

Branches

AN FBC WACO PUBLICATION

September 2013 VOLUME 01 | ISSUE 01

Community Ministry
Special Edition

First Baptist Waco

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Letter from *the Editor*



Curt Kruschwitz
Editor

What's the most memorable gift you've ever received? Think about it for a minute. Perhaps it was a childhood Christmas present. Or maybe it was a surprise party thrown by a friend. Or maybe it was a thoughtful word spoken by a loved one at just the right time. We've all received hundreds of gifts in our lives, but I think we'd all agree that the most memorable ones always send a strong message: You are loved. I've thought about you. You're important to me.

According to the Bible, we're like that gift. Though the biblical text is written over a span of hundreds of years, there's one common strand through it all: God sends his people to bless the world. God sent Moses to rescue Israel. God sent the prophets to remind Israel of their calling. God sent David to rule justly. God sent Jesus to redeem once and for all a broken world. And Jesus sent his disciples to spread God's message: you're loved and important. I'm here to help.

You may be the gift someone else needs. God has been using the First Baptist Waco community since its inception in 1851 to add value to the Waco and the world. This magazine describes opportunities you can use your gifts to further God's kingdom. Many of these ministries have developed gradually as church members just like you saw needs around them and sought to address them with a Christ-like response. As you read through this, it's our prayer that God will reveal ways he might send you to be a blessing in our community and around the world. We'd love to connect you with the mission opportunities you read about here--or to find ways to use your gifts for new ministries to meet the changing needs of our world.

Because ultimately, God wants you to be a gift. We're all gifts -- gifts from God. And God is sending us to embody his gift through Jesus Christ to the world.

Connect with Us



Want to know the latest news about our community ministries at First Baptist Waco? Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter by scanning the QR codes on the right for the most up-to-date information in the church. Don't forget to visit the pastor's blog, *Broken Steeple*, at <http://www.brokensteeple.com>. Volunteer using the QR code to the right!

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ABOUT First Baptist Church of Waco is a baptist church in Waco, Texas affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Cooperative Baptist Convention. Founded in 1851, FBC Waco exists to love God, love others, and share Christ's love.

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First Baptist Waco

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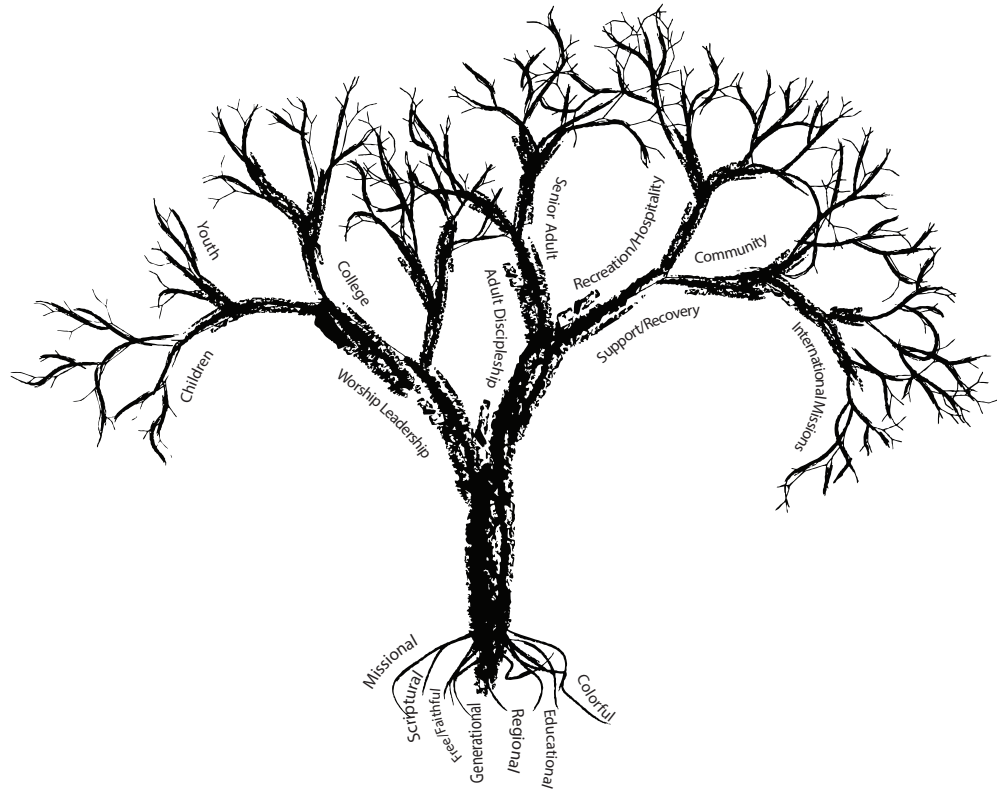
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First Baptist Church Waco, Texas, exists to lead all generations to love God, one another and the world in the Spirit of Jesus. This mandate has been articulated in different ways through the decades. It flows out of the great commission, the great commandment and our root values. All congregations are stewards of the "greats" yet unique because of the pluriform grace of God. Uniqueness flows from values. FBC Waco values being: missional, scriptural, free and faithful, regional, educational and colorful. This is how we are rooted.

