

FIRST words

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

FOSTER CARE

By Shelly Blake

I would like to thank you, our church family, for loving our sweet foster baby, J. It was important for him to have a church experience during the time we had him. Many of you watched me take him into worship for the music, then take him back to the nursery before the sermon. (no offense, Phil!) During these 300 days with J, many of you got to know him and looked for him on Sundays and Wednesdays. You became people who not only loved him, but you were loved by him.

I don't know what comes to mind when you think about foster care. Let me tell you what it means to me. It is no secret I am a baby lover! Growing up, all I wanted to be was a mother. That desire did not go away once our kids left home. After 7 years of empty nest, prayer, and visits with others already involved, we decided foster care with newborns would be a good fit for us. In April 2009, we became licensed foster parents! We were scared and excited at the same time. Our first baby arrived in June 2009, when he was just 2 days old. Since that time, we have cared for 20 babies in our home. Most went on to be adopted, a few stayed while their foster families went out of town, and a few, like baby J, went to live with a family member.

Being directly involved in foster care, often I hear comments which sound something like this: "I could never do that. It would hurt too much to let them go." Yes, it does hurt! It needs to hurt. I told CV when it quits hurting to let them go, we need to quit being foster parents. Pain is not all we feel. There is joy which comes from watching God put families together. There is also great satisfaction in knowing we loved a baby as our own, whether for 2 days or 300 days. Another comment is this: "I would get too attached." That's the idea-they

need us to be attached. They need to know they can trust us, and they need to know they are deeply loved. This comes through attachment.

When we started foster care, it was about me and my love for babies. It is not at all about me! It is about the babies, their birth families, and their adoptive families. I knew I could love and care for a baby, but I did not expect to fall in love with their families in the process. God constantly surprises us by giving us just what we need when we need it. Often, it is through members of our church. These are examples of our church family walking with us in this journey:

- Driving with me to take a sick baby to an out of town hospital
- Driving out of town with me to pick up a new baby
- Providing meals when a new baby arrives
- Offering medical expertise and being available anytime, even during "off" hours
- Bringing flowers when we say goodbye to a baby
- Becoming a certified babysitter so we can legally leave a baby in another's care
- Becoming a CASA volunteer
- Loaning us a high chair for J
- Giving our baby Christmas gifts
- Seeing needs before we even realize the need
- Encouraging and affirming us.

Like any ministry, this is not all easy. We do not feel alone. Thank you, church family, for loving us and our little ones!



words

FOR THE JOURNEY

What is your earliest experience of church? Take some time to ponder that question.... Mine is a mixed bag. Initially, I encountered the church as rigid and judgmental. I realize now they were doing the best they could. They were good and faithful people, but something was missing. I never heard much about grace or our mission of reconciliation to the "least of these."

Then, we joined Trinity Baptist Church. I wonder what church might have changed or challenged your understanding of church. My Dad was not very active in church, but he was on the Board of the Alpha House, a ministry of the church. Bexar County had closed a half-way house for recovering women alcoholics because of funding. Our church bought a house across the street and turned it into the Alpha House for women recovering from addiction. I went with my Dad to their Christmas party. There were tearful stories and I thought, this is church.

Trinity took the bold initiative to buy an elementary school which had closed. It became a mission center, in of all places, a historic area of San Antonio. It was named the "Ruble Center" for Jim Ruble who provided the lead gift. At the time, I didn't know much about Capital Campaigns of raising money. I only knew that Jim Ruble had worked in my Sunday school department. I wasn't surprised the Center was named after him. He was one of the most compassionate people I have ever known. Who or what church changed your understanding of being the church?

I am grateful our children have grown up in our church. Long before we were born or I became pastor, this church has looked outward, no matter the cost. The church saw a need and met it. I was so moved at our discussion about City Light by the words of ninety-year-old Dudley Longacre, a church patriarch, who summed up our history. As best as I can remember, Dudley said, "We have been here before in all of the ministries and

missions to take a step of faith and reach out. We have had doubts, but look how God always provides."

