

# FIRSTwords

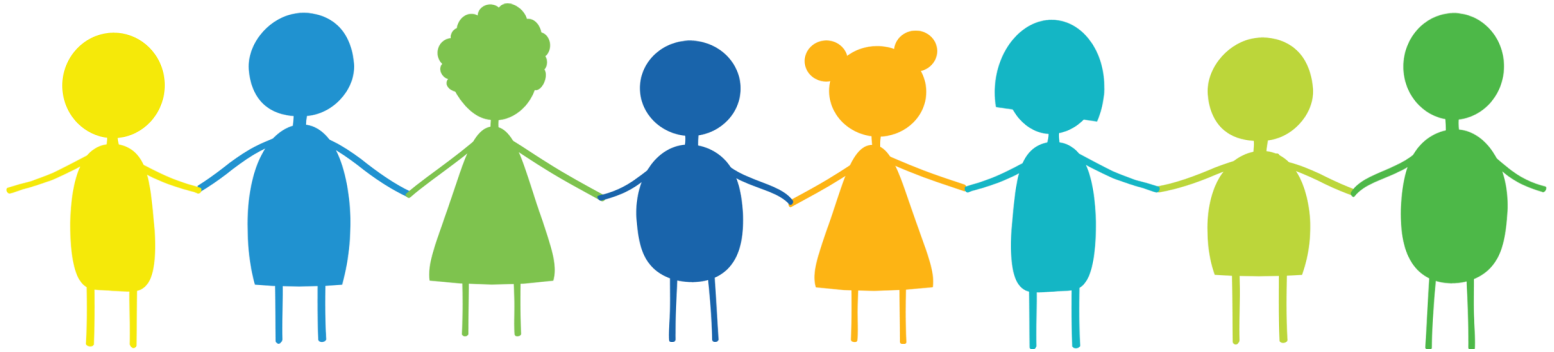
TO REACH PEOPLE FOR JESUS CHRIST & TOGETHER BECOME MORE LIKE HIM

## PRAYER PARTNER SUNDAY

On Sunday, September 23, we are planning a time when each Sunday school class can meet their new Prayer Partner class for the 2018-19 year. Partnering the classes has been a successful intergenerational endeavor for the past few years at FBC. We want to provide an opportunity early in the semester for classes to get together and meet each other. Many classes have given us feedback that they would have preferred to meet their partners earlier in the year so they can put names with faces and feel more connected to the people for whom they are praying. The partner classes will be together for the duration of the year, so we hope this experience will create a stronger bond and more meaningful prayer for each other.

During the last 15-20 minutes of Sunday school on the 23rd we are asking that classes join with their partner class to meet and pray. Each person in Sunday school will be asked to fill out a basic information card and exchange it with the leader of the partner class. This way, classes will be able to pray for each other by name. There is no program that morning, other than meeting and praying.

We want to spend time doing this and commit to praying for each other, because we believe our whole church benefits when we gather as community across generational lines. Thank you for being flexible, praying for each other, and helping to create more authentic community.



## BLESSED FAMILY FUN EVENT

Spread the word! On Thursday, September 27, First Baptist will host another FREE community-wide Blessed Family Fun Event, from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the Family Life Center. Special needs children, youth, adults, and their families are invited to an afternoon of fun and games with lots of adapted activities which includes bowling, skating, art, games in the gym, and visits with therapy dogs. Pizza and snacks will be served. All our special needs children, youth, or adults must be accompanied by parent, guardian, or caretaker.

Come join the church family for a blessed family fun time together and share the blessing with our special needs community in Abilene.

