



The Way

January 2016

NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HOMESTEAD, FL

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

It's hard to believe another year has come upon us. Looking back, I am filled with gratitude at seeing the blessings of God in 2015 and I am excited about what God will do in the upcoming year. Some people are not a fan of New Years Resolutions, but I am. What are my resolutions for 2016?

The first two are standard and appear every year. **1) Read through the Bible.** Pastors spend a lot of time studying the Word of God in the process of preparing sermons. But it is also important to have that time when it is just me and my Bible with no agenda except to hear God speak. **2) Share the gospel weekly.** I state "share the gospel weekly" only because there will be those days when we are doing exactly what God would have us to do. And yet no divine opportunity presents itself to share the gospel. I do believe, however, if we are praying for

and seeking opportunities to share Christ, those will normally happen in any given week.

3) Convert my doctoral project into a practical prayer evangelism manual for churches. I believe prayer evangelism is a valuable tool for reaching people who would never be reached otherwise. We have done a considerable amount of prayer evangelism in Homestead the last few years and will do more this spring. I repeatedly get requests from other churches, spread out across the country, asking if this training and strategy can be sent to them. I hope that in 2016, my answer will be "yes."

4) Teach my children fifty new catechisms. I usually try to include some goal pertaining to my responsibility to evangelize and disciple my own children. Last year, one of my resolutions was to take my oldest daughter on her first international mission trip. As you know, I kept that one! I want to resume the teaching of Baptist

catechisms to my children, teaching them fifty new catechisms during the year.

5) Personally lead a mission trip to Haiti. I have felt that God would have me do this for some time. Between working on my doctorate and overseeing our Cuba work, the right time just hasn't come. I believe, however, that 2016 is the time and it is my plan to join our Haitian pastor, Gabriel Demosthene, in leading a trip to Haiti this summer.

6) Begin a second prison service at the women's penitentiary. Last year, one of my resolutions was to oversee the beginning of a weekly worship service at the men's unit. That service is now a reality. We are averaging eighty men at our Sunday services and have already baptized about twenty. There are almost 700 women at the women's unit across the street. They also need to hear the gospel. Join me in praying that this will become a reality, Lord willing.

7) Lead a successful stew-

ardship campaign. Notice I did not say “capital campaign.” It is time for a serious *stewardship* campaign because, frankly, we have been blessed with enough new people, many of them new believers, who need to know what biblical stewardship is all about.

8) Read twelve books which will strengthen me as a pastor and theologian. Before you say, “Only twelve?” know the first book is *The Cross and Salvation* by Bruce Demarest. Want to join me? Order a copy. I’d love to have someone go through it with me! The second is *Counter Culture* by David Platt. Both of these should be powerful reads.

9) Build upon the new Spanish service. Last year, starting the Spanish service was both a prayer and a resolution. I prayed God would allow us to do it and resolved to do my part if the Lord was willing. Well, that service is now off the ground. So far, the transitions between the three morning services have been smooth. We have seen some new people who would probably not come to an English service. We’ll soon baptize our second person at that service. Praise the Lord. I want this service to remain strong and to grow. What do I mean by “Build upon” this service? I mean adding Spanish translation to the evening service, adding a Wednesday night Bible study in Spanish, and equipping our newest members from the Spanish service to serve. We are all “saved to serve.”

Please know that this list is not exhaustive. I may add more as God leads. This is just where I am at the moment. Feel free to make suggestions! I share it with you hoping that two things will happen. First, I hope something on this list might remind you of something you should be doing, but aren’t. Second, I share this so you might pray for me and keep me accountable. For example, you all have permission to ask, “How is the Demarest book?” Or “When will that women’s prison service start?”

Speaking of goal #3, we will be prayer canvassing on Saturday, January 30, at 9:30 am. Simply put, this means we will go into the community and ask our neighbors, “How can we pray for you?” You’ll be surprised at how many will gladly respond, even sharing personal needs in their lives for which we can pray. The first thirty minutes will be training for those who have never prayer canvassed before. If you are a “prayer evangelism veteran,” you may arrive at 10:00, but know we will depart promptly. We will also need those who will commit to pray and write “prayer-grams” to those who submit prayer requests.

