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A PUBLICATION OF ROYSTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Life Together

"THE ACT OF WORSHIP MAKES US 'CHURCH.'  
...TEACHING OUR CHILDREN, SERVING THE  
POOR, GATHERING IN SMALL GROUPS,  
MAINTAINING THE BUILDINGS IN WHICH WE  
MEET ARISES FROM OUR ENCOUNTER WITH  
THE LIVING GOD IN WORSHIP."

The Work of the People:  
What We Do and Why  
by Marlea Gilbert

Being a faithful church is more than just what we do on Sunday mornings, but congregational worship should stand at the center of all that we do as a family of faith. Throughout the summer, as the staff and I planned for the fall, we discussed ideas and dreams for how to harness and utilize the energy and vision that is already present as we move forward following God's guidance to live more and more faithfully as Royston Baptist Church.

Beginning in September, you will notice some enhancements to how we do life together at RBC. These will revolve around our congregational worship at 11:00 am on Sunday mornings, but they will help shape what we do throughout the rest of our week, with the overarching goal of experiencing further transformation in our individual lives and in the life of our congregation.

Here are the principles guiding worship on Sunday mornings at Royston Baptist Church, as we continue forward, growing as disciples and growing as a family of faith:

- *Christianity is a communal faith. We are united as one body, and we thrive together.*
- *Worship is at the center of the life of our church.*
- *Worship is the work of the people, not just the work of the ministers and other formal worship leaders.*
- *Worship is meant to integrate faith and life. The more of our lives we bring into our worship, and the more our faith becomes a part of all areas of our lives, then the more vital our worship becomes.*
- *The patterns of worship equip and empower us to faithfully live like Jesus beyond Sunday mornings.*
- *Each and every element of worship is purposefully and intentionally planned with the goal of providing many different opportunities to encounter God and experience life-giving worship for everyone.*

With these principles in mind, here are some of the enhancements you can expect beginning this fall:

- **Worship Preparation:** *We should all come to worship with an expectation of encountering God, and this takes personal commitment from all of us to prepare ourselves for worship. Included in the weekly Life Together email will be an invitation to prepare for worship on Sunday. The preparation element will connect to Sunday's scripture and/or theme. It may be scripture, a quote, a question to ponder, or lyrics from a song.*
- **Worship Participation:** *Worship is meant to be active, not passive. There will be more opportunities for participation from the congregation: responsive readings, communal prayers, or experiential elements. This is also an invitation to anyone who would like to serve as a worship leader in a variety of ways: reading scripture, leading a litany, or praying, and if you have a creative idea for worship, let's hear it!*
- **Worship Practice:** *Worship is an opportunity to be filled with God's Spirit so that you can live like Jesus beyond Sunday, and carry Jesus outside the walls of the church as you go. As you leave from worship you will be given a charge or challenge to actively put your faith into practice in the days ahead.*

I am excited for our future together as we continually seek to become more of who we are created to be.

William

Spend any amount of time with Deborah Herring, and you will be overwhelmed by her passion for following Jesus and her love for God. Listen to her sing, and you will be blown away by her ability and musicianship. Sing in the choir or play with the worship team, and you will see someone who leads and ministers with grace and joy. And, what an honor and privilege the past 12 years have been for the family of faith at Royston Baptist Church to have been loved and led and celebrated and supported and prayed for by Rev. Dr. Deborah Herring!

Deborah, I am grateful to have served alongside you and been ministered to by you. This church is eternally grateful for you and your family. Yet our words, whether written or spoken, will never be enough to truly express our gratitude for all that you are and all that you have been and all that you've done in our lives as our minister and our friend.

I am also so excited for Andrew as he continues to pursue where God is leading him in his career and his life. I am grateful for his ministry with our youth and among us. I have said it many times, and I say it again - you can teach a lot of the "skills" of ministry, but you can't teach heart; and, Andrew has a ton of it! Andrew, thank you for being present for our youth, for befriending them, for teaching them, for modeling Jesus for them, for loving them. Thank you for loving all of us, and allowing us to love you. You always have a home at RBC!

Thank you, Deborah and Andrew. You are both loved deeply at RBC. You are God's beloved, and with you God is well pleased!

