

FIRST *words*

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

Coming Back
TOGETHER!

FBC ABILENE
at the
ZOO

First Baptist Night at the ZOO!
On Sunday night, June 13 starting at 6:00 p.m. we will have a night at the zoo where you may see all of the animals and enjoy a homemade hamburger dinner provided by the church. We want this to be a wonderful time of fellowship as we have waited for just the right opportunity for us to host an event like this.

Now that things are beginning to open back up, as a church, we wanted to provide some opportunities for us to gather and simply be together as a family of faith.

So, in June, two different events will be offered to do just that, get together!

Summer
FUN NIGHTS
at the flc

Summer Fun Nights at the FLC will begin on June 2 with dinner served from 5:30-6:15 p.m. and then all of the activities in the center available until 7:30 p.m.



words

FOR THE JOURNEY

Last Sunday was Pentecost, which gives us great hope for the future as we emerge from the days of COVID-19 and all of the changes. Pentecost arrived ten days after Jesus returned to the Father. The disciples were down to eleven. The future of the Jesus movement seemed so uncertain. A small group of followers were gathered in an upstairs room not knowing the next step. But, they *“were joined together constantly in prayer.”* I ask, *“Have we been constantly praying? That is always the prelude to the pouring out of God’s power.”*

You’ve heard the story of the rushing wind and the tongues of fire, but we can still wonder what is exactly the *“gift of Pentecost.”* We could describe the gift as energy and excitement. God knows we need it. Some could focus on the power. God knows we need power.

Tom Long observes, ***“The gift of Pentecost is the one gift we most desperately need and especially this world and the church.”*** The gift is not the superficial power of a five-hour energy drink or a shot of spiritual adrenaline in worship. The gift of Pentecost is the gift to speak a *“Word”* in this broken world unlike any other word. People from all over the world understood the *“Good News of Jesus”* in their own language. Could we dare say Pentecost gives a common language where we start understanding EACH OTHER?

Dr. Long tells two wonderful stories which help us understand the gift of Pentecost. He first shares when Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross was writing her book on death and dying, part of her research involved interviewing dying patients in the hospital trying to find out how they felt and thought as they faced death. As she went from room to room in the hospital, she began to notice a remarkable pattern. Sometimes she would go into a dying person’s room and the person would be calm, at peace, and tranquil. She also began to notice this pattern after the patient’s room had been cleaned by a certain hospital orderly. One day, Dr. Ross happened to run into this orderly and said: *“What are you doing with*

my patients?”

The orderly thought she was being reprimanded and said, *“I’m not doing anything with your patients.”* *“No, no,”* responded Dr. Ross. *“It’s a good thing. After you go into their rooms, they seem at peace. What are you doing with my patients?”*

“I just talk to them,” the orderly said. *“You know, I’ve had two babies of my own die on my lap. But God never abandoned me. I tell them that. I tell them that they aren’t alone, that God is with them, and that they don’t have to be afraid.”* There’s the gift at Pentecost: A Word to speak in the brokenness and tragedy of the world, a word of good news and hope that is unlike any other word.

The second story is about a personal experience when Tom was a brand-new pastor and here is that story.

I announced to my congregation one Sunday, “Next Sunday morning I’m going to start a pastor’s class on the basics of the Christian faith. If you are new to the faith, I invite you to join me next Sunday at ten.”

The next week, I went to my classroom expecting to greet a throng, and I was immediately disappointed. There were only three elementary school children, three little girls, waiting on me. I tried to hide my disappointment and over the next few weeks to do the best I could to teach them about the Christian faith. The week before Pentecost Sunday, I said to them, “Do you girls know what Pentecost is?”

They didn’t. So, I said, “Well, Pentecost was when the church was seated in a circle and tongues of fire came down from heaven and landed on their heads and they spoke the gospel in all the languages of the world.”

Continued from page 2.

Two of the little girls took that rather calmly, but one of them got her eyes as big as saucers. And when she could finally speak, she said, "Reverend Long, we must have been absent that Sunday!"

The beautiful thing about that is not that she misunderstood. The beautiful thing is that she thought it could have happened in our church, that God's Spirit could have come even to our little congregation and given us a word to speak that the world desperately needs to hear.

Perhaps the question of Pentecost is what healing word will we speak to the brokenness of this world AND to each other? God knows we need the healing word of Pentecost where we start looking to understand each other.

A Word for Now and the Ages....

