



FIRST BAPTIST *At First Glance*

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



Dr. Wade Smith
Pastor

Merry Christmas! Christmas is the best time of the year! As we observe Advent over these next weeks, let us prepare our hearts and lives for the transformative event of history: the birth of *Immanuel. God is with us!* Our Advent theme flows from the Christmas carol *Silent Night, Holy Night*. A beautiful Warren Osburn painting illustrates this theme and beckons us to explore hope, faith, peace, joy and love on our way to the manger. Our Advent devotion book invites us to share these days together as we tell our stories of Christmas. Worship services bring us together and provide focused and quiet moments from the distractions of the season. Christmas music and carols give expression to the joy and majesty of the Nativity. Christmas gatherings embody the spirit of good will and community. May your Christmas season be filled with the gift of Jesus and the experience of His love and grace in your life and family.

Generosity is one of the central themes of the Christmas season; best demonstrated in the gift of Jesus. How will you practice generosity this Christmas season? Of course there will be gifts under the tree and expressions of friendship and thanksgiving shared with those we love. But how will you express your generosity and thanksgiving toward God? Christmas is the season that many offer thanks to the Lord by supporting the work of missionaries. **The Lottie Moon and Global Missions offerings** are a wonderful way to do this. Would you give to support the work of Christ throughout the world? Also, Christmas is the season that many bring their tithes and offerings to the church. Let me encourage you to be faithful to the Lord's instruction. This is an important time of the year for our church as we look to support our ministries through the winter months. *Christmas is a great time to practice generosity toward His Kingdom.* I hope that you discover this blessing!

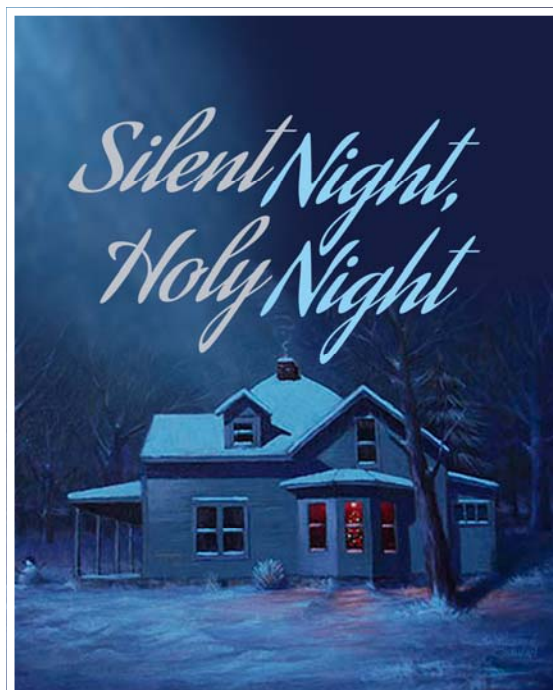
One of the opportunities I have as your pastor is to participate in community conversations and events. A little over a year ago I was invited by Dr. Joe Siano, Superintendent of Norman Schools, and Keith Humphrey, Chief of Police, to be part of a community effort to address the social issue of bullying. Too often, bullying is seen only as a school issue. The reality is that our schools simply mirror the broader culture. Bullying is a problem in the workplace, in our neighborhoods, and yes, even in our churches. As a result, a community forum entitled **Above Bullying** is scheduled for Tuesday evening, December 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the Nancy O'Brian PAC. Author Wes Moore will be the featured speaker and a community panel will follow. I hope to see you there.

MannaFest is a special outreach event to our friends and neighbors in Downtown Norman. On the first Wednesday each month during the school year we gather at Common Ground for a meal, fellowship, and to hear from a speaker. Several from our downtown community join us and we are always blessed and encouraged by our time together. Rev. Linda Harker, pastor of McFarlin UMC, will be our guest this month, sharing part of her faith story and some ways that McFarlin serves the Norman Community. Over the past months we have heard from Rev. Clark Mitchell of Journey Church, and Rev. Rusty Tugman of Alameda CoC. I hope to see you on December 4. Come and help us be good neighbors. *MannaFest... Good Food and Good Neighbors in Downtown Norman.*

As I write these words for the December newsletter, it is just a few days from **Thanksgiving**. I am blessed to be your pastor and give thanks for the opportunity to serve you. Thank you for loving the Smiths and encouraging us in our journey of life and faith. We look forward to celebrating Advent with you and the joy of gathering with so many of you on Christmas Eve to worship the Christ-child.

