

FIRST *words*

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

night at the **ZOO**

On Saturday, October 7, we will once again have FBC Night @ the Zoo. This is a free event for all FBC members and their guests. We want this event to serve two purposes: a night when the church can gather and fellowship together in a wonderful and exciting setting, and a night when church members can invite guests who might be looking for a church.

This event is extremely low key and provides a great way for you to introduce someone to members of our church. So, mark your calendar for the evening of October 7 and begin thinking about who you might invite.

OCTOBER 7, 2023



GROWTH MINDSET

Baptism is a beautiful moment in the life of a follower of Christ. I love the way we practice baptism at FBC Abilene. I love the words we say on the day of our baptism, the confession that brings us to the waters – Jesus is Lord.

Jesus is Lord, and those baptismal waters are the outward sign and symbol of our commitment to love and obey our Lord and Savior. But what do we do after the waters of baptism have dried?

Song writer Kyle Matthews has a song called “Been Through the Water.” The chorus of that song is as follows:

He said, "I've been through the water
And I've come out clean
And I got new clothes to cover me
And you don't wear your old shoes
On your brand-new feet
When you've been through the water
Been through the water"

Those of us who have been through the water have those “brand-new feet” the song writes about. We are called to a new way of life, as the words of our baptism declare. But how do we learn to walk with those brand-new feet?

The good news is that as followers of Jesus, we have practices, habits, and direction to help us learn to walk with those new feet. Beginning on September 10, we'll be exploring the ways which are proven to help us learn to walk in newness of life. God's will for us is not to simply remember our baptisms, but to remember our baptisms (and confessions) as the moments that launched us deeper into relationship with God. I hope you will make every effort to join us on September 10 (and invite friends!) as we begin an in-depth examination of the steps we can take to grow in our faith.

What a joy it is to be buried with Christ in baptism! And, what deeper joys await us as we all learn to grow more closely to God who grants us peace beyond all measure! I look forward to walking this road with you all.

Love,

Brandon



Wonderful

A MULTIGENERATIONAL
WORSHIP EXPERIENCE
FOR CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS MUSIC KICK-OFF

Sunday, September 10 | 6 p.m. in the Choir Room

We hope you will come join us for the WONDER of Christmas, our Christmas music presentation during Advent. The title of our Christmas music this year is WONDERFUL. You do not have to be a member of the choir to join us for Christmas!

Men's Choir
BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

The Baylor Men's Choir will be with us in worship on Sunday morning, November 12. As generous hosts, we will need host homes for approximately 70 singers the evening of November 11. If you would be interested in hosting some of these young men, contact Merri Roberts in the office of Worship & Music (325-675-8118 or merri.roberts@fbcabilene.org).



CITY LIGHT “CARES” FOR PEOPLE

By Makenzie Morrison

June saw my temporary hiring at City Light Community Ministries as a grant clerk. The ministry received \$196,000 through the CARES Act and needed to distribute it by September. We knew we were able to disperse the funds, but they were claimed faster than we expected. We opened and closed the program in twelve days with more than one hundred applications. As appointments began in July, we maintained a pace of a dozen meetings per week until mid-August, all the while signing paperwork, calling landlords, and calculating just how much money we had left. By the end of August, 72 households met with us and secured their rent. While the numbers are incredible, the stories were powerful, too.

Each appointment involved people with unique and challenging lives. Some shared about raising other people's children, employment difficulties, or troubling medical situations. Some meetings became even more serious as they confided in us their grief, difficulty accessing food, or experiences with domestic violence. These were the sessions I was never sure what to do with, but my incredible boss, Stephanie Stewart, is a rock. At the end of each meeting, I watched her extend her business card to everyone, and I realized she offered much more than a phone number. She offered dignity and hope.

Our appointment room housed a used copy machine, three chairs, and a desk, but don't be fooled by its humility! Stephanie transformed it during every appointment by giving each applicant compassion and attention. She was rather discreet with her agenda of kindness, though, as she began each meeting with the same question: "What brings you in today?" Some people responded with their life story, while others gave a simple "rent help." No matter their answer, she listened. After the first week of meetings, I learned that this—the

listening—was the best way to serve our neighbors. Not only did we meet their basic need for shelter, but we helped meet deeper emotional needs. When Stephanie asked and listened, each person was dignified in a world which tramples on the unwealthy and ignores the needs of the suffering. In her compassion towards every neighbor, my boss taught me how City Light functions. Yes, they feed people and offer a reprieve from the weather, but they also recognize the humanity in all our neighbors. City Light gets to remind them they are made in God's likeness. In this, the work City Light does is the same work Christ did 2,000 years ago and asks us to continue.

