



FIRST BAPTIST *At First Glance*

First Baptist Church / 211 W. Comanche, Norman, Oklahoma 73069 / 405-321-1753 / Fax 405-321-2087 / www.fbcnorman.org

As a veteran traveler of I-35 between Oklahoma and Texas, the Red River bridge crossing is always a defining marker of the journey. On most trips you peer over the bridge, hoping to find a glimpse of water, understanding perfectly how the river earned the name “Red,” but curious about the description “River.”

With the rains of recent weeks, however, the Red River found new life. The amount of water flowing was so massive that it actually reached the underside of the I-35 bridge. Bridge and road engineers carefully monitored the integrity of the bridges to make sure they were not compromised and unsafe for travel. Imagine the chaos and separation that would be created if the I-35 bridges collapsed under the force of recent rains.

Bridges are a vital part of life and we often take them for granted. They connect us across canyons, waters and terrains that would otherwise be impossible to cross. They make relationships with those on the other side possible. What bridges are you thankful for? What bridges do you take for granted? What bridges are you monitoring, building and/or repairing today?

A bridge is one of the powerful metaphors used to describe the saving work of Jesus. The chasm that separates people from God is sin and death. Attempts to span this chasm on our part are doomed to fail. We are simply not good enough or strong enough or even interested enough to successfully bridge the gap on our own. Yet, God’s perfect love and compassion see the possibility of a bridge. Through the incarnation Jesus, the God-Man, offers His life as the Bridge that spans the chasm between God and us. Jesus’ life, death and resurrection build a bridge of grace and forgiveness that welcome us into the presence of God as new creations, made righteous through Jesus’ atoning work. Have you crossed this bridge yet?

I wonder if worship could be understood as one of the bridges for the

Christian faith. After all, worship connects us with God and with one another in ways that are unique and profoundly meaningful. The Scripture teaches that God is Spirit and He seeks those who worship in spirit and in truth. Worship is the bridge that facilitates this encounter with God. In those special and holy moments, grace is received, faith is strengthened and lives are transformed.

Worship also is one of the bridges that connects a faith community to each other. The Psalmist says, *One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts* (145:4). This is a beautiful picture of what generational worship can look like. Imagine a church where the generations gather to share their faith stories, praise God and give testimony of God’s work (mighty acts) as part of their worship expression. A church like this honors and practices the worship traditions and music of older generations, but also receives the new things that God is doing in music and worship expression within younger generations. I believe this is the primary vision that God is placing before us as we move our worship times to early and late beginning on July 12. Our move away from generationally focused, simultaneous worship services to an early and late worship format creates the opportunity to embrace the generations in worship, allowing us to share our stories, our music, and our lives with each other.

The early service will begin with a more traditional feel and the late service with a more contemporary approach. Over time, as our worship arts and music ministry grows under the direction of Chad Smith, we hope that both services will be characterized by a sharing that welcomes and encourages all the generations to worship together. The goal is not identical services, but rather



Dr. Wade Smith

authentic expressions of worship, reflecting who we are generationally.

The early and late worship format benefits us in several ways. First, it creates a new worship time for us and for those in our community. Several have indicated they will join us for worship when we begin the early worship service. Second, it continues to honor our commitment to a unified Bible study hour on Sunday morning. Third, it will allow Chad and our worship arts ministry time to grow naturally into these generational worship expressions. Fourth, there is great benefit to being in one location for worship. While Common Ground has been a wonderful venue for LifeSong, its distance from the nursery and Sunday School space has hindered some. Its size also limits our potential for growth. Finally, our ministry staff will be able to participate in worship more fully with the entire congregation, not having to choose which part of the congregation to worship with each week.

As we begin this journey on July 12, let me ask you to do a few things. First, pray! Pray for our worship teams as they manage the new times and the transition between services that will take place each Sunday morning. Pray that God will continue to shape our vision for worship and ministry as a generational family of faith. Second, participate! We need more folks to be involved in our worship ministry: choir, drama, orchestra, praise team, tech team, ushers, greeters, extended session (King’s Kids). Volunteer and get involved. Third, worship! Worshiping in community is a vital part of our faith journey. Whether you come early or late, let’s commit ourselves to worshipping together. Fourth, invite! Invite your friends and neighbors to worship with us. This time of transition is a wonderful opportunity for individuals and families to join us. Finally, be gracious. Transitions like these always bring a variety of emotions. Many are excited about the opportunities ahead. Others are anxious over the changes and sense of loss. Let us persevere and encourage one another as together we enter into this new season of worship and building bridges.