Peace!

Dr. Wade Smith



From the Pulpit

Silent Night, Holy Night

December 1: *Silent Night*

December 8: *Holy Night*

December 15: *All is Calm*

December 22: *All is Bright*

December 24: *Mother and Child*

All Church News



First Family Western Night and Tree Lighting

December 1

5:30 p.m. Fellowship

6:00 p.m. Tree Lighting

6:30 p.m. Western Family Fun Night

Norman Christmas Parade

Saturday, December 14, 10:00 a.m.

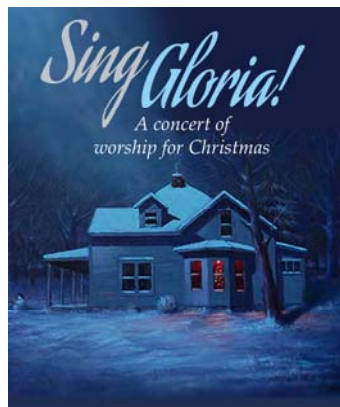
Join us at Common Ground for fellowship and hot chocolate to watch the City of Norman Christmas Parade. Bring your friends and neighbors.

Common Ground will open at 9:00 a.m.

Sing Gloria! A Concert of Worship for Christmas

December 15, 6:00 p.m.,
Sanctuary

Bring your friends and family for the annual Christmas Concert featuring the FBC Worship Choir and Orchestra.



Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 24, 6:00 p.m.

Bring a gift to put under our tree for baby Jesus. Gifts will be distributed through our Community Ministry.

Advent Guides are available for pickup in the Church Office, FLC, or any Welcome Center.

Music Ministry

Worship Beyond Words

By Michael Raiber

I am often asked about the place for instrumental music in a worship service. This is an interesting question for many reasons. We will not explore them all, but we can look to the history of instrumental music in worship services as a place to start our discussion. The history of instrumental music's use in worship service though not as robust as choral music, is rather extensive. Early instrumental consorts were used often at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice in the 16th century. So, it would be safe to say this is not a 'new' phenomenon. Yet, there are more limited opportunities for instrumental expressions apart from an accompanying role to the choral

ensemble. To be fair, there is little debate about the combination of the aesthetic power of combining great text with well-crafted music. I am often astounded by the worship I

experience during a great choral anthem. God's hand is definitely at work on me during those times.



So are instrumental expressions alone different from a choral expression? I believe they are for a couple of reasons. First is the sonic power of the instruments themselves. The ability to express wide ranges of dynamic volumes, timbres, and textures with all the possible combinations of instrumental colors allows for a wide variety of sounds that can communicate complex thoughts, emotions, or ideas that are often beyond words. A religion professor told me in my undergraduate degree that mankind must limit its understanding of God because of our limited vocabulary. There are not words to express who God is.

The second reason that instrumental expression in worship is different than a choral expression is that the listener must construct his or her own understanding of what the music is saying to them. While similar to the first reason, this is subtly different. When one allows the power of sound alone to wash over him or her in worship of the Almighty, I believe there is a unique avenue open to communicating with our Lord. For me (and that is the only context in which I can authentically discuss this), I must bring all I am to the experience and be willing to share that in my expression to God. The communication has a vocabulary. It is not just a wonderful aesthetic moment. But, the vocabulary is much different than any other communication I experience. It is a time when I can bear my soul to the Author of the Universe and feel for a brief moment that I get a glimpse of, at least parts Him. Sometimes that is a glimpse of His immense love. Sometimes it is a glimpse of His awesome power. Sometimes it scares me to experience his wrath through the music. It is always, however, a unique worshipful experience that connects me closer to the God I love and who loves me. It is worship beyond words.