SEPTEMBER 2018



FIRST BAPTIST  
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# words

## FOR THE JOURNEY

I recently shared in worship that Beltway Park and David McQueen generously gave \$10,000 as the first gift to our City Light Capital Campaign. David wanted this to be a “seed gift” of how God will multiply such a gift beyond what we can imagine. It worked. After worship, a leader in our community approached me. He wanted to match Beltway’s gift of \$10,000. We need to be encouraged that people in our community are catching the vision of what the **Revision Plan** will mean for downtown and fulfilling our mission statement of “**Reaching people for Jesus Christ.**”

### NEIGHBORS TOGETHER

INSPIRING HOPE IN THE  
*heart* OF OUR CITY

The theme of our campaign is: **Neighbors Together: Inspiring Hope in the HEART of Our City.** From our beginning, the church looked for ways to be neighbors. Founded in 1881, First Baptist Abilene continues to be a major stakeholder in our city and the future of downtown. The church draws hundreds of people not only for church events, but for civic, cultural, and community events. We understand the importance of providing a safe environment in which our downtown can thrive. Our future depends on making downtown an inviting place to be. The city is presently seeking investors to improve downtown. Our church has already stepped up to be a part of transforming our downtown neighborhood. We recently voted to invest \$2.8 million dollars to respond to the needs of downtown.

Challenges exist in every downtown area. These challenges can be frustrating. They present great potential, as well as real problems. Downtown draws all kinds of people. Some come seeking a loan at a bank to build a new home, while for others, home is a backpack sitting in the doorway of a business. Others come to shop or dine, while others come hungry. The three zip

codes around downtown and our church are the poorest in our city. Yet, the needs or problems are not going to go away. We need to be a city for all people.

So what can we do? We believe through the **Revision Plan for City Light** we can be a part of the solution for our downtown. We believe the **Revision Plan** will make downtown more of a neighborhood of hope, safer and secure, reflecting our Christian and community values of caring for every citizen.

The plan. We are seeking to move from “toxic charity” of handouts, to empowering people. Our vision includes job training and developing a program for entrepreneurship. Life skills and money management will be taught. The goal is self-sufficiency. The gathering place at City Light for the working poor or homeless will not be a place to be feared. It will be a community where our brothers and sisters discover a new way, and are empowered to become the persons God created them to be.

As leaders of Abilene who love our city, we are called to renew our community for all citizens, which includes in the words of Jesus, “*the least of these.*” One community leader who has been involved in downtown renewal said, “What if one day the new dining facility at City Light would host a dinner for the poor sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.” Perhaps we might have really transformed downtown and become a “*city set on a hill.*”

I close with a very personal story. One Saturday afternoon, I was leaving the church. There was a young man, in his twenties, at the bottom of the stairs who asked if I could help him get something to eat. I went to Sonic to get him a burger and fries – no big deal. When I returned, I asked him his name. He said his name was “Jeremy.” For those who don’t know, that is the name of my son. It hit me like never before. I thought...this Jeremy in front of me could be my son, Jeremy, seeking

*Continued from page 3.*

help from some stranger. If we are able to Revision our City Light ministry, I could have told him not just where to get another meal. I could have said we have a job training program, a way to manage your money, and a way to find a community which will help you see there is more of who you can be. That encounter reminded me that all of the people on the street are someone's son or daughter. Even more, those on the streets in downtown are our brothers and sisters created in the image of God.

Let us trust ***God is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine...***

Phil

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT ADULT CLASSES -- FALL 2018

Here are the Adult Spiritual Development classes offered for the first half of the fall. Note two classes, DivorceCare and GriefShare, will begin on August 29. All of the other classes will begin on September 5, and then we will be adding some more beginning on October 24 through the end of the semester. A few classes will focus on specific topics such as Foster Care and Adoption, Dealing with Family Members in Long-term Care as well as others. Those class will be one to two sessions in length. We will provide information about those as the dates draw closer.

### **Beginning August 29**

**DivorceCare**—Come join us and learn how to heal from the wounds of separation or divorce. We have a core group of former DivorceCare members who come and share their stories of healing with those new to DivorceCare. **Room 300 Led by Suzanne Shaw**

**GriefShare**—A friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone. **Room 311 Led by Steve Queen**

**Adult Gathering**—Join us in the 3rd Floor Gather area for a time of conversation, fellowship, with drinks and snacks provided. More information about the fall classes will be provided at this time.

