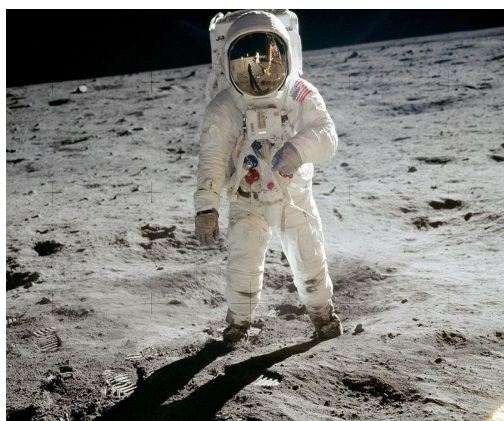


JULY  
2019

A PUBLICATION OF ROYSTON BAPTIST CHURCH

life together

***“I’m helping put a man on the moon.”***



A few weeks ago I got to spend some time chatting with my grandfather in Alabama. He was an engineer who worked with the team at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, AL, developing the Saturn V rocket that sent a man to the moon.

On July 20, 2019 we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of an incredibly significant event in the history of humankind. At 4:18 p.m. Mission Control received radio transmission from the surface of the moon, *“The Eagle has landed.”*

NASA’s Apollo 11 mission sent 3 astronauts into space with the collective goal of walking on the moon.

At 10:56 p.m., one of the most famous lines in all of history was heard over the radios at NASA’s Mission Control, as Neil Armstrong stepped out of the lunar module, and onto the moon. *“That’s one small step for man. One giant leap for mankind.”*

Some years earlier, President John F. Kennedy toured NASA’s headquarters in preparation for giving a speech to inspire the nation to rally behind the Apollo missions. During the tour, he encountered a janitor holding his mop.

*“Hello sir, what do you do here?”* JFK asked.

With the President of the United States standing right in front of him, the mop-holding custodian, replied,

***“Oh, Mr. President, I’m helping put a man on the moon.”***

We may never know that janitor’s name, and you’ll never hear my grandfather’s name, or the names of the countless others on the team that helped send Apollo 11 and its crew to the moon. And, frankly, I don’t think that matters to any of them. What does matter is that they were a part of something greater than themselves, something extraordinary, something that was literally *out-of-this-world*.

As I reflect over my first year of serving as Pastor at RBC, and of doing life and ministry together, I am filled with gratitude and joy. As I look toward the future of what we can do together, I am filled with anticipation and hope. There is energy and excitement within our congregation and within our community. God is alive and active here in Royston, and we have an opportunity to be a part of something that that is truly *out-of-this-world*, by helping do our part to bring the Kingdom of Heaven to Earth.

William

## PASSION FOR GOD BY DEBORAH HERRING

I can't remember a time that I have not been in love with God. Even before I knew Him I was drawn to seek Him. He has been the over-arching presence in my life and I truly believe that every good thing I have in my present life is a direct result of His blessing. I still remember coming up out of the baptismal waters when I accepted the Lord as my Savior 47 years ago. I had a deep sensation that I had made the best choice of my life. I can remember my aunt giggling at how undignified I looked standing in the baptismal pool with a huge smile over my face in eager anticipation of receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. I walked around afterwards like a

superhero who knows she is housing a powerful gift with limitless potential. While I haven't taken off flying through the atmosphere, or lifted any vehicles single-handedly, I have witnessed His miraculous power surging through my life with the force to lift me out of darkness, preserve my life, and steer me into His loving will and direction for my life. I cannot comprehend how such a magnificent, powerful God can also be so gentle, loving and kind. Sometimes when I



pray, I envision myself being cradled by Him and can feel His sweetness in my bones. I am awed at being completely known by Him. He is aware of every cell in my body and every thought in my mind. Despite all my inadequacies, He calls me His beloved and still loves me more than I can imagine. How could I not want to honor such goodness? In response to Him, I take both my frailties and the gifts He has given me and try to faithfully use them to serve and build up others. This passion drives me through the challenges and discouragements I encounter into His glorious presence where I bring him the best I have. Sometimes it is simply my heart.

## THANKFUL FOR GOD'S GIFTS BY MARY KATE DEAL

The first time I ever preached was my senior year in high school. Our youth minister had only been at our church for about 9 months and he asked if I would be the preacher for our Youth Sunday. To be honest, I don't remember how I felt in the moment that he asked me, but I do remember how often I practiced. I would leave school and call Chris to ask if could come up to the church to practice, so nervousness must have been one of the emotions

that stood out the most. Chris patiently obliged and would help me practice in very...creative...ways. "Preach through the distractions," he would say as he flipped off the lights or pulled the fire alarm or cut off the microphone. His silly antics prepared me for anything—none of which actually happened, of course. Throughout this process, I found God in a way that I never had before. I had known God my entire life. I had learned

about the love of Christ since the first Sunday I went to church at only a few weeks old. But as I wrote this sermon, I felt something come to life within me that I was only just learning would become one of my favorite gifts from God. Even though I normally have excruciating performance anxiety, when I stood up to preach at a mere 17 years old, I experienced God, yet again. I realized what it meant to be called. When I consider how

many preachers precede me in this calling, I am simultaneously overwhelmed, empowered, and humbled. I can certainly say that it is only through and by the grace of

God that this passion fills my soul. I am so thankful to Chris for seeing something in me as a skeptical, nervous teenager. I am also thankful that I can always see God all along the

way as I read the scripture, write the words, and preach the sermon. And I will forever be grateful for the opportunities to encounter God in this way.

## A GREAT YEAR WITH THE DEALS

Sunday, July 1, 2018 was a good day in the life of Royston Baptist Church. Pastor William Deal, Mary Kate, Dorothy and Adeline became part of our family. Where do we start to say thank you? Good sermons, good leadership, a lot of fun

and laughter just to begin. This has been an exciting year. So many good and positive ideas are keeping Royston Baptist Church involved with our sister churches and our community. Thank you, William, for your love, patience, and faithfulness

to us, the people of Royston Baptist Church. Thank you for teaching and leading us to follow the path God has for us as individuals and as a church. We are thankful and grateful that God led you and your family to us.

## SERVING A GOD WHO SEES BY SARA FREEMAN

One of my favorite stories in the book of Genesis is that of Hagar. Her story is one that is filled with people bubbling over with envy, who do not trust the Lord, and people who doubt God's plan. It's always reassuring to see great figures in the Bible who we think of as "heroes" do things like stumble and make mistakes, and Hagar's story is no different. After a moment in Hagar's story where it is said that Sarai deals harshly with her, Hagar flees from Abram and his wife and she finds herself alone. It is then that the Lord comes to her, a mere servant, and makes her a promise extremely similar to the one He had given Abra-

ham: to multiply her offspring. It is this promises that propels Hagar to give the Lord a name that is enough to fill a heart with hope. Hagar calls the Lord "a God of seeing."

I am so thankful to serve a God who sees me. He sees my personality, both the good and bad. He sees my heart, both the admirable parts of it and the parts I would rather no one see. But most importantly, God sees my desires and passions. He sees and understands what makes my heart race and what drives me. He sees my love for nature, my heart for the lost, and my longing for fellowship. He gives me opportunities to

meet new people because He knows I love to learn more about others. And as I grow and change, He even crafts those desires to take me where I need to go next. He is always watching, looking for ways to take me places where I can do the things I love while making His name known.



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- *The Forgiven Duke*
- *A Duke's Promise*



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