



First Baptist Church | February 2016

# *The State of God's Church*

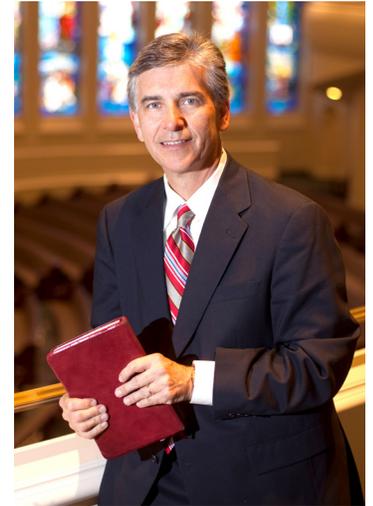
*"I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

— *Philippians 3:14 NIV*

**G**od has been pouring His lavish blessings on our FBC family in a way that creates humility, affirmation, and inspiration! But, we are not yet done. Now is the time to press on toward the finish line while experiencing God's blessings. The following is just a sampling of the kingdom harvest God is sending our way.

## MEMBERSHIP, EVANGELISM AND FINANCIAL MINISTRY REPORT

- Church membership grew to **6,615 precious souls** and Bible Fellowship enrollment **rose** to more than 5,000.
- During 2015 we received **289 new members** with **130** of these treasured friends requesting to be **baptized**. Other evangelistic harvest endeavors resulted in hundreds of people coming to Christ through The Living Christmas Tree, Vacation Bible School, our *Crossroads* television broadcast, prison ministry, Judgment House, and a multitude of mission partnerships.
- God enabled us to soar past our budget of **\$6,425,000** with budget gifts of **\$7,189,237** — **an average of \$764,237!** *We are also praising God that we are officially debt free!*
- Our **Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions®** was an amazing **\$358,523** and the **Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions®** totaled **\$109,053**. Our support of the Community Ministries totaled **\$190,000**. 2015 gifts to **Children's Hope** exceeded \$1,200,000. Our **India Church Building** fund received over \$80,000. *Our aggregate spending for mission endeavors exceeded \$2,000,000!*



*Let's celebrate the following Ministry highlights for 2015:*

## DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES

- We continue to progress in our **Bible Fellowship Class Goal of 2020 by 2020**.
  - **Bible Fellowship Class Average Attendance** was over **1,800**.
  - **Bible Fellowship Enrollment**, our most important indicator, grew by more than 150 and surpassed 5,000.
  - **Easter Sunday** we had **2,450** in Bible Fellowship attendance!
  - **Sunday School Training/Appreciation Day** in August was attended by more than **300** of our leaders.
- We continue to grow in Christ by equipping the Saints for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13).
  - **On-Campus and Off-Campus Bible Studies** continue to multiply helping disciple our members during the week.
  - On Wednesday and Sunday nights, our **discipleship classes** thrived with a variety of courses from *Experiencing God* to marriage and parenting courses centered on Christian principles from God's Word. A new offering on *World Culture and Conflicts* featuring Air University experts drew an average of 100 per session.

## PRESCHOOL MINISTRY

- There were **206 dedicated teachers** who shared the love of Jesus to more than 365 preschoolers in Preschool Bible Fellowship.
- We had **129 Worship Care Ministry volunteers** who provided loving care to our preschoolers (8 weeks to 3 years of age) and our **PEW (Preschoolers Experiencing Worship)** ages 4-5 years of age during our 11:00 AM worship each Sunday.
- God blessed our FBC family with **32 precious babies** this year.
- Our **Easter Egg Hunt** was a wonderful time of family fun and fellowship with more than 200 people attending.
- **MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)** experienced a great year averaging 30 with four mentor moms.
- Thank you to the **123 VBS teachers** who shared the gospel of Jesus with **352 preschoolers**.
- **Mission Friends** had an average attendance of 45 preschoolers (2-5 years of age). Each Sunday, our 13 teachers taught our Mission Friends how to share the love of Jesus in their community as well as how missionaries around the world are sharing Jesus' love in different countries.
- **Parent's Night Out** provided time for our parents to have a free night out for dinner or do "special" Christmas shopping for their children. We had 31 children (grades 1-6) and 54 preschoolers (8 weeks-5years of age) for a total of 85 children and 36 volunteers.

