most importantly, Mr. Dudley's presentation details how Sam Smith's family immigrated from Scotland to explore their Presbyterian convictions and, together with several other families, moved through

Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 18th, 2017
7:00 AM: Men's Monthly Breakfast with Pastor Gene
Nannie's on Rte 15

March 2nd, March 16th, April 6th 2017
6:00 AM: "All Its Worth" training with Pastor Gene
FCOB

March 9th 2017
6:30 AM Men's Ministry Planning Team
Mt. View Diner

Saturday, March 18th, 2017
7:00 AM: Men's Monthly Breakfast with Pastor Gene
Nannie's on Rte. 15

April 1st, 2017
Men's ½ Day Workshop:
FCOB Chapel
"Philemon: Grace Received, Grace Extended"

May 19-20, 2017
Men's Weekend Retreat
Sky Croft Retreat Center in Middletown
"Stand"

Breakfast continued from page 1...

Pennsylvania. and then to Baltimore, founding Baltimore's First Presbyterian Church that exists to this day. Mr. Dudley's encouragement to the men was that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:20) and that God will likely call us to serve sacrifice, and lead. We can look to General Sam Smith as one who answered that call of duty. sc

On January 28, the Men's Ministry again held its monthly men's prayer breakfast. Our speaker this month was Pastor Mike Davidson. Pastor Davidson gave a talk entitled, "What is the Gospel and What its Not." The focus of Pastor Davidson's talk was to define, clearly and with biblical support, the key features of the historic orthodox Christian Gospel message, including God's Holiness, Man's sinfulness, Christ's atonement for sin, and the necessity of a response to the offer of grace through repentance and faith. Pastor Davidson distinguished the faithful message of the Gospel with other counterfeit "gospels" that claim salvation based on works or are more related to health, wealth or prosperity. Pastor Davidson shared riveting stories of his international missions where he builds up local churches. He described the hunger in these countries for the Word of God. Pastor Davidson's handout was worth the price of admission (which is only a \$10 to cover the meal), as his outline was so well researched and supported that it helped the men continue to study the key points of his talk. Pastor Davidson has been in ministry for almost 30 years, the most recent of which where he was the Senior Pastor at People's Baptist Church in Frederick for 19 years. Pastor Davidson now travels internationally to develop local church leadership in the developing world and to help train those called to preach the Word of God.



Prayer is critical to our growth as men and as a church body. Please join us for a time of group prayer every Sunday morning from 9-9:30 AM, FCOB Chapel

[Men's Bible Study Groups](#)

Every Other Sunday Night:
2/19, 3/05, 3/19, 4/02, 4/23
8:30 PM, FCOB Room 214

Every Monday Night:
7:00 PM FCOB Media Rm.
Faith Lessons (video):
"The Miracles of Jesus"

A Note from Pastor Gene

Dear Brothers in Christ,

You are God's precious remnant prepared to live as salt and light Matthew 5:13-16 in the very challenging times that we are now living. You need to be strong in the Lord and in His mighty strength Ephesians 6:10, not your own. I count it an honor to walk with you in this coming year.

A team of FCOB men are praying and planning a series of opportunities for growth that include: men's breakfast bible studies, a winter 1/2 day conference and retreats that will help equip you for the times that we are now living. All of us need to be encouraged. Encouragement is oxygen for the soul. All of us as men need to be challenged; and to be God's instrument to form us into the image of Jesus.

The theme for the year will be *Prepare The way Through Preparing Ourselves*, and will correspond with the new sermon series at FCOB for the coming year. We will explore the infinite space of our souls to encourage deeper encounters with Jesus. We will study God's word to glean his truth in a series called "How to Read the Bible for all's Its Worth". We will invite the Holy Spirit to do His work in us and among us. We will endeavor to build deeper community through personal transparency, spiritual authenticity and radical love for one another!

As the team develops the details they will share them through the website, bulletin, email and this newsletter.

I look forward to growing in the Lord together and challenging one another as iron Sharpens Iron. Proverbs 27:17

Growing In Jesus,
Pastor Gene

Proverbs 27:17 Corner

“Prison” Matthew 25:31-46
Tom Stackhouse



All the preparation in the world would have been enough to prepare me for the slamming of the heavy metal-barred doors as we walked through each one. Seven to be exact. I walked down the halls of stone, with the other men in single file through each section of the prison where the inmates were waiting out their sentences and simple staring as we walked by. The smells were a mixture. In some sections, it reminded me of the schools I went to, especially at lunchtime. In others, well it was a house of men, so I will leave it to your imagination.

I entered the gym where we were to set up for the weekend event we called KAIROS. A group of Christian men who went through several months of training to have the honor of serving these prisoners with the love they hungered for, the love of Christ. Many of the prisoners coming to the weekend shared with us that they never experienced love in their life. Many grew-up in badly broken and abusive families. My heart ached for them, but Jesus was truly present and He filled that old gymnasium with His Holy Spirit. The power of His grace and love was flowing freely.

There were times for Pastor and Lay talks, there were times of music and singing in worship, and times of discussion, which were all part of the agenda. Most of the conversations I had were very deep and real. I sat in awe as I listened to the stories of these men. At one point I thought to myself: “What would it be like if we had men on the outside could be this real and honest about our struggles, and be open about our love for Jesus, or even the lack thereof.” How beautiful would the communion of saints be!

During one of the discussions, I met a man named Izzy; he was in for life plus 35 years. The reason he was there was never asked, and it truly doesn't matter when you are there to share the unconditional love of Christ. But he shared as story with me. When he was a boy he lived in a Middle Eastern country and was raised Muslim. His parents wanted him to have a good education, so they allowed him to attend a Catholic school in his neighborhood. Izzy was not allowed to participate in any of the religious services of the school, but a nun took a liking to him and gave him a crucifix, which he loved very much. At the age of 12, his father thought it was time for him to become a true man and offered him a box full of handguns. But if he wanted to accept this gift from his father, Izzy would have to give up the cross he carried with him. With tears streaming down his face as he told me how that day he felt like he had exchanged Jesus for those guns. And that choice, ultimately led him to the place he was now, paying the price for his action. However, today Izzy is living his life in prison, dedicated to Jesus Christ; and he is a man that truly overflows with joy and peace.

One of the men from the outside was having trouble with his eyes and was likely to have to have surgery to remove it. Izzy offered his own eye for this man, and he was very serious! The man declined the offer. Izzy is a man physically imprisoned, but so completely free because of Jesus that he can sacrifice himself to love and serve others unconditionally. He is truly living life to the full! I have many more stories from prison, and perhaps I will share a few in future issues. Stepping out of my comfort zone and into prison was not easy. But it has changed my life for the better and deepened my understanding of the gospel.

If you are interested in learning more about the KAIROS prison ministry, please do not hesitate to contact me. Stay strong in His love my brothers!