



# FIRSTWORDS

## STEWARDSHIP OF STORIES

When we talk about stewardship, money is often the first thing that comes to mind. Are we using our money wisely? Are we investing in earthly things or heavenly things? Are we sharing the first fruits of our finances with the church? While these are valid and necessary questions to ask, I would like to propose another avenue of stewardship: stewardship of stories.

For centuries, society has used stories to create meaning out of the world around us. As Christians, we hold fast to the stories found in the Holy Scriptures as the lens through which to view the world. Genesis teaches us that we are made in the image of God and are therefore worthy of dignity and respect. Humans are the crown of God's creation. God gave Adam the task of naming animals, and later Hagar gave God the name "The One Who Sees Me." There is beauty found in naming things, whether animals, or people, or God. These names are then tied to stories of shared experiences.

The stories we tell about the people around us influence how we treat each other. Are the stories we manufacture based on stereotypes we see in the media? Are they based on experiences our friends or family have had? Or, are the stories we tell based on personal experiences with someone sharing their story with us?





*Raul sharing his excitement of getting his new ID.*

*Continued from Cover.*

Stories are sacred, and when someone chooses to share their story with us, we should recognize the holiness of the moment. At City Light, we have the opportunity to hear our neighbors' stories, and to share our own stories with them. When we share stories, we are able to recognize the commonalities we have with one another. We see the faces of our children, our parents, our grandparents, or our cousins in the faces of our neighbors. Sometimes, we even see the face of God.

As we approach the season of intentional giving and generosity, my challenge is that we become intentional with sharing our stories with others, and listening to their stories as well. May we seek to recognize the shared experiences which bond us together as humans. May we steward stories of hope, peace, and love, and allow those stories to impact our financial stewardship.



*Stephanie and Sunny sharing their pregnancy journeys, with babies due one day apart.*



*Larry sharing the draft of a book he's working on in hopes to get it published one day.*



**STEPHANIE STEWART**  
City Light



# PAWS FOR PEOPLE

by Roy Jones

Eight more dogs graduated from FBC's Paws for People canine therapy program on October 22 and are ready to start visiting the sick and shut-ins. Six of the dogs also earned their American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizenship certification.

The next class will be in January 2025. For more information on this unique mission opportunity, call trainer Linda Chisholm at (325) 725-1741.

# Congratulations!

This past summer, Candy Rains and Becky Tucker were both able to take their first sabbatical and were away from their normal duties for six weeks. During their time away, they both participated in a certification program through Group Ministries. Each completed all of the course work in the Group U Ministry Training Center and were awarded a Certification in Children's Ministry.





# TRUNK OR Treat

by Candy Rains & Becky Tucker

WooHoo! We were able to have a traditional (outdoor) Trunk or Treat. Due to COVID and bad weather, we have been forced most years to adapt and either have a drive-thru event or host the event in the Family Life Center. While we are very fortunate to have the ability to make those changes, we were so excited to be able to have this year's event in the south parking lot.

It was, as expected, "organized chaos"! There were children dressed in wonderful costumes wandering around the parking lot playing games, gathering candy and prizes, riding the train, laughing with friends, as well as munching on hot dogs! The joy and excitement was contagious!

We are so blessed to be at a church who not only values children, but truly shows their love for our little ones by praying and loving on them, as well as supporting them, when we host activities like Trunk or Treat!

**Thank you so much FBC Church Family!**







**It takes so many people to make events such as Trunk or Treat happen, so we want to send out a special thank you to:**

- All of those who donated money, candy, cupcakes, and cookies
- Those who brought their vehicles and decorated them and hosted the activities for the children
- Those who cooked and helped serve the hot dogs, popped the popcorn, and made the cotton candy
- Our custodial staff for the many things they do to help
- Those who helped set up the parking lot and got all our games and candy outside or stayed after the event and helped pickup games, tables, chairs, and trash.