### **Beginning September 4**

**Experiencing God**—God is inviting Christians today to experience Him in an intimate love relationship through which He reveals His will, His ways, and His work. Learn how you can recognize where God is working and join Him in what He is doing. **Room 308 Led by Tommy Culwell and Mike Greenfield**

**Uninvited**—A Multi-generational Bible Study—The enemy wants us to feel rejected...left out, lonely, and less than. When we allow him to speak lies through our rejection, he pickpockets our purpose; cripples our courage; dismantles our dreams; and blinds us to the beauty of Christ's powerful love. Join us for a study by Lysa TerKeurst, *Uninvited: Living Loved When You Feel Less Than, Left Out, and Lonely*. **Room 316 Led by Kristian Spencer**

**Amazed and Confused**—Young Women's Bible Study. Most people have prayed for something or someone in earnest, seeking God's will, only to be left confused by God's response. Sometimes we ask, "Why would a good God allow bad things to happen to good people?" In *Amazed and Confused* by Heather Zempel, we will tackle this question head-on by exploring the book of Habakkuk. **Room 313 Led by Reagan Berry**





# WHERE DO I FIT?

By: Kristian Spencer

This is the question I find myself asking in many aspects of my life. It is a question I am sure many of you have asked when trying to decide where to invest in the life of the church. If you are a woman...I have your answer! You fit in our Intergenerational Women's Bible Study on Wednesday evenings. This past year was one of the most rewarding years of my life in terms of church-based Bible study! Through the fall and spring, we worked through multiple studies ranging from the sweet voice of Jennifer Rothschild to the powerhouse that is Priscilla Shirer. I spent an hour every week not only gaining extraordinary wisdom from women ranging from their twenties to their eighties, but finally feeling like I had a place where my insight, wisdom, and perspective mattered. I built relationships with women whom I would have never encountered in my typical Sunday interactions in the church. Women who have inspired me, encouraged me, and loved me. I rejoiced as women in our community, who may call another church home or are not active in any church, found a place amongst us! I watched in awe as women from all walks of life found common ground in their search for Jesus. This is truly a gathering of women who want nothing more than to serve Jesus the best they can and know Him as deeply as possible. This a place I believe you too can call home, a community you can call family. If you are seeking a place to plug in, I encourage you to join us as we begin our journey together once again this fall!

## STAFF UPDATE

A big THANK YOU goes to Rebecca Hunt for faithfully serving FBC Abilene as the Ministry Assistant to John Moore and the missions' office. Friday, August 31, is Rebecca's last day with us in the office. She has invested her life in so many ways in helping FBC be the presence of Christ here in Abilene and around the world for almost 3 years. Her genuine spirit of encouragement and attention to details will be greatly missed. She has represented the missions' office of FBC with great honor and heart. Please add her to your prayer list as she begins to pursue additional education and training in the field of graphic design.

With Rebecca's resignation, we are looking to fill the Ministry Assistant for the Pastor for Missions position. If you know of someone who would be interested in this position, please let us know here at the church. This is a full-time position with benefits. Resumes can be submitted to [john.moore@fbcabilene.org](mailto:john.moore@fbcabilene.org).

## IT'S CHURCH DIRECTORY TIME

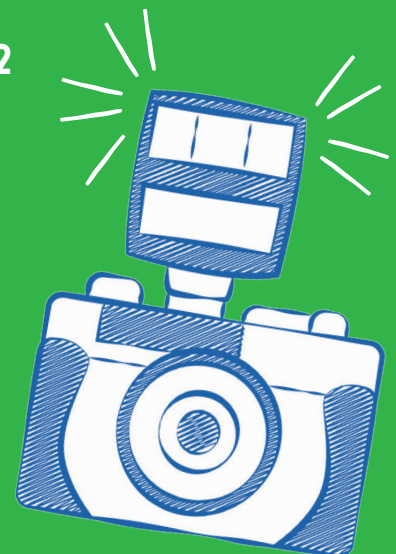
Every 6 years we try to produce a new church pictorial directory. Hard to believe, but it has been 6 years since our last directory and so it is time for a new one. This year, we are trying a new company, Re:Member Church Directories. The format of the directory will be much the same as in years past, each family is encouraged to have their picture taken and then each family will receive a free 8 x 10 portrait and a free directory for participating in the program. Families will also be given the opportunity to purchase additional portraits, but that is not a requirement or expectation for participating! Obviously our goal is to have each and every person in the church represented in the directory.

