

# FIRSTwords

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

## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

*by Brandon Hudson*

The last few weeks have been a re-education on West Texas heat. While living in more humid climates, I would often tell my dad that at least the heat out in these parts was a dry heat. “Sure,” he would reply, “but so is an oven. And it still cooks the bird.” He’s not wrong. Sometimes, hot is just hot.

As we face these hot summer months, I pray your hearts are not too burdened or worn down by the heat. I sometimes find days on days of hot weather to wear me down, to leave me feeling discouraged. Then, I look to our neighbors who don’t have air conditioning or a cool place to rest and I am ashamed of my own complaints. I am thankful for our community who offers some respite for our neighbors on both hot and cold days.

Even more so, I’m thankful for our Savior, Jesus, who knows all our burdens – including hot weather! It is sometimes easy to forget that Jesus knew all our troubles and actually spent days and months traversing the hot and cold weather as He took on the full human experience.

I hope that in these days you can find comfort not only physically, but also spiritually. I hope you can find comfort in the reality that we worship a God who loves us enough to become one of us and know our sufferings. And still, that God offers us “an easy burden” and “light yoke” as we seek to follow in Jesus’ footsteps.

Together may we embrace the way of Jesus regardless of the weather, trusting that in all we face we are known and loved.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CITY LIGHT

*In an effort to be the presence of Christ in our community, City Light engages with neighbors to help with their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual growth. We do so through community meals, case management, showers, Rockin' Moms, Sunday morning worship, and a culinary academy.*



## **8,124 MEALS SERVED**

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



## **725 VOLUNTEER HOURS**

### **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE:**



## **27 HOUSEHOLDS**

helped with rent and utilities



## **379 WALK-INS**

bus passes, clothing and other



## **223 MAIL**

Delivered and checked



## **111 SHOWERS**

*June 2023*

On Sunday, June 18, we celebrated Charlie Love's retirement from preaching at City Light. Charlie has preached and volunteered at City Light for over 16 years, so he earned the right to retire. If you are interested in joining our preaching rotation at City Light, please contact Stephanie Stewart. We worship together every Sunday morning from 9:00-9:45 a.m. in the City Light Dining Room. It's a great time to share in Christian fellowship with our neighbors, and to practice using the gifts God has given us!



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE



# FAMILY LIFE CENTER

The Family Life Center opened in 1981. Our mission is to provide family-oriented activities for the church membership & surrounding communities in a Christian atmosphere at an affordable price. Our facility accommodates a variety of groups such as businesses, churches, day care/day camps, private home schools, public schools, individuals with special needs, universities, military, family reunions, residential treatment centers, exercise groups, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes to list a few. We host birthday parties, bridal showers, wedding receptions, and Family Fun Nights. In addition, we have a full fitness center with lockers, showers, and sauna amenities. For those who simply want a place to walk, out of the weather, our track or gym is free to the public.

## HOSTED GROUPS & INDIVIDUALS IN MAY

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**SCHOOL GROUPS - 32 GROUPS**

**SPECIAL NEEDS - 48 INDIVIDUALS**

**DYESS FAMILIES - 1 NIGHT**

**SERENITY HOUSE - 313 INDIVIDUALS**

**PARTIES - 13 PARTIES**

**GLO - 3 GROUPS**

**FITNESS USE - 529 INDIVIDUALS**

**LOCK-IN - 1 EVENT**

**FBC GROUPS - 5 GROUPS**

**FULL BUILDING RENTAL - 3 GROUPS**

**FITNESS CLASSES - 16 CLASSES**

**WALK-INS - 600 INDIVIDUALS**

# NORTH MACEDONIA MISSION TRIP REPORT

*by John Moore*

The best summary for the North Macedonia Mission Trip is...Great Joy! It was great joy to return back to North Macedonia to work with Alicia, Jeff, & Ethan Lee after a long absence. FBC has been involved the Lee's ministry for over 10 years and has played a crucial role in developing the ministry partners who we worked with during that week. Our team was received with great joy at Poraka, a home for adults with disabilities, or a better description for this ministry partner is a small glimpse of heaven. Games were played, shakers made from pill bottles and beans which helped keep the beat to dancing and singing, and kazoos were the new musical instrument introduced to the home and community. Many sounds, new, loud, and different reverberated from the concrete walls and tile floors, but the smiles made up for the loud and sometimes unusual sounds! The North Macedonia Food Bank put our team to work packing food boxes and delivering them to a Roma community just outside of Skopje. The joy of serving here was met with the thankfulness from families receiving the staple food items wrapped around seeing the heartbreaking needs of this community. Our team also witnessed the frustrations from other families who did not receive help that day and spent time in the Roma Center trying to understand this partnership in the context of poverty, discrimination, and distrust. The Roma Center is trying to break down these barriers and bring more joy of connection to this community. And finally, it was a great Joy to be among the dairy cows of Aya Farms. The cow bank strategy (placing a dairy cow in a vulnerable community) continues (FBC had the first cow) and this strategy of community development has expanded to chickens as well. We look forward to egg stories in the future. Our team had the tough job of taste testing the final milk products at the local ice cream store that uses the milk from the farm. Their ice cream tastes better because of the joyful cows and their dairy farmer's great care!

