



# SOUTHSIDE MIDWEEK NEWSLETTER 9.23.20

## Online Reservations – Barrett

Beginning next week, we will have a new way of inviting people to the building on Sunday mornings. We have been inviting people primarily through our life group ministry. This has been an effective way of bringing people back to the building. By this method, we have been able to invite members back to the building every other week. We have now invited people in this way for three months and have averaged about 95 people/week. By seating people in both the auditorium and the gathering place at recommended social distance, we have seats for a total of 160. So, as thankful as we are to have people back at the building on Sunday mornings, we are only running at 60% capacity. So, for the month of October, we are going to attempt something different in hopes of providing a better opportunity for more of our people to come to the building each week. Are you ready for this? Drumroll, please. We are going to have **online reservations** (said in my best radio announcer voice with generated cheering noise in the background).

Through an online reservation process, you will have the opportunity to come to the building each week. Every Monday morning, we will open the online reservation sign-up for the coming Sunday. There will be a link on the front page of our website at [southsidelexington.com](http://southsidelexington.com). Follow the link and you will be given two options to choose. You will select to come to either the auditorium or the gathering place. There are a limited number of seats in each room and once a room reaches its maximum capacity, you will no longer be able to select that option. We will still be pre-seating you with nametags, so you will be asked to include your name and the number of people who will be in your group when you sign up. Due to the time it takes to set up the rooms, we will close the online reservations at noon on Friday. We will continue to have the livestream on YouTube for those who are not comfortable coming to the building and for those who are not able to sign up on a certain Sunday. If you have any questions about the process, please contact me and I will be happy to help walk you through it.

As always, college students and visitors will **not** have to go through our reservation process. We have designated areas for both of these groups that allows for them to simply come. Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we continue the process of regathering at the building.



## Identity – Jessica

*Who am I and where do I belong?* These are questions all of humanity contemplates once we develop the ability to self-reflect. For most of us, we start wrestling with these questions during adolescence. Before we can even really name it, the desire to find ourselves and the group we fit in with pulls strongly on us and it continues through adulthood. So many things can factor in to how we identify ourselves – name, age, gender, ethnicity, family, appearance, faith, beliefs, habits, interests, choices, location, education, sports teams, life experience, credit score, politics, values, occupation, culture... The list includes both internal and external factors and it goes on and on. Sometimes we are aware of it, but often this search unconsciously influences what we think and what we do. If we aren't careful, we attempt to fashion identities for ourselves, identities that give us false notions of our value and worth and fail to fully satisfy our need to belong. What happens when these idols of our own making begin to crack and crumble? What happens when the things we think define us fall away? When our world is shaken, God is there to comfort and remind us that who we really are is not a mystery waiting to be discovered either by looking deeper inside ourselves or by looking to the outside world to inform us. Our identity is found in Jesus Christ, the One who was there when we were formed and who redeemed us through His blood. As Daniel Hill puts it, "...we are our best and most redeemed self when our identity is rooted in our status as beloved children of God. When our sense of belonging rests on anything else, we lose touch with that redeemed self." There is a blessed relief that comes with realizing that the questions really are not *who am I and where do I belong* but rather, *whose am I, to whom do I belong?* We must be intentional, with ourselves and with our children, in holding this truth close – A person's value and worth as a uniquely created image-bearer, redeemed by a Savior who lives, supersedes anything else that competes to define them.

*"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body, all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."*  
-Psalm 139:13-16

## A Shepherd's Prayer – Mike

Barrett's sermon got me thinking. I guess that is what it was supposed to do!

Liniment is a word not often used today. Some of you will recognize it right away and know exactly what it means, while others would know what it means if I mentioned a product that falls into that category, for instance IcyHot, Absorbine Jr or maybe Tiger Balm. These are all examples of a liniment; a balm, ointment or a lotion applied for the purpose of relieving pain or stiffness. We often look to liniments as quick but temporary fixes to relieve our physical aches and pains. Sometimes this habit extends to our spiritual aches and pains as well. We choose to pursue a "liniment style" fix of self-medicating with a distraction to occupy our mind, comfort food to lull us off to sleep or possibly denial to pretend the hurt does not exist. While we have at our disposal the more powerful and longer lasting avenue of lament.

David shows us repeatedly through the Psalms that taking our hurt and our complaint to God gives the soul rest and renewal, provides hope for tomorrow, and draws us closer to our Lord. This is the simple process of lament. Barrett is teaching from Psalm 13, there are plenty of other examples. I would like to share with you Psalm 142 as a strong example of David's lament. David was running for his life when he wrote Psalm 142. In this lament, David pours out his heart to God. David pleads for mercy, shares his complaints and acknowledges that God is his refuge. I encourage you to read this short Psalm, ponder it, reflect on it and discover where your prayer life could be enriched by learning to lament. I am excited to see how this series on lament affects my prayer life.

Father in heaven, how blessed we are to call you Father. You know our deepest thoughts, our pain and our fears. Lord teach us to find hope and increased faith by sharing these things with you openly in our prayers and learning to lament. We praise you for your faithfulness. We trust you with all we have. Our hope, just like David's hope, is in you. Thank you for the blood of Christ that sets us free, we pray through Him, Amen.

Psalm 142

With my voice I cry out to the LORD; with my voice I plead for mercy to the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> I pour out my complaint before him; I tell my trouble before him.

<sup>3</sup> When my spirit faints within me, you know my way!

In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me.

<sup>4</sup> Look to the right and see: there is none who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul.

<sup>5</sup> I cry to you, O LORD; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."

<sup>6</sup> Attend to my cry, for I am brought very low!

Deliver me from my persecutors, for they are too strong for me!

<sup>7</sup> Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name!

The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.