

# FIRSTwords

TO REACH PEOPLE FOR JESUS CHRIST & TOGETHER BECOME MORE LIKE HIM

## LOOKING AHEAD AT 2023

*by Mike Greenfield*

2023 has arrived and here at First Baptist Church, we are looking forward to an exciting year. Of course, the most exciting event will be the arrival of our new Senior Pastor, Brandon Hudson. As mentioned in church on the Sunday we voted for him as our new Senior Pastor, he will need some time to make the transition from Alabama to Texas. Specifically, he will need time to end well at his current church and say goodbye to that congregation which he has faithfully served for the past nine years. So, continue to be in prayer for Brandon, Jill, Sophie, and Quinn as they write the final paragraph on that chapter in their lives and prepare to start a new one here with us. We are still planning on his first Sunday in the pulpit to be February 5. Until then, we continue to be blessed to have Dr. Matt Cook as our interim pastor and he will be preaching through the month of January.

On Sunday evening, January 8, we will have an ordination service for the newly elected deacons who have not been previously ordained. Those who will be ordained are: Bob Fink, Gerald Galbraith, Callie Harris, Becky Rentz, Ashley Roy, and Susie Vandever.

December 16 marked the 20th Anniversary of Todd Wilson as our Pastor for Worship and Music. That weekend was already filled with the events surrounding the call of Brandon and we did not want to detract in any way. So, the personnel committee has set January 15 as the date for us to pause in worship and honor Todd. More about that Sunday will be sent out over the next two weeks.

Wednesday nights will feature some new adult small groups as well as activities for preschoolers, children, and youth. All of these offerings follow a wonderful meal and time of fellowship in the dining room. So starting back on January 11, Wednesday night at FBC is the place to be!

# 2023



FIRST BAPTIST  
CHURCH • ABILENE



# WEDNESDAY NIGHT

## INTERGENERATIONAL SMALL GROUPS

Hey everyone, we want to let you know about a great opportunity to connect with Christ and your church family on Wednesday nights in the spring. We are going to begin having men's and women's small groups which meet together weekly to study scripture and build Christian community with one another.

One of the greatest strengths of First Baptist is being intergenerational. It's a natural way to accomplish the great commission by making disciples of one another with one another. These men's and women's small groups will provide an intentional way for you to build intergenerational relationships in our church. Young will learn from old and old will learn from young.

Each group will be capped at 10 people, which allows for greater discussion and closer community to be built. Registration will begin in January, and you will have an opportunity to register online to select the group you'd like to be a part of.

For comfortability and familiarity, you can register with some people you know. In addition, we also encourage you to branch out to connect with more people in our church as we strengthen our church by strengthening our relationships with one another. More information on how to register will be available in the coming weeks.

For these small groups, we will study the same story in Scripture 2 weeks in a row. This way of studying allows you to have initial thoughts and reflections of the passage the first week. It also lets the story ruminate in your mind through the week and then come back with other thoughts, questions, feelings, and applications. Prolonged study of a singular passage helps recollect Biblical truths when we encounter both joy and pain in our lives.

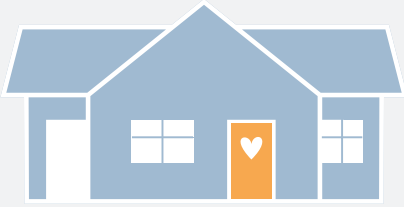
### **SIX QUESTIONS WILL GUIDE OUR DISCUSSION EACH WEEK.**

- 1. What did you appreciate about the story?**
- 2. What did you struggle with in the story?**
- 3. What did the story teach you about God?**
- 4. What did the story teach you about people?**
- 5. Now that you've heard this story,  
how will you live your life differently?**
- 6. Who else do you know who needs to hear this story?**

First Baptist's mission statement is "To reach people for Jesus Christ and together become more like Him." We hope you will take this great opportunity to both reach new people and become more like Jesus Christ.