Sign-up dates will be on Sundays in the Welcome Center starting September 16. The photography dates are:

**Monday-Friday,  
October 29-November 2**

**Monday-Wednesday,  
November 5-7**

On-line sign-ups will be available as well and that information will be sent as we get closer to the photography dates. Re:Member, the directory will not be complete without you!

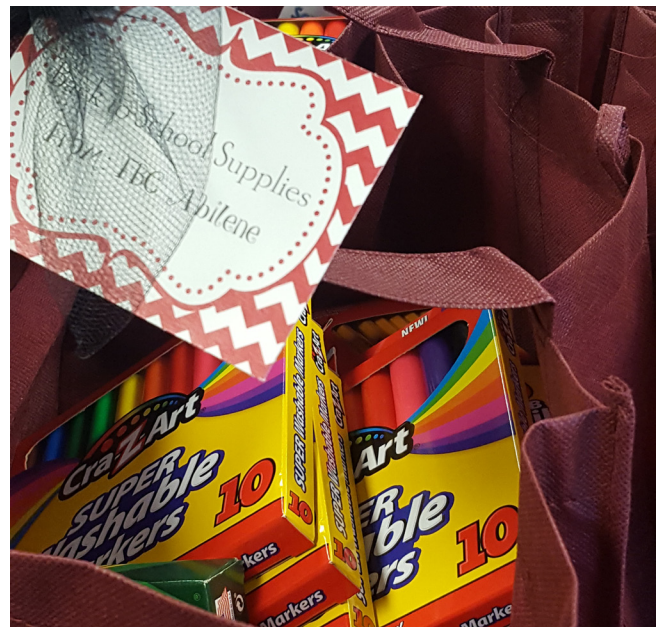


# ACTING IN *love*

## MARTINEZ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

*Thank You!*

Our Martinez Elementary School Supply Drive was a success! This year, we dropped off 55 bags of supplies to the teachers with more supplies left to help the teachers and staff throughout the year. Without your donations and financial support, this would not have been possible. A special thanks to Stacey Collins, Mary Davis, Eric Couvion, Lee Curiel, Tony Martinez, and Mike Brown for helping unload the bulk order of school supplies, organize and assemble the bags, and deliver the school supplies to Martinez Elementary. Thank you for helping get these teachers and students at Martinez Elementary off to a great start to their school year!



## ROUND UP SUNDAY THANKS

*by Mike Greenfield*

Round Up Sunday was a great success and I can promise you it does not just magically happen! So, thanks goes to: Jack Rentz for loaning us the Rentech smoker to cook on; Boyd King for providing all of the wood for cooking (cut and delivered!); John Weeks and David Hall for helping me cook 300+ pounds of brisket; John, David, and Steve Clemmer for cutting all of that meat; Casey Curnutt, Mark Edwards, Robert Yearian, Mike Langford, Alan Davis, and Steve Clemmer for cooking 110 pounds of chicken; Debra Clemmer for making all of the cole slaw; Jessica Yearian, Patti Greenfield, Vicki Brady, Becky Tucker, and Debra for dishing all of the cobblers and getting the drinks ready; all of the above for helping get the food out for serving and keeping the lines filled; and Jeanne Jowers and Robin Roberts for taking care of the money. And of course none of us would have had a place to sit, serve the food, or use the space afterwards if it were not for our magnificent custodial crew headed up by Eric Couvion. So, to Sly, Lee, Mike, and Chris, thanks! Without all of these folks, lunch would not have happened, so next time you see one of them, give them a pat on the back and say thanks.