The church's decision to venture out in a bold plan of ministry to the working poor and homeless will not be a burden for our children to bear in the future, but the great opportunity our forbearers gave us to be the church. In our decision, we are teaching our children what it means to be the church and live by faith. God always provides the resources for whatever we do.

The church is also like a family - we pray a healthy family in which nothing divides us. In a healthy family, members can disagree. They have the freedom to express their opinions without fear of rejection or judgment. We respect and honor each other. I hope in disagreements or differences, each person felt heard and that no one questioned their love of the Lord or our mission. I pray that as we have been through this process with City Light, we understand every question or objection was taken as a compassionate concern about the future of our church.

I love the line from the movie, "Remember the Titans" where Coach Herman Boone said to his racially divided team, "Let nothing, nothing come between us...." We might have different ideas about missions, how to get there, or funding for the future, but let nothing divide us. Let us focus on what we have in common in reaching people for Jesus Christ.

We are a family, no matter what...

Phil



THANKS FROM A H.S. SENIOR MOTHER

by Sommer Brock

Senior Sunday was a day of much joy and remembrance for me. They say it takes a village to raise children, and FBC has been my village. As I looked around the sanctuary, I thought about how so many people in that building are examples of hope...to me, to our church, to our community, to His people. When we moved to Abilene in 2009 and the kids started school, Jack Patterson and Trey Smith invited my youngest son Cody to Wednesday night activities at FBC. He brought his sister Hannah along, and soon we were attending as a family. My oldest son Caleb met Everett Waddle at school and they became fast friends on the youth floor. I thought about Heather Baker inviting me to help with Big A and how my Sunday school class (Godsquad) became my extended family and some of my best friends. So many members have come along side to lift me up during trials, walk with us through valleys, and rejoice with us on the mountain tops. Each and every staff member has personally impacted my life. Cody Favor and Drew Doss were like father-figures and big brothers to my boys when they desperately needed them. Fredalyn Everett sent me the most uplifting notes on a regular basis. Women on the youth floor helped my Hannah become the young woman she is today and were role models of Christ for her. Katherine Ellis and Mackenzie Curnutt met her for coffee and offered friendship and encouragement, which meant so much to Hannah. I have met friends that are my brothers and sisters in Christ, and who have challenged me to be who He has called me to be. I have been able to grow and learn in this church from many teachers, including Paul Irby. They have encouraged me to dig deeper, led me to fall further in love with our Savior, and given me the opportunity as a woman to lead and serve in ways I never thought possible. It is truly because of Jesus that I am where I am today, and have been able to raise three children away from my family. However, I never question that FBC has been my partner and village in this. Because of space requirements, I have left off so many names and stories of how this church has blessed my family and me. Another joy, though, has been the wonderful experiences of watching these people bless others in our church, community, and around the world. I am so thankful to be a part of this amazing church family.

FOURTH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM CONCERT

Presented by Sanctuary Choir & Celebration Orchestra

Join us for an evening of patriotic music followed by a watermelon fellowship.

JULY 1 - 6 P.M.





ACTING IN *love*

STUDENTS HELPING OTHERS

By Lynn Martin

Have you ever known that something true and real was about to happen?

In early spring, Debbie Harris, Jim Ned Counselor and Student Sponsor, called to introduce herself and set up the spring volunteer schedule at City Light for the 8th grade honor students. This was our second year to have these awesome students volunteer and serve at City Light. Eight students would come in groups of four to volunteer once a month. These young adults would prepare, clean, serve, take out trash, bag cookies and crackers, pack lunches, etc. Anything we asked. But, mostly they came with a heart of love and compassion for people. Not people from their school or church. Not people from their neighborhood or even their town. Simply people. They are amazed with our programs, laundry, showers, and volunteers. But, mostly they are amazed with the people – the City Light “family.”

Debbie would tell me about conversations these students would have around the table while eating or driving back and forth from Jim Ned. They shared with enthusiasm about the honor of being able to serve and make new friends. To experience life in a different, but at the same time familiar way. Everyone eats, talks, drinks, shares their dreams, heartache, sickness, loss, success, and failure. Everyone laughs and everyone cries.

