



First Baptist Church

Volume 12, Issue 6
January 2016

At First Glance

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

Happy New Year! Are you ready for 2016?

Each new year provides the opportunity for remembrance, redemption, and resolutions. Interesting that these are spiritual practices as well. Through Christ, we have the daily opportunity to remember, redeem, and resolve. One of the tangible ways we acknowledge these practices at the New Year is by sharing together in the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday. I invite you to join us on January 3 for worship as we celebrate and anticipate a new year in Christ and in community with one another.

On January 10, I will bring the Annual Sermon. This sermon allows us to remember the previous year and to look forward to a new year. We will reflect on our mission and core values. We will celebrate the good and new things the Spirit of God is doing in our midst. We also will identify some of the challenges and opportunities that lay before us.

2015 was a significant year in many ways for First Baptist. God is inviting us to experience deeper relationships with Him and each other as He empowers us to live out our mission to Love People, Teach the Word, and Live the Journey of life and faith.

In His Steps was written in 1896 by Charles Sheldon, a minister in the Central Congregational Church of Topeka, Kansas. By 1935, Publishers Weekly noted that the book had more circulation than any other book except the Bible, having been translated into 21 languages.

In the 1990s, the "What Would

Jesus Do?" principle became the focal point of popular Christianity. All of this to say, *In His Steps* is one of the most influential Christian works ever published. If you haven't read this book, I encourage you to do so.

On January 17, I will begin a five week series by this same title. The sermon series will pick up on Sheldon's framing passage 1 Peter 2:21 which declares that in His suffering, Christ left an example for us, that we should follow *In His Steps*.

The social and moral issues of Sheldon's day are quite different, but his questions for discipleship continue to be worthy of consideration.

One of the unique aspects of Sheldon's fictional novel is the invitation for the church to gather and talk specifically about the tensions and challenges of following Christ. As such, I will make the same invitation to gather on Sunday evenings during the course of the series as we consider what it means to walk *In His Steps*.

The MannaFest lunch on the first Wednesday of the month at Common Ground continues to be a gathering place for fellowship and good food. Your presence at MannaFest is one way that you can help us host and welcome the downtown community.

This month Amy Williams will be



Dr. Wade Smith

our guest speaker sharing how her faith helps to shape and motivate her work with the Bushenyi Alliance for Rural Health and Development (BAHRD).

MannaFest is always a blessing. I hope you will join us on January 6 at noon.

As I conclude these thoughts, I can't help but reflect on the recent Advent and Christmas celebrations. *The Sounds of Christmas* invited us to listen for the sounds of Christmas Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. The worship, events, and ministries of the month impacted not only us, but our community.

The Christmas tree and Nativity on Main Street told their story to all who passed by. A teacher at Whittier expressed how much she was blessed by the devotion guide. A visitor to our Christmas concert said it was the best she had seen in Norman in 50+ years. The poems written by our members offered new expressions for worship. The Family Caroling night blessed singers and those who were visited. And, the Christmas Eve Candle Lighting service is one of the special fellowship and worship moments of the year.

All of these meant to prepare our hearts to receive the glorious news that Christ the Lord is born. Thank you for finding your place to serve, be present, and help others (including me) prepare for Christmas morning. Now, let us continue to be faithful to tell and live out this Good News each and every day.

Looking forward to a wonderful 2016.

Online giving options made available for FBC members

Happy New Year. With 2015 now being seen in the rearview mirror, how was your year?

Around FBC it has been a year filled with excitement in ministry and change. We finally have a complete ministry staff, and how that has affected our worship life, as well as our ministry to University students, has impacted us all. The water of the baptistery was used more often than any of the other years since our arrival in 2008.

Ministry opportunities continue to come to our doors and certainly mission efforts grow around the world. As you look back at 2015, it is my prayer that you can say, God used me through... and you fill in the blank. He calls us all to be ministers to the world around us. Please don't forfeit that call.

Newsletter by mail or electronic?

Several years ago we began offering our monthly newsletter to be sent to you either by mail or electronically.