Family Life Center



Hours:
Monday-Thursday
 8:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Friday
 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.
Saturday
 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

FITNESS CENTER ORIENTATION: Mon at 6:00 p.m.
 (Required before using Fitness Center) Randy Praytor

LOW-IMPACT EXERCISE: T / Th 10:00-10:45 a.m.
 Parkinson's/Arthritis approved Mary Higgins

PILATES: M / W / F 8:00-9:00 a.m. Rebecca Darrow

ZUMBA: (FREE) Wed 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tori Collier

STROLLFIT: M / W / F 9:00-9:55 a.m. Sarah Smith
 Fitness for moms, fun for their child.

Call 360-5300 for more information on programs offered at the FLC.



Upward Basketball

Practices begin Dec. 9.
Games start on Jan. 11.
and finish on March 1, 2014.



Sunday, Dec. 1

Fellowship 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Tree Lighting 6:00 p.m.

Western Night & Chili Supper 6:30 p.m.
 We will have hot dogs for the children.

Please bring your Chili or Dessert to the FLC by 5:30.



STROLLFIT
 Fitness for you. Fun for your child.

New exercise class for winter! 9:00-9:55 a.m.
 Meets in the gym on Monday & Wednesday
 Meets upstairs in the FLC on Friday



The Christmas Parade

Dec. 14

Join us at Common Ground
 for Hot Chocolate and treats.
 Open at 9:00 a.m.

Holiday Closures:

Dec. 24 & 31 at 5:00 p.m.

All Day Dec. 25, 26 & Jan. 1

FBC Family News

The FBC Family wishes to extend sympathies to...

Family & friends of Jeff Edgemon at his passing

*Susie Conklin-Simpson and Judith Conklin at the passing of
 Susie's husband, Rick Simpson*

Ruth Bacon at the passing of her husband, O. Dean Bacon

*Ron, Debbie, Torie, Veronica & Halee Lynch at the passing of
 Ron's mother, Joebillie Lynch*

*Jack, Donna & Teresa Holt and Katie Holt Davis at the
 passing of Jack's sister, Carolyn Sue Sanders*

*Greg Hunt & family at the passing of Greg's mother,
 Adeanya Hunt*

Marie Hunter at the passing of her son, Mike Hunter

*Debra & Julie Skinner and Janice Hill at the passing of
 Debra & Janice's father, Curtis Skinner*

Jack Shadle at the passing of his wife, Betty Shadle

*Phil Webb, Jon & Megan Fields and Mike & Julie Bradford at
 the passing of their wife & mother, Debbie Webb*

*Rick, Debbie, Clay & Zac Miller at the passing of
 Debbie's mother, Marian Smith Thompson*

*Gary, Barbara, Jennifer & Sarah Hunt at the passing of
 Gary's father, Edward Claud Hunt*

*Jerry & Carrol McConnell at the passing of their niece,
 Glenda Cox*

Staff Anniversaries This Month

Andrea Karmed, five years as Custodian

Norman



A Community Together

Tuesday, December 3, 7:00 p.m.
 Nancy O'Brian Performing Arts Center

Wes Moore, author of *The Other Wes Moore*
 Community Panel will follow

Childhood Ministry

**HOLIDAY WEDNESDAY
NIGHT CLOSURE**
December 25
January 1



First Kids Christmas Caroling

Dec 11, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Kinder-Grade 5

Transportation Waiver
Required



Christmas Concert
Mini Musicians will
perform during the
Christmas Concert Dec 15
at 6:00 pm



FBC KIDS Christmas Party
Wed Dec 18, 6:00-7:30 pm
Kinder - Grade 5
Bring a small gift for our gift exchange
(\$5 or less)

Adult Ministry

"Cocoa and Carols"
A Family Christmas Gathering
Thursday, December 12
Common Ground

Start with a Pizza Supper at 5:45 p.m. at Common Ground. Then caroling to FBC member's homes, ending back at Common Ground with Cocoa and Cookies. Contact the church office for more information.



**Sponsored by the Uncommon Love Adult Ministry
of FBC, Norman**

A weekend devoted to refining and building better marriages, featuring Greg and Priscilla Hunt, Kansas City, Kansas.

January 24 & 25, 2014
at Common Ground
Friday 6:00-8:30 p.m. includes dinner
Saturday 8:30-Noon
Weekend childcare available with
advanced reservations
Cost: \$50 per couple or \$30 per
individual



Annual Poinsettia Sale

Poinsettias will decorate the Sanctuary during the Advent season this year. You may purchase a poinsettia in memory, honor, or appreciation of a loved one. You may pick up an envelope in the church office. The cost is \$17.50.



