



FIRSTWORDS

**Our NEW Church Directory
Won't Be Complete Without
*You!***

- Each family photographed by Re:MEMBER and who view their proofs will receive a complimentary 8x10 and a copy of the directory.
- Specially priced portraits and frames
- Portraits available in Full Color, Black & White, and Sepia

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Re:MEMBER Church Directories

Pastor Ray really wants to
“see” you in the new FBC
Church Directory!

Use this QR Code to make
your online reservation to
have your picture taken.

**Photos are scheduled for
October 15-18, 2025.**

**New dates have been
added October 20 & 21.**



Dear FBC Family,

What an incredible start here at FBC Abilene for our family. We have had somebody join each week since we have been here. We had 8 families at our First Steps Lunch, including 6 families in their 20s. We have had baptisms and meaningful worship services. God seems to be moving, and we are discerning the best way to follow! Keep praying, keep showing up, keep worshipping, and keep serving. Let's see what God can and will do through His Grace.

If you see a sign around the office that says "We can Spell – CPELL" do not worry about our spelling abilities! Although, I'm not sure any of us are going to do well during a spelling bee! Our staff, during staff retreat, came up with a set of values for our pastoral staff to rally around. These are Centered, Presence, Excellence, Loyalty, and Love (CPELL). We want to be centered around Jesus. This is not only about our messages, but with our lives. When we flow from the center, we flow from Grace. The next value we chose is Presence. The present is a gift. We want to be present right where we are. If we are in a committee meeting, let's be present. If we are in a hospital or in a worship service, let's be present and aware of God's movement and the person or people in front of us. After presence is Excellence. The only thing we can really give God is ourselves. Are we giving God our best selves? Are we giving and offering God excellence in our worship, our programming, our discipleship, and our serving? After excellence is Loyalty. One of the ways to translate the word "faith" in Greek is loyalty or allegiance. Our loyalty will be to Jesus and each other. This means being trustworthy and accountable. Finally, our last, but certainly not least, value is love. God is love after all. So are the things we are doing with love. It's great to be excellent, except if it does not have love, it comes across as cold and hollow. We can be the most gifted person in the world, but if we do not have love, we have missed the mark.

These values for our pastoral staff will be used to remind us what we are working for, gives us guidelines in our being and doing, and to evaluate ourselves as we do the work of ministry with you. We believe God will shine through our efforts in living out these values. Grateful to be here.

Grace and Peace,

RAY P. MILLER, DMIN
Pastor, FBC Abilene, TX



DEACON LEADERSHIP

At First Baptist, Abilene, our Deacon ministry is a cornerstone of our church community. Sixty ordained, active deacons, along with inactive deacons and emeriti, are dedicated leaders and servants. They act as peacemakers, counselors, and advisors, providing spiritual oversight and joining in prayer for the congregation's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. These men and women are committed to serving our church with their time, tithe, talents, and wisdom.

Join us in thanking those who serve FBC in this capacity and Sean Morgan for the leadership he has provided as Deacon Chair for 2025. Those rotating off their 3-year term to inactive deacon status are:

Nancy Brock	Jeff Goodin	Sean Morgan	Darrell Roy
Kathryn Clark	Danny Haddox	Shona Preston	Paul Thames
Marci Cole	Ron Harden, Sr.	Ron Rainwater	Susie Vandever
Bob Fink	Callie Harris	Becky Rentz	John Weeks
Gerald Galbraith	Tom Martin	Ashley Roy	Robert Wiggins

"Serving as Deacon Chairman has been a tremendous honor, not only because it allows me to serve our church family, but also because it reminds me of the importance of giving ourselves fully to others. Over the years, I have been blessed by so many great servants of this church who mentored me, encouraged me, and poured themselves into the life of FBC Abilene. Their example has shown me that it is only right for my own generation to step forward and help share the load, even in the midst of our hectic lives. We are all busy, but that is why it is so vital that we serve together—because when we share the work and encourage others to join in that same spirit of servanthood, the burden becomes lighter, and we accomplish so much more for God and His church. It has also been deeply meaningful to show my own children, by example, that our time and talents are gifts meant to be given back to Him. My prayer is they will grow up seeing the joy and value of serving others, so they too will embrace a lifetime of service to God and His people. I often remind our deacons of a quote: "Progress and comfort cannot coexist." I love this church and the people in it, and while the goal is never to change simply for the sake of change, I believe we are called to step beyond what feels easy and comfortable to make something already wonderful, even better. FBC Abilene is a special place, and I am excited to see all God has in store for us in the years ahead—because I believe wholeheartedly in the faithful and generous people who serve it every day."

