

Together

Vol 36 No 1

January 2020



**FIRST
MEMPHIS**

A Different Way to be Baptist

200 E. Parkway N.
Memphis, TN 38112-5414
901-454-1131
www.fbcmemphis.org

REMINDERS

Wednesday, January 1

Happy New Year!

The church office will be closed.

Sunday, January 5, 9 am

First Cup Gathering

Sunday, January 12 noon

Congregational Conversation
in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, January 12, 4-5 pm

Kids' Missions

Come to our **Epiphany Take
down** of the Advent and
Christmas decorations on
Sunday, January 5 from 5-7
pm.

Youth Winter Summit is
January 17-19.



Asha's Refuge

REV. DR. RANDY L. HYDE, INTERIM PASTOR

One thing I am most proud of, in regard to our church, is the obvious desire to minister in, to, and with our community. For example, we currently have two other congregations meeting in our facilities each Sunday morning. One is the First International Baptist Church, which began as a Laotian community. Another is the Congolese church that meets during our Sunday school hour. Past ministries include Peace of Thread

and Ekata. In other words, we have a long-standing tradition of supporting refugee ministry.

And now, another opportunity has come our way in Asha's Refuge.

While you may not be aware of this, beginning this month we will be housing this ministry on the south wing of our third floor. What is Asha's Refuge? I quote from their website... this ministry "offers support and defends the rights of local underprivileged refugees through community and client education, thereby reducing any overall negative impact on the unprepared local government, city, business, school and/or neighborhood dealing with an influx of culturally diverse people."

Who are these "culturally diverse people"? "Many of the refugees/asylees we serve have a disability, an illness, are elderly, are parents with multiple children, are preschoolers in need of an educational head start, have no job skills, do not speak English, are young adults at risk for human trafficking or other crimes, are single parents and/or are widows." All participants in the program are documented, and the majority live near our

church.

Why does Asha's Refuge exist? The answer comes from scripture... "But the stranger that resides with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and you should love him as thyself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."
- Lev. 19:34 "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt."
- Exodus 22:21

In the near future, we hope to invite representatives from Asha's Refuge to meet with our congregation and share in a dedication service. In the meantime, I ask you to be in prayer for this ministry's leadership, and for the people they serve, those Jesus identified as "the least of these."

One practical note: this section of our building, has for some time, been in need of repair, and a renovation is currently underway. Costs for this work are coming from the endowment, but the monthly rent Asha's Refuge will be paying us will reimburse these expenses in the coming months. Our contract with Asha's Refuge is for three years.

Continued on page 4

TRANSITION TEAM

From the Transition Facilitator

FOURTH CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATION, JANUARY 12

In response to many requests, on January 12, the transition team will be creating a space for naming what hinders FBC from moving forward in unity, and for listening deeply to one another. The team and I believe this time together can be powerful and fruitful. We ask for your help in making it so in these ways:

Pray specifically for this conversation. Thank God for FBC. Ask for God's guidance. Pray that the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of everyone present and that we would all be receptive to the Spirit's movements.

Spend time in personal reflection beforehand. Make a timeline or draw a picture representing your spiritual journey so that you can become more aware of all that has shaped how you feel now. Clarify the root of any hurt. Mull your part in moving the church forward.

Show up. If you are someone who has been asking for this space to share, please take advantage of it. (If you're not comfortable speaking up in a large group, you can submit your stories in advance to be read during the congregational conversation. You can do so on paper via a box in the reception area or online through this link. The

submission deadline is January 10.) Once you're in the room, commit to being fully present in heart, mind, and spirit.

Come to the conversation with an open spirit.

Covenant with those present to stay within the guidelines that the team is carefully designing. Be ready to listen, even when it's difficult. Trust that God will be present among us.

Notice the image of God in one another. Put on "Christ goggles" and look around the room at your fellow church members. Remember the good you have done and the fun you have had together. Know that everyone present is beloved by God.

This time together on January 12 has so much potential. Join the team in getting ready for it. If you have any questions, please contact any member of the transition team (Shawn Hawkins, Mike Ward, Sally Smith, David Weatherspoon, Gloria Hodges, April Blankenship, Cherish Mathis, Robin Miller) or me (reverendlaura@gmail.com).

Laura

FBC

Annual Church Conference

JAN. 27, FOLLOWING WORSHIP

Please mark your calendar for our **Annual Church Conference** on **Sunday, January 26**, following morning worship in the Fellowship Hall.