Grace and Peace,
Dr. Wade Smith

Many Adult 55+ activities planned for summer

Summer has arrived. Check out the Adult 55+ activities that are coming soon.

Theatre Nights

July 7: Lyric Theatre with production of Mary Poppins

Aug. 14: Yellow Rose Dinner Theatre with Elvis Presley

Blue Plate Special Luncheons will be July 8, July 15, Aug. 5, and Aug. 12. Lunches are served at 11:30 a.m. in the Garden of Eatin'. Cost is \$6 per person and everyone is invited.

Musical Evenings

July 18: An evening with the Flying High Tinker '40s Band in Midwest City.

Aug. 28: An evening of Gospel with Broken Vessel at the Family Life Center.

Senior Seminary with Dr. Bobby Kelley from Oklahoma Baptist University

Aug. 7: 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Includes lunch.

Field of Flowers with Cheryl the Artist

July 21: 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$20 and supplies are provided. Invite a friend and come join us.



Vickie Riggs

July-August-September Birthday Bash Luncheon

Aug. 20: 11:30 a.m. Garden of Eatin'. Cost is \$5 unless you are a birthday baby and your lunch is free.

Fall Adventure to the Missouri and Arkansas Hills Branson and Eureka Springs

Sept. 8-12: Our trip includes, "Jonah" at the Sight and Sound Theatre, "Six," "Red, Hot and Blue," "The Great Passion Play" and much more in Branson and Eureka Springs. Transportation by Motorcoach.

Detailed itineraries are available at the Family Life Center. Sign-up by July 6.

Vickie Riggs

Sunday Schedule beginning July 12

Early Worship 8:30 a.m.

LifeGroups 9:40 a.m.

Late Worship 10:50 a.m.

Summer a busy and important time for First Baptist Church

July has proven to be a month of important activities in the life of FBCN over the past few years.

Many places and many churches seem to go on auto pilot in the summer but activities seem to mount to a full fury around Norman. We complete youth and children camps in June then it is time for teams to head to the mission field at the end of June into the first of July. Certainly, this year is no exception with around 40 of our members spread across the globe at this time. Pray for their successful ministry and for their safe travels.

Consider these important July events from the past few years. July 2009, was the time the church approved activating the Committee on Committees with a journey to nominate more than 100 of our members to lead us through a major capital facilities planning time which led to the 2010 presentation and approval of our Strategic Capital Plan. That plan presented a challenge to look at how our facilities needed to receive maintenance or upgrades to meet the ever needed improvements to keep our legacy of facilities

functioning for future generations and those not yet here.

Of course there is always a little carry over into June and August, to finish our July impact. In August 2012, we accepted the challenge to financially support phase one of these projects through our IGNITE emphasis. That led to two months of prayerful consideration for commitments of more than \$3 million to support the east wing renovation, along with adding a new front entrance to our sanctuary.

At the end of June 2013, we celebrated with the groundbreaking service with great excitement and anticipation of what a year-long construction project would provide in facility improvements. Last July, we moved into the renovated space.

As we enter July 2015, we look forward to completing our commitments to pay off the project by this fall. You have given abundantly and in many cases sacrificially over the



Roy Joe Ham

past 2 ½ years and as we head down the home stretch it is time to finish strong.

There are sufficient commitments left to be made to pay this project off and provide a good base to lead into

the greatly needed phase two of projects. That kind of base would allow us to begin the design stages so we can accurately provide cost for the work needed in hopefully both the west wing for our children and in the FLC.

I ask you to join with me in prayer as we express gratitude for the wonderful generosity, the greatly renewed space and that we will finish well. We have until October to finish our three-year commitment. A number of people extended their giving commitment six months into 2016. I am convinced that obedient generosity and fulfilled commitments will lead to completing this work in October.

This year, July brings another exciting step in this journey of faith and

being family at FBC. As we have discussed since last September, when we called a new Minister of Worship Arts/Music, we also would introduce a new worship schedule. On July 5, we will celebrate with a combined worship and on July 12 we will begin our early and late worship times with both of them being in our sanctuary.

As with all things new, there will be a season of adjustment but the focus will be about renewed opportunities to worship God. Along with these opportunities, we pray that lives will be changed, that opportunities to grow our church will be experienced and a new spirit raised among His people. Pray for those that you need to invite to be a part of this new journey in our family life.

