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**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Our Mission**  
 First Sweetwater exists to LOVE. We love God by worshipping the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and by loving our neighbors. We love others by serving as Jesus served.

**Worship...Grow...Serve**

**A LOOK AHEAD...**

**February**

- 1: Deacon Hosted Chili Cook-off/First Lunch
- 1: Church Conference
- 7: Paint Your Pottery Ladies' Trip
- 9: Deacon Conference
- 10: Church Council Meeting
- 18: Ash Wednesday Service
- 21: Small Group Training
- 22: Small Group Training
- 28: Men's Breakfast

**First Baptist Church**  
**Hands & Feet Newsletter**

**February 1, 2015**  
**Volume 2, Issue 2**

**A WORD FROM DR. MEEKS...**

My iPad is slowing down. Yes, it's getting older, but the chief problem is that I've got too much stuff in it. When I first bought it the device responded quickly to every command I gave. Now, it seems to mull over my commands, not sure that it wants to obey me. Clutter is a threat to efficiency and obedience. The old acronym KISS (keep it simple stupid) reminds us that a clean life is a clear life, one without clutter. A godly life is one that maintains healthy simplicity.

Simplicity is also the sign of a healthy church. We are now implementing the recommendations suggested in the book, *Simple Church*. You will literally see the signs of a simple church in our sanctuary: Worship, Grow, Serve. Simple church is a process for discipleship that practices the Great Commandment to love God and love others by serving as Jesus served. In order to do this we have simplified the church's administrative and educational structure. The goal is to simplify for the sake of efficiency and health.

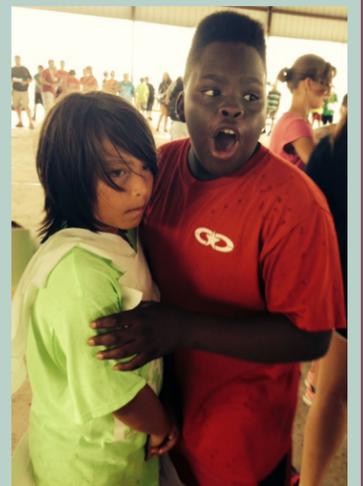
We need to remember Jesus' words to Martha when she complained about Mary's spending time at Jesus' feet rather than in the kitchen: "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed" (Luke 10:41). Let's be sure to lay aside good but unnecessary things in order to do the one thing that must be done.

**NEWS FROM THE MEN'S TEAM...**

Christ's blessings from the Men's Team!!  
 We hope everyone is having a wonderful New Year thus far. Our next Men's Breakfast will be Saturday, January 31, 2015. This will be an important breakfast as we are going to discuss the possibility of the men assisting the Church by doing repairs and updating the Pastor's office, as well as Tique's and David's offices. Watson Moore will lead a discussion on this matter, as well as a potential opportunity for some of the men to serve on a mission project this summer. So mark your calendar for January 31, 2015, at 8:00am: we promise good eats and great fellowship!

Also, we would like to plug the Deacon Hosted Chili Cook-Off, Sunday, February 1, 2015, immediately following Worship. You are invited to bring a batch of your favorite chili recipe or just come and enjoy the chili prepared by the contestants. Some chili will be spicy and some mild, but all will be properly inflated! Your donations are your votes for best chili and provide money for Youth Camps.

In the meantime, please contact any of the team members if we can be of service and God Bless you all.



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**NEWS FROM THE FBC FOUNDATION...**



Changes are happening! God is working through the FBC Foundation to meet the needs of FBC. With monies designated by The Foundation, we are in the process of making much needed updates to the building.

First, you may have noticed how dark the Sanctuary has been since November. The reason was a lightening strike knocked out our light board. The Foundation designated \$21,000 to purchase new light boards, replace lights that were out on the ceiling of the Sanctuary, and install new lights over the choir. With these updates, we will now have brighter, more efficient lighting, along with the ability to dim and adjust individual lights for whatever the need may be.

Second, the Foundation set aside \$30,000 for use on the building debt service. With this money, we can reduce the total amount paid out of the General Operating Fund each month on the building note.

