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The Builder

Volume XIV Number 11

The Power of Presence

The other day I sat with a friend who was hurting. My friend had experienced great hurt and great loss and she feared that she may be hurt again. Some would say that her fears were irrational. After all, the hurt she experienced at the hands of another had been acknowledged and seemingly dealt with. However, my friend felt that more effort and energy had been poured into rehabilitating (and to some degree protecting) the perpetrator than had been expended making sure that she and the other victims were okay.

She was weary and buckling under the weight of caring for others, putting on a brave face, and trying to take the advice of others and move past it all. I listened as she spoke of her hurt. I listened as her hurt gave way to anger and rage. I had few words of advice or comfort. In fact, the more I listened, the more I began to identify with how she was feeling.

The meal we shared served to ease some of tension and remind us of at least one of life's joys. Naturally I insisted that we order dessert, and it was one more reason to smile in the midst of everything we were confronting. Soon we found ourselves laughing at how quickly the cheesecake had disappeared, and lost for a moment was the memory of the tears that had so recently been shed.

As we drove back my thoughts turned toward my own shortcomings. I quietly wondered if our time together had done any good. We hadn't solved anything and again, I had no sagely advice to give. I wasn't a counselor or a therapist. I had no magic wand to wave away the troubles with. I'd only had time, food, and a listening ear to offer. Was that anything let alone enough? That's when I was reminded of a most important truth. I am the church, and the power of presence is never to be underestimated. We are the church, and while we cannot always calm the storms of life, we can certainly be present with those who are trying to navigate them. We are the church, and where we are there comfort, consolation, and love should be also. If we specialize in anything it should be in presence, in showing up, in coming alongside, and in leaving behind an awareness of being deeply loved.

This we can do today wherever we are and with whatever we have at our disposal. My prayer is simple. May God show us the places where our presence can facilitate his healing and his love. May we enter those places with joy and without fear. Emmanuel. Amen.

Have a blessed week knowing that you are loved.

Pastor Johnathan

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CALENDER OF EVENTS

Sunday, November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

9:45 am Sunday School/11:00 am Worship

Sunday November 9: Homecoming

Covered dish/bring your favorite dish and a dessert – church will provide the meat, rolls and tea

Sunday, November 16 – Deacon Sunday

Pastor Johnathan will preach on 2, 9, and Pastor Dwayne will preach on the 23rd

November 30: First Sunday of Advent – Pastor Johnathan

Monday, November 17, 24

17: 7:00 pm Church Council/ 24: 6:00 pm Finance/7:00 pm Deacons

Tuesday, November 4, 11, 18, 25

6:00 pm Bible Study

11: Church Holiday

Wednesday, November 5, 12, 19, 26

12 Noon Bible Study/ 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

24: Alice vacation day

Thursday, November 27, 28

Happy Thanksgiving/Church Office Closed



NOVEMBER

1 – Doris Avery

2 – Jim Costner

7 – Alisha Cann

9 – Vickie Willoughby

11 – Alice Foy (Staff)

12 – Judy Desrosiers

Richard Hart

13 – DeDe Gerhart

14 – Loretta Harris

17 – Bob Biggerstaff

20 – Heather Wynkoop

28 – Tim Griffin

29 – Regina Cann

30 – Lisa Pardo

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 – Paul Avery

Teresa Biggerstaff

4 – Lee Pritchard

6 – Susan Absher

22 – Susan Haney

26 – Ann Woodruff

HONORARIUMS

In Honor of:

Pastor Johnathan Bryson

and

Pastor Dwayne Burks

Pastor Appreciation

By: Ann Siva

MEMORIALS

In Memory of:

Perry Baumgardner

Son of Jessie McSwain

By: Martha Spurrier, David &

Linda Wright

In Memory of:

Joyce Ervin

Sister of Alice Foy

By: Jim & Ann Costner, Martha

Spurrier

In Memory of:

Richard Hart, Sr.

Father of Richard Hart

By: David & Linda Wright

In Memory of:

Carolyn Justice Wright

Mother of Rebecca Hart

By: Adult SS Class

In Memory of:

Bill Pearson

By: David & Linda Wright

MISSIONS UPDATE.

The final quarter of the year is underway with the focus of First Baptist's Backpack Mission. Our goal is to provide Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter meals to the six families we serve at Southwest Middle School and then provide them weekend meals through the next school year. Over the past school year approximately \$5,600 has been used to provide for these families. That's about \$23 each weekend per family for the whole school year. Jim and Ann Costner do a fantastic job of managing the Backpack mission and we are so very thankful for their devotion to these children and their families.

If you have other ideas for mission projects, please suggest them to any member of the Missions Committee. As we look forward to First Baptist Church's 150th celebration we hope to collect 150 pounds of food for CAM.

(Please remember Mission offerings are separate from you offering to support the operation of our church)

Thank you,

The Mission Committee

Ann Costner, Jim Costner, Judy DesRosiers, Lisa Pardo, John Price, Charlotte Eddings



We are presently service 5 families (22 people)



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER



Dave Holloway



**Thanks to Cat T. and Heather Wynkoop
for filling the Blessing Box.**

COFFEE/DONUTS

**Sunday December 7
9:30 am in the Narthex**



HOMEcoming

We will have Homecoming on Sunday, November 9, 2025

There will not be a luncheon, but request that you invite family, friends and former members to join on this occasion.

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

We will observe All Saints Day on Sunday, November 9, 2025 during the morning worship service. During this service will remember those in our congregation that have gone before us in the past year. Letters have been sent to the families inviting them to attend in memory of their loved ones. Hope that you can be there also.

This morning Dan reminded me of our prayers for people to worship the Lord at FBCG. Well today, November 2, 2025 we had not just one, but two simultaneous worship services at FBCG as The Place Church launched its next chapter on this campus.

God is unfolding right before our eyes.

