

FIRST *words*

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



HELLO summer

FOURTH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM CONCERT | JULY 1 - 6 P.M.

Presented by Sanctuary Choir & Celebration Orchestra.
Join us for an evening of patriotic music followed by a watermelon fellowship.

JULY PREACHING SCHEDULE

July 1	Guest Preacher	Mike Cope, Former Preaching Minister, Highland Church of Christ and Professor of Preaching at Pepperdine University
July 8	Macedonian Update	Jeff and Alicia Lee Sharing about their work in Skopje, Macedonia
July 15	II Corinthians 12:2-10	Worship in Weakness
July 22	Psalm 8	Discovering Our Worth in Worship
July 29	Guest Preacher	Allen Walworth, Former Pastor Park Cities Baptist Church, Dallas, CEO, Generis Company, and dear friend of FBC

JULY 2018



FIRST BAPTIST
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words

FOR THE JOURNEY

As we celebrate the birthday of our country on July 4, we seem to be a country more divided than ever. We dig into political positions which polarize us like border security, which I know is a complex issue. I certainly don't have all of the answers.

“ I have been searching for ways the Church can respond as followers of Jesus to unify, recognizing we are first citizens of the kingdom. ”

Relating to the recent events on the Texas border, we hear the words of Jesus about children: “Anyone who welcomes them welcomes me...but if anyone causes them to stumble, it would be better for him to have a huge milestone hung around his neck and be thrown into the sea.” Deuteronomy says, “Do not be hardhearted toward the poor, but be open handed. There will always be poor. (But we forget the rest of the passage that says) Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward the needy.”

In the midst of these challenging and controversial times, I want to offer a word of hope which goes beyond politics to profiles in courage. This hope comes in the story of one who faced the greatest division in our country's history. I pray this story from the past will give you hope for the future.

Here is the story of the person in our country's history who brought a divided nation together with compassion. He was the 16th President, Abraham Lincoln. When elected, Lincoln was considered a hillbilly joke. During those dark days of the Civil War, he was unmercifully attacked by all

sides. The sensitive Lincoln was wounded by his critics. Yet, his presidency became a spiritual journey of a divine calling to bring a nation together. Lincoln was attacked by critics, suffered great personal tragedy, and finally was assassinated. But, he was a giant of reconciliation and leaves a legacy of building bridges of understanding.

Lincoln was painted as a pagan. Yet, Elton Trueblood reports he was immersed in Holy Scripture. He knew by heart most of the Psalms, the book of Isaiah, and the New Testament. According to Trueblood, the Bible not only influenced the content of his speeches, but the style of his addresses. Of the 265 words of the Gettysburg Address, 194 of the words are one syllable. Similarly, the 23rd Psalm, one of Lincoln's favorites, has 118 words, and 92 of those words are one syllable. Lincoln just didn't quote scripture when it was expedient, convenient, or served his own political ends. Instead, Biblical language was so deeply embedded in his thinking and life it became a normal way of speaking and acting....

One historian points out, Lincoln could hold a moral position without the usual self-righteousness and posturing of politicians of today. A minister from the North announced during the Civil War that the “Lord was on their side.” Lincoln responded, “I'm not as concerned about whether or not God is on our side. I want to know how I can get on God's side.”

In Lincoln's “Second Inaugural Address” we see his faith at its deepest. On this occasion in 1865 at the end of the hostility, the war had claimed 620,000 lives of brothers against brothers. The address was only seven minutes long and consisted of 701 words. His speech has been called one of the greatest, and a theological classic. The crowd came hoping Lincoln would give voice to their anger and hate for the South and all of the losses. Yet, instead of demonizing the South, Lincoln asked: “How can we bring the South back into the Union and offer forgiveness?”

Continued from page 2.

Dr. Allen McSween has written, "Lincoln refused to divide the country - or human beings in general into those who are good and those who are evil. Lincoln knew that the line between goodness and evil runs not between contending parties, controversial positions, or nations, but through the dark hearts of every last one of us."

Lincoln ended his last inaugural address with the words: "With malice toward none; with charity toward all...let us bind up the nations wounds...." Lincoln died at 7:22 a.m. on April 15, 1865. When he breathed his last breath, it was said, "He now belongs to the ages." Of all things, Lincoln died on Good Friday. His crime? "Malice toward none and charity toward all."