Finally, the Foundation designated almost \$19,000 to update the Children's Building. With this money, we will be carpeting the first floor, putting up a strong wainscoting on the first floor, and painting the first and third floors. God has provided through the Foundation, and we are excited about the changes that are happening at FBC.



*"Put on your painting apron and let your creative juices flow." - Women's Ministry Team News*

**TRACKING MOVEMENT...**

In our new Process for Discipleship, Worship...Grow...Serve, we are putting a new emphasis on tracking numbers. We are not taking attendance to say, "Wow! Look how many people we have at FBC!" Instead, we are taking attendance by subgroups to see how people are moving through the process. Here is sample of the tracking of movement:

	<b>Worship</b>	<b>Grow</b>	<b>Serve</b>
<b>Children</b>	35	32	10
<b>Students</b>	20	14	10
<b>Adults</b>	57	37	35
<b>Senior Adults</b>	39	29	20

As Thom Rainer says in *Simple Church*, "A measurement tool...focuses on moving people from one level of commitment to another. Holes are easily identified and remedied." If there is an increase at the Worship level in a group, one would expect a proportional increase in the other levels. When you fill out an attendance sheet, remember it is not just to say, "Look at our numbers," it is about seeing people grow in Christ.

**CUMULATIVE RECEIPTS & EXPENDITURES FOR 2014**

**Undesignated Receipts**  
\$444,806

**Undesignated Expenditures**  
\$452,390

**Undesignated Operating Fund Balance**  
\$26,205

**2014 Connecting Generations Receipts**  
\$60,924

**WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM NEWS...**



Mark your calendar for a fun event. Put on your painting apron and let your creative juices flow. On Saturday, February 7, we have reserved "Mine By Design" in Abilene. Each participant will select a piece of pottery to paint. There will be several items to choose from. We will spend the morning painting our piece of pottery. Then, we will grab a bite to eat together. This trip will be an adult only trip. You can sign up in the Church Office or on the Women's Ministry bulletin board.

The purpose of the Women's Ministry Team is to help fulfill the church mission to love God, love people, and serve others.

We are the Church. Church is not about what "I" want, but about serving others. The church gathers for worship and growth, but then we should go out for service to others. "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." - 1 Peter 4:10



*"This year...(will be) another joint effort as we present the musical 'A.D. - A Musical for Easter and Beyond' to our community." - A Word from David*

**A WORD FROM DAVID...**

Looking Ahead...

Last year we were privileged to be a part of a joint effort, sponsored by the Sweetwater Ministerial Alliance, to present the Easter message to our community as we helped present "He's Alive" at our community auditorium.

This year, Lori Ortega of the First United Methodist Church, will be directing another joint effort as we present the musical "A.D. - A Musical for Easter and Beyond" to our community. The tentative dates selected for this presentation are March 29 and April 5, and we hope to expand beyond the three churches who participated last year to include more churches this year.

I am so pleased to say that our choir was so pivotal to last year's success and are crucial to this effort attaining our desired goal ... of sharing the love of Jesus as a community of churches in Sweetwater. Won't you consider joining us for this season? No memorization ... simply singing as part of the chorus while actors portray characters in the Easter story ... and beyond!

Let David know if you aren't a "regular" choir member, but would be interested. You will be blessed!

**SPECIAL SERVICE...**

On Wednesday, February 18, 2015, we will have our Ash Wednesday Service. Last year, we had our first Ash Wednesday Service and it was a great time of worship, focus and repentance as we began the Christian Season of Lent.

The Ash Wednesday Service will take place of our other activities that night as we invite you and your family to be a part of this special service. The service will have several elements that explain Ash Wednesday and Lent, along with elements to lead us in experiencing worship and repentance together, while focusing on the cross of Good Friday.

In Advent, we prepared ourselves for the coming of Jesus. In Lent, we will prepare ourselves for the suffering of the cross, so that we can truly experience the power and joy of the Resurrection.



**FEBRUARY DEACON OF THE WEEK**

- 1: Mike Hale
- 8: Glen Harrison
- 15: Wilton Hayes
- 22: Jeff Lay