

FIRST words

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

HELP US TELL OUR STORY

by Jennifer Woodard

Social media is a great way for our church to reach people for Jesus Christ and the more you get involved, the bigger the reach.

HERE ARE QUICK AND EASY WAYS YOU CAN HELP.

- When you enjoy a Facebook post, such as a music video or a First Words video... like it, leave a comment and most importantly, share it!
- When you see a post announcing an event that involves our community...share it!
- When you see a picture of your friend or family member on Instagram... like it and better yet, leave a comment!
- When you find a comment or video tweet on Twitter interesting...retweet it!



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words

FOR THE JOURNEY

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the despised Samaritan had the courage and compassion to “cross the road” to minister to a wounded Jew, his adversary. The distance might have been measured in feet, but it was like crossing a great divide. I wonder if we have made this story into a pious platitude of being “nice” instead of a radical call to get out of our safe comfort zones. What roads or barriers do you need to cross? Bruce Main, in his book, *Why Jesus Crossed the Road*, uses this image of the Samaritan’s “crossing the road” to reveal what Jesus was about and what we need to be about. Understanding the parable of the Good Samaritan is at the heart of understanding Jesus. Main writes, “*At every turn it seemed Jesus crossed impenetrable barriers, borders, and boundaries.*”

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- Bruce Main

I confess I have faced my own challenges in crossing the road of exclusion. I was uncomfortable when Gary came into the Family Life Center on Round Up Sunday. Gary has profound problems. He can be scary. I thought, here we are on this important Sunday with visitors and young families and Gary, a street person, shows up. Yet, Mike Langford crossed the road to Gary who seems so unlike us, and talked with him as if he mattered, and invited him to lunch.

We are delaying until the spring our Capital

Campaign for City Light as we consider the feasibility of purchasing First Christian Church. This does not mean our plans and priority for City Light are being abandoned. It was suggested in our Finance Committee meeting we explore all of our options before we renovate and revision City Light. We are still about “crossing the road” to minister to the working poor and marginalized who surround our church.

It is no secret we have received some push back for our plans to revision City Light. I understand their fears, which can control our thoughts and actions. Yet, let me tell you a story about how we have been called to care for the people at our door step in downtown and a well-known couple who was willing to literally “cross the road.”

Have you ever been to Magnolia Market at the Silos in Waco, which is the Xanadu of local tourist attractions created by “Fixer Upper” stars Chip and Joanna Gaines? Magnolia attracts over 30,000 people every week from all over the world. Mary and I made our first visit last Saturday. It was remarkable as we weaved our way through the crowd. First Baptist Waco is profiting from the popularity by charging \$10 to park in their lots.

The “Church Under the Bridge” meets underneath the I-35 Bridge near one of the main entrances to Baylor and adjacent to downtown. It is a church and worship for the working poor and homeless where everyone is welcome.

A three-to-five year plan to widen I-35 will begin in March, which will displace the “Church Under the Bridge” and its congregation of the poor. Enter the Gaines. They have invited “Church Under the Bridge” to move to their own magnificent Magnolia Market area. The church of the “least of these” will call this business bonanza their home. Jimmy Dorrell, who shepherds the flock said about the offer to worship at one of Waco’s most visible landmarks, “I didn’t see this coming....”

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Chip Gaines said he considered the risks involved in allowing hundreds of people to gather on the Magnolia lawn on Sundays. He could fear, “what if people from the Bridge showed up on a Saturday.” What could this venture do to their business? Megan Henderson, executive director of City Center Waco, which advocates for downtown improvements, applauded the news. Waco City Councilman Dillion Meek, whose district includes the Mission, said he was thrilled Magnolia Market and “Church Under the Bridge” could get together and it was a perfect location for them.

Pastor Dorrell knows that even though Magnolia is closed on Sundays, tourists still flock to take photos. He said, “If extra people show up, for whatever reason, that will be a byproduct of love.” He said, “We are here for people who don’t feel welcome....” Can you imagine, the homeless and working poor will be welcomed at Magnolia where people are usually pulling out a credit card?