We express our unique mandate by encouraging each member to live on mission in their life context. We are sent daily into a world madly loved by God. We are his people, serving his mission. We also develop congregational ministries that seek to impact others in a life giving way. These are the branches that grow outward in multiple directions. Take a look at the tree sketch. What categories are you interested in serving strategically? New ministries begin each year. What has God put on your heart? What are you good at? What is your ambition? We are here to be loved by God, to love and enjoy God and serve him forever. We'd love to walk with you as you begin a lifestyle of service. That's what church is all about.



FBC Starts Restored, a Recovery Ministry

Restored is a recovery ministry started by Charlie and Becky Jones. The first season of Restored starts this Fall. The ministry seeks to help anyone struggling with hurts, habits and hangups by providing a community that supports people with Christ-centered approaches in the recovery process. The ministry is open to men and women of all ages. Re-

stored meets every Tuesday night from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. There are currently 20 men and women enrolled in the class. *For more information contact Charlie Jones at cjones@cjones.com or Becky Jones at becky_jones@baylor.edu.*

Short-term Mission Trips to Shaw, MS Serve the Local Community Members

First Baptist Waco developed a partnership with the community of Shaw, Mississippi. Shaw is a small community in the Mississippi Delta. First Baptist sent short-term mission teams comprised of both college students and adults in 2013. The FBC church members are partnering with local churches and ministries to be a part of kingdom work in Shaw. Members of First Baptist helped with construction work, led church services and tutored children in the community. *If you're interested in going, contact Randall Perry in the church office via email at rperry@fbcwaco.org.*

Homebound Adult Ministry Reaches Out to FBC Members at their Home

There are 35 homebound adults who are members at First Baptist Church Waco. The Homebound Adult ministry serves these individuals by developing relationships with them through meeting on a monthly basis. Ten teams of two minister to homebound adults by bringing them church material, baked goods and other gifts. Children in the Wednesday night programs make cards for these adults. All FBC members are encouraged to get involved with this ministry. *For more information, contact Randall Perry in the church office via email at rperry@fbcwaco.org or Carol Thompson at (254) 744-2664.*

Local Ministries

Sports League Gives Kids Opportunity



About ten years ago, church members felt a call to open our athletic facilities for children in our neighborhood. Dwight Crain, a longtime coach, said that this ministry began by “look[ing] for things the neighborhood kids liked to do, so soccer was the first thing we started doing.” It soon became obvious that there was also a high demand for basketball in our community. The goal for this ministry is to try to share Christ’s love through sports and to let families know they’re welcome at FBC Waco. Crain mentioned that making the league

affordable has always been a priority. For \$10, a child gets a full athletic season and a jersey. Our sports leagues have become a staple for many families around our church and throughout greater Waco. In Fall 2012, over 225 children played in our soccer league. “We are always pushing at the end to get enough coaches,” Crain said. We’d love for you and your family to be involved. *For information on how to be involved as a coach or volunteer with the league contact Dwight Crain directly at dwight.crain@pro-filesmail.com.*

Dress and Bless Provides Uniforms

The community ministry, Dress and Bless, provides new school uniforms for children in the immediate neighborhood of First Baptist Church. Wearing new school clothes on the first day of school can give these children a much-needed sense of excitement and self-confidence. Each August, church members have the opportunity to purchase uniforms for a specific child. They are also asked to commit to pray for that child by name throughout the year. Each child receives

a card telling them that they are being prayed for by the donor. Volunteers are needed for this ministry in the areas of publicity, sign-ups, organizing donations and assisting with the purchase of new uniforms. Those unable to shop for a child may make a monetary donation directly through the church. (Matthew 25:37-40). *For more information about this ministry contact Gloria DuBose directly at w.dubose@sbcglobal.net.*



