



The Way

October 2015

NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HOMESTEAD, FL

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

It has been said that the seven last words of a dying church are, "We've never done it that way before!" I imagine we have all been guilty of uttering those words a few times over the years. When deciding what to do in the future, it is easier to default to what has been done in the past. But sometimes, God calls us to do something new.

In last month's edition of the Way, I told you about a report our Spanish Exploratory Committee would make to the church at the September business meeting. They made a recommendation that we, as a church, do something new. The church heard their report and unanimously approved it. I believe it is important, however, that everyone know what has been done and what is coming. There will be some changes. It will involve us doing things we have never done before. But I believe we should be excited about the changes being made.

First, some background. In February of 2015, I related to the Church Council the tremendous demographic

changes occurring in Homestead. According to census data, 57% of Homestead residents speak a language other than English at home. Many of them are English speakers, but their heart language – the language in which they will commune with God – is Spanish. This percentage is projected to grow dramatically in the next ten years as more and more Miami residents move south.

As our community changes, how we communicate the gospel to them must change as well. Please note: The gospel does not change. The *message* always stays the same. The *methods* by which we present that message, however, do change over time. Methods which were useful in days past will not be useful today. Methods we would not have considered previously are relevant now.

With this in mind, the Church Council recommended to the church the formation of a Spanish Exploratory Committee. The committee on committees then recommended a slate of willing members to serve on this committee. That committee began working in April and has met almost every week, with a few weeks off during summer travels. This committee was assigned the task of exploring the feasibility of adding a

Spanish service to the schedule at FBCH. They also studied what action plan would have to be implemented in order to launch such a service and do it well.

The committee began with every imaginable option on the table. Through much prayer and discussion, those options were narrowed down to a single plan. The members also visited other churches in Miami implementing a bilingual format. They learned a few things to do and *not* to do in the process. Over time, the committee came to the conclusion that any Spanish service at FBCH should be *as integrated as possible* into the total life of the church. They did not recommend we start another Spanish *mission* as was done in the past. They recommended a service which will be 100% First Baptist Church of Homestead. It will be led by the same pastor. The announcements made at the English services will be made in Spanish. The same events will be promoted and the same ministries will be shared. Tithes given will go into the same budget. The same missions offerings will be promoted with the same goals being pursued. The same baptism class will be taught to those pursuing believer's baptism. The same membership class will be available to those who want to know more about FBCH. The same core values will be stressed so that those join-

ing FBCH through the Spanish service adopt the same church identity. Even the web site will be the same, with each page being translated into a Spanish equivalent. This is a different way of doing it. While there are some churches in Miami who are utilizing this approach, it has never been done this way at FBCH before.

The recommendation made can be called a "One Church" strategy. This is not a separate church under the same roof, but simply an additional service of the same church. This service will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am when most of you will be in Sunday School.

One recommendation the committee made was for me to preach the same message in Spanish I currently preach in English. This way, no matter which service one attends, they hear the same message based on the same Scripture. We all move in the same direction at the same time. It is my conviction that everyone needs expository preaching because everyone needs to be systematically exposed to the truths of Scripture. There may be slight differences in how different cultures apply a certain text, but the need to hear the text is the same for everyone. This is what makes such a strategy possible.

By the way, I am aware of the additional responsibility this will place upon me. I preach in Spanish probably a dozen times every year when I go to Cuba. It takes work to translate my messages and ready myself to preach them in a second language. My personal feeling is, if I can preach to thousands of people in Cuba behind someone else's pulpit, I can preach in Spanish behind my own pulpit. With growth, it will be necessary to provide additional staff. If a significant number

of people come to the Spanish service, the total number of people I will shepherd will grow even more. This husband and father of four, on the other hand, will continue to have only twenty-four hours per day! It is my prayer that God blesses this endeavor to the point that we are forced to add an additional pastor who can provide pastoral care, help with administrative duties and assist in ministering to all of our members, including the Spanish speaking ones. But that's another discussion for another day.

I would also like to point out some of the things which will not change. The constitution of our church will continue to be in English. The by-laws we follow cannot and will not be translated. Our business meetings will still be held in English. Anyone who comes and desires translation, of course, can have that need met.