These eight young adults (8th grade honor students) decided to have a fundraiser for City Light. Their campaign began after researching information from our website, marquee, handouts, and their experience while volunteering. In groups of two, PowerPoint presentations were given during study hall for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at Jim Ned! The goal was set at \$1,500 and the campaign ended at \$2,200. Armed with a list of supplies needed at City Light, their last volunteer day was a trip to Sam's. Again, in groups of two, their campaign continued. With a list and given dollar amount, the shopping began. Eight flatbeds and carts (and also a lot of math – remember honor students) later, the loading began. Debbie had to call for reinforcements.

Back at City Light someone said, “we are almost out of trash bags.” I said, “they’re coming, I know they’re coming!” I knew they were coming! Finally, I saw their bus and ran past our front doors around to the back. Our homeschool volunteers serving lunch stayed and helped unload. My heart was so very happy, excited, amazed, in awe, and about to burst!

His heart is revealed in love, kindness, joy, compassion, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, peace, and self-control. His heart is exemplified in and through the hearts of His people for His people.

Praise God for all that is done in His honor for His kingdom.

THIS IS A LIST OF LOVE FROM THE JIM NED 8TH GRADE HONOR STUDENTS:

- 350 lbs. Sugar
- 5,000 8 oz Cups
- 4,000 12 oz Cups
- 1,100 Trash Bags
- 3,000 Forks
- 3,000 Spoons
- 60 lbs Pancake Mix
- 125 Rolls of Toilet Paper
- 120 Rolls of Paper Towels
- 108 Cans of Vienna Sausages
- 4,500 Dinner Napkins
- 1,720 Loads of Laundry Soap
- 1,250 Styrofoam Plates - Large
- 1,600 Styrofoam Plates - Small
- 1,800 Styrofoam Bowls
- 4,800 Napkins - Plain
- 15 lbs. Black Pepper
- 1,500 ft Heavy Duty Foil
- 35 lbs. Jalapenos
- 20 Cans Glass Cleaner
- 44 lbs. Pasta Sauce
- 9 gal Gravy Mix
- 40 lbs. Baked Beans
- 35 lbs. Pinto Beans
- 45 lbs. Corn
- 70 lbs. Green Beans
- 96 lbs. Chili
- 4,250 packets Coffee Creamer
- 6 gal Fabuloso
- 7 lbs. Powdered Ranch Mix
- 12 gal Degreaser
- 4 gal Floor Cleaner
- 12,000 Salt Packets
- 2,000 Disposable Gloves
- 96 gal Tea Bags
- 24 Wash Cloths
- 24 Bar Mops

Final Touch - 1 bouquet of
spring flowers!



SHOES FOR ORPHAN SOULS

Thank you to all who donated toward our Shoes for Orphan Souls shoe drive in April! Our goal was to collect 1,000 pair of shoes, and so far we have collected 573. A BIG thank you goes to Becky Tucker, Jennifer Miller, and the children's ministry for allowing the RA and GA Racers/Bake Sale proceeds to purchase over 200 pair of shoes of our total collection. We will be collecting shoes throughout June and will take them on the McAllen Family Mission Trip. If you would like to donate, please bring your donations by the church office and we'll be happy to take them.