Phil

GIVE HOPE UPDATE

by Larry Smith

This is a very exciting time in the life of our church as we begin to actually see each other in person after so many months of worshipping and meeting by Zoom or other methods. We, as a committee, are so thankful for your continued prayer and financial support to the Hope Center projects. While we have been limited by being unable to meet in person, we have still been able to make progress on plans for the Hope Center campus.

Through your faithful giving we have received \$4,067,706.00 on pledges in excess of \$5,900,000.00. Expenditures to date total \$166,435.00. These gifts speak of the love and compassion First Baptist Church people have for the outreach ministries of our church. These gifts are currently invested through HighGround Advisors so we can gain some income while we are in the design process.



Continued from page 3.

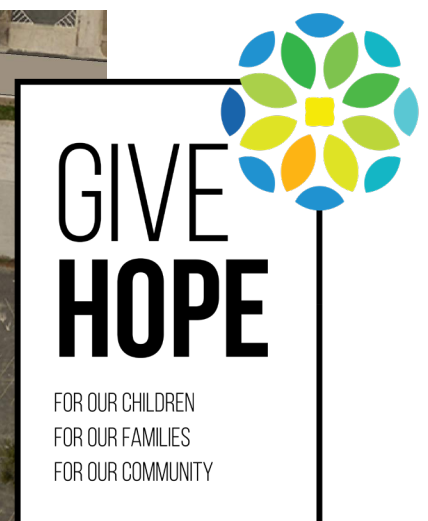
The first of April we completed renovation work in the Perry Building (BOBS) and the décor and furnishings are now being completed. We have renovated the third-floor restrooms to be ADA compliant as well as installing new ceilings, carpet, vinyl base, and paint on the 2nd floor for the expansion of the Ministry of Counseling. Eric Couvion and his staff have been instrumental in making this happen as they installed new lighting, computer lines, toilet accessories, and assembled furniture for the entire project.

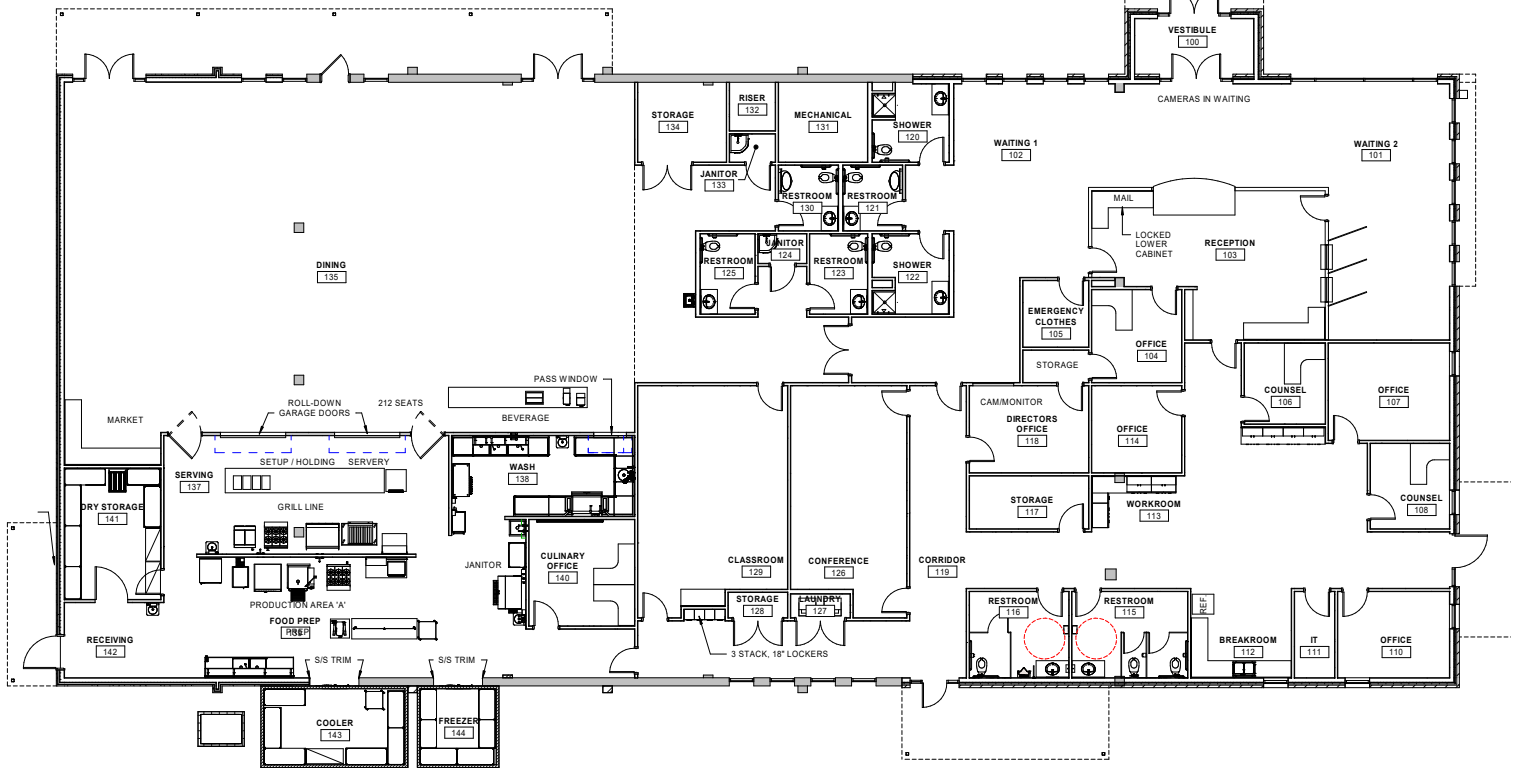
Design of the City Light ministry project is nearing completion. The building committee, along with members of the City Light board, have spent a great deal of time determining the needs of the City Light ministry in order to create the most efficient facility possible. Several construction options were considered before determining that additions on the east and west end of the existing activity building would best meet our needs. By expanding east/west we are able to preserve the parking lot that is south of the existing activity building for use as a drop off zone/parking area for GLO as well as a parking area for the Ministry of Counseling and future tenants in the Perry Building. The main entrance for City Light clients will be located on the northeast corner of the building. We have designed two large lobbies that clients will be able to use while waiting to use the showers or to meet with a counselor. This area will also serve as an indoor waiting room for entry into the dining room. The dining room will enable us to seat approximately 180 during meal times which is more than double the existing City Light dining room capacity. The commercial kitchen space will not only be used to prepare meals for City Light, but will also serve as a training area for the Culinary Academy. Classroom space is also provided