# BYO STEAK NIGHT

57 men gathered for BYO Steak Night on Sunday, October 13. This was the kick-off event for the newly revitalized Men's Ministry. The men enjoyed a time of fellowship, and a delicious steak dinner prepared by volunteers. Phil Brown gave a testimony about the value of healthy male relationships and Dr. Ben Gray gathered information from the men. From this, a menu of options will be developed for men to participate in Bible study, small group discussion, accountability groups, retreats, and service projects, to name a few.

The lay-led Men's Ministry, led by Dr. Gray, has as its goals to (1) foster and develop healthy male friendships (2) deepen our spiritual walk with God and (3) develop and equip generational leaders for our church.

## For further information, contact:

**Ben Gray** 325-518-8327  
bengray1945@gmail.com

**Jim Barlow** 325-513-7983  
james.barlow.5@us.af.mil

**Phil Brown** 325-665-0386  
brownpj60yahoo.com



# CHRISTMAS STORE 2024

Once again, this year, our church has the wonderful opportunity to encourage and help families from Martinez Elementary, GLO Daycare, and City Light with their 2024 Christmas celebrations. We need your support in making this season special by providing Christmas gifts, stocking stuffers, cookies, and a meaningful gift from our church which shares the true reason for the season.

## Here are ways you can help:

- Provide gifts for children and families by purchasing toys through Amazon and having them shipped directly to the church. Toys not on the list are also welcomed.
- Donate funds for the City Light Christmas Store, where gifts can be purchased tax-free. Please indicate the donation is for the City Light Christmas Store.
- Volunteer to help run the Christmas Store.
- Pray over each toy and gift, that God would use them to bring joy and His presence to these families.



**Please bring toys to the office by December 5.**

We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with these families, showing them Christ's love this Christmas. If you know a family who could benefit from the Christmas Store or if you'd like to volunteer, please reach out to Beth Young at the church office (325-675-8112 or [beth.young@fbcabilene.org](mailto:beth.young@fbcabilene.org)).



Amazon link: <https://a.co/aRFpDNB>







## **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

November 18-25

For over fifteen years now, as a church, we have participated in Operation Christmas Child. Operation Christmas Child, or OCC, is led by Franklin Graham, son of Billy Graham and has as its purpose the desire to give children across the world a Christmas present along with a Gospel tract. Literally millions of shoeboxes have been filled and delivered over the past years.

First Baptist Church will continue as the central drop off. Being the central drop-off means that we will not only collect our own boxes, but we will collect boxes for all the towns within about 100 miles like Snyder, Coleman, Sweetwater, and Albany just to name a few.

The week of November 18-25 is known as collection week in OCC terminology. Here at First Baptist, it means we will have our collection center open every day during that time frame. The hours vary some, but each day we will have someone here to collect the shoeboxes that come in. After the boxes come in, they will all be put into larger shipping cartons and then finally loaded on to a semi-trailer to be shipped to the sorting center in Dallas.

Once again, this year we will need people to volunteer at University Place. Volunteers will still be needed to greet and collect shoeboxes from folks in our community who want to participate, help crate up all of the collected shoeboxes and prepare them for shipping, and finally anyone able to lift 80 lb. cartons to help load all of the crates into the trailer for final shipping. Sign-up sheets showing time slots are posted in the Welcome Center, along with packing information.

Hopefully, this year will be a record year for us as a church in the number of boxes that we fill, but I know it will be a great year as we have the opportunity to serve as the collection center. If you have other questions about OCC and your involvement, let Debra or Mike know and we will gladly fill you in on how you can help. You can call or email either of us at: 325-675-8116 or [debra.clemmer@fbcabilene.org](mailto:debra.clemmer@fbcabilene.org) or [mike.greenfield@fbcabilene.org](mailto:mike.greenfield@fbcabilene.org).



# good morning!

Youth & Parents, join us for a Breakfast Potluck

**November 17 | 9 am | Youth Floor**

Please bring your favorite breakfast item to share.

Drinks and Doughnuts provided.



