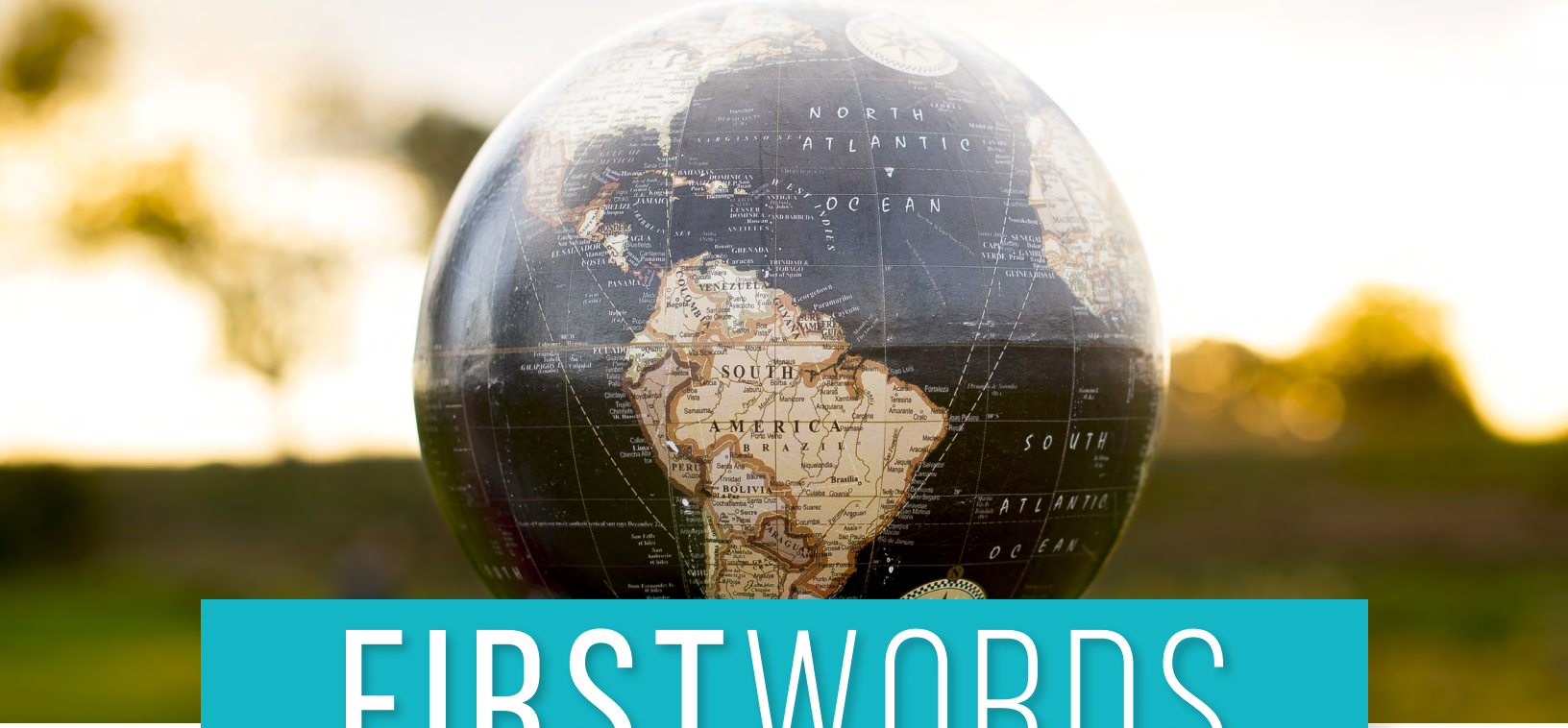


FIRSTWORDS

NOVEMBER AT FIRST

This year, we are taking the month of November to highlight missions. Pastor Ray will be preaching a series titled, God's Mission, Our Partnership. This will culminate on November 22 with the parade of flags and the combined choirs singing Carry the Light. Now you might be thinking, don't we do this in December? Well, for many years we have, but the month was not the reason, rather the focus on missions was the real reason. So, with the sermon series focused on missions, moving Carry the Light just makes sense. Then, at our annual Thanksgiving Dinner at the Expo Center on November 22, we will also be focusing on missions and hearing stories about how God is using FBC around the world.