After helping spread the grant to our physical neighbors, I expect this experience will encourage us to live generously. Many of the applicants already do, sharing their homes and food with their neighbors, and I am glad we could support their efforts. But the purpose of this grant was not to reward generous people, as it didn't matter who they were when they applied. Nothing in the application measured their goodness or generosity, nor should it have. The purpose of this grant was to give money to struggling people. If Christ has taught us something, there is no earning grace, and the CARES grant is a small example of this holy principle. For the applicants, there was no earning their portion of the \$196,000 other than applying and qualifying. There were families with five children and households of one. Working, unemployed, and retired adults. Families mourning recent deaths, pregnant people, and people across every spectrum of identity, be it race, age, ability, gender, or anything else. These people received help because they are human. We receive Jesus' sacrifice because we are made in God's image. It is the same principle applied 2,000 years apart and I am honored to be part of a process that shows my neighbors the grace of God.

PARTNERSHIP WITH MARTINEZ ELEMENTARY

*I will instruct you and teach you in
the way you should go.
Psalms 32:8*

We're so thankful for our teachers at Martinez Elementary School. Through your support of our church budget, we have been able to purchase classroom school supplies for all of the teachers at Martinez. You have truly made a difference in the lives of these children through your generous gifts, and for this we are truly grateful! Please continue to pray for all our teachers and students at Martinez and in our city. Your prayers and support are a blessing to both the teachers and the students. *Thank you!*



"Thank y'all so much for
the wonderful baskets
you donated to Martinez
Elementary! We are so
incredibly grateful for
your amazing hearts for
our school."





August 2023



8,336 MEALS SERVED

Includes MWF meals, Sunday Breakfast, Continental Breakfast, Sack Lunches, and City Light Market*



433 VOLUNTEER HOURS

PERSONAL ASSISTANCE:



45 HOUSEHOLDS

helped with rent and utilities



477 WALK-INS

bus passes, clothing and other



270 MAIL

Delivered and checked



110 SHOWERS

GRATITUDE

Ashley M. was one of the recipients of the CARES Act rental assistance. She wrote City

Light the following thank you card: *"I'd like to thank you ALL very much for helping me & my son out with our rent. It means so much to us! I hope one day I'll be able to pay it forward & help someone else out. God Bless!"*





FAMILY LIFE CENTER

The Family Life Center opened in 1981. Our mission is to provide family-oriented activities for the church membership & surrounding communities in a Christian atmosphere at an affordable price. Our facility accommodates a variety of groups such as businesses, churches, day care/day camps, private home schools, public schools, individuals with special needs, universities, military, family reunions, residential treatment centers, exercise groups, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes to list a few. We host birthday parties, bridal showers, wedding receptions, and Family Fun Nights. In addition, we have a full fitness center with lockers, showers, and sauna amenities. For those who simply want a place to walk, out of the weather, our track or gym is free to the public.

HOSTED GROUPS & INDIVIDUALS IN AUGUST

SUMMER GROUPS - 6 GROUPS

DYESS FAMILIES - 1 NIGHT

PARTIES - 34 PARTIES

FITNESS USE - 365 INDIVIDUALS

FBC GROUPS - 1 EVENT

FITNESS CLASSES - 19 INDIVIDUALS

BEN RITCHEY BOYS RANCH

BACK TO SCHOOL - 40 INDIVIDUALS

GLO - 1 VISIT

FULL BUILDING RENTAL - 7 GROUPS

WALK-INS - 1421 INDIVIDUALS

SCHOOL GROUPS- 4 GROUPS

Back to School Party giving out 140 back packs full of school supplies & athletic shoes





2023 FBC UNIFIED MISSIONS OFFERING

Equipping...with Every Good Thing... Hebrews 13:20

We need you to pray for and give to this unified missions effort of our church!

GOAL: \$75,000 AMOUNT COLLECTED: \$7,718

4 DIFFERENT OFFERINGS COMBINED INTO 1 UNIFIED MISSIONS OFFERING

1. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions - 60%

Supports the long-term presence of CBF field personnel serving in the United States and around the world. It provides support for their salaries, insurance and children's education for nearly 60 field personnel serving on the mission field. Promotes leadership, ministry, and development of the local church among the least evangelized. Provides Bible translations and digital resources to reach international refugees, immigrants, and students. Seeks justice/reconciliation for the most marginalized and works to end extreme poverty through development and transforming communities to restore natural environments.

2. Texas Baptist World Hunger - 15%

The Texas Baptist Hunger Offering unites the body of Christ to end hunger and poverty and promote holistic transformation in the name of Jesus. 15% of the offering goes to over 100 hunger relief and development ministries across Texas and around the world. This offering supports projects across the world which feed the hungry and help the hungry help themselves in the context of holistic Christian ministry.

3. Abilene Community Transformation - 15%

Provides resources for responding to specific ministry opportunities and needs right here in Abilene, Texas. These resources help to transform families, neighborhoods, and ministry partners within the Big Country.