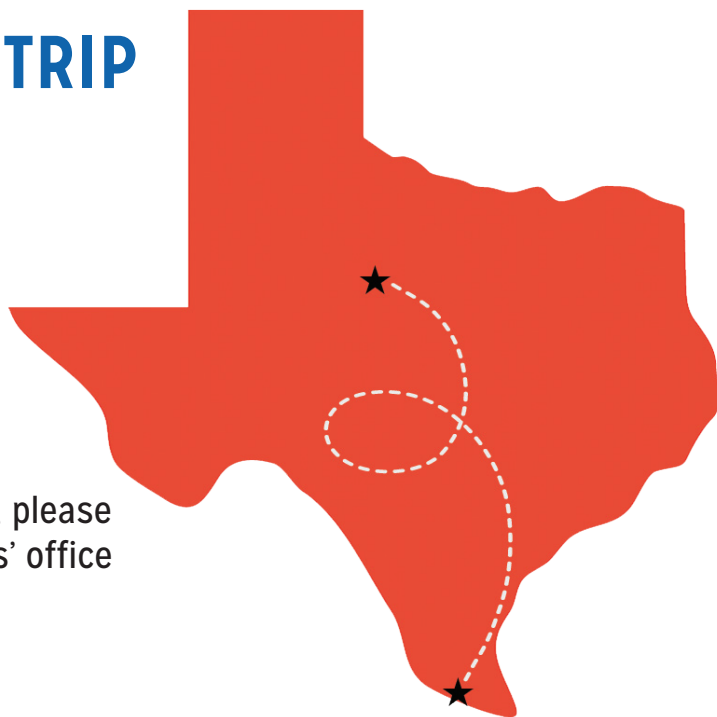
MCALLEN FAMILY MISSION TRIP

July 15 - 21 & 22 - 28

Would you be willing to participate in the third Family Mission Trip along the Texas Border?

NOW IS THE TIME TO SIGN UP!

The cost is \$25 plus lodging and transportation. For more information or if you would like to sign up, please contact Rebecca Hunt or John Moore in the missions' office (325-675-8112) or rebecca.hunt@fbcabilene.org or john.moore@fbcabilene.org.



EL SALVADOR MISSION TEAM

Please pray for our El Salvador Living Water Mission Trip team from June 23-30. During their time in El Salvador, they will be drilling a water well and teaching about health and hygiene. Thank you to our team members who are willing to serve! Team members: Anjani, Currian, and Carson Cole; Tim McClarty; Jerry Carter; Billy Bob Neff; Eddie, Candy, Morgan, and Chance Rains; Kristian Spencer; Mike Greenfield; and John Moore.