Ignite Challenge



Roy Joe Ham
Minister
of Administration

December brings us to a time of celebrating Jesus with family, church and community. If we are not careful the busyness of this season can overwhelm us and we get to January without ever celebrating Jesus. This year our Advent focus is Silent Night. It is my prayer for each of us that we find some Silent Night time to reflect on the wonderful reason for this season.

This month, I am drawn to share some polar opposites that I ask you to celebrate with me on the first, and pray then respond with me to the second.

IGNITE: I hope you are excited to see the work that is ongoing. December 1 will bring the opportunity to enter the sanctuary up new, welcoming steps. I was asked just today “why didn’t we do this years ago, because it looks so welcoming.” Hopefully by early June, the elevator tower will lead to an east wing that is fully accessible with a fire suppression system, new HVAC system, and great Bible Study space. These are things that we and the community can all celebrate. We can do this because of your faithful generosity! We began the Ignite program in October 2012, and you responded with great support. From the beginning you have responded above the anticipated rate of giving. We continue to be ahead of the projected giving and through the end of October you have generously given \$1.638 million. Through your giving all of the project work to date has been paid in cash. Thank you. We praise God for each of your participation in IGNITE!

Ministry Plan (Budget) Challenge: This fiscal year has been a challenging season. While we have been ahead in our Ignite giving, we are and have been behind in our regular ministry plan (budget) giving. Even though your staff has been extremely wise in spending, maintenance and utilities are under anticipated costs, we are further under in budgeted giving.

Giving to Ignite is meant to be above and beyond your regular tithes and offerings, and as a church we have been extremely generous to meet the project demands. Yet, our regular giving has fallen behind. All of this is to ask you to pray, evaluate your ministry plan (budget) giving and be a part of what needs to be a historical (at least in comparison to recent years) year-end giving month. I look forward to celebrating that season with you as we look ahead to an exciting 2014!

May you have a Blessed and Merry Christmas!
It is a joy to serve with you.
Roy Joe



Youth Ministry



What a great time we had at Falls Creek for this year's Fall FallOut! Thank you for all your prayers!

Youth Ministry Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 8

5:30 p.m.

info
coming
soon

Community Ministry

GIVING TREE

November 26-December 15

Through our partnership with Lincoln Elementary, once again we have the opportunity to minister to 25 families by providing gifts for their children. Special ornament tags with gift ideas for each child are available on our Giving Tree located in front of the library.



This Christmas, share God's love with our own community!

Clothes Closet Needs:

Blankets Sleeping bags Gloves & hats Coats
Men's and boys' clothing and shoes Socks



We need several mentors to work one on one with at-risk students at Lincoln Elementary. Just one hour a week is all it takes to change a life! Contact Angela at kidshope@fbcnorman.org.

Friendship Sunday Supper FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS 4:00 P.M.

FIRST
SUNDAYS
Sunday
Supper
Prayer &
Praise



THIRD
SUNDAYS
4:30 p.m.
Clothes
Closet and
Food Pantry

THANK YOU!

In November, we received a donation of 140 bikes from OU. This followed large donations we received this summer and earlier in the fall. Our bike crew has worked hard to repair these bikes as quickly as possible so that we can distribute them to people in our community who need transportation. Without the diligent work of Roy Blasius, Glen Hubbel, Jim Harp and Harold Fithian, this ministry would not be possible.



Since it began, the Bikes & Bibles ministry has given out over **1100 bikes**.

Adults +55



Operation Christmas Child Mission to the Dallas Processing Center.

December 3-5. There are still a few spaces available! The cost is \$150.00. For questions or details contact Vickie or Deborah at the Family Life Center.

First Monday Playtime is scheduled for **December 2** from noon to 3:00 p.m. Bring your lunch and invite a friend!

Christmas Holiday Adventure to Dry Gulch, U.S.A. in Pryor, Oklahoma
December 13

Come join us as we travel to eastern Oklahoma into a world of wonder and delight for the Holiday Season. Our first stop will be at the Miller Amish farm for lunch. Amidst the Old West setting at Dry Gulch we will enjoy the Christmas train ride aboard a steam locomotive, see a multi-media presentation of the Christmas story, live reenactments, specialty gift shops, a live music show, wagon rides and have photos with Santa! Transportation is by motorcoach. The cost is \$58 per person.