On Saturday evening, November 28 beginning at 5:45 p.m. with hot chocolate, hot cider, and homemade cookies, we will light the church for Christmas. This annual event has become a wonderful time of fellowship and outreach as we all get ready for the coming of our Saviour and head towards Bethlehem. As a part of the evening's celebration, free tickets to the Winter Light Fest for that night only will be available for all who attend. So, be thinking now about someone you might want to bring and introduce them to FBC as we fellowship together. If you would like to help offset the cost of the Christmas lights, and yes we do still need help with the funding, you can donate by simply **clicking here** and selecting Christmas Lights in the drop menu.

Then we will gather on Sunday morning, November 29, for the 1st Sunday of Advent. The sanctuary will be decorated for Christmas and the children will decorate the trees with the Chrismons.

Dear FBC Family,

Finally, it is starting to cool off a little here in the Big Country. Hopefully, leaves will begin to turn as nature prepares for the winter months. The rhythm of seasonal cycles is part of God's creation. It gives beauty during the fall with the change, preparation during the hard times in winter, and that fall and winter preparation brings out new flowers and crops in the spring and summer months.

Speaking of changes, we are making a slight change to how we approach the Parade of Flags, United Missions offering, and our Thanksgiving Dinner on November 22. We are dedicating November as Missions Month. We will be telling stories about what God is doing through our mission partners around the world. We will be promoting and asking you to pray about giving to the United Missions Offering, which benefits CBF Global Missions, Abilene Community Development, Texas Baptist Hunger Offering, and the Baptist World Aid (the disaster relief portion of the Baptist World Alliance). Each sermon in November is connected to God's mission in the world and challenges us to find ourselves in partnership with God in God's mission to reconcile the world back to Himself. The emphasis will culminate on November 22 with the Parade of Flags and the combined children, youth, and sanctuary choirs singing "Carry the Light." Then, on the night of November 22, we will gather at the Expo Center for our church-wide Thanksgiving meal, with the theme being gratitude for what God is doing all around the world through our church.

Several of you have asked about the follow-up to our Your Kingdom Come conversation we had toward the end of August. Our staff spent the retreat praying and analyzing the results. There were three main emphases:

1. Better communication. This would include the website, social media posts, and our internal and external communication. We took this to heart and are working to improve our communication. We had a website training to make sure each of our areas of the website is updated. You will also notice a difference on the home page in the coming days.

2. There is a general excitement about how God is working in our church. We had a year in which we saw 14 baptisms and over 60 people join the church. We long to see people know Jesus and live under Jesus in community. Right now, that is happening and we are praying that momentum continues.

3. Investment in our main building. There is a desire to see our building, particularly the education space, modernized and more accessible. We will be working on a plan to

do just that. Right now, we are still in the dreaming stages. When we are ready, we will be sharing what we believe God wants us to do with our space. Until then, know we are working on it and would love to talk with you about what we believe God might be inviting us to do.

I am looking forward to the holiday season and to live out the Gospel with you. I am honored to be your pastor.

Grace and Peace,

RAY P. MILLER, DMIN
Pastor, FBC Abilene, Tx

PRESCHOOL SERVICE PROJECT

Throughout November, we will be highlighting thankfulness and service during our Preschool Sunday School time. We hope the children will participate by bringing new gloves to the nursery throughout the month. At the end of November, we will donate all the gloves collected to City Light.

Our hope is that this project will help the children connect thankfulness and service by recognizing their blessings and using them to help those in need. As the collection of gloves grows, we hope it will serve as a visual reminder of the difference they are making and encourage them to continue sharing God's love with others.

THE SISTER'S TABLE

thinks pink

On October 13, twenty-eight ladies gathered at Sister's Table for a morning of learning, fellowship, and fun. We are grateful to Aubri Ward, RN, from the Hendrick Breast Institute, for volunteering her time to talk about breast cancer awareness, the importance of self-breast exams, and getting mammograms.

