

# Continuing Our Journey: The Story Behind our Second Church Retreat, *Becoming God's Church*

Our second annual church retreat took place at Hillcrest on March 25-26<sup>th</sup>. Our guest facilitators for the evening were Dr. Leroy Cole from Mt. Zion Baptist Church, in Oklahoma City, and Pastor, Rev. Michael McDaniel from Northeast Missionary Baptist in Oklahoma City.

The retreat was entitled, *Building God's Church*; a theme that worked in conjunction with last year's retreat, *Becoming a Breakout Church*. "Last year we dealt with 'Leading Change', 'Innovation in Small Group Ministry', and introduced the *Breakout Church Model*," said Pastor Anthony Scott, who established the retreat. "This year we have chosen to focus on the Breakout Church Model once again, as well as including a Team Ministry component and a specific focus on our largest small group ministry-the Sunday school."

Before the second retreat took place, members were very excited about what was to come based on last year's retreat. Rushella Latimer, Women's Ministry president, was motivated by last year's message and feels Pastor Scott's vision is something all members should embrace.

"I am excited to delve back into becoming a breakout church" says Latimer. "It is very important that God has given him a vision and that we walk into it."

If you are wondering why it is so important, Pastor Scott shared just that:

*"The general purpose of the retreat is to cast or recast vision. Last year's retreat was an introduction to the Pastor's Vision, this year and following will be attempts to recast and renew the general parameters of that same vision. It is my intent for these outings to not only renew our purpose but revitalize our congregation."*

During the retreat, members had the opportunity to do more than listen, but were called to actively engage in the presentations from our guest speakers.

Dr. Leroy Cole presented *Re-vitalizing a Vital Ministry* posing this question - "Morning worship is when you get energized and motivated, but what about the teaching?"

Members learned the importance of "this dying ministry," as Dr. Cole mentioned, by testing their knowledge on certain books of the bible. Groups had 5 minutes and 8 pages of questions to answer.

On Saturday, Rev. Michael McDaniel helped define elements of team building and how it plays an essential role in how we work together; Members were asked to work together in small groups and build the tallest tower, consisting of newspaper and tape. Everyone pulled together and first place one by an inch!

After the second retreat members agreed that the retreats are a rewarding experience.

In a random poll 100% answered yes, when asked if the presentations were relevant to their lives. One person even elaborated by stating "Not just church, but work and [their] home relationships"; 100% agreed their expectations were met or exceeded when it came to learning something new; and 100% said their overall experience was good/excellent!

In the same survey, when asked which retreat they prefer there was some indifference. 50% said they liked this year's better in comparison with last year; the other 50% said both were excellent. For those who preferred this year, most explained the hands on activities really helped in the learning process. One Surveyor said, "This year's retreat included more practical (hands-on) information that allows for more application/implementation."

Whether attendance should be mandatory was another question split the votes 50/50. Regardless, Pastor Scott does think it is vital and a part of our instruction as believers:

"It is important to be reminded as Paul affirms that we plant and water but God gives the increase. There is a pattern in scripture of Jesus and his followers often retreating away from the crowds and their normal settings to pray and build themselves up for ministry; the retreat setting affords us an opportunity to get away and listen to His voice and receive direction... Attendance at the retreat is important to ensure that we all march forward on the same page and with new faith for the road ahead."



*If you have a story please share it! All stories are due by the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month. You can submit your stories, ideas, and questions for the newsletter via the newsletter drop box in the foyer!*



**Teaching Minds, Changing Hearts Touching the World**

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**THREE**

A Monthly Update for First Baptist Church North Tulsa

# First Baptist News Chronicle

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO.....



Join First Baptist for two special **Easter** performances from the Drama Ministry.

On Good Friday, April 22nd at 7:00p.m. they will perform, "The Crucifixion (part I)," a play based on *God's Trombones*, a unique collection of poems that replicate African-American folk-sermons by James Weldon Johnson.

Part II, "The Resurrection," will be performed Easter Sunday, April 24 during regular morning worship service.

