

FIRST FOCUS

WHERE WE'RE GOING

On Wednesday, April 29, I shared the first report of the church Strategic Planning Committee (SPC). Since November, we have been engaged in a process of discerning God's vision for our church for the next 3-5 years. We are a vibrant, active downtown church with well over 200 ministries, groups, programs, and committees. We certainly don't need to add yet another thing to our plate for the sake of doing something for Jesus. We do, however, recognize how much our world has changed in just the last few years. In the midst of a shifting society, the church still represents the only eternal alternative to death: everlasting life with Jesus.

Imagine for a moment that you were sent as a missionary from Spain to Tallahassee and you were given 3-5 years to fulfill God's call here in our city. What would you do, where would you start, and what programs and ministries would you begin? Knowing that none of us are church planters, and all of us have the luxury of 165 years of established ministry, facilities, and friendships from which to begin, you would still recognize that (1) we can't do everything but (2) we can do something. But if you wanted to discern God's call, you would need a vision and a plan from which to begin. That's the kind of process we are undergoing.

First Baptist is a flagship church representing God's presence to our city. Based on Jesus's authority from Matthew 16, the church bears witness to Him whether on the block at 108 West College or throughout our community. By working together on a vision, we are able to be the church. We can clarify our direction, set aside individual projects, invite new people to discover their gifts and calling, coordinate efforts across the ministries of our church, and integrate our personal walk with Christ into our corporate programs and ministries.

After listening to our congregation's feedback, we decided not to go in 200 different directions simultaneously, add a few new programs, or prioritize every suggestion we've received. We would likely spend the next 20 years trying to complete that checklist. Instead we took a short term approach. We assessed the current reality of our church and world and are proposing a way that would capture the hearts and hands of all of us. We gathered information thus far from over 250 church attenders, 40 deacons, 9 Pastoral Staff, 9 community and denominational organizations, and have studied statistics and trends on our church and community. Based on this information, prayer, and discernment, we are inviting our church to focus on five outcomes. In our mission and ministry, we want to fulfill God's call by 2020 as faithful disciples, in strong homes, through a transformed city, among a connected church, and with servant leaders.

Each one will be measurable and discernable. Each year we'll take a look and assess the progress we've made and make adjustments to our programs and strategies based on these five outcomes. Like the farmer sowing seed, we want to focus on the areas where the soil is fertile and the harvest is plentiful. In order to do that, we need your help and want to hear even more from you again. Over the next few weeks, the SPC will be meeting with committees, ministry groups, deacons, staff, trustees, and ministries of our church to discern the strategies, programs, and ministries that we need to accomplish these outcomes. We would like to know what programs currently helps us in these five ways and what new ministries, volunteers, staff, and resources would be needed to fulfill this vision. We will gather information and use it to help us discern strategies at our next planning retreat.

Our website will have the information we've shared thus far, including a presentation from April 29. Please check this out, and send your feedback to Amy Parks (amy@fbctlh.org) by June 1. If you can't download it from our website, drop by the front desk; and our staff will be glad to share a copy with you. Together, we can trust the Holy Spirit to guide our next steps as we fulfill this vision to the glory of God.



THIS WEEK

LIFE GROUPS: EQUIP

Life Groups at FBCTLH are “church where life happens” for our members who have a common place, pursuit, or phase of life with those outside our campus. Anyone who is interested in being in a Life Group should register to join us for a training session THIS SUNDAY, May 17 from 12:30 until 3:30PM (lunch included). Register online at fbctlh.org/lifegroups or by using the form available in the connect center.

SMBS LEADERSHIP MEETING

Sunday Morning Bible Study teachers and directors are invited to a gathering on Tuesday, May 19, at 6:00PM in the fellowship hall. We will share a meal together and spend some time discussing the vital role of SMBS in the life and future of our FBCTLH family. There is no cost for the meal, but please RSVP to jordan@fbctlh.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Registration is going on now for this summer’s “Everest” VBS: June 15–19, from 9:00AM until 12:00PM. Upward Basketball and Cheerleading Camp is also available for \$100 per child in the afternoons from 12:00 until 5:00PM. Vacation Bible School is FREE, and for children 4 years old through the completion of 5th grade. Registration forms are available online at fbctlh.org/vbs or in the welcome center. Volunteers are also needed. For more information, please contact Rhonda (x501 or rhonda@fbctlh.org).



Thank you, FBC! We have just completed the 14th year event to help fund the summer music camps at the Christian University of Northern Haiti (Haitian Baptist). These music camps have been going on for 45 years and today are supported by individual churches. Through these camps we have sent hope and encouragement to hundreds of young people and provided mentoring for youths to learn teaching and leadership skills.

We had 115 attend the event at my house with FBC members from all sections of our congregation, and friends from all over Tallahassee. Thank you for welcoming them and making them feel “at home.” The FAMU JAZZ combo (plus our Richard Anderson) shared lunch and played for us, as well as the FSU Caribbean combo, local music teachers and many FBCTLH musicians. Special thanks to my committee: Mary York, Paula Chafin, Judy Bishop, Linda Smith, Rhonda Jones, Paula Silcox, Larry Kung, Scott Brown, and Dale Olsen. We raised enough funds to begin the building of the UNCH volunteer house! Praise God!