After the talk, we played breast cancer bingo and celebrated six winners! We wore pink T-shirts and pink sunglasses and enjoyed pink donuts. Louise Roy made each lady a bracelet with a breast cancer ribbon attached—a thoughtful reminder of our time together.

We missed Ann Mayhall this month, and the ladies joined in singing "We Wish You Well" for her. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a special morning!

FBC UNIFIED MISSIONS OFFERING 2026
"TRANSFORMING ABUNDANCE THROUGH CHRIST"
JOHN 15:5

GOAL: $75,000 – YEAR TO DATE: $15,478

Please prayerfully consider how you can be part of reaching our 2026 FBC Unified Missions Offering goal of $75,000. This unified offering combines four vital mission efforts which extend the love of Christ—locally, nationally, and globally. Giving envelopes are available in the Welcome Center and may be returned to the church office anytime before the end of the year. Thank you for being a giving church and for helping us reach our mission goal for 2026.

Four different offerings combined into One Unified Missions Offering

1. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions - 60%
Supports the long-term presence of CBF field personnel serving in the United States and around the world. It helps to promote and provide: salaries, insurance and children's education for nearly 60 field personnel serving on the mission field; leadership, ministry, and development of the local church among the least evangelized; Bible translations and digital resources to reach international refugees, immigrants, and students; justice/reconciliation for the most marginalized and works to end extreme poverty through development; and transforming communities to restore natural environments.

2. Texas Baptist World Hunger - 15%
The Texas Baptist Hunger Offering unites the body of Christ to end hunger and poverty and promote holistic transformation in the name of Jesus through over 100 hunger relief and development ministries across Texas and around the world. It also supports projects across the world that feed the hungry and help the hungry help themselves in the context of holistic Christian ministry.

3. Abilene Community Transformation - 15%
Provides resources for responding to specific ministry opportunities and needs right here in Abilene. These resources help to transform families, neighborhoods, and ministry partners within the Big Country.

4. Baptist World Aid - 10%
Since 1920, Baptist World Aid has networked Baptists around the world to alleviate poverty and hunger, respond when disasters strike, and support sustainable community development projects around the globe. This is the compassionate arm of the Baptist World Alliance and provides help for persons in need globally through disaster relief, alleviation of hunger, medical assistance to those affected by HIV/AIDS, and community development.

please pray

FOR OUR FIELD PERSONNEL AROUND THE WORLD

DAVID AND LAUREN BASS

We have been serving in Cambodia since 2015 and have two daughters, Chloe and Lily. As Cambodia's church planting movement matures, we have aimed to walk alongside Cambodian pastors and church leaders as they, their churches, and their faith go from new and dynamic to deep and sustainable. Since 2024, we have partnered with Phnom Penh Bible School to train pastors and ministry students. David teaches a variety of classes and mentor's students. Lauren works alongside the staff and oversees the library. Overall, our goal in Cambodia is to find where God is working and to join in.

First Baptist, Abilene has supported us, encouraged us, and prayed for us from the very beginning. For over 11 years your partnership has helped sustain us through transition, language school, raising kids, and deepening ministry. While it's a joy to serve God here, life and ministry in Cambodia can be challenging, and your steadfast prayers and support have meant so much to us!

Prayer Requests from the Basses:

1. Pray for the students and teachers/staff at the Bible School— That they would grow in wisdom and knowledge and for rich opportunities to minister.

2. Pray for health and safety for the Bass's.

ALICIA AND JEFF LEE

Alicia and Jeff Lee serve in Skopje, North Macedonia, where they seek to be the presence of Christ by engaging in holistic, relational, and healing ministries among the ethnic groups of Skopje.

North Macedonia is a small land-locked country in the Balkan region of Europe and is a unique blend of religious and ethnic diversity. Many days, this diversity is lived out beautifully, but at times, it can be a tense and often exploited balance. Approximately 60 percent of the population are ethnic Macedonians who are generally Orthodox Christians or agnostic; 30 percent are ethnic Albanians and are Muslim; and 10 percent are varied minority groups like Roma, Serbs, and Turks. Skopje is the capital city of North Macedonia and is home to 800,000 people.