- Sean Morgan, 2025 Deacon Chair

DO GOOD THINGS CELEBRATION DINNER

What a wonderful evening we shared at the Do Good Things Celebration Dinner! From the very first bite of hors d'oeuvres to the last round of raffle prizes, the night was filled with joy, fellowship, and gratitude.

Chef Keith Sprouls treated us to an incredible meal, and the dining room was alive with conversation and laughter. The excitement grew as raffle tickets were drawn, and winners cheered—each prize adding to the fun and energy of the evening.

A special thank you goes to Sandi Rainwater for her tireless organization in bringing all the details together, and to Mike Coffey, who kept the night moving smoothly and joyfully as our emcee. We are also deeply grateful to our generous raffle donors:

- Richard and Carolyn Shelburn for the dove hunt
- The Secret Society of Closet Quilters for the stunning handmade quilt
- Charles Lynn Jewelers for the dazzling diamond bracelet and diamond ring
- Surprises Gift Shop for the John Hart bag
- Marsha Lovelady for her beautiful bowl crafted by Holly Horn Meckler
- The Hair Parlor for their gift card and hair care items
- Sandi and Ron Rainwater
- Laura's Boutique for the gift certificate
- Original Canvas Photograph by Steve Butman
- Dinner at home from Keith Sprouls

We also want to recognize Rob Westman for his excellent work on our video, which beautifully highlighted the heart of our ministry.

This evening would not have been possible without the incredible support of First Baptist Church members who purchased both dinner and raffle tickets, and without the many volunteers who came together for a cleaning day to prepare our space. To our faithful City Light staff, thank you for your ongoing dedication and hard work—you are the heartbeat of this ministry.

Truly, the Do Good Things Celebration Dinner was a night to remember. Its success came not from one person, but from the many hands, hearts, and gifts which made it possible. Together, we continue to shine light into our community.

Beth Young



COMMITTEE WORK WHICH HELPS MAKE MINISTRY HAPPEN

First Baptist Abilene's rich history is rooted in its committee-led structure, which works hand-in-hand with our dedicated staff. With the close of the year marking the end of terms for our third-year committee and board members, we wish to express our deep gratitude for their important and meaningful work. Each committee fulfills a range of duties, attends meetings, and performs tasks crucial to maintaining and improving FBC's ministries, finances, bylaws, and properties. These members offer their valuable time, expertise, strategic thinking, organizational skills, and leadership. Their commitment is invaluable to the vitality of our church. Below, you'll find reflections from our outgoing committee and board chairs. Please join us in thanking them for their three years of dedicated service to FBC!

**- Sarah Martin-Werntz,
25/26 Chair of Committee
on Committees**

Serving on the Personnel Committee has been challenging, but it has also proven to be an incredible blessing in so many ways. Serving as a member of the Personnel Committee gives each member the opportunity to work alongside our FBC staff. Seeing their passionate dedication to our church family is a gift.

**- Callie Harris,
2025 Chair of Personnel Committee**

The Missions Committee serves as a representative spearhead for the various mission endeavors of First Baptist Church. We provide a listening ear, prayer, and financial support when engaging individual missionaries, mission agencies, and assist our Pastor of Missions in developing and funding local and foreign mission projects made possible for and by church members. In addition, we endeavor to provide mission education to the church. As chairman, it has been a blessing to see how God works in us and through us when we obey the Great Commission by sharing Christ here and around the world.

**- Mike Patrick,
2025 Chair of Missions Committee**

Serving on the Ministry of Counseling and Enrichment Board has been both rewarding and challenging! I have seen God's hand in this ministry, and it has been such a blessing for me to serve on this board with such caring and devoted church members. We have all viewed this opportunity as one to make a meaningful impact on this mission's direction and success.

- Jill Harris, 2025 Chair of MOCE Board

The Finance Committee's duty is to handle FBC's finances in a proper way so that the church will be operational and growing 100 years from now. Our committee needs dedicated members who can understand finances and accounting, be knowledgeable of fundraising, and can assist other committees and boards in maintaining their budgets and reaching their financial goals.

**- Gerald Galbraith,
2025 Chair of Finance Committee**

I am just completing my 2nd year on the GLO Board; this year as chairman. There have been tremendous challenges and there are more ahead, but all the work is worth it. GLO is the face of FBC in our community. A ministry for the children of Abilene, those that our Lord told us were priceless and a model for our faith. It's been a privilege as great as any I have been afforded.