At this time the church body will approve the 2020 Church Budget and new committee members.

DEACONS

Deacons' Meeting

JAN. 19, FH, 12:15 PM

The Deacon body will meet Sunday, January 19 in Fellowship Hall following morning worship.

Lunch will be provided.

FELLOWSHIP

First Cup Gathering

JANUARY 5, 9 AM

Join other First Baptist members and the Ministry staff in the Welcome Center on January 5, for that first cup of coffee/tea/hot chocolate and a pastry, and enjoy a time of fellowship with family and friends from 9-9:45 am.

Our First Cup Gathering is held on the first Sunday of each month.

MISSIONS

52 Weeks & 52 Ways to Change Memphis

2020 MISSIONS INITIATIVE

FBC's Missions Committee is excited to offer a new Missions Initiative to start off 2020!

The FBC family is invited to participate in *52 Weeks and 52 Ways to Change Memphis*. This weekly "missions moment" will be highlighted monthly in *Together*, with weekly focus points discussed in the *Table Talk*. These "moments" will fall into four categories: prayer, giving, doing and connecting.

The Missions Committee hopes this encourages members and their families to partner with FBC's ministries, as well as participate on their own for moments to keep missions as a focus throughout the entire year.

Our Missions Focus in January includes:

Jan 5-11—Giving: Continue collecting items for Perea (household cleaning supplies; clorox wipes; paper towels; toilet paper; feminine hygiene products; broom/mop; non-perishable food) to help needy families with keeping healthy.

Jan 12-18—Praying: Pray for the families who will receive the donations.

Jan 19-25—Doing: Donate blood, join the bone marrow registry, or talk as a family about organ donation. Think about how these donations affect others in our community who are in need.

Jan 26-Feb 1—Connecting: Send a "get well" or "thinking of you" card to someone who needs encouragement or is ill.

CHURCH

Taking Down Christmas Decorations

Our Hanging of the Greens event in November was a wonderful time of decoration and fellowship.

We are looking for a group of volunteers to help us take down and store the decorations on Sunday, January 5 at 5-7 pm.

PRAYER GARDEN

Memorial Prayer Garden of First Baptist Church

A plaque in memory of **Tom Morse**, son of Sally Smith, has been added to the Memorial Prayer Garden.

For more information about plaques or the Prayer Garden, contact Sandra Chandler.

MISSIONS

Kids' Missions

JANUARY 12, 12-2 PM



Kids (age 3 -5th grade) are invited to join us for a special time of missions activities and creative play.

This month we will learn about CBF Field Personnel working for Together For Hope. Our kids will learn about hunger and how it affects children and families. We will collect food for the Caritas Little Free Pantry.

I'm looking forward to a new year full of missions fun! —Holly

YOUTH

Winter Youth Summit

JANUARY 17-19

Please be in prayer for our youth and chaperones as we travel to Huntsville, AL for a weekend of retreat and fellowship January 17-19.



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a different way to be Baptist

Asha's Refuge, Continued from page 1

I want to thank the facilities' task force that has arranged the details in our agreement with this ministry. They are Mark Weaver, Clay Wilson, Mike Ward, Glenn Everton, Jason Vogel and Jason Sullivan. They have represented our congregation well, and I hope you will take the opportunity to express your gratitude to them.

BOOK CLUB

FBC's Book Club

JANUARY 13

FBC's Book Club is reading *Holy Envy* by Barbara Brown Taylor.

Please join us in reading. We will discuss as a group on January 13. For details or questions, contact Julie Richardson.

MEMORIALS

In memory of **Vinson Cobb** by

Ms. Maggie Jordan
Dr. & Mrs. John McCall, III
Ms. Linda Bond
Ms. Carolyn Bynum
Dr. & Mrs. David Cunningham
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Wilson
Ms. Kathleene Sims
Mr. Al Henderson
Ms. Willena Highsmith
Ms. Jo Davis
McHendry Family
Callicott Family
Wicktora Family

In memory of **Frances Ray** by

Dr. & Mrs. David Cunningham

In memory of **Carol Henderson** by

Mr. Al Henderson

In memory of **M V Highsmith** by

Ms. Willena Highsmith

HONORARIA

In honor of **Jana Wilson** by

Dr. & Mrs. John McCall, III

In honor of **Carol & Greer Richardson** by

Ms. Anita Cobb

In honor of **Ray & Trudy Hatton** by

Ms. Anita Cobb

In honor of **Randy & Janet Hyde** by

Ms. Anita Cobb