I am excited the church called Chad Smith as our first full-time Minister of Worship Arts and Music in a long time. I enter this time with excited anticipation to see how God uses him in this season of transition. Pray for all of your staff, especially Chad and his family, as they begin their ministry among us.

Roy Joe Ham

The Jude Bible Study
 will begin
 at 6:30 p.m.
 on July 1 in Room B34

Pledges \$3,127,007
 Received \$2,731,451

The importance of connecting to an FBC LifeGroup

Have you ever found yourself so excited about something going on in your life that you couldn't wait to tell someone...and you had no one to tell? Or found yourself in a place where you needed someone to cry with or laugh with or scream with...and you had no one? I have been there.

Truth be told, I usually prefer to be by myself with some things. Sometimes, though, I need to have people around me. A small group of people can sometimes be the difference between enjoying all that life throws at us and just taking all that life throws at us.

At FBC Norman, our goal is for every person to be a part of a group of people who want to live life together. We call these groups LifeGroups. The name fits the purpose.

This is a group of people with whom we study Scripture, apply that Scripture to our lives, pray together, laugh together, break bread together, ask for advice about raising our children, ask for help in our marriage. These are the people who

receive our first phone call when something has gone wonderfully right, or horribly wrong. Some

of these are what I like to call our 2 a.m. friends. We have "friends," and then we have FRIENDS. Then we have those in our lives that we can call at 2 a.m.

As FBC Norman's mission statement reads, our LifeGroups exist for us to Love People, Teach the Word, and Live the Journey... TOGETHER. Have you had the chance to experience a LifeGroup yet?

Maybe you have had a chance to be a part of a LifeGroup, and it hasn't been the best experience for you. I talked with someone last week who discussed this very experience, AND they decided to "Golden Rule" their LifeGroup...they did to their LifeGroup what they wished



Kirk Hatcher

had been done for them when they first became a part. Surely you can imagine what happened! The LifeGroup has become an entirely new community for them simply because one couple decided to do something different. Maybe that gives you an idea for something you can do...

Perhaps you have been a part of a LifeGroup and sense that you would want to have a conversation about becoming a LifeGroup leader. Please let me know!

Did you know that we have a place where newcomers can visit on any given Sunday? We call it our Discover First class. Regular attenders and newcomers alike can come to this class before trying to find their way to a LifeGroup. When they are ready to venture into LifeGroups, someone from Discover First can go with them until they find a LifeGroup that fits. This is one of the ways that we are aiming at our goal of every person at FBC Norman as a part of a LifeGroup.

When you're ready to begin this journey together, let me know!

Kirk Hatcher

The long-term impact of Falls Creek on our students

Falls Creek. It's one of those places that is famous (and because of recent rain, infamous) to all in Oklahoma. As someone who had never taken a group of students there for summer camp, I was anxious to see if it would live up to its reputation.

And for the most part, it did. Our students worshiped with 5,000 other students each morning and evening. We did ropes course elements that required us to cheer each other on. We had an undefeated middle school kickball team (in a high school division, no less). We ate three square meals a day. Many ran the 5k, the toughest one I remember running.

But most important were the

conversations we were able to have.

While some of them happened during the activities listed above, the rest of them happened over the course of the unscheduled rest of the day. These were conversations of fellowship, getting to know each other. They were conversations of concern and care, learning to share what is important with each other. And they were conversations of love and hope, conversations of faith in God and grace



Rich Lubbers

for the moment.

I wonder what the long-term impact of Falls Creek will be for our students and our church. Will it be something that challenges us and helps us grow, or will it be something that we forget about later in the year? This is where you come in: will you help us remember what God has done in our lives? Will you find a student and ask them how God worked in their life that week at Falls Creek? Will you find a student and commit to praying for and with them until next year's Falls Creek?

We need you, our kindred, our family.

Rich Lubbers

Church directories are available and can be picked up at the church office

Housing ministry prayer needs



Angela Atkins

Our Samaritan's Inn Housing ministry began two years ago as a tangible way to help homeless get off the streets. We currently have three women participating in the program.

This ministry provides physical shelter, as well as opportunities to improve financial health, spiritual growth and self-sufficiency. Our hope is that this transitional and transformational ministry will change lives. You can help in this ministry through prayer, using this daily prayer guide to pray for many areas of their lives. Our God is mighty and changes lives.