*Sunday, November 17*

Starts at 5:30PM in the Dining Hall

Pizza at 6:45PM

Judging at 7:30PM

*You will get all of the necessary materials at the event*

# CITY LIGHT

Community Ministries

**6,226**

## MEALS SERVED

Includes: Sunday Breakfast, Community Breakfast, Community Lunch (both dine-in and take out), and Produce from the City Light Market

**541**

## VOLUNTEER HOURS

Personal Assistance:

**491**

## WALK-INS

for assistance

**330**

## MAIL

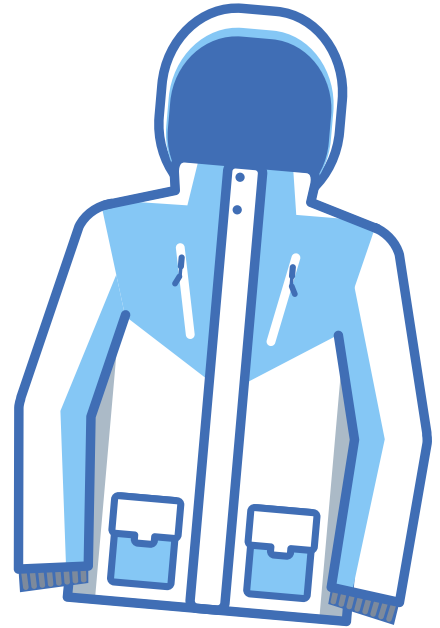
Delivered and checked

**241**

## SHOWERS



# City Light Coat Drive



As Thanksgiving approaches and the cooler weather sets in, many of us welcome the break from the heat. However, for some of our neighbors at City Light, the excitement is met with concern. Many are struggling to find something warm to wear as the temperatures drop. If you have time, we kindly ask you to look through your closets and see if you have any lightly used jackets, sweatshirts, or blankets you'd be willing to donate. Your generosity would make a world of difference to our neighbors at City Light during this season of giving.

**Thank you for considering this opportunity to help our community.**



# THANKSGIVING BREAKFAST AT CITY LIGHT

## Volunteers & Casseroles Needed

It's that time of year again! We're excited to host our annual Thanksgiving breakfast at City Light on Wednesday, November 27, and we need your help.

We are looking for 30 breakfast casseroles and volunteers to assist during the event. If you'd like to bring a hot, ready-to-serve casserole, please drop it off at the volunteer entrance on Wednesday morning between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. If you plan to bring a casserole that needs to be baked, please bring it to City Light on Tuesday.

Your support helps make this special breakfast possible.  
Thank you in advance for your generosity!

**If you are planning to bring a casserole or would like to volunteer,  
please sign up with Beth Young in the Missions' Office.  
325-675-8112 or [beth.young@fbcabilene.org](mailto:beth.young@fbcabilene.org)**



## PRAYERWORKS

The number of call or emails - **9**

The number of cards requesting prayer - **64**

The number of Prayerworks cards sent - **87**

## STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

November 1, 2 years  
**CHRIS HUFFORD**  
*Custodian*

November 5, 6 years  
**DAVID CURRY**  
*Finance Assistant*

November 22, 31 years  
**MARILYN HENDERSON**  
*GLO Ministry Assistant*

## NOVEMBER

- 3** Recreation Board Meeting  
Congregation Conversation
- 10** Personnel Committee Meeting
- 12** Women's Bunco Night
- 13** Buildings & Grounds  
Committee Meeting
- 17** Budget Committee Meeting  
Missions Committee Meeting  
Youth Master Chef Jr.
- 18-25** Operation Christmas Child  
Collection Week
- 18** MOCE Board Meeting
- 19** Finance Committee Meeting
- 20** GLO Board Meeting
- 24** Annual Thanksgiving Dinner  
w/Lord's Supper
- 27** CLCM Thanksgiving Breakfast
- 28 & 29** Church Offices Closed

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

October 2024

| <b>Budget</b> | <b>October</b> | <b>Year-to-Date</b> |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Required      | \$278,010      | \$2,956,200         |
| Given         | \$206,148      | \$2,655,455         |

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



**FIRST BAPTIST**  
CHURCH ♦ ABILENE

1333 North 3rd, Abilene, TX 79601  
fbc@fbcabilene.org | 325-673-5031  
[www.fbcabilene.org](http://www.fbcabilene.org)