Lincoln has the magnificent memorial in Washington as he sits in that chair of honor which overlooks the city and our nation. I wonder if we look closely, might we see a tear in his eye because we have forgotten his words of hope and reconciliation: "With malice toward none; with charity toward all." Those words have made America great. Let us celebrate the fourth with hope.

God Bless America,

Phil

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Sunday we launched a new Bible Study and discipleship tool called RightNow Media. It is a gift to you from the church. The easiest way to describe it is like a Christian Netflix. You can search through all the different Bible and topical studies and watch them immediately or add them to your queue. There are topics such as marriage, parenting, youth, Christian living, and leadership. There are also Biblical studies for children.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

If you are reading this via email, you should have received an email invite from RightNow with a link to take you to the registration page. If you didn't receive that email, please let us know. You can also register by TEXTING "Rightnow Abilene" to 41411 and you will receive the registration link.

We encourage you to try some of the different studies and see what appeals to you. It's a new way to do Bible study and discipleship. Once you try it you will find it helpful as you seek to grow in your relationship with Christ and His people.

For more information or assistance with registration, please contact C.V. Blake at cv.blake@fbcabilene.org or Matthew Broyles at matthew.broyles@fbcabilene.org.



YOUTH CAMPS

What a great week of camp with our middle school students at Lake Brownwood! There is nothing like a week of camp to bring young people closer to each other and God. Our middle schoolers were challenged to make their faith real. At camp, we were called to look beyond faith as only a mental exercise. We must not just see beliefs and ideas as the end goal of discipleship. Jesus makes us rethink how we engage beliefs and scripture with our real lives. More than just words, real faith calls for real love. Pray that these young people would make God's love real to the world around them.



Please pray for our high school group at camp July 8-13. Camp is a week full of hope. What is left when camp is over is hope - hope for a return next year, hope for a new way of life on the way home, because we live with a glimpse of what the future holds. Camp is less an experience as it is a pilgrimage. These youth travel together, literally and figuratively, toward a holy destination: life in God.



Sunday: Pray for safe travel as our high school students and leaders leave at 10:00PM for Estes Park, CO.

Monday: Pray that our youth would believe in Jesus and find the life he offers. Pray for energy after a long night/day and a good night of rest.

Tuesday: Pray for small group leaders as they teach and mentor. Pray for friendships to be built and strengthened today.

Wednesday: In the beauty, majesty, and power of God's creation, pray our group will know God seeks each of us in the nearness, smallness, and closeness of love through the cross.



Thursday: Pray that our youth would see how authentic community helps grow God's kingdom. Pray that our youth would know God is at work in the world and they are invited to participate in that work.

Friday: Pray for safety as we travel home. Pray that our youth would see that God holds the future and is at work making all things new through Jesus.

By Linda Piazza

A vibrant collage of colorful line-art icons representing various fields of study. The icons include a spiral notebook, a magnifying glass, a pencil, an apple, a calculator, a sign with 'ABC', a paint palette, a ruler, a square root symbol with '389', a school bus, a globe, a leaf, an open book, an atom, a flower, a paintbrush, a Venn diagram with letters A, B, and C, a plus sign, a flag, a school building, a bus, a book, a pushpin, and the equation 1+1=2. The icons are scattered across the page in a playful, hand-drawn style.

Thank you!

ACTING IN *love*



CITY LIGHT RE-VISION UPDATE: NOURISHKC

By John Moore

A team of four people from FBC consisting of: Karen Dansby, Lynn Martin, Hillary Moore, and myself, served 330 restaurant style lunch plates to those who were hungry in Kansas City, Missouri. Our service started with the evening prep team deboning chicken, washing fresh salad, and cleaning the kitchen. All of these items were considered “food rescue,” which is food that was going to be thrown away, and this food supplied the many meals prepared that week. Three hours of deboning chicken will make you appreciate what it takes to run a kitchen like this, which is very similar to our City Light kitchen. Our Tuesday morning started at 8:30 a.m. preparing for the 11:00 a.m. lunch to start. Some of our deboned chicken became the stock for our chicken noodle soup. Our menu also included: pasta and meat sauce for entrée one, and soft taco Tuesday with a fresh corn salsa or black bean medley for entrée two. Fresh salad and fruit topped off the meal. The lunch shift serves from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and 330 plates later, we stopped for our own lunch. We were joined by 15 volunteers from a local bank who served as our waiters, hostesses, and bussers for each table. Guests were greeted with a friendly face, then seated to have their order taken and filled by the plating station. Our servers brought the smiles, prayers, and encouragement to all who were hungry. After lunch, we spent the next four hours talking and asking questions with the NourishKC staff, who were so generous with their time. We left tired, but affirmed in our calling to live out our Re-vision plans here in Abilene. The only thing I asked Lynn was to not debone any chicken in Abilene for at least a week!