## WHAT A SUMMER! WHAT'S COMING UP! BY SARA FREEMAN

It is almost incomprehensible that the summer is coming to a close and school is beginning yet again for the kids at Royston Baptist Church. My first summer at RBC has been beyond memorable, filled with Parent's Nights Out, a trip to Bear Hollow Zoo, a day at Athens Botanical Gardens, and more. It is a joy to get to know the kids who come to Royston Baptist and I do not take it lightly that the families here have entrusted me with their children to love on, disciple, and care for. As you all are probably well aware, they provide constant entertainment, but they also ask insightful questions, trust deeply, and



love abundantly. A lesson I continually learned this summer is that they have much more to teach us as a church than we may believe we have to teach them.

While we are winding down for the summer, we are looking forward for the new and the familiar that will be gearing up

for the Children's Department in the fall! Wednesday night activities will be starting back up on August 14th, with new curriculums in place like Royal Ambassadors for our elementary-aged boys and Girls in Action for our elementary-aged girls! We also are looking forward to planning activities involving all the fall things (looking at you, Denver Downs Farm). For Sunday School this upcoming year, we are excited to begin exploring new curriculum for that time of discipleship as well. This new season with RBC Kids will be one to remember and I can't wait for the cool weather to come along with it!

## THANKS RBC BY ANDREW SMITH

Royston Baptist Church, as I transition into the next part of my life I would like to thank you so much for all you have been for me the last year and a half. From helping with JT, the former youth pastor, to taking his position, I have always had a big heart for the youth at this church. I never knew what it was like to be a part of a smaller church. RBC has been nothing but love to me. Everyone at this church has

been extremely loving and caring to me and the youth. From general greetings to helping pick up some of my youth for church, RBC has shown me what it is like to serve Christ. It truly is a family and it shows. Everyone is so willing to do their part in the body of Christ wherever and whenever they are able. RBC has always been understanding of people's lives and the responsibilities they have along

with understanding that Christ also comes first. I cannot thank you enough for the love support that I received at this time in my life. I will always be forever thankful and RBC will always have a special place in my heart as my first church that I personally chose. It is never goodbye as you all will be in my prayers and I will still be attending when I come to visit. Again, truly thank you so much for everything.

## TWELVE WONDERFUL YEARS BY DEBORAH HERRING

It has been my joy to serve, lead, educate, pastor, and love you all for the past 12 years as your Minister of Music. You have become part of my family and I love you all with an everlasting love as exemplified by our Heavenly Father. Each of you are special to me. It has been my joy to see your faces on Sunday morning when leading music, and during the week when rehearsing the choir, worship team, or coaching those singing special music. We have grown together through the leadership of four different senior pastors, the zeal of new youth and children's ministers, the excitement of new members and births, and the comfort of each other during the losses of our friends and family who

have gone on to be with Jesus. This ministry provided me the opportunity to delve deep into God's word to prepare myself and us as a body for worship. I learned the responsibility that comes with pastoring and the sweet sound of God's voice as He leads. It was through this church that my call to be ordained into the ministry of the gospel was fulfilled! You all have loved me and my family through seasons of heartbreak and seasons of joy. You have mothered my children, taken in my parents, provided for my sister, and (little did I know when you hired me) that as my husband's home church, you would even have a part in providing the future foundation for my care through John's steadfast faith as a result of the

investment that you provided to him as his teachers in Sunday School and church, and modeled to him through your lives. I am awestruck to see how we can never ever out give God and if we have eyes to see, there is continual evidence of His work in our lives! I'm grateful that God has confirmed to me that this is the season for me to slow down and I look forward to what He has in store for us all ahead. Mary Kate Deal will do an excellent job as your new Minister of Music and I look forward to singing and serving with you under her leadership. I am so grateful God sent me to you and that you allowed me the privilege of ministering to you!

## Royston Baptist Church

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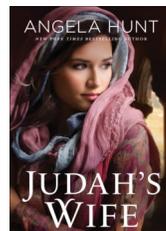
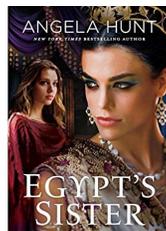


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- *Judah's Wife*
- *Jerusalem's Queen*



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