Chip and Joanna Gaines have been willing to “cross the road” like the Good Samaritan and Jesus. More than just “Fixer-Uppers,” they are building the kingdom of God right in their own backyard and downtown. Let us never forget, generosity begets generosity. As we prepare for our plans for City Light, let us pray our church, as well as our city, will be willing to “cross the road.”

Ronald Martin sees deep faith as more than memorization of the Bible or going to church, but crossing the road. He believes spiritual maturity includes our courage to interface with people unlike us. If we don’t see who our neighbor is, we will not see God.

Who is and where is my neighbor?

Phil

Trunk or Treat

Are you ready for some chaotic, crazy fun? If so, you should join us on Wednesday, October 31, when we will have our annual Trunk or Treat event from 5:30–7 p.m. in the south parking lot. We will have around 30 trunks with games and candy, fun train rides, and free hot dogs!

It is so much fun to see the cars which are decorated so cute, as well as many costumes worn by both children and adults!

In order for this event to happen, we need people to volunteer to bring their vehicles, candy, and/or cookies/cupcakes/cakes. If you would like to help in any way, please call Jennifer at 675-8105.

We hope you will join us for this wonderful community event.



FINAL THOUGHTS

by Cody Favor

Over the last few weeks, I have looked to the future with both deep sadness and great joy. Joy in following God's calling and sadness to move away from a church that is family. In considering all of the emotions I have felt, I am often reminded of the words of Psalm 90. While this psalm is one of lament, there is great hope to be found as well. "Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Numbering our days reminds us that nothing, even our lives, will last forever. This passage doesn't teach us that life is oppressive and painful, but that our days are in fact, a gift. As I have numbered my days here at FBC, I hope to have gained wisdom and I certainly see them as a gift.

I can count the days walking beside awkward and scared middle school students, then seeing them discover their gifts and calling and know they are a child of God. Those days are a gift. I can count the days of high school students bringing their pain and joy and finding love and acceptance. Those days are a gift. I can count the days of praying with parents who needed to know their family wasn't alone. Those days are a gift. I can count the days when families welcomed me into their homes so I wouldn't be alone. Those days are a gift. I can count the days when I shared the burdens of others and when my burdens were carried. Those days are a gift. I can count the days when I've participated in the weddings of students from this church. I can count the days when young people from this ministry participated in my wedding. Those days are a gift. I can count the days of trying to find all the light switches or trying to open the door in the youth room. Those days are a gift. I can count the days spent at the Glorieta cabin with college students and staff. Those days are a gift. I can count the days walking to Monks before staff meeting every Tuesday. Those days are a gift. I can count the days of dabs, dad jokes, and ridiculous (amazing) youth group videos. Those days are a gift. I can count the days of celebrating National Treasure. Those days are a gift. I can count the days of standing on top of Eagle Cliff Mountain with my high school friends. Those days are a gift. I can count the days when you prayed for me, Brennan, Micah, and Margaret and sent us to Cisco with your blessing. Those days are a gift.

My days here have been a gift. The kindness and encouragement you have given us these last few weeks have been a blessing for the journey ahead and we are grateful. Thank you, First Baptist, for letting me be a pastor to you, for entrusting your children to this youth ministry, and for loving us so well.

Grace and Peace,
Cody



PAWS *for* PEOPLE

One of First Baptist's unique ministries is going to the dogs. Literally.

Paws for People, a program that trains dogs to be "pet therapists," marked two milestones recently--10 years of ministry and more than 100 dogs trained.

Linda Chisholm organized the program and teaches dogs (and their owners) how to share the pets' natural enthusiasm for life with FBC members and friends who are homebound, living in an assisted living home, or hospitalized.

Classes meet weekly for six weeks at University Place. The next class will begin February 4.

For more information, call Linda Chisholm at 725-1741.