**- Barry Moak,
2025 Chair of GLO Board**

Being part of the Building and Grounds Committee has been such a blessing. I love that I was given the opportunity to serve God in a practical way by helping care for His house. I've enjoyed working alongside others, especially Eric and his staff, who share the same love for our church. It's rewarding to see how Eric's efforts make the church welcoming and safe for all who come. It has deepened my sense of connection and gratitude; and has made me aware of how much work goes into keeping our beautiful facilities running so that God's work can be done here.

- Vicki Brady, 2025 Chair of Buildings and Grounds Committee

Serving on the FLC board has been a wonderful blessing and inspiration to me. It has opened my eyes and heart to the many ways FBC touches so many lives in our community. From area school groups, to home-school communities, to those church members and their friends who meet at FLC regularly for basketball, pickleball, walk the track, bowl, skate, play ping pong or foosball, there are so many who are drawn together in meaningful ways. Youth groups from near and far meet here annually for their special events. Many who are disadvantaged, both young and old, can gather here to bowl, for games, or simply to study and rest. And, to see Mike Brady and his staff make all this possible, with loving and prayerful support from the board, representing the FBC members, is truly watching God's love delivered to so many of His flock. This has been a blessing and privilege that I wish everyone could experience!

**- Jim Barlow,
2025 Chair of FLC Board**

City Light Board performs a critical ministry at FBC Abilene. We are a "working board" that is involved in food and social ministries, fund raising, as well as serving as a liaison between City Light, FBC and the larger Abilene community. Board members are privileged to take part in the City Light community and witness people's lives being transformed.

**- Sandi Rainwater,
2025 Chair of City Light Board**

What a surprise it was to learn more about the finances and organization of First Baptist Church. Having been a member for years, I was surprised and amazed at the dedication, commitment, and history of so many members. It's been a great learning experience and caused me to be more impressed with the membership of our dear church!

**- Jud Powell,
2025 Chair of Budget and
Stewardship Committee**

The Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies Committee is extremely important. It establishes rules for the life of the church. It determines what is permissible and what is not. When we are needed, it is a matter of vital importance. I am honored to serve on this committee, it fulfills my desire to be effective and productive at church.

**- Lynn Ingalsbe,
2025 Chair of Constitution, Bylaws,
and Policies Committee**

thank you!

The following members are rotating off committees/boards on December 31 -
please thank them for their dedication and service!

Budget and Stewardship: Marty Anderson, Jud Powell, Doug Worthington

**committee term is March 1 to end of February*

Buildings and Grounds: Karen Barlow, Vicki Brady, Tom Cunningham

City Light Board: Phil Brown, Sandi Rainwater, Susie Vandever

Constitution, Bylaws and Policies: Tiffany Fink, Lynn Ingalsbe

MOCE Board: Bart Craig, Jill Harris, Johnny Warren

FBC Foundation: Ryan Gibson, Sandy Utle

Finance: Donna Dougherty, Gerald Galbraith, Sandy Longacre, Sean Morgan

GLO Board: Martha Brown, Phil Christopher, Denise Davis

Missions' Committee: Paula McGrew, Mike Patrick, Eddie Rains, Darrell Wood

Personnel Committee: Bridgett Gann, Callie Harris, Wayne Roy

FLC Board: Jim Barlow, Bob Cluck, Trina Fink

Treasurer: Jane Wiggins

SAVE THE DATE!

**Orientation for all committee and board members for 2026
on January 4, immediately following church service.**

TRUNK OR Treat

The temperatures may not make it feel like it is time for us to be planning for Trunk or Treat, but whether or not we are having fall weather, it is time for our annual event. We will be enjoying Trunk or Treat whether it is warm or cold on Wednesday, October 29, from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. in the south parking lot. We are planning to have at least 24 trunks with games and candy, fun train rides, and a free hot dog dinner!

This is always a fun night as we see the cars which are decorated so cute, as well as the many costumes that both children and adults wear!

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 Keathley at 325-675-8192 or Becky at 325-675-8106.

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

MINISTRY OF COUNSELING AND ENRICHMENT

October 6–12 is Mental Illness Awareness Week. The National Alliance on Mental Illness reports that 1 in 5 U.S. adults experiences a mental health condition each year. On October 10, World Mental Health Day, the World Health Organization highlights the urgent need for mental health support in humanitarian emergencies, with over 123 million people displaced worldwide.

