

# FBC NEWSLETTER

Embracing Our History | Engaging Our Future | Inspiring Worship

## Focus On: Snow!

Last month Crestview and the surrounding area experienced a historic event: SNOW! We aren't talking about a few flurries or a light dusting of snow...the official measurement for Crestview was nine inches!



FBC covered in snow

As a church, we closed the office, canceled services, and went home to enjoy this rare display of God's awesome creation. The time-tested adage is true: a picture is worth a thousand words.. so here are just a few shots of our church, and our church family, covered in snow.



Machayla & Matthew



## A Word from Our Pastor

*"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4)*

We are only one month into 2025, and so much has happened already. As you look at what has happened in the first month of this year, how much of it have you prayed over? What are you praying for God to do in the remaining eleven months? As Christians, we are not only privileged with the blessing of prayer, but we are also obligated to pray. According to the words of the Apostle Paul, our world counts on the prayers of the saints for a peaceable society and for the spread of the Gospel.

So, as you are praying, be faithful to pray as the Apostle instructed us. Lift up the political structures of our nation. Intercede for those who need a touch from the Lord. Pray for mission opportunities to open for the people of our church to engage in both individually and corporately. As you pray, we will see the Lord working in our midst and opening doors for the Gospel.

I invite you all to participate in our Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, February 8th, at 8:00 AM. Please call the office this week or sign up on our church website if you can come.

May the Lord's mercy, grace, and peace be multiplied to you all.

Pastor Stan



Bev & snowman



Emily Heathershaw



The Tuckers



Chuck Walthall's drone snow shot

## Thoughts from Pastor Andrew

We were asked recently about interacting with folks who come by the church who are homeless or who have other significant needs like addiction or mental illness. How do we love people as Christ would, but also keep in mind our safety and limitations in ways we can help? I'm in no way an expert on this topic and it's impossible to truly tackle this in such a short space, but here are some things to consider:

1. James 2 strongly reminds us that we are to love and treat everyone equally, showing no partiality. All people are made in the image of God and deserve love, compassion and respect. There are many reasons people end up in difficult circumstances. If you feel led to have a conversation, hear and empathize with their story. Truly SEE them.

2. Pray for compassion, wisdom and discernment. Try to determine if they are truly seeking spiritual help or are primarily interested in help with a physical need. Share the gospel, a kind word, or "cup of cold water" as opportunity allows.

3. We want everyone to be welcome inside the church building, but don't put yourself or others at risk to try to help someone. If someone is under the influence, is acting aggressively, or otherwise seems unsafe, don't invite them to enter. Depending on the situation, you can just talk outside, go inside to grab a member of the Safety Team, or if warranted, call law enforcement. Never allow a stranger in your vehicle, especially if you're alone.

4. Have a friend nearby and your phone in hand in case you need to call for assistance.

5. It's usually best not to hand out money as it often goes straight to feed addictions. If you feel led to help with hunger, consider buying them a meal or offering a "Blessing Bag" (non-perishable food and hygiene items put together by our Awana kids). Resource handouts with information about local ministries, transitional housing, and service organizations are available in the church office. See a staff or safety team member for assistance with these items.

6. Invite them to church or share a Bible (various sizes of gift Bibles are available in the church office.)

7. Offer to pray for their needs. Then later on, remember their name and pray God would meet them and help them.

Let's share Christ's love as we have opportunity.

Pastor Andrew



FBC "Blessing Bag"

## Family Focus: Awana Ministry Conference

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”  
(Matthew 28:19)*

During the month of January we had the privilege of hosting the Awana Ministry Conference. The Awana Ministry Conference is a one-day event where Awana leaders from all over the Florida panhandle (and a couple from much farther away!) come together to learn how to be more effective Awana leaders.



Awana Ministry Conference Participants

Our Awana missionaries, Jim and Lori Lambeth, came and shared the vision for sharing the Gospel with just one child. It was a good reminder that everything we do in Children’s Ministry should have the goal of sharing the Gospel with these children. As we reach each child, then we also have the opportunity to reach each family, and as we reach each family, we have the opportunity to grow the body of Christ and increase the mission of sharing the Gospel with even more people. We were also able to attend break-out sessions and network with other Awana leaders in the area. And of course, we had a lot of fun in the process!