In order to begin this service, the Exploratory Committee must complete the steps on the action plan which was presented to the church. I can tell you they have already completed the majority of these steps and may be ready to announce when the starting date will be within a few weeks. The Florida Baptist Convention is providing us with funds for promotion so that everyone in our community has heard about the service and will know when it begins. You can expect to hear about it on the radio. A praise team has already been assembled. (The music will be dynamic on day one.) We still need someone to volunteer in the sound booth. (This will require training.) We have greeters. We are in the process of starting a parking ministry and some have volunteered to serve in it. We will need assistance helping everyone find a parking space when there is an entire congregation meeting here during the time when we already have English Sunday School.

One significant change will apply to those of you who attend the 8:15 am service. In order to have time for three Sunday morning services, the 8:15 am service will need to begin at 8:00 am when we start the Spanish service. Yes, I know that is early. But I would ask you to make a fifteen minute sacrifice (which is really no sacrifice at all) so that hundreds of people can hear the gospel in their heart language.

Some of you may feel led to be a part of this service. Most of the members of our Spanish Sunday School class (about twenty-five people) will be switching to this service. I hope that some of our 11:00 crowd will consider switching to the 9:30 Spanish service. This will have the added benefit of providing some much needed room at 11:00.

Overall, I am thankful for the work this committee has done. I am excited about what the future holds. Most of all, I am prayerful, knowing anything we do will fail unless the Lord is in it. No plans we make will ever be good enough to make up for a lack of Holy Spirit power. So join me in praying for this service. Pray as we make preparations. Pray that we will be ready to launch soon. Pray for God to bring the right people to this service. Pray for souls to be saved. Pray for me to have something resembling the biblical gift of "tongues" as I preach the gospel in a language in which I was not raised.

Thank you for the privilege of being your pastor.

Pastor Howard



Happy Birthday!

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 10/01 - Vivianna Catlin | 10/09 - Angelo Durante | 10/16 - Jonathan Sourber | 10/22 - Catherine Botek |
| 10/01 - Steven Clayton | 10/09 - Tairo Sosa | 10/17 - B.J. Benn | 10/22 - Beatriz Giraldo |
| 10/02 - Cristal Cruz | 10/10 - Kailee Breivogel | 10/17 - Steve Bergeson | 10/23 - Alex Taylor |
| 10/02 - Vivian Nelson | 10/10 - Jesus De La Cruz | 10/17 - Jesus Delgado | 10/25 - June Thomas |
| 10/02 - Estefania Sarraff | 10/10 - Anaya Goedhart | 10/17 - Andres Diaz | 10/26 - Jason Eldridge |
| 10/03 - Austin Pichardo | 10/10 - Tania Morales | 10/17 - Leah Lapworth | 10/26 - Mariela Rodriguez |
| 10/03 - Sabrina Pichardo | 10/11 - Ralph Bellis | 10/17 - Chris Matthews | 10/26 - Grace Rodriguez |
| 10/05 - Nicole Hardiman | 10/11 - Kanye Fox | 10/17 - Sarah Moak | 10/27 - David Allen |
| 10/05 - Blair Lowe | 10/12 - Jenelle Lopez | 10/18 - Leorah Norestin | 10/28 - Irasol Cruz |
| 10/06 - Pat Hollinger | 10/12 - Ava Lugo | 10/19 - David Accursio | 10/28 - Veronica Dominquez |
| 10/06 - Huguette Lundy | 10/12 - Trent Martino | 10/19 - Pamela Helms | 10/28 - Ashton Drury |
| 10/06 - Kollins Lundy | 10/13 - Donna Case | 10/19 - Xonnia Villena | 10/28 - Madison McCarty |
| 10/06 - Tracy Wilt | 10/13 - Rachel Goodwin | 10/19 - Randy House | 10/28 - Judy Mendheim |
| 10/07 - Caleb Benn | 10/14 - Yvette Cordova | 10/20 - Lizzie Losner | 10/30 - Ella Graham |
| 10/07 - Lindsay Fox | 10/14 - Emily Friman | 10/20 - Steven Losner | 10/31 - Lani Hardiman |
| 10/07 - Edith Ramos | 10/15 - Amanda Barnes | 10/20 - Donald Mills | |
| 10/07 - Rebeca Santana | 10/15 - Elma Branson | 10/20 - Bob Smith | |
| 10/08 - Suzanne Suarez | 10/15 - Bobby Conty | 10/20 - Crystyna Wright | |
| 10/08 - Jalin Wilson | 10/15 - Rickey Webster | 10/21 - Tim Ebersole | |
| 10/09 - Jonathan Davis | 10/16 - Tiffany Seneriz | 10/21 - Randy Zebold | |



Music Ministry



Webster's definition of "Worship" ~ to regard with great, even extravagant respect, honor, or devotion.