Certainly we would like to keep you informed and give you the option of how you receive it.

We currently mail about 600 newsletters monthly. Of course, mailing is an expense to the church in paper, printing and mailing costs. If you would like to only receive it electronically to save some of the cost and be more environmentally friendly, would you please contact the office and opt out of mail. Give us the email or emails that need to be used for your family. Thank you for your consideration.

Online Giving

Did you know that First Baptist offers you an option to give online? There is a link on our website, fbcnorman.org that takes you to



Roy Joe Ham

our giving page. It only takes a few minutes to set up an account to begin the process.

You can set up giving one time, or on a regular interval basis. This is a convenient and easy way to give. You can use online giving when you are away and it allows you to become a regular contributor to the ministry of FBC.

Approximately 5-7 percent of our regular budget giving is done online. Could this be your new path to become a regular contributor? Check it out and if you have questions, please let me know.

As we move into 2016 the opportunities for ministry are great and we need you to be involved. If you have not found a place to serve, talk to a minister in an area that you feel called to be a part of and see if you can get plugged in. If we serve together, we will become a closer and more productive family.

Enjoy the journey we face into this New Year.

Celebrate the birth of Christ by supporting missionaries

In Indonesia children love birthday celebrations, because every child attending receives a gift. Of course, it is a small gift. The person whose birthday is being celebrated receives the major gifts.

We just celebrated the birth of Jesus. Decorations are being put away; lights are coming down; gifts are being enjoyed. But what about the One whose birth we celebrated. Did He receive a major present from each celebrator?

God so loved the world...all the people of the world.... He gave his Son so that through belief in Him they would not perish but have eternal life. However, 2,000 centuries later so many of them have never heard. How can they believe if no one tells them? How can messengers go tell unless someone sends them?

Of course, we believers are to tell

the people with whom we come in contact. Many of us go to other parts of the world on short-term mission trips. Others take the good news of Jesus as they are spread around the world for business, vocational or secular reasons. We are all to be "missionaries."

But God still calls some believers to plant their lives in another country. They learn the language of that people, come to understand their culture, and LIVE FULL-TIME among them. They share in the people's daily lives in a way that opens doors to tell about God's great love and what Jesus wants to do for them. They are on-site to disciple new believers. These are usually "sent" by Christians at home.

What better way to celebrate the birth of Christ than by giving Him the major Christmas gift of sending

missionaries to them about Him. The Lottie Moon (SBC) and World Christmas offerings are still open to receive your gift. Contact the church office.

Marge Worten

FBC Norman Book Club

Join an online discussion group with our ministry staff.

facebook.com/FirstBaptistNormanbooks

2016: A Year for HOPE

I am filled with hope for the coming year. It's strange, really. Anyone who knows me knows that I tend toward being a "glass half-empty" kind of person. It's not something I'm proud of... definitely something I'm working on. Yet, I find myself hopeful.



Kirk Hatcher

How's your hope meter? As we begin this new year, are you hopeful? Are you filled with wonder at what the year might hold? Chances are, like me, you are aware of some things that could potentially happen during 2016

and you have already jumped to the worst possible scenario. It's difficult to find hope in the midst of this, isn't it?

What kind of hope are we talking about, really? For most of my life, I thought that hope was very nearly the same as a wish. Recently, our ministry staff read through *Creative Ministry*, by Henri Nouwen. In one of the chapters he talked about hope in a way that helped me better understand it. He contrasted hope with wish-fulfillment.

Nouwen mentions that in our wish-fulfillment thinking we have specific goals in mind. Goals like a better way to help our homeless friends, or finding a way to help more people find employment.

We often get so caught up in our goals, according to Nouwen, that

we lose sight of the Giver and focus entirely on these goals as the basis of who we are. "Only through hope are we able to overcome this...attitude, for hope is not directed to the gift but to the Giver of all gifts. We wish *that*, but we hope *in*." [1]

How hopeful are we? In 2016, can we make a pledge with each other to be hopeful? Surely if I can see a glass half-full and be grateful for the opportunity to have a glass at all, you can join me. What if we managed to work together to accomplish our goals? Hoping (dare we say trusting) in God to fulfill God's objectives with our help. What a year we can have TOGETHER.

1. Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Creative Ministry* (New York: Doubleday, 1971), 85.

How will you participate in WakeUpWeekEnd?

Our students will participate in WakeUpWeekEnd, an in-town retreat centered around the idea of what it means to serve, from January 15-17.

While I'm certain that the vast majority of them know what it means to serve in some capacity, helping them think through making this a part of their lifestyle is something that they (and we) will learn for the rest of our lives.

I wonder how you'll be a part. Will you commit to praying for them? I'm asking LifeGroups to adopt a group, praying for students by name the week before, as well as throughout the weekend. Will you come and be present with them?

Our students love being with people in the church who they don't normally run into. I wonder if you'd be able to carve out time that weekend to spend a few hours with a group of students.

Would you be able to provide snacks or a meal for them? This helps us stretch our scholarship and

fundraising dollars as far as possible, and provides a really great time for you to get to know them and for them to get to know you.

I'm certain that God will do great things in and among our



Rich Lubbers

students. For those of you who have already committed in some way, please know how insignificant my thanks seems, but how heartfelt it is. Thank you for being the kind of church who continues to invest in our students, breaking down generational differences, shepherding them to grow in their faith, and having some fun along the way.

COMMUNITY

Ministry Needs

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Winter Clothing | Athletic/Work Shoes |
| Coats For Adults | Socks |
| Blankets | Gloves |
| Sleeping Bags | Canned Vegetables, |
| Men's Jeans and Pants | Meat and Fruit |

THE SOUNDS OF *Christmas Concert*

*Thank you
to everyone
for making
The Sounds
of Christmas
Concert a
great success.*

— Chad E. Smith



Contributions to date: \$2,982,244

Loan Balance: \$284,975

Downtowners Lunch

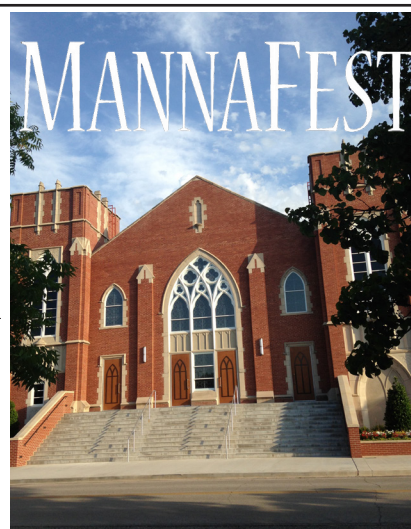
January 6

Noon - 1 p.m.

Cost: \$5

Speaker: Amy Williams,
President of Bushenyi
(Uganda) Alliance for Rural
Health & Development
(BARHD)

Menu: Potato soup,
ham sandwich,
chips and cheesecake





Adult 55+ sponsors trip to conference

So do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.

2 Timothy 1:8.

This scripture is the theme for the State Evangelism Conference scheduled for January 25-26. The adults 55+ ministry will sponsor a trip to the conference. Dr. Don Wilton, senior pastor of First Baptist Church Spartanburg, S.C., will be one of the keynote speakers. Detailed itineraries and conference schedules will be available after January 1.

We all make resolutions for the new year. And some of us keep a few of them. I encourage you to make this the year you share your life story with your children, grandchildren and beyond. It is a unique gift that only you can give to those you love.

I know it seems overwhelming. I know you think your life is boring. I know it takes time. But the result is priceless and invaluable. And how do you do begin?

Join us January 13 at 10 a.m. in the Family Life Center conference room and step by step you will tell your story. If you have questions, please contact me at 360-5300. Hope to see you then.

Thursday Visitation/Outreach Day continues in January. If you are available to be part of the Adults 55+ pastoral care ministry, we need you. We need volunteers to visit newcomers to the ministry, homebound, members with special needs and caregivers.

