

# FBC NEWSLETTER

Embracing Our History | Engaging Our Future | Inspiring Worship

## Focus On: Crestview Impact

As I'm writing this we are in the final countdown until Experience Christmas. The preparation for this event is huge, with all of the details, organizing, delegating, decorating, praying, and... marketing! A couple of days ago Nicole (my EC marketing volunteer buddy!) and I were out on Main Street asking store owners if they'd allow us to put EC signs in their windows to (hopefully) catch parade-goers and make them aware of the FBC event.

When we asked one store owner if she knew about our event she



looked shocked and said, "Well, yes, who doesn't?" A shopper in the store chimed in, "Oh yes, my friend and I go together every



2024 is coming to a close, and what a year it has been. God has been so faithful to our church; this has been a good season for First Baptist. There have been a number of new families that have joined our church, we baptized quite a few people this year, and we have seen our local and international mission work grow.

As we look forward to 2025, here are some items to pray over. Continue to pray that the Lord opens doors for our church to share the Gospel locally and on foreign fields. Remember to pray for our community as it grows that our church will welcome those new to the Crestview area. Pray for a youth pastor to be sent by the Lord to our church in His time. Lift up to the Lord the problems that we have been attempting to address, such as our HVAC issues and our debt service. Finally, remember all the critical events we will conduct in 2025: VBS, SMAAC, Youth Camp, Honduras, Nepal, Resurrection Sunday, and Experience Christmas.

I am praying that you have a wonderful Christmas and New Year,

Pastor Stan

year; we can't wait to go again this year!"

We were thrilled to hear that First Baptist is making an impact in the community. Our church is situated in the hub of Crestview and our community is aware that we are here and our doors are open to them!



This comes with a reminder of the responsibility we have to carry the light of Christ wherever we are because people all around us are watching and listening! "...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matt. 5:16)

We hope many of you will be there to volunteer at Experience Christmas. We expect a large crowd and need many hands to welcome our community and share the love of God; you are making a difference!

Laura Kitchen

## Thoughts from Pastor Andrew

As I sit down to write today, two very different thoughts bubble to the surface. I couldn't let either one go, so both are included below.

Christmastime has some of my favorite music of all time, but brings up a big debate in our household: "When is it ok to start



listening to Christmas music?" (Similar to the infamous "When do we put our tree up" debate...) For me, since I start listening and planning for Christmas music at church in late July, I like to

wait until the day after Thanksgiving before opening that door at home or in the car. However, Haven usually cranks up the Christmas tunes by early November. I've known some people for which Christmas music is fair game year-round! Whatever your preference, I'm so grateful we can take time to worship (and have fun) through music as we celebrate our Savior's birth.

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On another more somber note, we give thanks to the Lord that Amendment 4 (unrestricted abortion access in FL) did not pass and will not become part of our state constitution in 2024. This is a great victory, but comes with some words of caution. Although it was a winning percentage in this case, it is sobering to observe that only 42.8% of Florida voters voted for the (Biblical) prolife position on this amendment. 58.2% voted for unrestricted abortion in Florida, only 1.8% short of passing. This issue is not closed and will no doubt be back on the ballot in the future. We need to keep praying that God will change the hearts of many of our fellow Floridians.

Have a blessed Christ-filled Christmas!

Pastor Andrew

## Missions & Media: Time

Experience Christmas is but a few days away. Blink your eyes and it will be Christmas Day. My how time flies...

Nepal 2024 plans began in June, when Mark told me he wanted to go teach the Nepali pastors with me. I recall setting my 'countdown' app to over 100 days, counting down to November 4th. That seems like last month. The trip is now in the missional history book. My how time flies...

An interesting aspect of Nepal is that time and calendars do not seem to exist. However, we in the US are constantly checking our calendars, clocks and to-do lists, which I would argue causes US time (culture) to run faster.

God is not subject to time or space. We, on the other hand, are subject to both and thus priorities rule the day. It's okay to have a calendar. It's okay to be prompt. It's okay to have tasks to complete, provided your #1 priority is at the forefront of your daily routine.

Chris Tiegreen states it this way, "Lord, I don't want to miss a single opportunity to experience You in any area of life. Open my eyes to holy moments and places of divine rendezvous."

As we Experience Christmas, celebrate Christmas and continue to live an existence in this time and space, keep Him in your primary focus, your #1 priority. When each of us reach that day when we are no longer subject to this time & space, He will recount to us how we invested our time here on Earth for His Kingdom.

Pastor Chuck



## Family Focus: Christmas

*"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11*



Can you remember the wonder of Christmas when you were a child? I have many special memories of Christmas traditions with my family as a child. We didn't get a lot for Christmas, but I don't really remember any of that. I remember the experiences that came along with Christmas.

My family always went Christmas caroling the night before Christmas Eve. We would make loaves of homemade bread and would head out to deliver our gift of bread and music to those who had blessed us during the year.

Then, before presents, we always stopped to read the Christmas story from the Bible. I can still hear my father's and grandfather's voices reading the story and telling us that the greatest gift is not something that was under the tree, but the gift of Jesus Christ, God's son.

So, as you celebrate Christmas this year, remember it's not about all the things that we get, or even all the things that we do. It is all about Jesus Christ coming to earth so that he could eventually give his life for us. Take the time this Christmas to teach your children and grandchildren why we really celebrate Christmas and have them do something to share the love of Christ with others as well.

Beth Hendricks

## 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  
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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)

## Student Happenings: Guest Writer, Phil Nyderek

### Investing in Our Youth

As a member of the Youth Search Committee, a volunteer teacher, and a father, I have a unique vantage point from which to observe the incredible journey our youth are on. In this role, I see firsthand the dedication, challenges, and triumphs that shape their lives. Here are a few reflections I'd like to share.

### The Power of Purpose

One of the most profound aspects of youth ministry is watching our young people discover their purpose. Our church has always believed in guiding our youth toward finding their spiritual path, and it's truly inspiring to see them engage with their faith on a deeper level. This purpose-driven life not only enriches their personal growth but also strengthens our community as a whole.



### The Importance of Support

As a father, I understand the pivotal role that support plays in a young person's life. Our youth ministry provides a safe, nurturing environment where teens can explore their beliefs, express their doubts, and find solace in knowing they are not alone. The bonds they form here offer them a sense of belonging and a network of support that extends beyond the church walls.

### Leading by Example

The mentors and leaders within our youth ministry play a crucial role in shaping the next generation. They lead by example, demonstrating what it means to live a life of faith and service. As a father, I've seen how these volunteer leaders inspire our youth to strive for greatness in their spiritual and everyday lives, and I'm grateful for the positive influences that guide my children and their peers.

### Investing in the Future

We are committed to fostering an environment where our young people can thrive, grow, and become the leaders of tomorrow. It is heartening to see the dedication of our church community in supporting this mission as we search for the leader God is already preparing for us. The role of a youth pastor is crucial in guiding our youth, and finding the right person is a journey that requires our collective prayers and support.

In conclusion, serving on the Youth Search Committee and witnessing my own children's growth within our ministry has been a deeply rewarding experience. I invite all of you to continue supporting our youth; together, we can ensure that our youth flourish in their faith in God.

Thank you for allowing me to share these thoughts. May we all continue to nurture and support our youth with love and faith.

Phil Nyderek