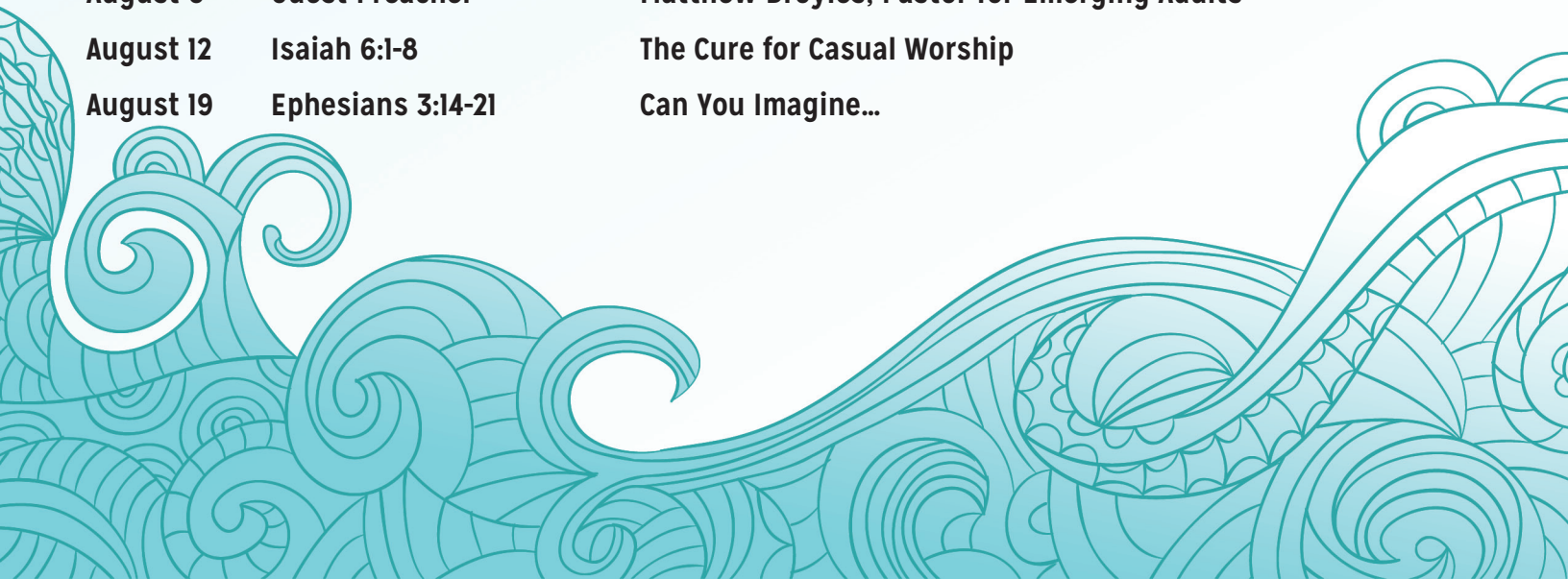




SUMMER WORSHIP... WHO I AM IN CHRIST

How would you define and describe worship? Worship is more than something we do on Sunday, but a lifestyle for the rest of the week. This summer, we will be looking at ways worship teaches us about who we are in Jesus Christ. Worship calls us to our new identity as a child of God who overcomes shame, slavery, and affects how we live every day of the week. We will enjoy time off this summer, but worship never takes a vacation. In fact, worship becomes the journey where we truly rest and find renewal in learning who we are in Christ. As we discover our identity, worship calls us to our mission and purpose which can change our lives.

June 3	Mark 14:48-52	Naked and Afraid
June 10	Philippians 2:3-11	The True Test of Worship
June 17	Father's Day	Steve Queen, Director, Ministry of Counseling
June 24	Deuteronomy 5:12-15	Released from Slavery
July 1	Guest Preacher	Mike Cope, Former Preaching Minister, Highland Church of Christ and Professor of Preaching at Pepperdine University
July 8	Matt. 5:23-24; 18: 21-22	Forgiveness Isn't Cheap
July 15	II Corinthians 12:2-10	Worship in Weakness
July 22	Psalms 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
August 5	Guest Preacher	Matthew Broyles, Pastor for Emerging Adults
August 12	Isaiah 6:1-8	The Cure for Casual Worship
August 19	Ephesians 3:14-21	Can You Imagine...



CHURCH-WIDE POOL PARTY

JUNE 10 | HARDIN-SIMMONS POOL | 6-8 PM

SENIOR ADULT DAY TRIP

Let's Go To Waco

Monday, June 18, 2018: Waco, TX - Magnolia Market, Dr. Pepper Museum, TX Sports Hall of Fame, TX Ranger Museum (may choose which locations to visit), Cost is Dutch Treat (two meals and admission) \$6-8 to each museum. Sign up by June 13.

Bus will leave the north parking lot at 7:00 a.m.
Arrive back in Abilene at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Call Jeannie Wesley (675-8107) to sign up.

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

June 1, 17 years
Judy Santibanez
GLO Teacher

June 24, 26 years
Jeanne Jowers
Church Accountant

June 26, 1 year
Chris Hufford
Custodian

EVENT CALENDAR:

JUNE

- 3 Youth Leader Appreciation Breakfast
Personnel Committee
- 4 - 7 Vacation Bible School
- 7 Healing Hearts Meeting
- 10 Church-wide Pool Party
- 13 Wednesday Fun Nights @ FLC begin
Buildings & Grounds Committee
- 13 - 17 Middle School Camp
- 18 Children's Trip/Splash Kingdom
Senior Adult Trip/Waco
- 19 FFP Summer Session begins
Finance Committee
Deacons' Meeting
- 20 GLO Board Meeting
- 23 - 30 El Salvador Living Water Mission Trip
- 24 Lord's Supper

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

May 2018

Budget	May	Year-to-Date
Required	\$269,990	\$1,326,803
Given	\$202,390	\$1,305,872



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH • ABILENE

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