For questions please contact Matthew at [matthew.broyles@fbcabilene.org](mailto:matthew.broyles@fbcabilene.org)  
or C.V. at [cv.blake@fbcabilene.org](mailto:cv.blake@fbcabilene.org).





## FRIENDSHIP HOUSE UPDATE

*by Trevor Allen*

We are so humbled and thankful for our recent 2nd Annual Friendship House Mini-Parade in the College Heights area of Abilene!

It was a nice combination of family and friends! Some of these were old friends and some new from the neighborhood or FBC Sunday school classes.

It took a second, but folks of all ages eventually came from their homes and porches with smiles and waves to be met with more smiles and waves of good cheer!

Treats from Sweet Thyme Kitchen, AM Donuts, Hickory Street Cafe, and other candy were put in gift bags along with spiritual, emotional/mental and recovery resources in our neighborhood as well as local business coupons in the neighborhood!

If you want to know more about the ministry of the Friendship House, contact Trevor Allen at [friendshiphouse@fbcabilene.org](mailto:friendshiphouse@fbcabilene.org).







## DISCIPLE NOW 2023

FBC Abilene Disciple Now 2023 is coming soon! Our weekend is set for February 10-12. I'm very excited for the weekend and I am anticipating a wonderful time of spiritual formation for our students. This event is for all students 6th-12th grade. Sign-ups are open now! I hope you get to talk to your students about DNOW over the holiday break! This is a great time to get the conversation started and reserve your student's spot.

Please reserve your student's spot at DNOW as soon as possible so we have a good idea about how many T-Shirts we will need to order! You can sign your student up by using the Google Form link listed below. We encourage your students to invite their friends. This church loves everything about Disciple Now Weekend and we are thankful for a church who serves our students well! Most of all, we are praying for these students to experience God over the weekend and grow together under the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Our weekend's theme is Simplify. In our world of constant busy schedules, agendas, and excess, have you ever thought about what the Bible says are the essential things our lives need to thrive? How do we "Simplify" our lives to live well? We need a reminder of what we really need in life and luckily for us, God speaks on this!



### SIGN-UP GOOGLE FORM:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSr5v56AK-6klb2JN7RSm-F7YI8aoRfRtJuv0mnYKmlGfx6w/viewform?usp=pp\\_url](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSr5v56AK-6klb2JN7RSm-F7YI8aoRfRtJuv0mnYKmlGfx6w/viewform?usp=pp_url)

save the

first baptist church  
abilene  
women's ministry  
RETREAT  
FEBRUARY 24-25, 2023

date!

It's back! After taking a break the last two years, we are excited to bring back our Women's Retreat. **The retreat will be at the McM Elegante beginning Friday, February 24 at 6:00 p.m. and going through Saturday, February 25 at 2:00 p.m.**

Tammy Whitehurst will be our speaker. If you need some joy poured into your life, some laughter, along with spiritual growth, you will not want to miss hearing from Tammy during this wonderful weekend.

You can find registration forms on the third floor, Welcome Center, and outside the Music Suite or you can use the following QR Code. Cost for the retreat depends on type of housing requested and can be found on the registration form.



If you plan on staying at the hotel, you will need to be registered by Tuesday, January 24. Registration for those planning on commuting will go through Friday, February 17. **You do not want to miss this amazing event, so sign up soon!**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CITY LIGHT

*We are, as always, focused on meeting crisis needs, feeding the hungry, building biblical community, teaching children, and helping people move out of poverty!*

*December 2022*



## **4,614 MEALS SERVED**

Includes MWF meals, Sunday Breakfast, Continental Breakfast, Sack Lunches, and City Light Market\*



## **397 VOLUNTEER HOURS**



## **42 ROCKIN MOMS**

## **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE:**



## **41 HOUSEHOLDS**

helped with rent and utilities



## **124 WALK-INS**

bus passes, clothing and other



## **127 MAIL**

Delivered and checked



## **419 PHONE CALLS**



## **68 SHOWERS**

## **WHEN PEOPLE CAN RECEIVE HELP**

*Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays*

**Office Hours:** 9:00 a.m.-Noon, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

**Showers:** 9:00-11:20 a.m. | **Lunch:** 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

In addition:

**Sunday Breakfast:** 8:15-9:00 a.m. **Worship:** 9:00-10:00 a.m.

**Second Tuesday of Each Month: Rockin' Moms:** Noon-1:30 p.m.

# FBC MISSIONS: **ACTING IN** *love*

## **MISSIONARY UPDATE FROM CBF FIELD PERSONNEL: MARY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

### **Foster Home & Samaria Ministry**

The building for the foster home, featured in the bottom two pictures, is taking shape! The boys have moved into their new space and the girls remain where they are until additional funds are secured. Gardens are taking shape and the whole crew is pitching in to help them flourish. The hope is that these gardens will produce food to supplement what they buy and also produce enough to sell and offset the cost.

The foster home has been receiving much attention, but there are numerous ministries J & B are involved in that you help support. The name of the overall ministry is Samaria Ministry. It includes church planting, discipleship, ministry training, preaching, and community engagement focused on the people group from which they originated.



In top left picture, J is pictured with the president of the provincial Christian association during a gathering to bid farewell to the governor of the province. At this gathering J & B were challenged to start a church on an island that is comprised of 99% “cousins.” They will start building relationships there next year. The top right picture shows J praying with a member of a house church they helped start in a village a few hours away.

Please pray for energy and focus for J & B and new believers would grow and develop to be able to share their Christ-transforming relationships with others and for Mary as she leads this ministry. with rice, food essentials, and encouragement.

## CHRISTMAS STORE

# *Thank You*

*by Melinda Norris*

Thank you for another successful City Light Christmas Store!

I will never stop being amazed at the generosity of this church family! You helped over 100 kids have a better Christmas through your donations of toys and money, cookies, time, and your prayers! Please continue to pray for these parents and guardians, who are working (sometimes two jobs) and raising these children, that they will know the love of Jesus during this season and throughout their lives. You make a difference!

A special thank you to my elves: Teresa Ellis, Cynthia Worthington, Pam Bingham, and Gina Allen. What a great help you were and witness to our shoppers!

### FBC FOUNDATION *Grant Request Forms Are Available*

Forms are available in the office.  
Deadline to return the form is  
noon, Friday, February 3.

# JANUARY FLOUR AND SUGAR DRIVE

It is time once again for the January Flour & Sugar Drive. The need is growing as the strain of meeting the needs of those less fortunate increases.

***Our goal is 7,800 lbs. of flour  
and 6,200 lbs. of sugar.***

The funds donated to this drive should be designated for the ABA Social Ministries Flour and Sugar Drive.

Donations can be made in Sunday School Departments, the church office, or in the boxes located at the church entrances. Funds are preferred as they can be used over the next six months to purchase additional amounts as needed.





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**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH,  
ABILENE, TX**

<https://www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistChurchAbileneTx/>

## STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

January 1, 15 years

**John Moore**

Pastor for Missions

January 16, 4 years

**Rachelle Phillips**

GLO Teacher

January 19, 4 years

**Whitney Patterson**

GLO Teacher

January 28, 4 years

**Kayleen Mills**

Director of Operations/Chef Trainer

# January

- 1 **NO** Sunday School -  
Morning Worship Only
- 2 Church Offices Closed
- 3 **NO** Wednesday Night Meal/Activities
- 8-12 College Winter Retreat/Glorieta
- 8 Personnel Committee  
Deacon Ordination Service
- 11 Wednesday Night Meal/Activities begin  
Buildings & Grounds Committee
- 15 Todd Wilson's 20th Anniversary  
Recognition
- 16 Church Offices Closed (MLK Day)
- 17 Finance Committee  
Deacons' Meeting
- 22 Lord's Supper

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

December 2022

<b>Budget</b>	<b>December</b>	<b>Year-to-Date</b>
Required	\$475,432	\$3,467,652
*Given	\$280,907	\$2,949,179

*\*These numbers are not final as they do  
not represent year-end giving.*

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



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