



The Way

February 2014

NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HOMESTEAD, FL

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

A couple of years after becoming your pastor, we began a journey of articulating what it is we believe a New Testament church is to be about. It was a six month process, but after many meetings, Bible studies, and discussions involving staff, leaders and the church at large, we finally adopted seven core values. These were unanimously approved by the church and have served as a guide for what we try to do and what we want to become. Those core values are the centrality of prayer, total evangelism, compassionate ministry, God-centered worship, maturing discipleship, authentic fellowship and biblical unity. A video explanation of each of these values can be found on our website. You should watch them if you haven't already done so. If we find ourselves doing anything that does not relate to these values, we should stop immediately!

As we have been emphasizing "Advancing the Kingdom" these past few weeks, I am reminded of these values. I truly believe that these values are biblical. I believe there is a "book, chapter and verse" for each

one. There are many, in fact! I also believe there is a direct relationship between our core values and everything we are doing as we move forward in "Advancing the Kingdom." In other words, the plans that have been made were not made in a vacuum. They were made out of a desire to be about the things the Word of God says we are to be about.

Part of "Advancing the Kingdom" is the continuation of a building project. Capital fundraising for this building was begun three years ago and we were able to break ground last June. If you have not seen our progress lately, be sure and walk around to the West lot to see the building beginning to take shape! It would be tragic if everyone parked on the east side during construction and never saw what was happening on the west. ("You've heard the phrase, "Go west, young man?" That applies here!)

I don't think I can remind you too often why we are doing this. The first six of our core values directly relate to the building and the seventh core value is strengthened by the other six. For example, look at our first two core values: the centrality of prayer and total evangelism. The

missionary housing that will be provided by the new building will enable us to host mission teams from all over the country. This will help us to bring the gospel to more people than we could by ourselves. Prayer evangelism will be a major emphasis here as well. I foresee a day in which we are able to pray for hundreds of requests given to us by our neighbors (many of them unchurched) through these mission teams and then take the gospel to them after we have prayed.

The value of compassionate ministry is another reason for pursuing this project. Our ability to minister to the needs of the community will be greater once this facility is up. For example, we will have room for a much needed food pantry. Did you know that our church started a ministry in January in which we provide bags of food for those in the South Dade migrant camp? Right now, this ministry is operating out of the living room of a very dedicated member! That will work in the short term, but to continue, and to increase the number of people we minister to, we will need a place for storage! This space will not allow me to tell you about all of the ways this building will enhance our student ministry. Just ask Pastor Joe!

What does this building have to do with God-centered worship? “We aren’t building a sanctuary,” you might be thinking. This building will provide worship space for our student ministry as well as for services in other languages. So yes, our worship will be strengthened!

Maturing discipleship is a big part, perhaps even the biggest part, of what we are doing in this project. Simply put, we will be able to double the number of Sunday School classes. There are basic rules of thumb that are universally used to determine a facility’s educational capacity. I won’t bore you with the numbers, but our current capacity is about 200 people. In other words, if all of our current classrooms are in use, and if they are reasonably filled, this is the total number we can expect to maintain in Sunday School. Last Sunday I erroneously announced that our attendance was 197. We later discovered an attendance sheet that did not get turned in. Our actual attendance was 224!. So we can honestly say we are using what we have and there is a genuine need for additional space in order for our Sunday School to grow. When we say that maturing discipleship is what we are about, Sunday School is a big part of that, and for our Sunday School to be everything it should be, more classrooms are required.

Part of the building is a 9,000 square foot pavilion. This will enable us to have church-wide fellowships unlike what we can currently do with limited space. So we believe authentic fellowship will be enhanced as well.

Anytime we strengthen core values one through six, the seventh core value (biblical unity) is going to indirectly be strengthened as well. So everything we say we are supposed to be about, according to the Word of

God and reflected by these seven values, shows up in “Advancing the Kingdom” and the building project we are about. I really hope that every member of our church will be able to “connect the dots” here. I hope we can all draw a line between the core values and the practical functions of the building being constructed. Because if we cannot articulate why we are doing this, biblically speaking, we probably shouldn’t be doing it. If what we are not doing does not lead to Kingdom growth, it just doesn’t matter. With God as my witness, I believe that it does.

This Sunday, I will preach the final message of the “Advancing the Kingdom” emphasis. The message will be “Thinking Inside the Box.” The box I am referring to is the “Chest of Joash” from 2 Chronicles 24. The Bible tells us that in the day of Joash, a chest was placed at the temple where funds for temple reconstruction were brought. So we are going to borrow the imagery and use a chest in Sunday’s worship. This chest is where you will be encouraged to bring the pledge cards for “Advancing the Kingdom.” These cards were distributed last Sunday, but additional cards will be made available this Sunday if you forget to bring yours. We are simply asking you to pray about what God would have you to pledge to give to the building project above regular tithes and offerings over the next three years.