In the face of these global and local burdens, the Ministry of Counseling and Enrichment is making a difference; thanks to the faithful support of First Baptist Abilene. Because of this partnership, individuals and families in our community are finding healing and hope through accessible counseling services.



ELYA WHITTEN
Director of Ministry
of Counseling and
Enrichment

COUNSELOR SPOTLIGHT: *Mike Kesler*

For the past 18 years, the Ministry of Counseling and Enrichment (MOCE) has been blessed to have Mike Kesler serving as part of our counseling team. Mike brings a wealth of experience and a heart for walking with people through life's challenges.

Mike's professional path began in East Texas, where he earned both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Texas A&M Commerce. While working on his degrees, he gained early experience at Terrell State Hospital's adolescent unit. Over the years, his career took him across the country: Nebraska, Arkansas, Florida, California, Tennessee, and Texas; where he developed and directed rehabilitation programs for people with traumatic brain injuries and supported individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In 1997, Mike shifted into counseling work full-time, completing additional coursework at Hardin-Simmons University to become a Licensed Professional Counselor. Since then, his passion has been helping individuals, adolescents, and families discover the inner strengths that enable them to heal, adapt, and thrive.

Mike describes his approach to counseling this way, "I love to be able to work with people to help them see that they have inside of them what it takes to get through the issues." His focus has often been with adolescents, individuals with intellectual disabilities, and those recovering from injury or life-altering challenges. Through his years of service, he has walked with countless clients, always seeking to point them toward hope and resilience.

Outside of counseling, Mike enjoys gardening, reading, and traveling with his wife in their RV. Family is especially important to him. He and his wife have three children and five grandchildren, with another grandchild on the way this December. Much of his joy comes from spending time with them and investing in their lives.

Mike's long and diverse career reflects both professional dedication and personal calling. His 18 years with MOCE are a testimony not only to his commitment, but also to God's faithfulness in using his gifts to bless others. We are grateful for Mike's presence in our counseling ministry and the countless lives touched through his work.



Healing Hearts

Cherry Curry, Director

September has been a busy month for Healing Hearts Ministry. The West Texas Fair presented the opportunity for entries in the Crochet & Knitting category. Sally Doss, Suwanee Smith, and I entered several of our crocheted items, and we won ribbons for everything we entered. It is always fun to take part in the West Texas Fair. Most of these entries will be used as gifts for people in need of prayer.

During the month of September, we gave the following items to people within our church, or those who have some connection with our members, who are in need of prayer support:

13 Prayer cloths, 7 Prayer angels, 1 Prayer shawl, 5 Prayer throws, 2 Prayer blankets, and 6 prayer cards for a total of 34 reminders that these individuals have been in our prayers. When we have our meetings, we discuss the needs for prayer, then we each lay our hands on the item being given, pray for the recipient, and sign the card that is sent with each gift. These gifts have also been prayed over while we are making them.

For the month of October, our business meetings will be Oct. 9 & Oct. 23, and Oct. 16 will be our "Knit Along," a time when we gather to work on our projects together and sometimes learn new skills. If you are interested in helping with this ministry, we would love to have you join us.

For the month of November, we will probably only have one meeting due to my need to have surgery on my left arm on October 27. I will not know until my follow-up visit with the surgeon whether or not I can lead the meeting on November 20.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve FBC Abilene through this ministry.





Job Title:

Ministry Assistant-
Children and Preschool
Departments



Join our
TEAM

Position Overview:

The Ministry Assistant will provide essential administrative, creative, and organizational support to the Children and Preschool Departments. This role is key to ensuring smooth operations for weekly programs, special events, and volunteer teams. The ideal candidate is detail-oriented, creative, dependable, and passionate about supporting ministry efforts that serve children, families, and volunteers.

Responsibilities include:

- ☆ Administrative support for events & programs
- ☆ Volunteer coordination & communication
- ☆ Preparing materials for Sundays & special events
- ☆ Maintaining records (children, volunteers, attendance)
- ☆ Assisting with social media, website, and parent communication
- ☆ Helping to create & craft activities and signage for our ministries.

Qualifications:

- Strong organizational and administrative skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication abilities
- Ability to work collaboratively with ministry staff, volunteers, and parents
- Proficiency in basic computer programs (Microsoft Office, Cricut, etc.)
- A heart for ministry and a passion for serving children and families.