Furnishings at First Gives Free Furniture to Graduate Students, Community



Remember when you were in your early adult years and just getting started? Money was limited and you realized you had nothing with which to fill your humble home. Most graduate students come to Waco from out of town, and many of these students are no longer living under the financial support of their parents. Dan Hull noticed this need and started a program at First Baptist called furnishings@first. furnishings@first collects gently-used home furnishings from

church and community members and loans them out to graduate students for the duration of their studies in Waco. When students leave Waco, they may return the furniture to be loaned out again. furnishings@first asks for furniture donations twice a year to give back to the collegiate community. If you can't offer a piece of furniture, you can still volunteer to move furniture during the event. *Contact Dan directly at dan37hull@gmail.com to get involved in this ministry.*

FBC Partners with Others at Gospel Café

The Gospel Café, a ministry begun in South Waco about 15 years ago by the CrossTies Ecumenical Church, serves lunch from 11:30-1:30 to all who come each Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The lunch is on a pay-if-you-can basis, freeing the guests (generally about 200 people) from feeling as if they are receiving a hand-out. During the lunch time, the Gospel Café is a melting pot of cultures. Members of First Baptist Waco have been involved with this ministry

since its inception and currently provide all the support for the meal on the last Friday of each month, relieving the regular Friday staff. In addition, First Baptist receives non-perishable food items for the café on the months the calendar has a fifth Sunday. *If you are interested in this ministry and would like to be involved, you may contact Norma Cannata at nj-cannata@gmail.com.*



Agape Ministry Provides Meal Every Month

The Agape Meal ministry for the low-income community of Waco occurs on the last Tuesday of each month. The Agape meal provides comforting food, fellowship and a worship service. Jim and Peggy Hudson helped start this ministry. "This meal is like their own church service," Jim said when describing the impact the Agape Meal has on the homeless. Building relationships with this community has opened doors for FBC Waco members to continue these friend-

ships in the community. Jim and Peggy said that many volunteers are hesitant to sit at a table to facilitate the conversation. However, once they try it, they see God working at their table and are thankful for the opportunity to be a part of something bigger than themselves. *For information on how to get involved in this ministry contact Jim or Peggy directly at jhudson@julyservices.com or peggy@julyservices.com.*

Meals and Wheels Delivers Food to Elderly and Disabled Each Week

Meals and Wheels is a local nonprofit and supported by several churches serving meals to those who are home-bound. However, cooked meals are just the beginning of this ministry. Meals and Wheels provides transportation, pet food, groceries and a senior center where relationships can be made. All of these areas are enriching the lives of homebound adults in Waco. Members of First Baptist participate in this city-wide ministry by taking a delivery route to bring prepared meals

to several families at a time. Donations of food or help with delivering meals are one of the greatest areas of need for this ministry. This is a well-established organization, and a great way to help serve the Waco community. Alice Collins, Food Services Director for FBC, is a cook for Meals and Wheels and can inform anyone about volunteer options available. *For more information about this ministry and how to get involved, contact Alice directly at acollins@fbcwaco.org.*





LIFT Workshops for Low Income Families in Transition

After encountering the struggles of hard-working single parents trying to work and raise children, several members of FBC founded the LIFT Workshop. LIFT's primary focus is to efficiently and effectively facilitate services to low income families and individuals in our community. LIFT's ultimate goal is to assist families to achieve economic viability and lessened dependence on government assistance. LIFT serves and draws attention to an invisible and underserved population of minimum wage earning families who are struggling to make ends meet.

LIFT workshops are held once a year, spring and fall. They provide a "one stop shop" for working poor families who need the services of multiple agencies but cannot leave work or cannot lose work hours to visit these agencies. Approximately 36 nonprofits and government agencies, as well as TSTC and MCC, participate in LIFT workshops. Each workshop attendee is paired with an advocate at the workshop to evaluate the attendee's needs, to walk alongside the attendee at the workshop and to develop a plan to help the attendee achieve econom-

ic viability and lessened dependency goals. This personalized assistance is essential to ensure that each attendee receives the full benefit of the workshop and the services provided. LIFT is one of the most rewarding ministries of FBC Waco because it facilitates personal relationships between advocates and the families served.