In Skopje, the Lees work alongside local grassroots organizations to address the needs of families living in extreme poverty and people neglected by society. In 2010, the Lees began a partnership with the Food Bank of Macedonia to address food insecurity and alleviate hunger throughout North Macedonia. Through this partnership, over 30 tons of food has been distributed.

Jeff's educational background has opened up opportunities to consult with farmers and local governments to address the environmental issues within North Macedonia. Agricultural work includes the development of community gardens and a livestock-bank project which provides cows, goats, chickens, and fresh produce to local farmers through a small business development program.

Alicia's educational background has allowed her to provide counseling services for English speakers in Skopje and serve as the school counselor for an international preschool-12th grade school.

The Lee's are thankful for the support of First Baptist, Abilene.

Prayer requests from Jeff and Alicia Lee:

1. Pray for the continued work of our local foodbank and the blessing of providing for those in need.

2. Pray for a successful harvest which is abundant and plentiful to share with all their ministry partners.

please pray

FOR OUR FIELD PERSONNEL AROUND THE WORLD

JAVIER PEREZ

EduK nurtures children's minds, bodies, and spirits by providing high-quality early education and empowering their parents to cultivate thriving children. Our vision is to see 5,000 children out of poverty into a thriving life by 2045.

EduK is committed to lasting and transformative outcomes for children and families in Latin America and the Caribbean. We have built a family of organizations to provide a robust and resilient platform to support our mission and partnership with churches, businesses, foundations, and civil society organizations dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways. Although each member of the family operates differently, together they are guided by the same vision: Intervening in the lives of disadvantaged children – by providing better education and helping their parents support them better at home.

FBC has had the joy of working in this center for the last 3 years in Tepipilly, Mexico.

Prayer requests from Javier and Aura Perez:

1. Pray for the children and that the transformational center impacts families in the community.

2. Pray for Javier, his wife Aura, and their children as they go back and forth from the United States and Mexico.

ELKET RODRIGUEZ

It is a joy and an honor to share with your church a little about the work we are doing. I mean that sincerely. One of the greatest privileges of this ministry is knowing that churches like yours choose to walk alongside us as we serve families and communities in vulnerable situations.

Much of our ministry happens through presence, showing up, listening, building relationships, and responding to the needs we encounter. Here in the Rio Grande Valley, many of the families we work with are struggling to afford enough food. Twice a month, we help provide food to families in the colonias, while also working to address some of the deeper challenges affecting these communities.

One of the ministries I am especially grateful for is Strengthening Families. Over the past year, we have accompanied women from five colonias through classes focused on improving families, communication, parenting, and breaking harmful cycles. Forty-one women recently completed the program. Our relationship with them has continued beyond those classes. We are now offering Bible studies, and we purchased Bibles for the women so that each could have her own as we study Scripture together.

Sometimes this ministry also looks like rebuilding a home. We recently helped the Grimaldo family repair their house, giving them greater stability and equity for their future. But their home has become something more: a place from which food can be shared with other families in their community.

That is what I love about this work. A home becomes a place of service. Food becomes an opportunity for relationships. A class becomes a community. And women we first met through one ministry are now opening the Bible together.

My family and I are deeply grateful for your partnership and for the privilege of doing this work alongside you.

Prayer requests for Elket Rodriguez:

1. Pray for Elket as he advocates for immigrant families.

2. Pray for Elket and his family.

Trunk or Treat

BY KEATHLEY ROAN & BECKY TUCKER

Woo Hoo…together, we pulled off another successful Trunk or Treat!

It was a little warm outside to start the evening, but that didn't stop any of our "organized chaos" and fun! There were many children, dressed in wonderful costumes, throughout the parking lot playing games, gathering candy and prizes, riding the train, laughing with friends, as well as munching on hot dogs, cotton candy, & popcorn! The joy and excitement were contagious!