Angela Atkins



THE FLC AND CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FRIDAY, JULY 3, AND SATURDAY, JULY 4

Family Life Center

Fitness Center Orientation
with Randy Praytor
6 p.m. Monday

Required for use of Fitness Center

Low-Impact Exercise
Free

10 to 10:45 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday

Park/Arthritis approved

Pilates

With Rebecca Darrow
8 to 9 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Aerobics

With Darla Miller
5:20 to 6:20 p.m. Monday and Thursday

Samaritan's Inn Housing Ministry Daily Prayer Guide

Monday

Pray for their jobs and finances. Pray that their work empowers them and provides the financial resources they need.

Tuesday

Pray that God will ease their aches and pains, giving them the energy and health they need each day.

Wednesday

Pray that God will ease their worries and calm their anxieties. Pray that He will give them mental health.

Thursday

Pray that each of them will see God at work in their lives and will follow Him. Pray that they will know that He loves them.

Friday

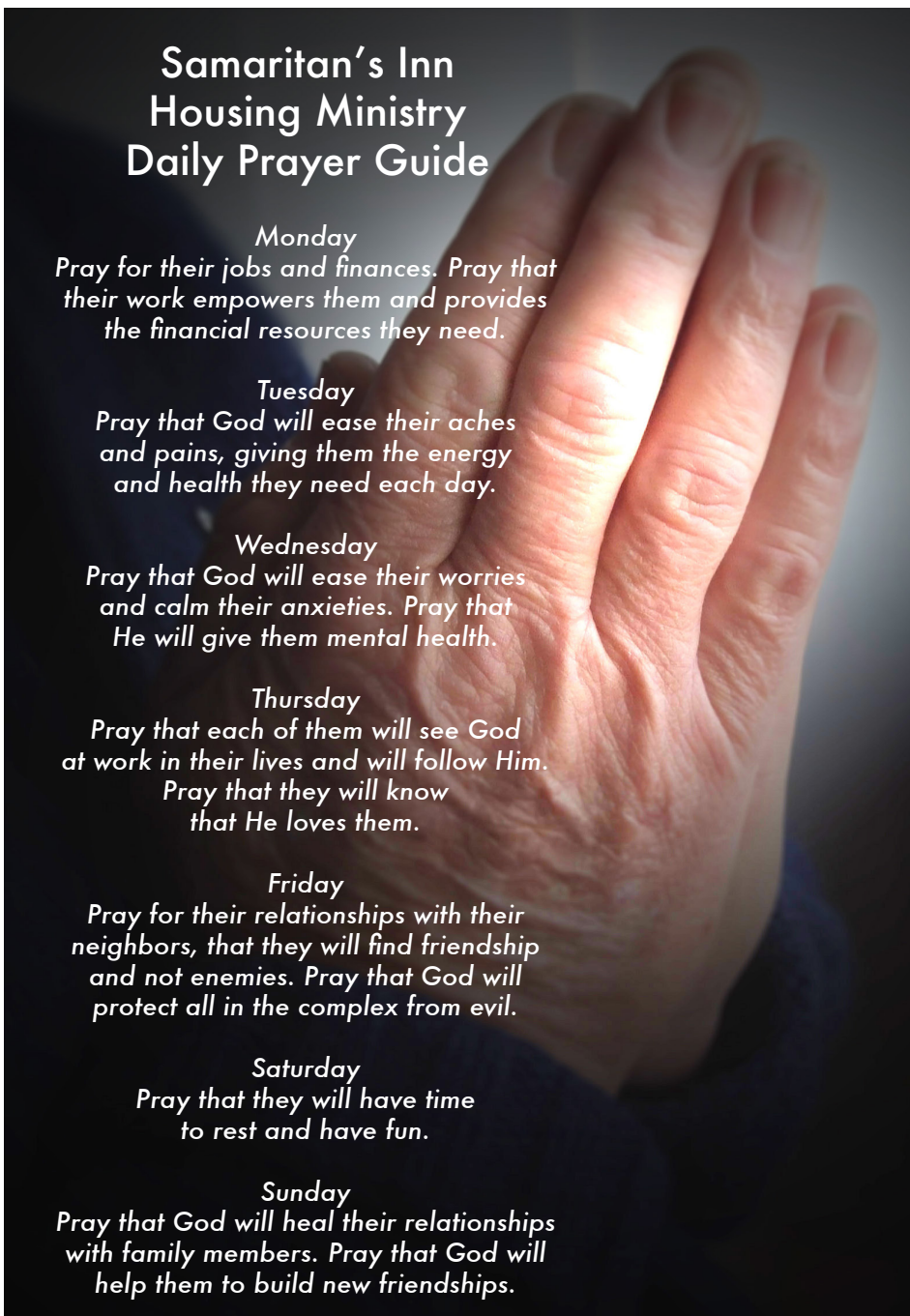
Pray for their relationships with their neighbors, that they will find friendship and not enemies. Pray that God will protect all in the complex from evil.