Janet Ray

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, MAY 17

8:00AM Median Adult III Bible Study, Parlor
9:00AM Traditional Worship, Sanctuary
10:00AM Churchwide Bible Study Options
10:15AM First Step, Welcome Center
11:15AM Contemporary Worship, Sanctuary
12:30PM Life Groups: EQUIP, CLC 2nd Floor
12:30PM High School Senior Luncheon, Fellowship Hall
3:00PM GriefShare, Adams 301

MONDAY, MAY 18

9:30AM Homebound Visitation, Connect Center
10:30AM First Joy Choir Rehearsal, Chason 2201
5:00PM First Brass, Adams 200

TUESDAY, MAY 19

6:00PM SMBS Leadership Meeting, Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

9:30AM Women’s Bible Study, Gardner Home
11:00AM Senior Ladies’ Bible Study, Large Meeting Room
4:45PM Fellowship Meal, Fellowship Hall
6:00PM Childcare, Duval 1st Floor
6:00PM Preschool Class, Duval 1st Floor
6:00PM Elementary Music & Missions, Duval 2nd Floor
6:00PM Youth Choir Rehearsal, Adams 211
6:00PM Adult Prayer and Bible Study, Sanctuary
6:00PM DivorceCare, Adams 315
6:00PM Moms Connect, Adams Basement
6:00PM Women’s Bible Study, Adams 301
6:00PM Weekday Committee, Large Meeting Room
7:00PM Youth Collide, CLC 2nd Floor
7:00PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Chason 2201
7:00PM Chamber Players Rehearsal, Adams 200
7:00PM Endowment Committee, Large Meeting Room
7:15PM Praise Team Rehearsal, Sanctuary
7:15PM Young Adults Veritas, Adams 317

THURSDAY, MAY 21

FRIDAY, MAY 22

SATURDAY, MAY 23

COMING SOON

DRAMA TEAM

On Sunday, May 31, we will host a Drama Drop-In after each of the morning services to connect (or reconnect!) with those interested in drama and worship enhancement at FBCTLH. Join Drama Team co-leaders AmyLynn Harrington Smoot and Bev DeMello in the Welcome Center 2nd Floor Café following the 9:00AM service and again after the 11:15AM service. Come by, grab a snack, and visit—no acting required—and hear about the many ways to use your artistic gifts and talents in our church and in the community.

A FULL SUMMER

We would love for you to get involved with this June's "A Full Summer." FBCTLH is partnering with St. John's Episcopal Church to provide funds and volunteers needed to pack meals for the hungry in our area. Many children in the Big Bend community who depend on free or reduced-price school lunches during the school year do not have a reliable source of food during the summer. Meals prepared at "A Full Summer" will be distributed by Second Harvest of the Big Bend to children and families in our community.

You can participate by volunteering to pack meals during "A Full Summer" on June 6 from 10:00AM until 12:00PM at Rickards High School. Registration forms are available in your SMBS classes. You can also participate by donating money to provide the food supplies required. Checks should be made payable to First Baptist Church, with "A Full Summer" in the memo line. For more information, please contact Becky Liner (beckyliner@comcast.net).



Literacy missions (English classes), one of our greatest mission opportunities, has concluded for this year. We reached people from over thirty countries with several individuals accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior and four being baptized! We are grateful for all volunteers and teachers. To you who provided refreshments which were shared at each class session, we give our heartfelt appreciation. The students were impressed with the generosity of our church and made many comments about your caring and giving spirit. This is truly a Christian witness. Our classes will resume on September 15. We trust our SMBS departments, WOM groups, and every ministry of FBCTLH will take advantage of this mission opportunity.

Thanks again for your prayers and assistance. We still need volunteers for many areas of this outreach ministry. A teacher-training workshop will be held at Lake Yale Baptist Assembly on September 10-12. Please contact us (933.8738) if you feel led to work with these international friends.

Janice & Marty Smith

SERVE

FLORIDA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME

For the month of May, we will join the Children's Home in collecting paper napkins, paper plates, aluminum foil, and Saran Wrap. Collection bins are in the College Avenue foyer, the welcome center, by the elevator on the first floor of the Adams building, and in the main office.

MORE OPPORTUNITIES

Check out the fbctlh.org/Serve page for more ways to get involved now in serving in and through FBCTLH.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TALLAHASSEE

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PERIODICALS
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THE VISION NEWSLETTER

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For submissions, address corrections, or to unsubscribe, contact x132 or hello@fbctlh.org.

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SERVICE RECORDINGS

fbctlh.org/sermons

Our Traditional Worship service is broadcast on Comcast Channel 21 at 11:00AM each Sunday.

Contact x215 or lee@fbctlh.org with questions.

If you are homebound and would like to be on our mailing list to receive a free DVD of our worship services each week, please contact x201 or lenoir@fbctlh.org. All other requests are \$5, and can be made at the front desk or online at fbctlh.org/contact.

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

May 20 - Veggie bar: macaroni & cheese, steamed cabbage, field peas, fried okra, corn muffins, salad bar, and dessert

FINANCIALS

YTD budget: \$1,074,043
Receipts 05/10: \$54,455
YTD receipts: \$940,911
Mother's Day Offering YTD: \$2,735

DEACON SCHEDULE

Deacon of the Day – Charlie Silcox

Deacons of the Week

- 9AM Bob Snyder
- 10AM Steve Williams
- 11AM Charles Maynard

SECURITY SCHEDULE

Sunday, May 17

- 8AM Jim Wheeler
- 10AM Jim Croushorn
- 11AM Art Pitts

Wednesday, May 20

- 6PM Roy Story

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP	9:00AM
BIBLE STUDY	10:00AM
CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP	11:15AM

LOVE THAT CONQUERS THE UNKNOWN

1 John 5:1-6