adjacent to the kitchen for training students. Our City Light volunteers will have an entrance area on the east end of the building where they can prepare to serve and then move into the kitchen through the office corridors.

The GLO ministry project continues to also be under study. We have preliminary design drawings that are based on input from the GLO board and Allie Workman. The new GLO facility will expand the capacity of GLO to meet the needs of more than 180 children which is nearly double the number we are currently licensed for. The new GLO facility will occupy the first floor of the existing children's education building which will house office space and infants. The second floor can be developed for after-school programs at a later date. The existing sanctuary will be converted into classroom space for toddlers and the existing chapel will become a multipurpose space for worship or indoor play. The current office/library area may become a kitchen and dining room. Our hope is to include an entry foyer in the center of the space which will allow entry from the East or West for check-in as well as indoor play. Again, these plans are still in the design phase, but this is the general direction we are going.

In light of current construction cost increases, we have instructed the architect and contractors to take the drawings we currently have and come up with new cost estimates for the Hope Center. Once we see those estimates we will have a better understanding of where we are in regard to our budget. Our charge is to construct and pay for these projects as funding comes in. In light of that, we are timing our work to coincide with our giving. Please continue to be in prayer for the building committee's wisdom in the days ahead as we seek to serve God in this wonderful ministry opportunity.





Initial drawings for City Light Community Ministries utilizing the gym and adding on to it.

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Initial drawings for GLO utilizing the existing children's building, sanctuary, chapel and office areas.

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LifeWay's

DESTINATION



UNEARTHING THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS
JEREMIAH 29:13

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2021

We are super excited about our multiple Neighborhood Vacation Bible Schools we have planned for this summer. As of right now, we have six different locations throughout the south-side of Abilene. We are still looking for a north-side location (backyard, front yard, driveway, park, etc.), so if you are interested in hosting, please call and let us know.

Our theme this year is "Destination Dig" where we will be "digging up" evidence which proves Biblical events were not just stories and exploring real-life archaeological finds that have helped to uncover the truth about Jesus! We could still use some more volunteers to lead the Bible Study, music, crafts, recreation, as well as bring snacks to help out our host homes. If you are interested in helping, please call Jennifer at 675-8105.

We hope the multiple sites, dates, and times will help everyone find an event to attend. We feel this will give all of our FBC children, their friends, and neighborhood kids many opportunities to join us for at least one exciting event! In order to find out the exact location, you will need to call Jennifer at 675-8105.