On Thursday morning we receive bread and pastries from Panera Bread. Items are prepared and available after 10 a.m. Prayerfully consider being involved. Let me know if you have questions.



Vickie Riggs

Volunteers needed for March event

WE NEED YOU!
Foster Children
Parent's Day Out
March 5
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

This event is working alongside DHS to help the foster families of our Norman community. WE NEED VOLUNTEERS committed to showing love and having fun with these foster children.



Crystal R. Byrd

Background checks are required to volunteer, along with a training for how to care and teach children in foster care.

If you would like to volunteer for our March event, please email me at crystalb@fbcnorman.org

Be sure to look out for Bread Banks

Grab a Bread Bank and start saving for our Children's World Offering. We will collect the banks in March.

Lord's Supper Both services Jan. 3

Sweetheart Night

A Parent's Night Out
February 12

6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

\$5 per child, \$15 Family Max

RESERVATION REQUIRED

Sign up with Crystal by Wednesday, February 3

January 22

Girls and Guys Night Out

6:30-9:30 p.m.

FBC Kids & up

Girls in the Youth Hall

Guys at the FLC Gym

Snacks provided

Community ministry team looks toward future

Thank you so much for your participation in the FBC Giving Tree this year. It was one of our best years to date, with all of the gift tags taken early and gifts steadily streaming into my office.

Thank you for your love for the children and families at Lincoln Elementary. Your gifts helped 73 children have a better Christmas.

As our community ministry team looks to the future, we hope to find more ways to partner with and help Norman children and their families.

We are investigating ways our

church community could help foster families in Norman. We are always looking for more ways to partner with the Center for Children and Families and Lincoln Elementary. In doing this, we are shifting away from our Samaritan's Inn Housing Ministry, returning the apartments to the landlord as each participant



Angela Atkins

completes her time in the program.

We still plan to continue to provide annual financial assistance for housing needs through Mission Norman, Food and Shelter, Salvation Army, and this year will add Norman Housing Ministries, a collaboration of local churches. We also will continue our other ministries to those in need.

If you are interested in helping our leadership team discern ways to support families and their children, please contact me at angela@fbcnorman.org.

What would our New Years resolutions be if we could not fail?

You may or may not realize it, but each year we as a church go through about four different New Years. Of course, there's January 1, on which we usher in the new calendar year. But there are a few more.

There's the new Fiscal Year on April 1. There's the new Academic Year, which falls somewhere around September 1. And there's the beginning of the Christian calendar, which kicks off four Sundays before Christmas.

All of these new years also come with their own set of resolutions.

On January 1, the sky is the limit when it comes to resolutions. People all over the world, and all over this church, resolve to do one thing or another because it's a veritable clean-slate.

On April 1, First Baptist as a whole resolves to lean into a new, fresh ministry plan and budget. Around September 1, I can bet the majority of our students resolve to turn in their homework on time, to write all their papers early, and to go to bed at a decent hour.

Finally, on the first Sunday of Advent, many Christians resolve to be more frugal and thankful, to focus on the true meaning of Christmas rather than the heavy materialism of culture

around us.

All of these things are good, and I'll be the first to admit, I'm a sucker for a good resolution. A good one can set forth challenges to overcome while at the same time calling us to rise to the occasion. They can provide opportunities to show what we're made of, and, if held accountable, they may even provide a platform for bigger, better resolutions



Chris Canary

down the road.

It's for these reasons, I am eager for 2016. And by way of closing, I'll leave us all with a question to consider in this new year: What would our resolutions be if we could not fail in 2016?

Brown Bag Lunch



January 4
noon

Wagner Hall
on the University
of Oklahoma campus

Df8

Dinner for 8
Sign-up through
Sunday, January 17

Sign-up at fbcnorman.org
OR by turning in
a completed Df8 form
to the church office.