Our team (Jaxon Craig, Beverly Warren, Johnny Warren, Martha Brown, Ken Brown, Todd Wilson and John Moore) represented our joyful church in a mighty way! Together, we ministered, worked, ate (the food is amazing here), listened, and strengthened important partnerships for the Lee's. Our eyes were opened even more to how God is moving in this part of world (especially in the worship service and Lord's Supper we shared at Matka Canyon...it's time to drink the large cup of blueberry juice to remember what Christ did for us!). Our greatest joy came from doing anything we could to support the long-term presence of the Lee's work in North Macedonia. That support and love was shown and lived out in our days there. We will go back next year, maybe now God is calling you to experience this great joy of witnessing how He is moving in our world!!





# memories from Macedonia



## YOUTH UPDATE

Even though the Pastor for Youth position is vacant due to Austen Winfrey leaving and heading to San Antonio, the youth ministry is still going strong and we are looking forward to having a great summer! The leadership of the ministry will be a shared experience among several of our pastoral staff; our new summer intern, Dylan Fink; as well as many of our faithful youth workers. C.V. Blake, with Dylan's help, will be overseeing all of the Sunday morning Bible study time and had a meeting with the workers this past Wednesday evening. Matthew Broyles will be taking the lead on Middle School Camp and along with several sponsors will be at camp in Brownwood June 14-18. High School Camp is June 25-July 1 and Mike Greenfield, also accompanied by several wonderful sponsors, will be in Colorado with the high school students. There will be some individual events spread out over the summer and each will be led by a staff member and feel sure there will be some youth workers involved as well. Of course, the Wednesday Fun Nights at the FLC will be an opportunity for our youth to gather and would be a great time for you to get to know some of these wonderful students. Dodge ball may not be your thing, but there will be numerous opportunities for you to simply learn a name and connect it with a smiling face!



**HIGH SCHOOL CAMP**  
*Estes Park, Colorado*





## FRIENDSHIP HOUSE BACK YARD BIBLE CLUB

First Baptist Church is grateful for Trevor and Gina Allen as they opened their home to our community for a wonderful Bible experience. Fun was had by all who attended. We would like to thank all our wonderful volunteers for helping make this worship time successful. Pure joy was on the faces of these precious children as they were learning more about God's word.

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





# FAMILY MISSION TRIP TO MCALLEN

Our FBC Abilene team looks forward to working with Buckner Family Hope Center in Penitas, Texas.

**Please pray for our team: John Moore, Brandon Hudson, Jill Hudson, Sophia Hudson, Quinn Hudson, Becky Tucker, Tim Griffin, Jecilly Varghese, Timothy Varghese, Sarah Varghese, Hannah Varghese, Bridgett Gann, and Charlotte Keith.**



## JULY FLOUR AND SUGAR DRIVE

It is time once again for the July 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 allow purchases to be spread out over the next six months.



July



## INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Wednesday, July 19

Family Life Center | Room 1 | 6:30 pm

Anyone interested in learning more about needs in foster care, please join us.

2 Church-Wide Fellowship  
at Adventure Cove

4 Church Offices Closed  
for July 4 Holiday

9-14 McAllen Mission Trip

18 Finance Committee Meeting

23 Lord's Supper

24-27 Kids Camp/Brownwood

26 LAST Summer Fun Night @ FLC

30-8/3 Pastoral Staff Retreat/Glorieta

## STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

July 11, 1 year  
Dominique Lee  
GLO Cook

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

June 2023

| Budget   | June       | Year-to-Date |
|----------|------------|--------------|
| Required | \$ 252,060 | \$ 1,619,360 |
| Given    | \$ 247,301 | \$ 1,433,572 |

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



FIRST BAPTIST  
CHURCH • ABILENE

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