Awana Ministry Conference Participants

children’s ministry is growing by leaps and bounds! So, if you happen to be someone who loves working with children, but are not currently serving, please reach out to me so that we can find the right place for you to serve.

Beth Hendricks

## Missions & Media

Now that January has passed (the Monday of the year), we can take a breath and settle back into our routines. January was anything but ‘typical’ for many of us, especially with the snow event.



February will host the first 2025 Newcomer’s Dinner on Thursday the 20th at 6:00PM. The dinner is a great time of getting to know new members and prospective members, a time of sharing FBC’s doctrinal beliefs, mission focus and vision for the future, not to mention the always entertaining Ida Faye Powell sharing the church’s history. Pre-thanks to Don and Donna Howard, Laura Kitchen and a host of others that make this dinner event a success each time.

Plans are being made for Honduras and Nepal mission trips for 2025. Honduras is scheduled for the end of September. Nepal is tentative for April and October. If you are interested in either, please do not hesitate to contact Dale Rice (Honduras) or myself (Nepal). As mentioned in January’s article, “It is one thing to ‘know’ the truth. But the thing that changes lives is ‘experiencing’ the truth.” A mission trip can certainly be a life changing experience!

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](http://www.fbcew.org)

## Guest Writer: Tomasz Bielenin

Eighteen years ago, God led me to FBC Crestview...and little did I know why. I started showing up at the Lighthouse on Wednesday nights barefoot and wearing a cheap cowboy hat. Through the guidance, patience and, more importantly, the prayer of the amazing people of FBC and others, I was saved in February of 2007. Since then, I've found a pair of boots, married my beautiful wife (Nicole) at this very church and now we're raising our children (Isla and Pierce) here too. Looking back, there are so many dark routes I could have taken. But God got a hold of me, straightened out my path, and led me here. Fast forward to 2015, I became ordained as a deacon, a few years later I served as Secretary of Deacons, and for the past four years I've served as Chairman of Deacons. Who would have thought?

Now, as I am stepping back from the Chairman position, I reflect on the opportunity to serve. It has given me even more insight into how all the moving parts of a God-fearing church work together - many times behind the scenes with no personal recognition, but for our God.

The things I have learned serving as Deacon Chairman:

1. Know where all the thermostats are because it's either going to be too cold or too hot. Just kidding...kind of.
2. We have an amazing group of Deacons who love God, our church, and seek any opportunity to serve, no matter how big or small: from assisting in the nursery, to checking on our widows throughout the year, to being on standby as a "Deacon of the Week" when a church member needs something, or doing devotionals at assisted-living facilities. These guys are not seeking recognition from anyone, or looking to be part of some "country club" group. They're here serving out and meeting the qualifications given to us by God in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
3. As Brother Stan says, we all carry a bucket of "water" and a bucket of "gas". Each has a purpose...the trick is to knowing when to use each one. "Gas" is for coming alongside each other, encouraging one another, being there for one another, praying and encouraging a ministry or the beginning of one. "Water" is for smothering negativity, hearsay, gossip, or just being able to handle a "controlled burn" without overreacting or under reacting.
4. God is in control- no matter the situation. Just give it to Him. Whether it's worrying about an HVAC headache or if we'd ordered enough steak for the Men's Worship Dinner. It will work out.



Tomasz Bielenin

So now you may be wondering, "Wait, do I have a deacon?" You sure do! Every week, two of our deacons are on call. We perform hospital visits and provide general assistance, and most importantly, are here to pray whenever needed. These guys are ready to serve in any way possible as an extension of our Pastors and our amazing God-loving church. So, if you ever need anything, be sure to check your bulletin or call the church office and they will direct you to one of us. I thank you for the love you've shown me since the very beginning. I may have stepped back as Chairman, but I look forward to continuing to serve wherever needed... and no, I still don't know where all the thermostats are...

Tomasz Bielenin