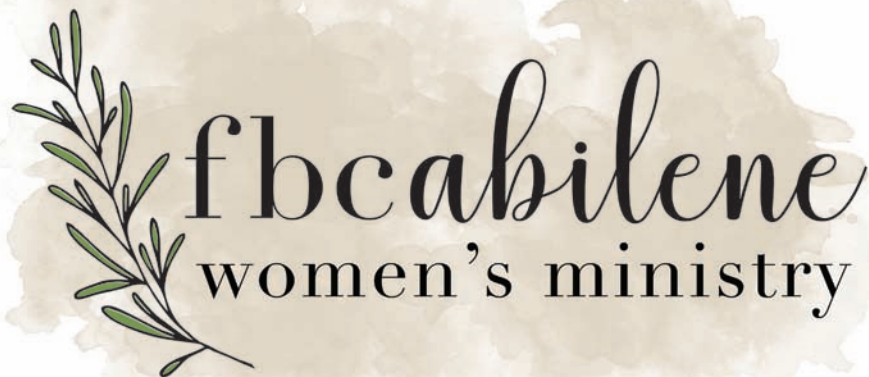
LEGACY SUNDAY CONTINUES

by Mike Greenfield

On Sunday, September 16, we celebrated Legacy Sunday where we took time to honor those in our church who have been members for 50 or more years. We welcomed the class of 1968 and thank all of those who have been faithfully serving God through First Baptist Church. We also served lunch to all of our senior adults as a way to say thanks for who they are and what they mean to our church.

Yesterday, the church received a certified letter from a local law firm. My first reaction was a very uneasy feeling that we were being sued for something. However, to my delight the envelope contained a copy of a will. The will was from the estate of Gayla Fielder who left 10% of her estate to First Baptist Church. We know Joe and Gayla Fielder loved their church. They were extremely active in every area of the church. They also made tithing a part of their life. They understood the Biblical command to tithe, to give back to God 10% of what He has entrusted to us. So, as life here on earth has ended for both Joe and Gayla, they made provisions to tithe once more and help continue the work of the church.

So, what kind of legacy are you leaving?



Women's Fall Fellowship
October 9 | 7 pm

Women! We have so many great opportunities for you to get involved this fall! Mark your calendars for Tuesday, October 9. We will host our Women's Fall Fellowship at 7 p.m. on the third floor. Our night will be centered on the topic of hospitality to help us prepare for the upcoming holiday season. We hope you will join us for music, discussion, and a festive treat. This fall, we are also offering a variety of women's Bible studies. You can join our Facebook page: FBC Abilene Women's Ministry for all the details. We have saved a seat for you, and I hope you will join us at all of our upcoming events.

ACTING IN *love*

FBC UNIFIED MISSIONS OFFERING 2018 *Training witnesses of God's love*

"We were recently asked to train 100+ Ukrainian Christian school teachers. When asked about the most important problem in their classrooms, the common answers were discipline and authority. The Ukrainian educational system still uses the old Soviet system. It does not value students, practices shaming, and expects authority. During the training,

I explained that authority delivers short-term results, but influence goes farther. We used Jesus' example with the Samaritan woman to show Jesus' focus on building relationships which leads to transformation. At the end of our teaching, unexpectedly, we were thanked with a standing ovation and an outpouring of gifts.

We are thankful that through CBF we are able to fulfill our call to teach and train others to be witnesses of God's acceptance, redeeming love, and abundant life."

- Gennady and Mina Podgaisky, CBF field personnel in Kiev, Ukraine

Please pray about how you can be involved in reaching our FBC Unified Missions Offering goal of \$80,000 this year. Ministry like the Podgaiskys is happening all around the world and supported through our FBC Unified Missions Offering. We have currently given \$37,822 towards our goal of \$80,000. Thank you for supporting seven different offerings through our Unified Missions Offering.