Do we honestly give God the true worship he deserves, or do we enter the building waiting to be entertained? Worship comes from the heart and the soul. It includes respect, reverence, coming together as a whole body of Christ. Worship is not only singing, but includes giving,

preaching, scripture reading and especially prayer.

God has blessed our music program with many, many talented people, with vast musicians skills, so I could see where you are easily "entertained". True entertainment comes from God! If we are singing or playing an instrument for "our glory" then we are unquestionably participating for the wrong reason. We give glory to whom it is due. I

strongly encourage you to come next Sunday, come to worship, with a heart prepared, in a proper state of mind to sincerely receive genuine worship.

I love my church because YOU are my church!

Singing for HIM,
Pam



Stewardship

September 2015

Contributions for September 2015:	\$ 37,963.18
Monthly budget requirements:	\$ 46,491.16
YTD Contributions:	\$ 583,768.15
YTD Budget:	\$ 604,385.08

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



Feeding the Homeless
 October 13, 11:30 a.m., Join us as we serve meals and distribute Bibles to the homeless.

Prison Ministry

"I was in prison and you came to visit me." Matthew 25:36

If you are interested in joining the prison ministry, please plan on attending training at FBCH on Thursday, October 8, 6:00 p.m.



PRISCILLA SHIRER

The Armor of God



Sunday 5:30 p.m.
 &
Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
 Meet in the sanctuary

metamorphosis



Word of Life Youth Camp

October 29 - November 1

Deadline to register
 10/14/15 \$150.00

If you are able to sponsor a student, please contact Joe.

FBCH CHILI COOK OFF 
Don't Miss It!

Join us Saturday, October 24, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall as we enjoy food and fellowship.

Help the Women on Mission kick – off our Thanksgiving canned food drive.

Prizes will be awarded for: *Best Tasting Chili
 *Hottest Chili



Thanksgiving Food Drive

Help us provide a thanksgiving feast to families in need.

Items needed: Stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, instant mashed potatoes, corn, chicken broth, canned sweet potatoes, green beans, rice, pumpkin pie filling, pie crust (boxed), dry beans, evaporated milk, cream of mushroom soup, flour and oil.

"Gift cards and monetary gifts are appreciated and needed to purchase turkeys and perishable items." Deadline November 18th

ONLINE:
WWW.FBCHOMESTEAD.ORG

NEWSLETTER OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF
HOMESTEAD, FL

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**Building bridges...empowering
people...changing lives!**



October is an exciting month in the life of our Student Ministry. Here's a look at what's going on that I hope you'll make sure to get involved in.

First, on Wednesday nights, we're continuing our message series called **Redefining Greatness** where we've been exploring the topic of serving. I'd love to encourage all of our students to join us on Wednesday nights from 6:33 – 8:00 pm as we meet together to worship.

Second, our annual fall retreat, **Metamorphosis**, will take place this month on October 29 through November 1. This is always one of the highlights of the year for our ministry. We'll be traveling back to Word of Life Youth Camp in Hudson, FL for this year's retreat. The theme for this year's retreat is the Word of God. In a world that is

becoming increasingly hostile to the Scriptures, our students will study topics that answer questions such as "How did we get the Bible?" "How do we know it can be trusted?" "What role should the Bible play in my daily life?" and many more! I hope **ALL** of our students will take advantage of this retreat! The deadline for submitting registrations is Wednesday, October 14. Informational brochures are available in the youth room or online at www.633students.org. We are still in need of scholarships for students who have a financial need. If you would like to help make it possible for a student to attend **Metamorphosis** this year, please let me know.

Third, next month we will be going to the Tobymac "*This is Not a Test*" tour. The concert is Saturday, November 21, at 7:00 pm at the BankUnited Center. We will be leaving the church at 4:30 pm and eating dinner in the Coral Gables area before the concert. Cost

is \$36 and must be paid by Wednesday, October 21. Students should also bring money to eat supper beforehand.

Finally, this month I'm highlighting the core value of **Worldwide Evangelism**. This core value highlights the truth that God has commanded us to take the gospel to our community, the ends of the earth, and everywhere in between. We want our students to understand that they are **always** on mission—no matter where they are or what they are doing! We want to do everything we possibly can to equip them to live out that mission of making disciples of **all** peoples!

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

For His Glory,
Joe