January Birthdays

January 1: Marjorie Lewis, Donna Queen, Judy Spearman
January 2: Brad Copelin, Trey Gaylord, Elvis Mahan, Megan Myers, Hope Turley
January 3: Max Murphree, Colonel Richardson, Luke Whitney
January 4: Maxine Cunningham, Keith Lawrence, Robin Nipper, Arlando Reed, Julie Skinner
January 5: Rick Miller, Stacy Strevett
January 6: Sue Overton, Robert Roy
January 7: Joy Satterlee, Buddy Williams
January 9: John Bedwell, Mark Dale, Floretta Logan, Genese McCoy, Haydn McDade, Cynthia Reed
January 10: Melanie Jonason, Jennifer Leber, Kim McDade Torres, Justin Mullinax, Jack Shadle
January 11: Cody Caddell, Rusty Grice, Marques Vontress
January 12: Shirley Haskin, Martha McCourry, Max Singleterry
January 13: Patti Barr, Carrol McConnell, Carmen Goodspeed-Sinclair, Courtney Soltero
January 14: Jamie Fields, Shirley Geis, Steve Graham, Joshua Holderby, Anita Reed
January 15: Lauren Axton, Caden Long, Mark Long
January 16: Stephen Durham, Steven Graham, Mary Haning, Alison Horstkoetter, Andrea Neal, Ada Sewell

January 17: Betty Buyten, Alice Coker-Camp, Lynn Foreman, Nancy Roley
January 18: Eli Adams, Byron Tanner
January 19: Sophie Dillon, Jacob Dvorak, Lisa Edge, Mary Elwell, Mary Gorton, Leslie Jones, Pat McCoy
January 20: Kathy Bills, Luke Davis, Priscilla Fennell, Andrew Marang, Gaitha Milligan
January 21: Nicole Antonio, Marva Meador
January 22: Joyce Marley, Madeline Storm, Cassidy Sullivan
January 23: Francine Barnard, Kyle Logan, Kenny Sullivan, Neva Weaver
January 24: Barbara Anderson, Robyn Briscoe, Kara Hill, James Hirst, Beth Jackson, Colin Marang, Sheila Myers, Vanessa Trammell
January 25: Milam King, Alan Thrower
January 26: Sallie Kennedy, Wanda Reid, Shanda Scott
January 27: Peggy Alexander, Geary Hunt, Emily Lenhardt, John Smist
January 28: Cody Williams
January 29: Sue Brown, Vicky DeLany, Clay Pattison
January 30: John Cole, Becky Leon, Jordan Probst, Sage Rasmussen
January 31: Jodi Beery, Chris Carlson, Don Farris, Brittney Hall, Caeden Hatcher, Tom James

Sympathies

The FBC Family wishes to extend sympathies to:

Buddy & Susan Williams;
 Justin, Traci, Emerson, Addison,
 Laney Jo, Eleanor & Wilson
 Mullinax and Peter, Jennifer,
 Glenn & Isla Bowles at the
 passing of Buddy's cousin,
 Barbara Smith

Larry & Annetta Brown at
 the passing of Annetta's brother,
 Clarence Thorsen

Joe, Jenny, Josh, Jordan
 Roby & Jane Kroeker at the
 passing of Joe's mother, Willie
 Roby

Steve & Mary Jane Gorton at
 the passing of Mary Jane's father,
 Bob Owens

Family & friends of Jean
 O'Dor at her passing
 Cody, Angela, Olivia &
 Cooper Caddell at the passing of
 Angela's father, Tony Oliver
 Will, Donna, Liam & Molly
 McCutcheon at the passing of
 Donna's mother, Betty Coleman
 Family & friends of Kathleen
 Moorhead at her passing

Ministry Staff

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 Address Service Requested

Letters from the FBC Family

Dear FBC Family,

Please accept my thanks for your expressions of love and caring during our Tessa's illness and death. Your prayers, phone calls, cards with sweet notes, lovely plants and flowers mean so much.

Thanks for letting the Jesus in you show and bless me.

Ginny Cecil



@fbcnorman



fbcnorman.org



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