Holiday Night Out to OKC
December 17

Enjoy dinner at Catfish Cove plus the holiday lights of Bricktown, Devon Energy Center and more! The group will leave at 5:00 p.m. and return around 10:00 p.m. The cost is \$3.00 plus dinner on your own. The buffet at Catfish Cove is \$11.50 for seniors.

Make reservations and payments at the FLC Office for all 55+ events and programs.



Missions Ministry

WORLD MISSION OFFERING

*Please give to the Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering and to
The Global Missions Offering*



Brad Price
Minister of Missions

Dear friends,

We have enjoyed four weeks of world missions emphasis. Our annual Parade of Nations procession and *MissionFest!* were inspiring. *Thank you* to everyone who volunteered to make these events a success. Thank you to the Missions Committee, the staff and the *DestiNations* Life Group for all your wonderful help.

The mission partners that we support at this time depend on us. The ability of CBF, BWA and the IMB to send and keep workers in the harvest is in direct proportion to the generosity that we exhibit at this time.

Merry Christmas! Brad Price



**Operation
Christmas Child**
A PROJECT OF SAMARITAN'S PURSE

***Thank you to Linda Lang, Ann Terrell
and their team for their dedication to
this wonderful ministry.***

*You can still give a box if you missed the deadline
by going to www.samaritanspurse.org*

No Evening Services/Activities
Wednesday, December 25

**Church Offices and Family Life
Center Closed**
December 25 and 26
January 1

University Ministry

First Baptist is looking for individuals to pour into the lives of college students!

College is a time in your life when change is constant, faith is tested and structures you've relied on all your life are gone.

We need your help building relationships at any or all of these events!

- Sunday morning Bible Study
- Wednesday evening worship
- Thursday noon lunches
- SALTs (Sunday Afternoon Lunch Things)

Please, contact Joey Armstrong (joeya@fbcnorman.org) if any of these would work for you.



Sunday

Morning 9:15 a.m. at Common Ground
(BYOM Bring Your Own Mug)

Sunday Night Thing 5:30 p.m. at church
family homes (check the website for the address
each Sunday)

twitter @FBCN_UM

facebook

NormanUM

joeya@fbcnorman.org



Weekly Schedule

Sunday

Worship Services

10:30 a.m. Classic Blend Worship
10:30 a.m. LifeSong Worship

Bible Study

9:15 a.m. Sunday School Life Groups
5:30 p.m. Pastor's Bible Study, HH
5:30 p.m. Home Life Groups

Wednesday

5:30 p.m. Dinner—Hallock Hall
6:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting/Devotional, HH
6:00 p.m. Youth & Children's Ministries
6:30 p.m. Adult Bible Studies
Choir & Orchestra

Ministry Staff

Dr. Wade Smith, Pastor

pastorwade@fbcnorman.org

Jim Stewart, Associate Pastor

Education and Family Life
jims@fbcnorman.org

Joey Armstrong, University/LifeSong Minister

joeya@fbcnorman.org
@FBCN_UM

Angela Atkins, Interim Community Minister

communityministry@fbcnorman.org

Crystal R. Byrd, Minister to Children

crystalb@fbcnorman.org
@iheartfbckids

Don Gilmore, Interim Minister of Music and Worship Arts

musicministry@fbcnorman.org

Roy Joe Ham, Minister of Administration

royjoe@fbcnorman.org

Kirk Hatcher, Youth Minister

kirk@fbcnorman.org
@iheartfbcm

Brad Price, Minister of Missions and Graphic Design

bradp@fbcnorman.org

Vickie Riggs, Pacesetter Minister

vickier@fbcnorman.org

Clint Taylor, Minister of Recreation and Community Outreach Ministries

clintt@fbcnorman.org

Facilities

Main Church Building

211 W. Comanche
405.321.1753
Office hours: Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Email: office@fbcnorman.org
Twitter: @fbcnorman
Web: www.fbcnorman.org

Family Life Center

300 W. Comanche
405.360.5300

Common Ground

324 W. Main

Happy Birthday!

