

FBC NEWSLETTER

Embracing Our History | Engaging Our Future | Inspiring Worship

Focus On: Heaven and Nature Sing

Summer is over and fall is in the air, which means it's time to start planning for Experience Christmas 2024! We will be opening our doors to the community for our fifth year on December 7th with a Christmas tree display, live nativity, live music, and free refreshments.



We prayed and debated over many potential themes for this year's Christmas tree display, but a conversation about creation helped to solidify the decision. This year's theme is all about the days of creation, we're calling it: "Heaven and Nature Sing."

So many people don't attribute the wonders of nature to our Creator; they miss out on seeing God's hand at work all around them! This theme will be a testimony to Crestview that each person and



A Word from Our Pastor

Being a part of a small group in the church is very important. So much of our pastoral care and theological training occurs in our Sunday Morning classes and other groups that meet to pray and discuss the Word of God. Gathering for corporate worship in the AM service is essential, but it is easy to get lost in the crowd and not make the vital connections that all believers need. Every Christian should have a small group of people around us who pray for us, whom we pray for, and who speak truth into our lives. I want to encourage you, if you are not a part of a small group, like a Sunday School class or a men's or women's Bible study, that you would give that a try in September. Once you do, you will see how a big church becomes smaller, how you are encouraged by the love of others, and how you can use your spiritual gifts to minister to the Body of Christ.

Simeon Peter gives us some beautiful words about the nature of our fellowship with each other and the Lord. Read his words and meditate on them. Let these words encourage you as to the deep connections that you have to the Lord and other believers: *"To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."*
(2 Peter 1:1-4)

Pastor Stan

every bit of nature is made with a purpose and reflects the glory of God!



There will be dozens of lit trees in the chapel plus some special “theme trees” which will be decorated especially to match the creation motif. The “theme trees” will be:

- Light
- Water
- Land
- Sea Creatures & Birds
- Animals
- Mankind

plus a special central tree focusing on “Heaven and Nature Sing.”

As you know, it takes lots of volunteers to make this happen! FBC’s Experience Christmas has made an impact on Crestview every year as a mission outreach to our community. Be thinking of how you can help through giving of your time, resources, and prayer. Contact us in the church office (850-682-2544) or through our website (fbcew.org/events) to find out where you can plug in.

Laura Kitchen

Worship While We Wait

Times of waiting can be agonizing! As a child, waiting for that next birthday or Christmas season can seem to take forever! As a teenager, we wait for our driver’s license. Later on, we anxiously wait for test results, news about our job, or for an answer to a long-standing prayer. As a church, we wait for God to provide needs we have, to give direction, to provide our next student pastor, or to move in our hearts as we hope He will.

It’s so easy to get discouraged or think that God is silent during these times. We pray and it seems nothing happens. We let our hearts turn anxious as we begin to look for worldly solutions or distractions. We pull away from God and His people.

In Psalm 27, we get a taste of David’s experience as he waited for God’s deliverance from a horrific situation. He closes the psalm with an encouragement to hope in the Lord and wait with courage:

“I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!” (Psalm 27:3-4 ESV)

Earlier in the psalm we see a clue about David’s focus during this time of waiting: His focus was WORSHIP.

“One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.” (Psalm 27:4 ESV) (Emphasis added)

David’s “one thing” he desired in the middle of his waiting was the opportunity to worship! He wanted to experience God’s presence and worship in the temple. His desire was to worship while he waited for God’s next step. As we wait on the Lord, let’s be faithful to worship Him. He is good, He is Sovereign, and He cares for you! Let’s be patient and rest in Him.

Let’s worship while we wait.

Pastor Andrew



Family Focus: Serve with Gladness

“Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing.” (Psalm 100:1-2)

As I was thinking about this verse this past week, it struck me that the command to serve the Lord with gladness is sandwiched between commands about joyfully worshipping the Lord. This leads me to believe that our choice to serve the Lord with gladness is an act of worship to our Lord. I love worshipping the Lord through music and through studying His Word. And, I love serving Him in the church through my job, even though sometimes it's hard, and sometimes there are other things I would rather be doing. At the end of the day, I never



regret serving the Lord with gladness.

I am so grateful for those who are currently serving in our children's and preschool departments. They give so selflessly of their time and abilities, and many of them are volunteering in multiple capacities.

Our preschool ministry is really growing right now, and we need people who can joyfully serve in the preschool department. We need a Sunday School Teacher for our two- and three-year-old classroom, helpers for all our Sunday

Missions & Media: Mission Preview

The Honduras mission trip was a great success! Thanks to Dale and his team who traveled, taught and touched lives with His love.

As we move into the Fall Season, let me give you a preview of the missionary efforts to come...