4. Baptist World Aid - 10%

Since 1920, Baptist World Aid has networked Baptists around the world to alleviate poverty and hunger, respond when disasters strike, and support sustainable community development projects around the globe. This is the compassionate arm of the Baptist World Alliance and provides help for persons in need globally through disaster relief, alleviation of hunger, medical assistance to those affected by HIV/AIDS, and community development.

1st GRADe Bibles

The weather tried to put a kink in our plans on Saturday, August 26, but it did not keep us from having a wonderful evening as our First Graders received their new Bibles. These Bibles are a gift from the First Baptist Family. This was an extra special year as this group of children were the first ones to receive their Bibles from our new Senior Pastor. As Brandon gave each child their Bible, he also gave them a bookmark with a scripture reference from God's Word.

These children were also recognized on Sunday, August 27, during the Worship Service. This time of recognition allowed our church family to see these children with their new Bibles and show the children how much they are loved, supported, and prayed for by our congregation. We are so grateful we belong to such a caring and giving church family!

Thank you for being that church to our children!



HOPE CAMP GOLF TOURNAMENT

For years (20+), the Abilene Baptist Association has put on a “golf tournament” each year and it was held at Maxwell and consisted of players getting a team together, picking a tee time anytime on a Thursday, Friday, or Saturday of the specified week, turning in the score card and then wait a week to find out if you won. This worked fairly well in the beginning, but the past few years had only a handful of players.

So, there were a group of guys who decided to try and “do it differently” and have a “real” golf tournament which would still help support and send at-risk kids to camp. So, if you are a golfer and would like to participate in the Hope Camp Golf Tournament as a single player, or if you would like to put together a team, then simply click on the link below and you can register.

The tournament will be held on Monday, September 18 at Diamondback and a continental breakfast and lunch will be included.

Scan Here for Hope Camp Golf Tournament Registration Form



THE WEDNESDAY THING IN SEPTEMBER

The Wednesday Thing is a weekly gathering of Senior Adults (and other adults who are available on Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m.). The first fall gathering will be on **September 6**.

SEPTEMBER 6

Jay Moore will offer a presentation on the city of Abilene in earlier years. If you are familiar with Jay, you know him to be creative and engaging. He will bring pictures and other visual helps. This gathering will be in the sanctuary.

SEPTEMBER 20

Greg Young will combine his musical talents with his vast pharmaceutical knowledge (he's a pharmacist, you know) in a presentation about healthy living. It will be fun and educational at the same time.

SEPTEMBER 13

Jim Barlow will tell us about some of the History of Dyess Air Force Base. Jim and his wife, Karen, are members of FBC. Karen is the daughter of the late George and Joan Knight. Jim is a retired C-130 pilot and is currently employed as a civilian at Dyess. This gathering will be in Room 112.

SEPTEMBER 27

We will enjoy singing some good old gospel hymns. Patti Walker will accompany C.V. Blake who will lead us as we sing these great hymns of our faith.

COMMITTEE INTEREST FORM

The Committee on Committees is tasked each year with finding 35 church members to fill all of the vacated slots of those who have rotated off of the elected committees of the church. This form was created as a way for you to provide the committee an idea of what you might be interested in helping with. This does not guarantee that you will be selected for that committee because there are many factors that have to be considered before each position is filled (variety of age, gender, backgrounds, etc.). You may either print this form, or copies are available in Sunday school or the church office, or [on-line by clicking here](#).

Reminder, if you are currently serving on a standing committee of the church, the church by-laws prohibit you from serving on more than one committee at a time.

1. Budget and Stewardship
2. Buildings and Grounds
3. Constitution, Bylaws, & Policies
4. Counseling & Family Enrichment

5. FBC Foundation
6. Finance
7. GLO Day Care Board
8. Missions

9. Personnel
10. Recreation Ministry Board
11. Treasurer

Committee

Background, interest, or expertise

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Please return to the church office by Sunday, September 24.

September

- 4 Church Offices Closed
- 9 Sanctuary Choir Family Picnic
- 10 Personnel Committee Meeting
Bites w/Broyles (College)
Christmas Music Kick-Off
- 12 Women's Night of Praise
- 13 Buildings/Grounds
Committee Meeting
- 16 ACU Tailgate
- 17 Missions Committee Meeting
- 18 Hope Camp Golf Tournament
- 19 City Light Board Meeting
Finance Committee Meeting
Deacons' Meeting
- 24 Lord's Supper
College Dinner @ Werntz Home
- 30 McMurry Tailgate

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

August 2023

<u>Budget</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Required	\$ 232,060	\$ 2,152,480
Given	\$ 221,296	\$ 1,910,469

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

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

September 5, 44 years

Lee Curiel

Custodian

September 6, 1 year

Jazmina Lopez

GLO Teacher

September 8, 13 years

Merri Roberts

Music Ministry Assistant

September 30, 4 years

Matthew Fahlender

Custodian



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH • ABILENE

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