It takes so many people to make events such as Trunk or Treat happen, so we want to send out a special thank you to:

- All of those who donated money, candy, cupcakes, and cookies
- Those who brought their vehicles and decorated them, as well as hosted the activities for the children
- Those who cooked and helped serve the hot dogs, popped the popcorn, and made the cotton candy
- Our custodial staff for the many ways they help set up and tear down
- Those who helped set up the parking lot and got all our games and candy outside or stayed after the event and helped pick up games, tables, chairs, and trash

We are so blessed to be at a church who, not only values children, but truly shows their love for our little ones by praying and loving on them as well as supporting them when we host activities like Trunk or Treat!

Thank you so much FBC Church Family!

SIXERS
3
ONICS
40

Sprinkle Toss

Trunk or Treat

FBC ABILENE

women's ministry

We have two opportunities in November to come together for games, fellowship, snacks, and always a lot of laughter!

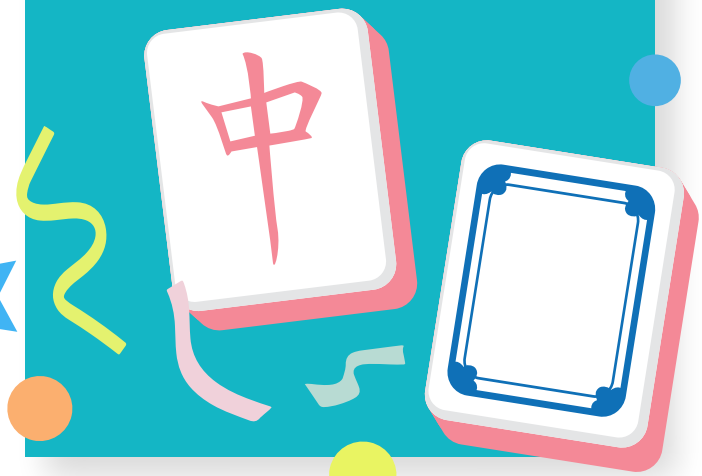
On Thursday, November 5, from 6 – 8 p.m. in the City Light Dining Room (1441 N. 4th) we will have our monthly 1st Thursday Mahjong Night! Whether you know how to play Mahjong or want to learn to play, come and join us. It helps us in our planning to know if you are coming so we can make sure we have enough game sets. Please contact Susie (325-675-8103 or susie.vandever@fbcabilene.org) and let her know if you are coming.

Then on Tuesday, November 10, at 6:30 p.m., we will host a BUNCO night at University Place (302 Hickory). This is always a fun night! Whether you love to play BUNCO and play often or have never played, come and join us. This is probably one of the easiest games you will ever play!

These events are wonderful ways to build new friendships and/or strengthen existing relationships. Hope to see you one, or both, nights!

MAHJONG NIGHT

Thursday, November 5 from 6 – 8 p.m. in the City Light Dining Room 1441 N. 4th St



BUNCO

Tuesday, November 10 6:30 p.m. at University Place 302 Hickory

MOCE Spotlight:
TINA HOFFMAN

Tina Hoffman has been an important part of the Ministry of Counseling & Enrichment team since March of 2013, when she joined as a part-time receptionist. She transitioned to a full-time role in May of 2014 and now serves as MOCE's Office Manager. After spending much of her earlier career working in medical offices, Tina found that joining MOCE during a season of personal transition turned out to be the perfect fit.

One of Tina's favorite things about working at MOCE is the variety her role brings. No two days are exactly alike! From balancing daily receipts to ordering supplies for the playrooms, Tina helps keep the office running smoothly while supporting therapists, clients, referring physicians, and maintenance staff behind the scenes.

Seeing the transformation which takes place in the lives of clients is what makes her work most meaningful. She loves watching someone arrive feeling discouraged and, after a few appointments, begin to smile again. Witnessing that journey toward hope and healing is, in her words, "absolutely priceless."

Tina hopes every person who calls or walks through MOCE's doors encounters a friendly, compassionate welcome and feels they have entered a judgment-free space filled with comfort, peace, and hope. She considers it a privilege to help provide a reliable place of support for individuals and families in our community.