Let me remind you to keep our “Advancing the Kingdom” campaign in mind. We have now entered year three, which is the final year. Those of you who were here two years ago were asked to pray about giving above and beyond your weekly tithe to the new building project

over a three year span. Since then, \$315,148.36 has been contributed. This does not count monies we have put into this project as a percentage of our budget, nor does it include gifts made by people outside of our church who gave, but not in fulfillment of “Advancing the Kingdom” pledges. THANK YOU! We still have a way to go, but every Sunday we get closer. For those of you who came to FBCH since then, pray about joining us for this final lap.

We are very, very close to reaching our Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$25,000. Let’s finish that up and “knock it out of the park” this Sunday. You’ve all returned from Christmas travels. Go back, take a look at how much you spent on Christmas and make sure your Lottie Moon contribution is at least that much. I confess: I will need to write another check in order to balance that out myself!

As always, thank you for the privilege of being your pastor.

Pastor Howard



Happy Birthday!

01/01 - Laycon Castro	01/11 - Jane McMillan	01/23 - Jessica Glass	01/28 - Brett Sharpe
01/01 - Randy Diaz	01/12 - Sandra Jones	01/24 - Rebecca Hadden	01/28 - Jason Castro
01/02 - Jesus Fabian, Sr.	01/14 - Valera Rickard	01/24 - Griffin Mitschelen	01/29 - Chrishawn Lewis
01/03 - Bonnie King	01/15 - Randy Olvera	01/25 - Jerry Dickson	01/30 - Brad Davis
01/03 - Leslie Olvera	01/15 - Ryan Orosa	01/25 - Cayla Housh	01/30 - Karen Dees
01/03 - Jimmie Tabor	01/15 - Thor Peterson	01/25 - Omar Lugo, Sr	01/30 - Susie Ebersole
01/04 - Cesar Berrones	01/15 - Madison Wells	01/25 - Judith Santos	01/30 - Zaida Gonzalez
01/04 - J. D. Van Ryn	01/15 - Peggy Wells	01/26 - Steve Breivogel	01/31 - Joseph Edmund
01/05 - Jocelyn Oliva	01/16 - Charles Stephens	01/26 - Amanda Clayton	01/30 - Rebecca Gonzalez
01/06 - Gianna Conterio	01/17 - Rose Marie Nazon	01/26 - Cathy Lamb	
01/06 - Geri Davis	01/17 - Elias Olvera	01/26 - Elizabeth Toirac	
01/07 - Kelly Davis	01/20 - Eddy Dickson	01/27 - Betsy Byars	
01/07 - Rachel Jones	01/20 - Jack Luff	01/27 - Ruth Garner	
01/07 - Doug Smith	01/20 - Sandra McBeth	01/27 - Jeri Martinez	
01/07 - Carolyn Sprinkle	01/20 - Ruben Toirac	01/27 - Terry Tompkins	
01/08 - Jeovany Torres	01/21 - Omar Lugo, Jr	01/27 - Eric Zdancewicz	
01/09 - Michael Mann	01/21 - Nancy Rodriguez	01/28 - Lisa Morrow	



Music Ministry



What a fantastic Christmas season. I am so proud of our Youth choir/drama team!! Uncle Phil's Diner was outstanding. They did a wonderful job! Special thanks to Ashton Drury for co-directing this with me. Of course, our children's and adult choir sang amazingly as well. Our adult choir also shared our Christmas cantata at the Homestead hospital. What fun! The acoustics in their front surroundings are unbelievable. Thank you to each and every choir member, of all ages. We know you too love sharing His story through song.