- In 2015 we were saddened with the **retirement of Sheila Hinds** as our preschool minister, but welcomed **Nancie McQueen** as she began her ministry.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

- 2015 started off with 54 children in **Bible Drill**. We had 18 of those children complete the State or District Drill.
- Our **Young Worshipers Club** involved 4th, 5th and 6th graders in worship. From reading God's Word to praying during worship, our kids are learning what it means to follow Christ with all their heart.
- Our **Incredikids Day Camp** for all 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders at Camp Chandler included 64 children.
- **Vacation Bible School** was held and we hit the target with 1,334 total enrolled. Our kids gave \$2,100 to the cooperative program; and 40 decisions to accept Christ were made. VBS also brought 50 prospects to our church.
- Our **Kids Kamp** theme was Game On! We took 94 kids and chaperones to Camp Lee in Anniston, Alabama.
- On Wednesday nights during the summer we had **Something Far Out** which helped our kids focus on serving others.
- Our summer activities were a big success thanks to our interns, Erin Williams and Walker Harris.
- Our annual **Family Fest** was held and we welcomed 75 visitors/prospects to the festivities.
- The **BIG Church Tour** welcomed 1st graders and their families to the Children's Ministry. They loved asking our pastor, Jay Wolf, personal questions and they were excited to tour our facilities. Sunday evening, we distributed 69 Bibles to our new 1st graders.

## STUDENT MINISTRY

- 2015 was a blessed year in the life of our Student Ministry. We saw students accept Christ as Savior, numerous baptisms, and many students commit to a strong stand for Christ.
- At the beginning of 2015 we were sad to see our associate student pastor of three years, **Caleb Farrow**, depart to take the role of Student Pastor at FBC Decatur, Alabama, but we were blessed to have **Spencer Jones** step into that role in May 2015.
- Students followed **God's call to serve and share** locally in Montgomery, in locations across Alabama, throughout the U.S. and across the world in places like Haiti, Cuba, and West Africa. These adventures helped our students grow in Christ as well as gave them the opportunity to impact the lives of countless others.
- Students also participated in great numbers with great hearts in our yearly events: Disciple NOW, Choir Tour, Outdoor Adventure, Crossover trips (6th-8th grades), Missions Montgomery, Youth Camp, Judgment House, Senior Leadership Retreat, Winter Conference, Passion conference, and much more. We had our largest attendance at both **Disciple NOW** and **Youth Camp** with more than 200 students at each! Our weekly events give a consistent foundation for a stronger faith in the lives of our students. Powerhouse, Baldwin Bible Study, and Weekly Small Groups assist students in their spiritual growth and create a strong foundation for our ministry.
- In 2015, God opened a new door for our College Ministry. After seven years of **GROW Bible Study** in the home of Douglas and Eleanor McElvy, we began a worship service each Tuesday with more than 80 first time visitors over the course of the semester.
- A new ministry was created in the college ministry called **Connections**. This ministry connects FBC families with college students in order to facilitate intergenerational relationships and for students to have an extra connection to our family. We had 15 families and 30 students participate.
- In March, the College Ministry went to Nashville over spring break on mission. We ministered to refugees through World Relief by gathering supplies for families as they move to the United States and having gospel conversations while visiting in their homes.

## SINGLE ADULT MINISTRY

- **Bible fellowship classes** continue to be the flagship of the Single Adult Ministry with six classes designed to meet the various needs of the single adults. We have more than 100 single adults active in Bible study and many other areas of service.
- **The Missions Auction** for the single adult mission scholarship fund raised a record amount and had the largest number in attendance yet. The monies raised enabled more than 40 single adults to go on mission. We continued in our partnerships with mission trips to New Orleans, Cuba, the Ejamat people of Senegal Africa as well as adding Japan.
- We added a new component to our **Back-to-School Block Party** in Chisholm. Members from the rap team "Flatline" performed. The audience responded with 27 decisions for Jesus!
- Our ministry continues to be involved in many areas of service from Tutoring on Wednesday nights to ESL on Thursday nights.
- This year our young adult class, the **Tripp Henley Memorial Class**, sent 20 to work at Mission Nueva in **Guatemala**. While there they held two medical clinics in the mountains and painted murals and laid floors in the new orphanage there.

## SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

- Our **2015 Trips** included the Holy Land; Warm Springs, Georgia; The Celebrators Conference in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee; the Billy Graham Training Center and the Biltmore Mansion in Asheville, North Carolina; and Virginia Christmas Trip.
- Our **JOY Singers** led us in worship on Senior Adult Day, the annual Patriotic Concert, and kicked off the Christmas season with our annual Christmas program. In addition they also sang at nursing homes during the year.
- Five special **banquets and fellowships** were held in 2015. Average attendance for these events ranged from 200-270 senior adults.
- The **January Bible Study** and **Senior Adult VBS** gave senior adults many opportunities to study God's Word.
- Our **In-Home Ministry** is a vital link between First Baptist Church and those who can no longer attend. This year

we provided flowers at Christmas and our deacons conducted In-Home Lord's Supper celebrations with many homebound adults. Regular visits are made by our wonderful associates.