Originally from Carlsbad, New Mexico, Tina has been a proud Texan since 1966. After calling Abilene home for many years, she recently relocated near Anson to be closer to her family. She is blessed with two daughters, two sons-in-law, and three grandchildren. Outside of work, Tina enjoys spending time outdoors with her dogs and cats, observing the local wildlife, working on all types of needlework, and watching football when autumn arrives.

We are grateful for Tina's years of dedication to MOCE and for the many ways she helps make our office a welcoming place of hope and healing for the Big Country!

Jubilaeum

A CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

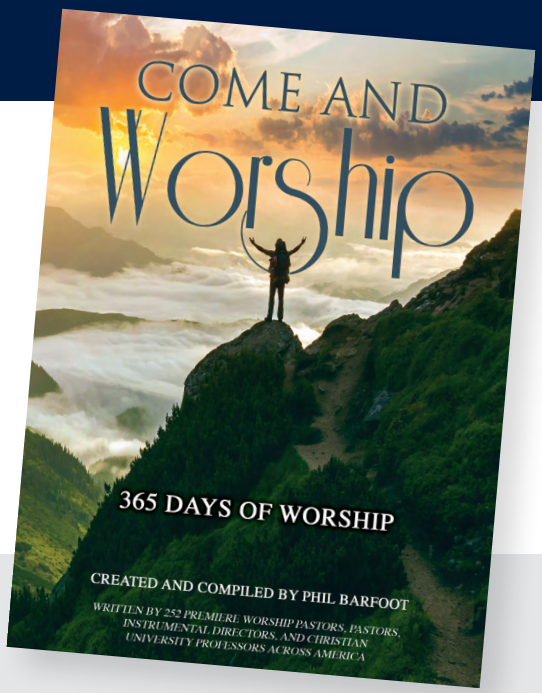
by Heather Sorenson

On Sunday, December 6, at 10:30 a.m. during our morning worship service the Sanctuary Choir and Celebration Orchestra will present *Jubilaeum*: A Christmas Oratorio by Heather Sorenson.

Jubilaeum explores the Nativity through the biblical theme of **Jubilee**--an ancient foreshadowing of the freedom, restoration, and redemption found in Christ. Featuring Heather Sorenson's signature blend of classical artistry, romantic lyricism, and cinematic orchestral color, this musically sophisticated, theologically rich concert work reveals the profound connections between the Year of Jubilee and the Christmas story.

COME AND WORSHIP

Come and Worship is a collection of devotions by Worship Pastors, Ministers of Music, and Church Music Leaders from across the country. These books are available in the church office for $20 and would make a great Christmas gift.



Ministry Spotlight:

CITY LIGHT
Community Ministries

SUNDAY BREAKFAST: 804

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST: 797

COMMUNITY LUNCH: 2,352

PRODUCE: 585

VOLUNTEER HOURS: 759

SHOWERS: 277

CLOTHING ITEMS: 522

CALLS AND VOICEMAILS: 431

MAIL CHECKS: 323

FRONT DESK WALK-INS: 2,998

DINING ROOM WALK-INS: 2,585

IT'S DEER SEASON!

Calling all hunters! Deer season is here, and we'd love for you to share your harvest with City Light Community Ministries! If you have venison to spare, we'd be grateful to receive it and share it with our neighbors throughout our community. Your generosity helps us serve hearty, home-cooked meals to those who need a helping hand!

SERVING UP good things!

Thanksgiving is approaching and many of us look forward to sharing a meal with family. For some of our neighbors, the holiday may look very different. Please help us make their morning special at City Light's annual Thanksgiving breakfast on **Wednesday, November 25**.

We're looking for **50 volunteers** to cook breakfast, serve, and greet our neighbors. We also need 50 breakfast casseroles. It's a wonderful morning to share a meal and serve our neighbors with dignity.

If you'd like to volunteer or provide a casserole, please contact Beth Young at 325-675-8187 or beth.young@fbcabilene.org. Thank you for helping us make this a warm and welcoming Thanksgiving morning!

YOU'RE TOE-TALLY AWESOME!

Our neighbors are doing a happy feet dance because of your generosity! Together, we collected **1,635 pairs of socks** to help keep our neighbors in need warm this winter. We're overwhelmed by your kindness and so grateful for every pair donated.