January 31st, we will be having an Everybody Sing during our

evening service. Please let me know if you would like to sing, share a poem, play an instrument, or perhaps share your testimony. It would be exciting if Sunday School classes would do something as a group! Let's put out a challenge to all classes to sing their favorite hymn. Now we'll see who responds.

On a sad note, we hate to say goodbye to Linda Smith. Oh my! She has been around as long as I can remember. I'm not saying she's old, please don't get me wrong. What I'm saying is, she has been an incredible servant in many, many, areas. Becoming a grandparent can make you do several unexpected

things. Please join us January 10th, after the evening service to wish she and Doug God's speed on their new adventure.

As we count our blessings and our family continues to grow, Benny and I wish you a wonderful new year. Please take time this year to pray more, read more, laugh more, and sing more! Looking forward to a fabulous year, 2016.

Singing for HIM,
Pam



Stewardship December 2015

Contributions for December 2015:	\$ 44,179.46
Monthly budget requirements:	\$ 46,595.00
YTD Contributions:	\$ 149,314.52
YTD Budget:	\$ 151,433.75

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



Feeding Homeless
Join us Thursday, January 28, 11:30 - 1:00 p.m., as we serve meals and distribute Bibles to the homeless.
28205 SW 125th Ave, Homestead, FL 33030



Club will resume
Wednesday, January 6, 2016
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.



All Choirs Resume
Sunday, January 10, 5:30 p.m.
Little Melodies, Children's Choir and Youth Choir




Men's Prayer Breakfast
 All men are invited to join us Saturday, January 9, at 8:00 a.m.



Women on Mission would like to thank our church Family for providing gifts for 79 needed children.

FAREWELL RECEPTION
 Join us January 10, 7:30 p.m. As we say good bye to Linda Smith and thank her for her many years of dedication and service.



2016 TITHING ENVELOPES ARE IN!
 ENVELOPES ARE LOCATED IN THE FRONT FOYER, NEXT TO THE CHURCH OFFICE.



ONLINE:
WWW.FBCHOMESTEAD.ORG

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



HAPPY NEW YEAR CHURCH FAMILY! I am so grateful for the past year and all God has accomplished among, in, and through our students, adult volunteers, and our ministry! 2015 was a *great* year of ministry and I can't wait to see what God has in store for us in 2016!

Here's a look at what's taking place in our Student Ministry during January:

First, on Wednesday nights at *ENCOUNTER* we're going to begin a new message series called *#decision2016*. We'll be taking a look at different characters in the book of Genesis and the good and bad decisions they made in order to see what we can learn about making God-honoring decisions in our lives today. I'd like to encourage all of our students to join us on Wednesday nights as we worship together.

Second, on Friday, January 8, we'll have our next Friday Nite Live from 6:00 – 10:00 pm! This month's theme for Friday Nite Live is *Board Game Night*. We'll begin with supper at 6:00 and then break out the board games to play. If they want to, students may bring their own favorite board game with them to play. We'll be sure to have *several* different games going on simultaneously. I hope all of our students will join us for this fun night!

Third, on Sunday, January 17, our Student Ministry will be attending Winter Jam 2016. Winter Jam is a tour featuring 10 different bands for only \$10. Artists include *Lauren Daigle, For King and Country, Matthew West, Crowder, Red, Newsong, Side-walk Prophets, KB, Trip Lee, and Tedashii*. We'll leave the church at 2:00 pm. Students should bring their \$10 admission fee plus money to buy supper at the arena.

Finally, this month, I'm highlighting the core value of *Matur-*

ing Discipleship. This core value reflects the desire that our ministry has to train students how to maintain an active relationship with Jesus Christ that is based on the principles of Scripture and is demonstrated by a life that increasingly imitates the character of God. We strive to accomplish this core value through our small group discipleship opportunities, whether that is weekly through Sunday School or Encounter services or special events like Renew Weekend and Metamorphosis.

As always, thank you for the opportunity to serve you and to serve with you for the glory of God! I pray that 2016 would be our greatest year of ministry yet!

For His Glory,

Joe