Fall Festival - A time of hosting young families with an alternative to the spooky commercialized Halloween. Beth and her faithful group of children's workers will lead as we all come along side of them and entertain our community with a wholesome fun evening of games and treats.

Experience Christmas 24 - This will be our 5th year opening our campus to Crestview, to enjoy an evening of music that celebrates His birth, a live nativity and our one-of-a-kind Christmas Tree Village! Many families have the first Saturday of December marked on their calendar to come and Experience Christmas at First Baptist. Last year's monsoon washed out the Crestview Christmas parade but it did not stop us or our guests from visiting. Wow!

I'm super excited about this year's theme, "Heaven and Nature Sing". The trees will represent Creation as written in Genesis 1. First Baptist is blessed to have such creative members & dedicated volunteers who expend endless efforts to make Experience Christmas a success each year.



Additionally, this year we will encourage our classes to take part as a group effort. Rhett Williams is our Executive Producer this year. He has been a key 'make it happen' component since the beginning.

On November 4th your mission's pastor will depart on his 10th adventure to Nepal. Mark Welton will be experiencing the adventure with me. In light of the pressure by the Nepali government to arrest foreigners teaching other religions, I thought it best to take an attorney with me. Mark and I will be teaching a group of Nepali pastors during a five-day-trek high into the Himalayas, away from governmental eyes and ears. We will share the fundamentals of Biblical servant leadership with the pastors as we trek, rest and enjoy Nepali cuisine. It's just amazing how He calls us to serve Him in ways and locations we never imagined: two flat-footed Florida boys in the Himalayas!

As evidenced in this article, First Baptist is a faithful fellowship dedicated to missions, touching lives both local and around the world & making a difference for His Kingdom!

Obedience starts with the decision to obey. We are obedient to His call. This is why we work, give our time, talents and tithe. We are missionaries!

Pastor Chuck

Staff



Dr. Stan Lewis
Lead Pastor



Andrew Heathershaw
Worship Pastor



Chuck Walthall
Missions & Media Pastor



Beth Hendricks
Children's Ministries Director

Our Service Times

- Sunday Morning Worship 10:30am
- Live Online @ fbcew.org
- Sunday School 9:00am
- Wednesday Scripture Studies 6:00pm
- Plus Worship Choir, Student & Children's Ministries and more!

171 Hickory Ave | Crestview, FL 32536
(850) 682-2544 | staff@fbcew.org
Office Hours: M-F 8-5 | Closed 12-1

- www.fbcew.org
- First Baptist Church of Crestview
- Firstbaptistcrestview
- First Baptist Crestview
- Podcast on Spotify & more

www.fbcew.org

Reflecting on FBC Youth

Since we are in a time of transition without a youth pastor to write this article, we asked one of our college students, Ethan Howard, to take this space to share his perspective on being a student at FBC:



Learning, adapting, shaping - for the first eight years of life, a person's neurons are in their most malleable, formative state. Shapes, colors, and numbers sprout names and enter conscious reality. Concepts of permanence and consequence begin to dictate our actions and worldviews. Because of this, we place utmost value on the education of our children, knowing that loving guidance in the way of Biblical truth, righteousness, and wonder prepares young people to be rooted against the current of a confused, ever-changing culture.

This is true of our children; it is also true of our youth and young adults. For me, FBC Youth Group was a critical part of my maturation. While we may have no longer qualified as "kids" during our youth group years, none of us ever have escaped our need for Biblical mentorship. Because of this, FBC Youth was essential in providing me with spiritual tools, teachers, and friends which have allowed me to stand firm on faith as an adult and college student. Even now, the work God has accomplished in the lives of our youth has emboldened my own faith and encouraged me to make my steps intentional for Christ.

At these critical times in ministry—when the Lord calls His servants to plant seeds elsewhere—it is up to us, the Church, to respond willingly. Just as we must support our Children's Ministry to lead little ones in Christ, we must continue to teach our youth how to reckon with the challenges, confusion, and questions that are common to all believers, young and old. In the past two years, I haven witnessed (and been personally affected by) the radical power of God transforming FBC Crestview students' lives. Many of these students have now gone on to college, making way for a new generation of youth to be poured into. In this season of change, I encourage you to seek avenues of supporting the FBC Youth Ministry as the Lord so calls. Adulthood and its trials arrive in the blink of an eye; but, "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

Ethan Howard

Continued from page 3 : Serve with Gladness

School classes, and volunteers to serve once a month during the worship service. The need is great and I know that the Lord will provide.

Would you please consider serving in our Preschool Department? I know, it may mean that you don't get to go to Sunday School, or you might miss worship service once a month. But I guarantee you will be blessed by the little children you serve. If you are willing to joyfully serve the Lord, please contact me in person at church, call me at the church office, or email me at beth@fbcew.org.

Beth Hendricks