This will be a full-time position Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

If interested in applying for this position, please contact Becky Tucker or Keathley Roan.



Becky Tucker becky.tucker@fbcabilene.org 325-675-8106
Keathley Roan keathley.roan@fbcabilene.org 325-675-8192

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS:

CITY LIGHT

Community Ministries

SUNDAY BREAKFAST: **646**

COMMUNITY BREAKFAST: **514**

COMMUNITY LUNCH: **2,408**

PRODUCE: **664**

VOLUNTEER HOURS: **549**

SHOWERS: **255**

CLOTHING ITEMS: **403**

CALLS AND VOICEMAILS: **466**

MAIL CHECKS: **370**

FRONT DESK WALK-INS: **2,439**

DINING ROOM WALK-INS: **2,661**



THANK YOU SUPPORTERS OF THE CITY LIGHT DO GOOD THINGS CELEBRATION DINNER

We could not have enjoyed such a wonderful event without our generous supporters. Thank you to each one who chose to help us care for our neighbors in need. We encourage you to stop by their businesses and show them the same support they have so kindly shown us.



Steve Butman
Charles Lynn Jewelers
Chicken Express
Dina & Tim Griffin
Hair Parlor
Hendrick Health
Holly Horn Mickler
Laura's Boutique
Lone Star Electric
Ann Mayhall
Hillary & Kimberly Moore
Moss Adamson Spalding Charities, Inc.
The Nomad - Keith & Paige Sproles
Jud & Martha Powell
RKB2 Consultants
Becky & Jack Rentz
Secret Society of Closet Quilters
Richard & Carolyn Shelburn
Sign Design Warehouse
Larry & D'Anna Smith
Wanda Sumner
Surprises Gift Shop

Addies Boutique
Bible Hardware
Bogie's Downtown Deli
Candies by Vletas
Caitie Pies
Community Foundation of Abilene
Cypress Street Station
Frontier Texas!
Front Porch Coffee Co. & Bakery
The Grace Museum

Grain Theory
Ron Harden
The Historic Paramount Theater
Milestone Floral
NCCIL
The Pumpkin Man
Poppies & Pearls
Seven & One Books
Texas Star Trading Company
United Way of Abilene

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.



FLC Family Life Center

PARTY PACKAGES: 59

FITNESS CENTER USES: 228

NEW FITNESS MEMBERS: 5

FITNESS CLASSES: 19

SERENITY HOUSE: 310

FULL BUILDING RENTALS: 25

WALK-INS: 294

SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS: 13

SCHOOL GROUPS: 9





Who knew getting down and dirty could leave City Light so squeaky clean?

What an incredible crew of volunteers showed up at City Light this past Friday to roll up their sleeves and give our building a deep cleaning before the Celebration Dinner. Thanks to their hard work, City Light has never looked better! We are so grateful for each of you,

thank you, thank you, thank you!

John and Beth





The Sisters's Table

A circle of sisters, so gentle, so sweet,
Gathered together where hearts often meet.
We spoke of the flowers—God's lessons they bring,
Of roots that grow deep and of petals that sing.

With laughter and love, our hands took their part,
Crafting bookmarks as keepsakes of heart.
Dried blossoms reminding, wherever we go,
Of faith that is rooted and love that will grow.



STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

October 1, 11 years
MARIA VERACRUZ
GLO Teacher

October 1, 7 years
ALLIE TOBIN
GLO Director

October 30, 2 years
NANCY ZAVALA
GLO Teacher

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

September 2025

Budget	September	Year-to-Date
Required	\$224,010	\$2,465,140
Given	\$452,652	\$2,624,964

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



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH • ABILENE

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www.fbcabilene.org

OCTOBER

- 5** Friendship House Open House
Personnel Committee Meeting
FBC Night at the Zoo
- 8** Buildings & Grounds
Committee Meeting
Committee on Committees Meeting
Deacon Selection Committee Meeting
- 12** Men's Ministry Steak Night
- 15** Committee on Committees Meeting
- 16** Men's Ministry Brown Bag Lunch
- 19** Missions' Committee Meeting
- 21** CLCM Executive Board Meeting
CLCM Full Board Meeting
Finance Committee Meeting
Deacons' Meeting
- 22** Church Conference
Committee on Committees Meeting
- 26** Lord's Supper
Foundation Board Meeting
- 27** Ministry of Counseling Board Meeting
- 28** GLO Board Meeting
- 29** Trunk or Treat