- 01: Allison Hawkins, Terry Hearen, Joy Sullivan
- 02: Jean Callahan, Phyllis Gage, Melissa Mills, Melany Pattison, Glenn Sullivan Sr.
- 03: Stephen Burris, Lindsay Crider, Benjamin Diehm, Samuel Harp, Krystal Harrington, Jequita Uhles, Frances Welch
- 04: Lyndal Caddell, Chris Canary, Frederic Ferris, Glenda Largent, Sue McAlister, Melynda Rider
- 05: Lee Bryson, Lilia Durham, Ines Reed, Lester Snyder
- 06: Pat Brown, Bill Geyer, Anja Hale, Bob Stone
- 07: Kristina Diamond, Marlene Fowler, Danny Heatly, Gena Tarrant, Allison Taylor, Marilyn Vann
- 08: Cooper Caddell, Olivia Caddell, Cathy Gilmore, Darline Hobbs, Evelyn Parker, Jenny Smiley-Nava, Nazia Zahoor
- 09: Ruthee Danner, Cerissa Keeler, Ron Mercer, Steve Owens, Renee Roe, Cayce Rogers, Jessica Rose
- 10: Vondell Wheeler
- 11: Hilda Buchanan, Paula Cook, Darrel Curry, Ellynn Wirth
- 12: Melissa Long, Olivia Ratzlaff, Amanda Rhea
- 13: Meagan Harden, Barbara James, Joanne Sloy
- 14: Danny Foster, Aaron Gray, Dedra Redwine
- 15: Charles Frank, Judi Hartsock, Linda Heinlein, Jennifer Morgan
- 16: Margaret Brown, Shelley Ogle, Collin Russell, Kathy Strickland
- 17: Dorothy Harp, Kelsey Henderson, Kaitlin Smith
- 18: Jo Bennett, Gabi Coleman, Roy Joe Ham, Scott Hawkins, Elliot Lee, David Martinez, Charles Prater
- 19: Katie Skeel, Rodney Smith
- 20: Lou King, Betty Klima, Casey Lawrence, Jennifer McMillen, Joe Theige
- 21: Amy Brown, Ed Copelin, Glenda Crider, Stephany Haxel, Jamie Jinkerson, Lucille Rachal, Sam Singletery
- 22: Steve Carter, Allen Lack, Savannah Mitchell, Paul Reed, Tommy Uglean
- 23: David Dillon
- 24: Natalie Elliot, Holly Lassetter, Bill Peters, Robert Summers
- 25: Connie Hearen, Nic Nelson, Mark Rhea, Mary Ann Spaulding
- 26: Susan Caddell, Doris Dannehl, Marilyn Woods
- 27: Dana Morris, Marge Morton, Brad Singletery, Avery Taylor, Douglas Vaughn
- 28: Janet Hardage, Sandra Lee
- 29: Susie Conklin, Susan Hawkins, Donna Holt, Michael Rifenburg, Dana Stacy
- 30: Dr. Lavonn Brown, Charles Holt, Matt Hunt, Maddux Rifenburg, Kenton Sanders
- 31: Larry Dilks, Jay Harp, Lauren Satterlee, Michelle Shebester, Patrick Smith, Paul Strunk, Courtney Villanueva, Gwen Wilburn



December 4 at Noon
Common Ground
\$5 per lunch

**REV. LINDA
HARKER**

**Pastor
McFarlin Methodist Church**

Menu:

Ham, Scalloped Potatoes, Green Beans,
Dinner Rolls, Dessert

*Good food and good neighbors in
Downtown Norman.*

At FIRST Glance
First Baptist Church
211 W. Comanche
Norman, OK 73069
Address Service Requested

The gift of Generosity



This holiday season, we thank everyone who has supported **First Baptist Church** this past year with their time, talent and financial contributions and look forward to support from all of our members in the year ahead. If you need a convenient way to make regular offerings or if you plan to make an additional gift before the end of the year, we encourage you to look into our electronic giving options. As the pace of life speeds up, especially around the holidays, you may find electronic giving a most welcome way to make contributions.

Visit www.fbcnorman.org or contact the church office for more information.