Church members serve as advocates, provide office assistance, childcare and hospitality. *Contact Julie Covington at Julie_covington@baylor.edu for more information and to explore your volunteer options.*



Class Builds Ramps for Service Project

Dr. Jeter Basden's Adult IV Sunday School class has been building ramps now for almost a decade. They started when a local ministry sought assistance repairing homes of people who were elderly or disabled. Since then, it has been transformed into a ministry that builds ramps for disabled people on a monthly to quarterly basis. The ministry starts early on Saturday mornings, sometimes going well into the afternoon. The class partners with Habitat for Humanity, which provides the lumber, tools and building plans for the ramps. If you were to

ask any of the class members what they enjoy the most about this ministry, they would probably tell you it is the ability to help someone in need while demonstrating their skills in carpentry.

Most of the members wish they could do bigger projects, and if more members from FBC got involved they would be able to extend their ministry to other home repair projects and perhaps a home construction project. *For more information on how to get involved with this ministry, contact Dan Davis directly at danrd1949@aol.com.*

Operation Christmas Child only comes once a year, but the effects last longer than one can imagine. This ministry is an arm of Samaritan's Purse and helps collect Christmas gifts for less fortunate children around the world. Members have the opportunity to fill up a shoe-box with both fun and practical gifts for a specific child across the globe. In 2012, we collected 120 boxes! This is a great Christmas project for the whole family. Working together to fill a box full of fun toys, school supplies, hygiene items and a personal note is sure

to bring about the spirit of giving. Besides filling up a shoebox, church members are also needed to promote the ministry in the fall and to help collect and organize boxes. There are numerous ways to be involved in this ministry by filling a box, helping organize boxes or running a table on Sunday to hand out boxes. *Lynn Segura and Shelley Brooks are the FBC Waco contacts for this ministry for those interested in helping out. They can be reached by email at lfasegura@aol.com or shelley_brooks@baylor.edu.*



International and Local Ministries

FBC Class Provides Meal for Christian Women's Job Corp

Christian Women's Job Corps is a thriving ministry in the Waco community. Marlene Griffis and her Sunday school class volunteer to serve a meal for them twice a semester on a Hospitality team. She wants women to get more involved with the purpose of the ministry, to provide a nurturing Christ-centered environment fostering personal, professional, and spiritual growth. "I wish it could be expanded," Griffis said, noting additional avenues for service. For example, women could get involved as journey partners who partner with the women in the organi-

zation and schedule a weekly meeting of one hour. A Journey Partner would be there to pray, encourage, and be an accountability partner for the women going through the program. "Serving a meal is level one for them, they need people to be more committed," Griffis added. Her vision for this ministry goes far beyond serving a meal twice a semester. She wants to see Christ centered relationships built. *For more information about this ministry, contact Marlene at mgriwaco@msn.com.*



Annual Mission Trip to Guatemala

Since 2003, First Baptist Waco has sent teams annually to minister alongside the staff of Fundacion Salvacion, an orphanage in Huehuetenango, Guatemala. Children in the orphanage range in age from 6 months to 18 years old. Each year, the team leads a Vacation Bible School and provides medical check-ups for the kids and the workers there in an effort to share God's love tangibly. Recently, First Baptist members have helped in the construction of a new school for the orphans which will

give them opportunities to get a quality education and learn English. The team leader and coordinator, Felipe Garcia, hopes to see new members join the Guatemala team to use their talents for the kingdom. "I pray that once they get involved with the Guatemala mission trip, they will reach out to other missions and ministries as well," Garcia said. "It changes lives." *First Baptist members can be involved with this ministry by contacting Felipe directly at felipe_sharla@yahoo.com.*

Bells Hill Elementary School Partnerships

Over the past year, many of our church members reported feeling a desire to support children in our community. After a season of prayer and exploration, FBC Waco's Missions Committee decided to explore ways we could assist the local schools. Kay Metz, a church member who worked for years in Waco ISD's administration, volunteered to lead FBC Waco in a partnership with Bell's Hill Elementary School. Statistics are clear that regular, positive interaction with adult role models make a big difference for at-risk children. We hope to bless the elementary school students and teachers through volunteers of all types: weekly mentors for children, support for teachers, and assistance for school special events. *If you're interested in learning more or volunteering in our partnership with Bell's Hill, please contact Kay Metz directly at kaymetz@yahoo.com.*

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