# MCALLEN FAMILY MISSION TRIP PART 2

By: Kathy Shackelford

I have been asked to add to the great account of our Family Mission Trip to McAllen and Mission, Texas that Katie Broyles wrote in August. I will dovetail on Katie's article from a senior adult perspective.

I cannot hit the head of a nail with a hammer, but this trip allowed for different "skills" and a desire to help others in our own state. Each year, I would look at the altar laden with little shoes which were to go to children in need. I always wanted to follow those shoes to their destination. In cooperation with the Buckner Foundation, 600 children will have new shoes at the beginning of school. New shoes begin the school year on a good note and offer both safety and pride for these kids. In the Buckner warehouse, we sorted shoes and packed hygiene kits with Bibles (both in English and Spanish). I witnessed teamwork from those ages 2 to 65 working side by side in total cooperation. The older kids took care of the younger ones with loving care. There was so much patience in getting the jobs done on both sites.

We were a group of 35 people from every walk of life. There were families with and without children, people with spouses and without, old and young working side by side. We were one family...one faith...one fellowship! The blending together of this team and love in this group was truly a work of the Holy Spirit.

The family the house was being built for was gracious and thankful. Samuel and Melida, the parents, live on-site in temporary housing. They are purchasing the land and going to classes on how to maintain the home both physically and financially. Samuel, who has a small sign and graphics business, worked on the house with our building crew most days. Samuel and Melida made the most delicious homemade meal on Wednesday for all of us. The "feast" included mesquite grilled chicken, guacamole, beans, and tortillas which we all enjoyed in their beautiful yard. It was delicious! They have a daughter named Valerie who is finishing high school. Her hopes are to be a lawyer. Their son, Joshe, is 14 and helped out along with his dad when he was home. This mission project was definitely a "hand up and not a hand out!"

My heart was warmed watching the more experienced members of our team teaching the younger ones how to use a sander, circular saw, and nail gun. These young people will carry on the passion for missions and teach the next generation how to be the hands and feet of Christ.

The scripture that was claimed in preparation for this mission trip was:

*"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus." Philipians 4:19*

He met all our needs in a wonderful way! To God be the Glory!



## STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

**September 1, 3 years**

**Sheryl Doss**

*GLO Teacher*

**September 5, 39 years**

**Lee Curiel**

*Custodian*

**September 6, 2 years**

**Augustina Rodriguez-Sanchez**

*GLO Teacher*

**September 11, 1 year**

**Shelley Danser**

*GLO Teacher*

**September 12, 6 years**

**Stacey Collins**

*M. A. to the Senior Pastor*

**September 18, 1 year**

**Cristal Lopez**

*GLO Teacher*

**September 20, 1 year**

**Julie Spicer**

*GLO Teacher*

**September 25, 1 year**

**Becca Cadenhead**

*GLO Teacher*

## EVENT CALENDAR:

### SEPTEMBER

- 3 Church Offices Closed
- 5 GLO Board Meeting  
Committee on Committees
- 6 Healing Hearts Meeting
- 9 Sign-Up for Directory Pictures  
First Grade Bibles/Lunch  
Personnel Committee
- 12 Buildings & Grounds Committee
- 14 The Roots/Ten 25 Lake Retreat
- 16 Sign-Up for Directory Pictures  
Senior Adult Recognition/Luncheon  
Missions Committee Meeting
- 18 Finance Committee  
Deacons' Meeting
- 23 Prayer Partner Sunday  
Lord's Supper  
Sign-Up for Directory Pictures
- 26 Abilene Association of  
Congregations Lunch
- 27 Blessed Family Event
- 30 Swing the Wondrous Story

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

*August 2018*

Budget	August	Year-to-Date
Required	\$261,000	\$2,089,803
Given	\$252,783	\$2,195,468

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



**FIRST BAPTIST**  
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