STAFF UPDATES

On Sunday, October 7, the church will be asked to vote on several recommendations from the Committee on Committees. Two of those items are search committees, Pastor for Students and Pastor for Senior Adults. As these two committees will begin their work, prayer for guidance and wisdom would be greatly appreciated. As with any staff position, the search committee will take time to evaluate the current job description, the ministry needs, and how the position fits with the current staffing and ministries. If you have any suggestions for either of these committees, you may send them to Mike Greenfield (mike.greenfield@fbcabilene.org) who will be working as an advisor with each committee.

We are also looking to fill the ministry assistant for finance. This position needs someone who has a basic understanding of accounting and good computer skills. If you know someone who would be good in this position, please have resumes sent to Mike Greenfield.



Our FBC Habitat House cleared its last hurdle and was presented and blessed on Saturday, September 22. Congratulations to Bikole & Fubiola Mulanda and their family for taking ownership of this new house. This family of nine, along with many FBC members and community volunteers, put hundreds of hours of sweat equity to build this six bedroom house. Each family member has their own room and a half bathroom was added out of closet space to provide for this large family. This project started in our church Sunday school classes with prayer. Babies and their footprints to senior adults signed 2X4's with messages of prayer, scripture, and hope for this house and family. Those 2X4's were paraded to the sanctuary as the first nail of the project was started by our pastor as an act of worship on a Sunday morning. Then, from the sanctuary the 2x4's were moved to the church parking lot where the framing began for the house. Many FBC volunteers nailed and cut those 2x4's into window frames, door frames, cripples, top plates, bottom plates, bracing, inside walls, and outside walls. When the foundation had cured on Congress street, those walls were moved and reassembled in its new location. From there the house was slowly worked on until it was completed just recently. For a long time this was just a house for the Mulanda family and last Saturday, through prayer, blessing, and dedication this house became a home. A home where a family of nine now resides. A huge thank you goes to FBC and the many volunteers who made this happen. Your financial gifts to the church offering, to Faces and Places, and thousands of man hours have allowed this house to become a new home. There was rejoicing last Saturday at the house blessing and dedication, and you were a part of that joy because you cared enough to help, give, and work. Thank you for the many ways FBC reaches out to our community in Love and Action each and every week!



PICTORIAL DIRECTORY SIGN-UPS

Remember we want everyone to be in the new church directory, but in order to be in the directory, you must sign up to have your picture taken. Sign-up sheets will be in the welcome center the next two weeks on Sunday Morning and next Wednesday night. After October 21, all sign-ups will be handled by the company.

Re:Member, the directory will not be complete without you!

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

October 1, 11 years

Nebra Peters

Administrative Assistant, Counseling & Family Enrichment

October 1, 4 years

Angela Mowery

GLO Teacher

October 1, 4 years

Krystal Smith

GLO Teacher

October 1, 4 years

Maria Veracruz

GLO Teacher

October 22, 34 years

Mike Brown

Custodian

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

September 2018

Budget	September	Year-to-Date
Required	\$246,990	\$2,336,803
Given	\$414,338	\$2,614,623

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

EVENT CALENDAR:

OCTOBER

- 5 & 6 Middle School Retreat/Camp Butman
- 7 Sign-Up for Directory Pictures
Personnel Committee
- 9 Adult Day at BCBA
Rockin' Moms
Women's Fellowship
- 10 Buildings & Grounds Committee
Fields of Faith
- 14 Sign-Up for Directory Pictures
Budget/Stewardship Committee
Foundation Board
- 16 Finance Committee
Deacons' Meeting
- 17 GLO Board Meeting
Church Conference
- 21 Sign-Up for Directory Pictures
Missions Committee
- 22 Roots Bowling Night
Craig M. S. Choir Concert
- 25 Time of Prayer
- 28 First Friends Recognition
in morning worship
- 29 Clack M. S. Orchestra Concert
- 31 Hospital Visitation Team
Trunk or Treat



FIRST BAPTIST
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