Saturday

Pray that they will have time to rest and have fun.

Sunday

Pray that God will heal their relationships with family members. Pray that God will help them to build new friendships.



Chad Smith looks forward to time at First Baptist Church

Chad Smith, First Baptist Church's first full-time Music and Worship Arts Minister in several years, said that he sensed a call from God to surrender his life to ministry.

"I believe it truly is a calling. I'm also a people person and ministry is all about people," Chad said.

"My spiritual gifts are shepherding, serving and mercy which all lend themselves to ministry."

That call, Chad said, came early in his life.

"I sensed the call soon after I gave my life to the Lord at the age of 12 but I wrestled with that call for about 20 years," Smith said. "Selfishly, I wanted to pursue a career that would bring me fame and fortune but God graciously closed all of the doors I opened for myself to try and gain those things. I have lots of interest and experience in other fields but I can honestly say I would not be completely happy or fulfilled if I were not in ministry."

Chad, along with his wife Tara

and their twin daughters, Addison and Ainsley, came to First Baptist in June. Prior to coming to Norman, Chad has ministered at seven different churches in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas in some capacity for almost 22 years.

"The church I served before the Lord moved us to Norman was First Southern Baptist Church in Bryant, Ark. I served there as the Worship and Senior Adults Pastor for five years," Chad said.

When he's not ministering, Chad said that he enjoys spending time with his family, water/snow skiing and traveling.

"I'm also an automobile and airplane enthusiast. I received my pilot's license through the flight school at Southeastern Oklahoma



Chad Smith

State University in Durant and enjoy flying when I have the opportunity," Chad said.

Chad and his family are quickly falling in love with Norman and the wonderful First Baptist family.

"I've enjoyed spending time with and getting to know the amazing staff. I've also enjoyed learning about all of the wonderful ministries First Baptist has to offer," Chad said.

During his time at First Baptist, Chad is most looking forward to building into the DNA of the worship arts/music ministry.

"It is important that we discover and mentor the next generation of church musicians and worship leaders," Chad said. "I also look forward to expanding our worship arts/music opportunities for children and students and working toward a multi-generational approach to music ministry at First Baptist. It also will be fun to help the church rediscover and use drama to communicate the gospel."

Many summer activities continue at the Family Life Center

The summer months have always proved to be a busy time for the Family Life Center and this year is no exception.

Anyone interested in going on the Mission Trip to Watonga from July 20-24, can email Clint Taylor at clintt@fbcnorman.org or call the FLC, 360-5300. We will be holding soccer and art camps for the families attending the Watonga Baptist Indian Church.

There are still a few spaces in the 4-year-old to first grade Jr. Chef's Camp for Aug. 3-6, and the second-fifth grades Chef's Camp from July 27-30.

It also is not too late to sign-up for Upward Basketball Camp which will be

held from July 6-9. It includes ages 6-12. Gymnastics registration for the

fall semester will begin Monday, Aug. 3.

Friendship Sunday Supper

1st and 3rd Sundays of each month
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

First Sundays
4:30-5:30 p.m.
Clothes Closet

Third Sundays
4:30-5:30 p.m.
Devotion & Food Pantry



**Jr. Hoops Camp
May 26-28
Family Life Center**



**FBC Kid's Summer
Theme Nights for
July and August**

July 1

Swimming at the Long's

We will leave the church
at 5:45 p.m.

July 8

Movie Night

July 22

Swimming at the Stapleton's

We will leave the church
at 5:45 p.m.