A question some will ask is, “Why pledge?” Pledging enables us to project where we will be and plan accordingly. When Building for the Future pledges were made, actual giving was almost 93% of what was pledged. So adding the total pledges will give us a good idea of what to expect. Decisions that will be made will be made with this number in

mind.

Please place the pledge card in the accompanying envelope and seal it. Place the sealed envelope in the chest at the designated time on Sunday. If you miss Sunday, you can mail it in or drop it off the following week. Only the financial secretaries will see the pledged amount for the purpose of adding up the total amount pledged. I will not know what you have pledged, period. No one will be keeping track of your pledge over the next three years. This is between you and God. Our purpose is simply to know the total amount pledged by the church.

While I am at it, let me thank the receptions committee for the wonderful job they did this past Sunday at our Advancing the Kingdom dinner. The meal was delicious. This committee is led by a young lady, Brittany Davidson, who was in the student ministry when I arrived ten years ago. What a blessing it is to see youth becoming leaders! I also noticed that many of those helping set up and serve fall into that same category. THANK YOU and keep up the good work.

I look forward to getting back to our series in the book of Revelation on February 9. This would be a good time to grab some of the Revelation invite cards and be handing them out! Things are about to get interesting!

Thank you for the blessing and the privilege of being your pastor.

Pastor Howard



Happy Birthday!

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 2/01 - Jesse Mendheim | 2/10 - Frankie Farias | 2/16 - Yvonne Orosa | 2/22 - Christine Orosa |
| 2/01 - Michael Velez | 2/11 - Damian DeVary | 2/16 - Samantha Sourber | 2/23 - Kayla Davis |
| 2/02 - Latavia Battles | 2/11 - Susan Sanchez | 2/16 - Gabbie Del Toro | 2/24 - Amanda Bridwell |
| 2/02 - Marie Edouard | 2/11 - Jay Shellhouse | 2/18 - Mary Johnson | 2/25 - Dylan Powell |
| 2/02 - Grace Hobden | 2/12 - Don Fox | 2/18 - Yamaira Lopez | 2/25 - Fred Rhodes |
| 2/02 - Danielle Martinez | 2/12 - Matthew Mullings | 2/19 - Lili Godinez | 2/26 - Woodrow Brown |
| 2/03 - Deanna Melton | 2/12 - Joseph Rodriguez | 2/20 - Raquel Davis | 2/26 - Ethan Martin |
| 2/04 - Verina Blaylock | 2/12 - Safirre Soto | 2/20 - Lucy Serna | 2/26 - Ruth Peebles |
| 2/04 - Debbie Hall | 2/13 - Gaeldesh Demosthene | 2/21 - Carrie Fernandez | 2/26 - Karla Tompkins |
| 2/04 - Bryson Orosa | 2/13 - Dolly Francis | 2/21 - Clifton Gardner | 2/28 - Audrey Carter |
| 2/05 - Manda Jarrin | 2/13 - Brian Lugo | 2/21 - Lacy Hoff | 2/28 - Geneva Byars |
| 2/05 - Morgan Wells | 2/14 - Caleb Blaedow | 2/21 - Samantha Perez | 2/29 - Vickie Clayton |
| 2/06 - Winona Nutter | 2/14 - Hailey Crawford | 2/21 - Alma Santos | |
| 2/06 - Lesley Arrieta | 2/14 - Savannah Drury | 2/21 - Ti Santos | |
| 2/07 - James Easom | 2/14 - Randi Heisterman | 2/22 - George Gonzalez | |
| 2/08 - Joyce Baxley | 2/15 - Anjanette Diaz | 2/22 - Brittany Lee | |
| 2/08 - Lisagay Khan | 2/15 - Brittney Eichler | 2/22 - Emily Leonard | |
| 2/08 - Paul McBeth | 2/15 - Rachel Harden | 2/22 - Emilia Lugo | |
| 2/09 - A.J. West | 2./16 - Julius Mora | 2/22 - Joe Maldonado | |



Music Ministry



We have a fantastic opportunity to have the Liberty Wind Orchestra on Wednesday, March 12th. If you recall, they were with us three years ago. Everybody fell in love with the sound because of the fabulous concert they performed. In order to have this super group with us, we need to house 50 students. If you would be so gracious to help in this manner, please let me know, or call the church office. This is only

one night, Wednesday night after the concert. What a wonderful way to share your family and home as the students share the excitement of Liberty University and how God has moved in their life.