- Our **Living Hope Cancer Care Ministry** continues to provide an important link of ministry. Our goal is to minister in the name of Jesus to those affected by cancer as well as ministering to their family.
- Senior Adults serve in so many ways. Mission expeditions, Beacon Deacons, Sunday greeters and ushers, Caring Center volunteers, just to name a few, enabled First Baptist to help more people follow Jesus.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

- The **Sanctuary Choir** plays a vital role in worship leadership each Sunday morning throughout the year. The **Sanctuary Orchestra** faithfully and effectively leads in worship each Sunday morning. Special events like our annual Gospel Sing are a great blessing to many.
- Our **One Voice Choir** (9th-12th grades) continues to grow and impact many students' lives. The choir had an incredible music and missions experience in Miami which culminated in our annual Homecoming Worship Concert. They worked with our NAMB mission partner Derek Allen and sang many worship concerts.
- In March, **Reflections Ensemble** took a mission trip to Vieques, Puerto Rico and ministered in a powerful way to many people. Missionaries Howard and Connie Walker were incredible mission hosts and we plan to continue to partner with them.
- Our **One Heart Choir** (7th-8th grades) has a membership of 65. One Heart led in worship throughout the year primarily during evening worship services and once during a morning worship service. The choir led a music and missions tour in the New Orleans area in June 2015. A record number of students participated.
- The **Preschool and Children's Choir program** impacted the lives of many children. The choir leadership had more than 50 volunteers. An average of 120 children and 30 adults per week participated during the past year. These choirs provided seasonal worship service experiences on Wednesday and Sunday evenings and culminated with a concert and musical in the spring. Ten of our students participated in the Alabama Baptist State Board of Mission's "Children's Honor Choir."
- We hosted the annual **Youth Choir Kick-Off Event** sponsored by the Alabama Baptist Board of Missions. We had 17 churches from around the state participate with 500 students in attendance.
- Only eternity will reveal every impact point of the **2015 Living Christmas Tree**. The lost were saved, Christians were encouraged, and God's Truth was revealed! Many people indicated they chose Christ as their Savior, made a recommitment of their life, and indicated they wanted more information about FBC. More people attended the Living Christmas Tree than ever before. Additionally, we had the largest choir participation we have had since we moved into the sanctuary with 180 singers. From parking, to decorating, greeters to greenery, the entire LCT team was comprised of more than 500 people. After 35 years, God continues to produce massive Kingdom fruit from our old tree.

## COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

- The **Communications Ministry** continued to creatively enhance and promote all of FBC's events and ministries to our members and the community. This was done through a variety of ways including the website, newsletters, mailouts, posters, billboards, email marketing, social media, and the order of worship. The electronic form of the Beacon continues in popularity and is sent weekly to more than 500 church members. The printed Beacon continues to be mailed each week with the help of a dedicated group of senior adults. Our goal is to keep everyone well informed and to encourage involvement in FBC.
- The **Media Ministry** continued to grow and sent the message of Jesus Christ beyond the walls of our buildings. Staffed primarily by volunteers, the media ministry produced 52 thirty-minute programs that were broadcast on WSFA as well as the Frazer Christian Television. In addition, a complete service is also available on the Frazer TV at 1:30 PM each Sunday. Many special productions were made, the highlights being the Living Christmas Tree DVD, One Voice Choir Tour, and the Gospel Sing.
- The website, [www.montgomeryfbc.org](http://www.montgomeryfbc.org), continues to grow in its offerings including the convenience of online giving and event registration, as well as an **online member directory**. It is being continually updated and expanded to add features that will magnify the ministries of FBC. Please take the time to explore and use this ministry tool.

## MISSIONS MINISTRY

- The **Missions Factory** was alive and well in 2015. FBC members have been actively involved in missions work here in Montgomery, the U.S. and across the Globe.
- In 2015, **761 volunteers** participated in **58 mission projects**, 39 of which were overseas.
- Our partnership with **SEND NYC** also continues to thrive. In 2015, we supported 3 NAMB church planters serving and reaching the lost in different areas of New York City.
- In October, our church played a major role in the **2015 River Region Judgment House**. This community outreach event saw more than 3,500 people in attendance with 481 recorded decisions for Christ.
- We have embraced four new **North American Church Planters** to support in Huntsville, New Orleans, Alaska and Seattle.
- We had a banner year in Operation Christmas Child with more than 1,400 boxes collected through our relay center.