As we served at NourishKC, we were:

- Encouraged we are on the right track, as City Light is already doing ministry similar to NourishKC
- Grateful to see the job training center, while meeting with the director and trainees to hear about their program
- Challenged by their great organization in volunteer development, and getting the most of their “food rescue” system
- Humbled by the love they have for the “least of these” and their willingness to invest meaningful and valuable time to strangers from Texas.

FBC Abilene, we are on the right path and God is moving in our re-visioning process. Be in prayer as we meet with Catalyst Kitchens July 10 and 11 at City Light. Thank you for being a church who cares.



STAFF UPDATES

By Mike Greenfield

Back in May, Keith Post read his letter of resignation to the church at the end of the worship service. Keith has been on staff for the past 7 years and he will be missed. Keith will be moving to Lubbock and starting a residency program in pastoral care at Covenant Hospital. On July 8, following the morning service, a reception will be held in the dining room for you to have an opportunity to say thanks and goodbye. With his vacancy, the Recreation Board will function as the search committee per church policies, and will be looking at the position and will be working with the personnel committee to determine the direction to go. We are also looking at the Senior Adult position which currently is a part-time position and most likely will be separating it from the recreation position. A senior adult focus group will be formed to evaluate the needs, wants, and desires for this position. If you would be interested in helping with this focus group, please let me know of your interest. Of course we cannot have 200 people on the group, but will work to have every area of the ministry represented.

The church has also received the resignation letter from Misty Donald as the director of GLO Day Care, having served in that capacity for the past 3 years. Misty has listed the effective date as September 7, 2018. As with the Recreation Board, the GLO Board will function as the search committee and they have already started the process of finding a new director. The first part of that process involves getting resumes from folks who are interested in the position. So, if you might know of someone who would be perfect to lead this vital ministry of our church, please have them submit their resume to mike.greenfield@fbcabilene.org or send to the church address 1333 N. 3rd Abilene, TX 79601. They would have to meet all of the requirements to be a director of a state-licensed daycare.

Your prayers for these two positions would be appreciated. Your input would also be helpful, so let me know if you have questions, concerns, or know of potential candidates.

MCALLEN FAMILY MISSION TRIP

Please pray for the McAllen Family Mission Trip team members:

John, Beverly, and Nathan Moore;
Kathy Shackelford;
Chad, Cari, Emma, Ethan, Rebecca, and Tara Carter;
Matthew and Katie Broyles;
Becky and Britney Tucker;
Robert and Jessica Yearian;
Kyle Berry;
Bart, Jan, Jaxon, and Reagan Craig;
Jecilly, Timothy, Sarah, and Hannah Varghese;
Olga Gaona;
Jasmine Rangel;
Monique Heidelberger;
Anahi Ibarra;
Ken and Martha Brown;
Lynn and Madison Martin;
Tom and Lana Cunningham;
Monty and Angela Lewis;
Steve Steed;
C.V. Blake; and
Charlie Jowers.



STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

July 1, 1 year
Brittany Rodriguez
GLO Teacher

July 7, 5 years
Debbie McClarty
Children's Choir Coordinator

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

June 2018

Budget	June	Year-to-Date
Required	\$240,000	\$1,326,803
Given	\$272,208	\$1,580,585

EVENT CALENDAR:

JULY

1	Christmas in July McAllen Mission Trip Info Meeting Recreation Board Meeting Patriotic Service/Fellowship
2	Youth Lunch Bunch
4	Church Offices Closed
8	Personnel Committee
8-13	High School Camp
11	Buildings & Grounds Committee
15-20	McAllen Family Mission Trip (team 1)
16	Youth Lunch Bunch
17	Finance Committee Deacons' Meeting
21-27	McAllen Family Mission Trip (team 2)
23	Youth Lunch Bunch
25	Hospital Visitation Team
26	Healing Hearts Meeting
29	GLO Board Meeting
30	Youth Lunch Bunch



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