July 29

Movie Night

Aug. 7 and Aug. 12

No activities

Aug. 19

Kids International Cookout

Parking lot and playground

THAILAND TREK

VBS™

6 - 8 p.m. July 13 - 17

Ages 4 through completed 5th grade

Register online today at fbcnorman.org

Contact Crystal Byrd today to volunteer

July Birthdays

July 1: Phil Cotton, Justin Love, Alice Mobley, Emily Pierce

July 2: Tyler Couch, John Dwyer, Hillary Hawkins, Wilma Minyen, Alyssa Smith, Jennifer Smith

July 3: Corey Dunford, Mark Dvorak, PJ Meek, Arthur Witt

July 4: Tommy Craighead, James Harp, EttaJean Hobbs, Carla Messer, Chad Smith, Ina Snyder

July 5: David Deford, Dustin Horstkoetter, Lisa Stegner, Kim Weaver, Shelley Wilson

July 6: Cathleen Clough, Pamela Hill

July 7: Edna Carrington, Robert Hamra, Gregory Hoyt, Jeff Jones, Hilary Michael

July 8: Jennifer Fox, Matthew Lang, Jean Tahkofper

July 9: Vivian Holt, Clay Miller, Isabella Nava, Marissa Polston

July 10: Doris Burleson, Ruth Ann Carr, Ryan Chapman, Claire Davis, Johnny High

July 11: Donald Burgess, Ed Goebel, Kathleen Moorhead, Nicole Parrish, Ann Terrell, Brian Wilson

July 12: MacKenzie Childers, Tom Gallaher, Marc Hardage, Flora Ionescu, Susan Knight, William Leber, Daxton Marley, Shirley McCormick, Pat Tucker

July 13: Janice Campbell, Daniel Deering, Rita Hilliard, Donnie Jones Jr., Tom Law, Steve Williams

July 14: Beverly Adkins, Patrick Combs, Iva Griffith, Trenton McMillen

July 15: Kara Barton, Jonathan Caddell,

Ian Chandra, Gabriel Cherry, Shelly Ellis, Lizzy Lefler, Patrick Livingston

July 16: Wayne Parrish, Joseph Schier, Anthony Strevett, Emily Sullivan

July 17: Jana Christian, Junice Frazier, Doyal Hedrick, Laura Jonason, Brandon Ragland

July 18: Nita Bill, Ginny Cecil, Sharon Garrett, Karen Griffin, Andrea Hale, Noah Hodges, Loretta Ketner, Brandon Leech, Ralph Moulton

July 19: Nina Hopkins, Madison Rigney, Wade Smith, Ronny Turbeville, Ethan Wilson

July 20: Tracy Foor, Eleanor Mullinax, Wilson Mullinax, Warren Osburn

July 21: Dan Caldwell, Kelly Combs, Jenni Holderby, Gloria Lamar, Matt Robinson, Jack Smith

July 22: Claud Dill, Jeff Dismukes, Linda Law, Michael Matthews, Ashlie Mowdy, Lisa Sabatelli, Austin Smith

July 23: Jess Porter

July 24: Pat Allen, Jeremy Briscoe, Greg Cook, Mike Reihart

July 25: Jennifer Curry, John DeLany, Estelle Evans, Linda Harrison, Vivian Hilgenfeld

July 26: Peggy Thomas

July 27: Jane Kroeker, Leslie Moss, Kent Nicholson, Austin Taylor

July 28: Glenn Adams, Robin Antonio, Charles Douglas, Carolyn Seratte, Jan Seratte

July 29: Huwanta Blasius, Laurie Foor, Helen Hull, Sally Lawrence, Benjamin Ray

July 30: Kevin Foor, Lynn Murdock, Lise Simpson, Sawyer Stapleton

July 31: Julie Bradford, Donna Dye, Kim Hopper, Chris Tucker

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Sympathies

The First Baptist Church family wants to extend sympathies to:

Jim & Judy Spearman at the passing of Judy's brother, Bill Manning

*Ina Snyder, Nita Bill & Craig Snyder at the passing of their brother & uncle, Ben Simpson
Crystal Byrd at the passing of her grandmother, Sylvia Byrd*

Jequita & Nick Napoli at the passing of their father in-law & grandfather, Albert Napoli Jr.

Joe Bob, Neva & Dick Weaver at the passing of their brother in-law & uncle, Trent Melder

Jane Close at the passing of her husband, Manning Close

Frank, Janette & Kim Marks, Bob, Kelly, Eric & Shea Fredericks at the passing of Frank's brother, Luther Marks III

Fred & Donna Queen, Jonathan & Kristen Queen and Valerie Shybosky at the passing of Donna's brother, Bobby Knotts

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