## OUTREACH, SPECIAL MINISTRIES AND FOOD SERVICE

- We had 42 participants complete the **ABCs of Evangelism**. Visitation was held each Sunday with an average of 11 participating.

- There were 8 special meetings and activities were held for **Visually Impaired Persons**.
- In 2015, we served 92 meals in our kitchen.
- 2015 also included the retirement of **Patty Roper** after thirty-seven years of blessing us as our Outreach Minister. **Will Spivey** began serving as our pastoral intern.

## COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

- The **Caring Center** registered 12,165 adults (i.e. families). We distributed 72 tons of food to 8,038 adults and children. Financial assistance in the amount of \$60,241.44 was given to needy families. There were two professions of faith. The **Barnabas Ministry** had 283 clients attend and 108 of them secured employment.
- The **Children's Learning Center** ended the year with an enrollment of 88 children. Every Pre-K child whose parents applied was accepted by magnet schools.
- **Counseling Care** had one counselor and three support groups.
- The **International Ministry** includes our **English as a Second Language** with an enrollment of an average of 75 students. Night ESL enrollment was 15 students. Total number of volunteers in the English Café is 18. **Conversational English** has an enrollment of 250 students from 59 countries. 40 children are enrolled in preschool during Conversational English classes.
- The **Nehemiah Project** owns three rental houses. We also have 7 ½ acres, three houses and a gym on the Nehemiah Center property. Extensive improvements were made to this property including renovating and dedicating one house for office space and GED classes. Our programs include Kid's Club after-school program with 44 enrolled, Friday Night Basketball with a Purpose with an average of 30, Mom's & Mentor's Program with a weekly average of 8, Lydia Project Job's Training Program, summer program for 50 children, GED program, Read to the Paws Program, and the Master's Garden. The garden is two acres with 41 plots and a common area where anyone can pick vegetables. We received \$50,000 in grants for the project and it's a great success!
- Other programs and highlights include **Tutoring Program** with 44 enrolled and 55 volunteers. **Santa's Workshop** provided for 40 children. **Angel Tree** provided for 90 children. 251 children were given a wonderful Christmas through community ministries.
- Our **Prison Ministry** continues to grow and make an eternal difference in the lives of inmates. More volunteers are needed as we continue to expand.
- We are happy to have **Ben Hulsey** on board as our minister of operations in Community Ministries.

## CHILDREN'S HOPE

- We rejoice in the Lord's blessings and favor in another momentous year for **Children's Hope** in providing orphan care, adoption, and foster care ministry. Stateside work in adoption and foster care advocacy and support continued, with multiple families and individuals involved in this amazing and much needed ministry. 43 children are currently living in the orphanage in Jacmel, Haiti.
- A new **Medical/Dental clinic** opened in Jacmel in the spring, with more than 3,380 patients seen and provided with quality, affordable healthcare. There were 188 professions of faith through the work at the clinic this year. Around 900 students are enrolled in Children's Hope supported schools and are receiving a quality education that will prepare them for advancement in life. 35 volunteer teams and over 360 volunteers partnered in Haiti in various ways including evangelism, pastor training, construction, medical, and teacher training.
- Construction of our **Life-Saving Surgery Center** began in August, with completion estimated for mid-2016.
- By the end of 2015, the **Peters, Payne, and Mouer families** were all serving full-time in Jacmel and are giving their best to the Lord and the ministry there.
- We welcomed **Jared and Sarah McCrory** to the **Children's Hope** staff and are excited about the wisdom and experience they will bring to this growing ministry.

## FIRST BAPTIST FOUNDATION

- The Foundation managed more than **\$6 million** during 2015, and received **more than \$565,000 in gifts** that will yield a massive eternal dividend.
- We **distributed more than \$350,000** in funds to help fuel God's work through the ministries at FBC. We provided significant assistance to our Caring Center and Nehemiah Center, provided funds for a Parent's Night Out for preschoolers and children, helped with some special IMB projects in Europe, Asia, and Africa, and invested in spreading the gospel through missions around the world.
- During 2015, we continued our partnership with **PhilanthroCorp**, a Christian estate planning firm from Colorado, and we hosted estate specialist, Dave Keesling. We've had more than 100 FBC families work with PhilanthroCorp's team of experts.
- The Foundation made a significant contribution of **\$52,000 for the educational advancement** of our 48 scholarship recipients.

## CONCLUSION

This is an exhilarating season of running the race. During 2016 we are trusting God to bless our efforts as we seek to follow Him and make an eternal kingdom impact.

Running the race together,