Choir members, you are invited to a Valentine's banquet, Friday, February 14th, in the church fellowship hall at 6:30 PM. Whether you are single or married, wear red and expect a loving, fun

time. We all know with Doris and Russ in charge of games, you are guaranteed an enjoyable time.

We will be starting rehearsal for Easter soon. It is not too late to join us. There is always a seat open with your name on it. Come join the fun!

Singing for HIM,
Pam



Stewardship

January 2014

Contributions for January 2014:	\$ 53,154.82
Monthly budget requirements:	\$ 46,227.68
YTD Contributions:	\$ 216,380.04
YTD Budget:	\$ 196,467.64

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



Men's Prayer Breakfast

All men are invited
**Saturday, February 1,
 8:00 a.m.**

FAITH, FOOD & FELLOWSHIP



CHAPMAN
 partnership

Join us February 11, 11:30 - 1:00 p.m., as we serve meals and distribute Bibles to the homeless.
 28205 SW 125th Ave, Homestead, FL 33030



Volunteers needed to host a booth at the Fair, to distribute Bibles and pray for visitors.

Please contact the Church office for details. (305) 247-1662.



Sunday at 6:30 p.m.

Student discipleship program that seeks to teach students the core doctrines of the Christian faith.



Liberty University Wind Ensemble

IN CONCERT MARCH 12, 6:30 P.M.



Baby Shower

Caring for Miami
 Crisis Pregnancy Center.

- Items for Baby
- Diaper, Size 3, 4, 5
 - Onesies
 - Pajamas, Gowns
 - Booties, Socks, Caps
 - Diaper Bags
 - Baby Monitor
 - Blankets, Crib sheets
 - Gently used Clothes and Furniture

- Items for Mommy
- Nightgown, robe, slippers
 - Toiletries
 - Bibles, Women's Devotional
 - Uplifting magazines & books
 - Wal-Mart gift cards



ONLINE:
WWW.FBCHOMESTEAD.ORG

NEWSLETTER OF THE
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**Building bridges...empowering
people...changing lives!**



It's been an incredible start to 2014 and I can't help but be excited about what God has planned for this year! I can't tell you how much of a joy it is for me to be able to journey with you as we seek to love, obey and serve the Lord together! Here's a look at what's taking place in our Student Ministry during February:

On Wednesday nights at **ENCOUNTER** we're continuing the message series called **I Am SixThirty3**. We've been taking a look at our Student Ministry purpose statement and talking about who we are and why we do what we do. I'd love to encourage all of our students to join us for worship on Wednesdays.

Last month we held an informational meeting to discuss the two options for our summer mission trips. I am beyond excited about the opportunities that we have for students to engage in mission work this year! In case you haven't already heard, our student ministry will be doing mission work both in New Orleans, LA and Queens, NY. I hope you'll be praying for our students and volunteers as they prepare for these two trips.

Speaking of preparation, February 9th is a **VERY** important day for these mission trips.

February 9th is the date that the \$100 non-refundable deposit for both trips is due. I know that it seems pretty early to be signing up and securing funding for this summer but we are trying to accomplish 2 things: (1) we're trying to spread out the payments for the trip so it's not so overwhelming to a family's budget and (2) we're trying to prepare students to **thrive** and receive the most they can from these trips. Because we want students to be prepared for the mission work they'll engage in, we have planned 6 training dates for these mission trips. Those dates are spread out over the next 6 months and are mandatory for students who want to participate in these mission trips. If you have any questions about either one of our summer mission trips, please don't hesitate to contact me!

We also began something new last month called The CORE. I am thrilled about the avenue that this class is providing us to help disciple students to not just know and own their faith, but to also make it known to others. One of the core functions of this class is to equip students to be able to give an answer for what they believe and why they believe it. Since that is one of the core functions, each class has a component in which students are challenged to think critically through objections people may have about what we believe and are given tools to help them respond to those objections. If your

teenager hasn't been to The CORE yet, they are missing out on a tremendous opportunity and blessing! I would **strongly** encourage you to make sure your teenager attends The CORE. I'm confident that they'll be glad they did and so will you!

A few months back I began highlighting one of the core values of our Student Ministry each month. This month I'm highlighting the core value of **Diverse Fellowship**. This core value highlights the truth that Christ has destroyed the walls that once separated us and has made us into a family. Our ministry is a ministry to and for **ALL** students and their family regardless of any characteristics that this world insists must divide us. We believe that diversity in the membership of our student ministry is a reflection of the diversity we will see in heaven and we welcome and celebrate any and all students that have surrendered to the Lordship of Christ no matter what their background.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you and to serve with you for the glory of God!

For His Glory,

Joe