Whether you are able to help or attend one of these events or not, we hope you will be in prayer for the volunteers as well as the children as they "dig" into the Word of God.

Come join us this summer and explore one of our fabulous events!

FBC MISSIONS: ACTING IN love

MISSION BITE: Cambodian Communion

One of our former language teachers accepted Christ a year or so ago. Like almost all Cambodians, he was a Buddhist. But, he was teaching many Christian workers in Cambodia, and began to get to know them, their stories, and what brought them to Cambodia. He started going to church and eventually decided he wanted to follow Jesus.

Since then, he has eagerly engaged in discipleship, and he has even started teaching and preaching. His new career is in IT, and he is looking for ways to use technology to share the gospel with other Cambodians. Because of COVID-19 and other cultural reasons, he had never taken communion.

On Easter Sunday, he joined a small group of us who took Easter communion together (virtually). It was an honor to be a part of his first communion!

*David and Lauren Bass;
CBF field personnel serving in Cambodia*



cbf



NEW OPPORTUNITY!

Hiring a Friendship House Community Coordinator. This is a part-time job and the coordinator would live in the house at 1518 Orange Street. They will assist First Baptist Church in becoming Christ's love in action by providing leadership, coordination, and administration for ministry happening in the College Heights neighborhood.

If you are interested in more details, please contact John Moore or Melinda Norris at 325-675-8112 or 325-675-8114.

Thank you!

Thank you goes out to our students involved in Disciple Now 2021 as they blessed City Light Community Ministries with the food donations and the help with packing sack lunches!

Lead
With
Love



First Baptist has joined in an effort to help the kids at Martinez Elementary and others in the Abilene and surrounding area by supplying a Care Pack for each weekend throughout the school year. An estimated 1,500 students in the Abilene ISD alone struggle significantly with very little food over the weekend. The schools are able to feed them a quality breakfast and lunch on school days, but on the weekend the kids struggle.

We have great volunteers who have helped pack the packs each week and helped unload the deliveries along with the others in the community.

A special THANK YOU to Dana Pearson, Tom Tomaras, David Stovall, Mark and Courtney Edwards, Kathryn Clark, Sandy and Shelley Utley, Debby Brown, Teresa Ellis, and others who show up faithfully on "pack night" and work hard to get the CarePacks ready for delivery!

Also, thank you to Austen Winfrey and Matthew Broyles who have picked up and delivered the packs each week to Martinez!

This ministry would not have happened without you and all those who are a part of making this a blessing to those kids in need.

City Light Community Ministries is launching a **CASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

PROGRAM PURPOSE:

To work with neighbors in crisis, helping them find stability and hope in a loving Christian environment.

Paired with a caring volunteer, neighbors experiencing crisis will find:

- stability through relief of their immediate needs
- hope for a more secure future by working on goals to improve self-sufficiency

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY:

We will be training lay case managers to be a support and advocate with our community and to share hope with those experiencing crisis.

If you are looking for an opportunity to get more involved in the community and would like to know more about this opportunity, please contact the Missions' office at 325-675-8112.



STAY *connected*



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ABILENE, TX**

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SUNDAY SERVICES PREEMPTED IN JUNE

The management at KRBC has informed us of the following preemptions, June 6, 13, 20. Yes, that is 3 out of the four Sundays in June! Needless to say, we are not thrilled with this decision and are starting to look at other options. Because of the actual programming schedule, they are going to allow us the 30-minute time slot from 10:30-11:00 a.m. on June 6 and June 20.

So, in an effort to still have a presence on those Sunday mornings, a special 30-minute service is being recorded and will air beginning at 10:30 a.m. This will not be the live service which will still take place in the Sanctuary and will be streamed live on both the website and Facebook. So, you might want to record the 30-minute program and join us either in-person or by streaming and that way you get a double blessing!

SCHEDULE:

June 6: 30-minute special from 10:30-11:00 a.m.

June 13: Totally preempted

June 20: 30-minute special from 10:30-11:00 a.m.

June 27: Normal live service at regular time

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

June 1, 10 years

Judy Santibanez

GLO Teacher

June 10, 1 year

Sara Hathaway

GLO Teacher

June 24, 29 years

Jeanne Jowers

Church Accountant

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

May 2021

Budget	May	Year-to-Date
Required	\$ 240,000	\$ 1,323,740
Given	\$ 202,978	\$ 1,183,518

**Numbers do not include May 31 giving.*

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



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH • ABILENE

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