Thank you for warming hearts and toes!

Faces & Places:

A MISSION THAT CONTINUES TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Who would have imagined a church launching a capital campaign dedicated to missions? In 2009, First Baptist Church, Abilene embraced an extraordinary vision: to invest in missions locally and around the world, not just for today, but for generations to come. The Faces & Places Missions Campaign set out to raise $5 million: $1 million to renovate the Family Life Center, $1 million to fund mission projects and send people to serve around the world, and $3 million to establish a missions' endowment which would provide ongoing support for ministry.

The goal was bigger than raising money. It was about creating a lasting source of funding to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, meet human needs, and support mission partners year after year. Let me say that again—**every year**. A continuing investment in God's work for generations to come.

Faces & Places builds on a rich legacy of missions at First Baptist, from founder missionary, Owen C. Pope, in 1881, and our first global missionary to China, Blanche Rose Walker, in 1905, to generations of pastors, church members, and Missions Committee volunteers who have faithfully answered God's call to bear witness of Jesus Christ by going.

Its impact can also be seen in tangible expressions of compassion and care, including:

- **Clean water:** Supporting the construction of two water wells in Honduras, along with water-well projects in Haiti and El Salvador.
- **Safe and stable housing:** Helping complete four Habitat for Humanity builds in Abilene and four Buckner home builds in Peñitas, Texas.
- **Local ministry:** Supporting two Friendship Houses in Abilene, along with Baptist Student Ministry efforts in Alpine and two locations in Abilene.
- **International partnerships:** Sending people and funding ministry projects to North Macedonia, South Africa, Rwanda, Cambodia, Cypress, China, Spain, Thailand, Scotland, Indonesia, Mexico, and Colombia.
- **Stateside partnerships:** Sending people and funding ministry projects to New York City, California, the Texas Border, Florida, Louisiana, Colorado Springs, and Abilene.
- **Ongoing community outreach:** Providing a major portion of the annual City Light budget, helping sustain vital ministry in our own community.

Each project represents more than a financial contribution. It represents people served, relationships built, needs met, the gospel lived out, and opportunities to share the love of Christ in meaningful ways.

Our mission does not stop at our community's borders. We are called to serve our neighbors here at home and share the hope of Christ around the world. Faces & Places helps make that possible by supporting existing ministries and opening doors for new opportunities as needs arise.

Each of us has a part to play. We may not all travel across the world, but we can all pray, give, volunteer, and serve the people God places in our lives. Missions is not just something we do on a trip or during a special event, it is a way of living out our faith every day.

Faces & Places began with a bold dream, but its impact continues today. Through faithful giving, meaningful partnerships, and an enduring mission’s endowment, First Baptist Church, Abilene continues to share the Good News, serve others, and answer God's call—year after year.

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

November 1, 4 years
CHRIS HUFFORD
Custodian

November 5, 8 years
DAVID CURRY
Finance Assistant

November 22, 33 years
MARILYN HENDERSON
GLO Ministry Assistant

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

October 2026

Budget	October	Year-to-Date
Required	$260,100	$2,724,000
Given	$293,612	$2,700,516

God continues to bless our faithfulness through the tithes and offerings given to His Kingdom work.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH • ABILENE

NOVEMBER

1	Personnel Committee Meeting Men's Ministry BYO Steak Night
4	Committee on Committees Meeting Deacon Nominating Committee
5	Women's Ministry Mahjong Night
6	Men's Ministry Golf Outing/ Brownwood
8	Youth Master Chef Jr.
10	Women's Ministry BUNCO
11	Committee on Committees Meeting Buildings/Grounds Committee Meeting
15	Budget Committee Meeting Missions' Committee Meeting
16	MOCE Board Meeting
17	CLCM Board Meeting Finance Committee Meeting Deacons' Meeting
18	Parade of Flags Practice
19	Men's Ministry Brown Bag Lunch
22	Parade of Flags Thanksgiving Dinner @ Expo Center
24	GLO Board Meeting
25	No Wednesday Meal/Activities
26-27	Church Offices Closed
28	Lighting of the Church
29	1st Sunday of Advent