The performances are free and open to the public. Please be our special guest and get ready to receive a great blessing!

## Living with the Incomprehensible

### Pastor's Corner

Significant dates mark significant events. (December 7, 1941-Pearl Harbor; November 22, 1963-JFK; April 4, 1968-MLK, Jr.; January 20, 1986-Space Shuttle Challenger; September 11, 2001-World Trade Center; and August 29, 2005-Hurricane Katrina) The sudden turn of global events leaves us with another unfortunate date-March 11, 2011.

The 8.9 magnitude earthquake, tsunami and potential nuclear disaster leaves us asking the perplexing question-Why? George Barna, a leading researcher conducted a national study on spiritual trends. One survey question read, "If you could ask God one question-what it would be...?" Overwhelmingly, the response was *why?* Why is there pain and suffering in the world?

Why? Why? Why? This is not just a question but an accusation. The Hebrew word for why is not only a cry of sorrow, it is a cry of protest. Job begged this same question during his personal ordeal, "Wherefore is light given to him that is in deep misery, and life unto the bitter of soul?" (Job 3:20) Physical suffering was once viewed as inevitable and without an answer.

Today, however with our ambulances, well-equipped hospitals, and powerful drugs we expect not only answers to our questions but quick solutions. We neither expect to suffer at all nor to suffer long if the unthinkable happens.



Thus, we are ill-equipped to deal with life's tragedies and perplexities

Here are three realities we must embrace: First, we are living in an imperfect world. Second, the path of life (at times) leads down rough paths. Third, we have a Caring God. It is Oswald Chambers who said, "Deeper and deeper grows the conviction that tragedy is the basis of things and redemption the way out."

The nature of faith is such that we gather ourselves unto God in troubles and tragedy, rather than be drawn away. This is how faith responds in the experiences of life. The Christian life is a life of submission to God in the face of struggle.

C. S. Lewis remarked, "God whispers to us in our pleasure, speaks to us in our pains, it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." What should the believer do when faced with incomprehensible events? "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8a)

## What Cha' Been Up To?

Marjio Grisson

For Caesar Latimer Jr. the Answer is 'Changing Lives'



We see him as he brings laughter to audiences in one of Shay Brown's dramatic productions. We hear him as his carmel-tinged baritone lifts our spirits in song during a Sunday morning worship service. And then he's gone. Caesar Latimer Jr. is always involved in something - serving, giving, helping, inspiring - and always with a spirit of humility.

Many times when we don't see him, Caesar is off doing his duty with the Air Force Reserves where he supports the Air Force air re-fuelers (those gasoline stations in the sky you see depicted in the movies). He's also heavily involved in a variety of community service organizations such as: North Tulsa Community Coalition; Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity; Community Relations Council; and Workforce Oklahoma Youth Council.

His passion for the past several years is the young men and women at Tulsa Job Corps. "These students wind up in Job Corps for many reasons," Caesar explains. "Maybe they've dropped out of high school; they may have been bullied or faced gang intimidation; maybe they had conflicts with teachers. Job Corps gives them the opportunity to become tax payers and not tax recipients. My sole focus is enhancing the lives of youth. Eighty percent of my kids have continued to college."

Kenneth Hayden is one of the youth whose life was enhanced by Caesar's efforts. Kenneth is quick to confirm that Mr. Latimer is a tremendous influence in his life

Kenneth, who attends FBCNT since coming to Tulsa from the neighborhoods of Chicago and Milwaukee two years ago, graduated in 2010 from Tulsa's Memorial High School. He found himself in a dilemma after high school. He didn't know what was next for himself or what he wanted to do with his life. His parents weren't financially able to pay anything for college, the job market forecast for even menial work looked gloomy, and the peer pressure for making bad choices loomed large.

Who do you talk to and where do you turn? The Tulsa Job Corps was the answer for Kenneth. Mr. Latimer is the mentor who steered him and helped open doors to educational and career opportunities Kenneth never imagined possible for himself

"Kids seem to gravitate toward me - they just talk to me and I listen to what they're saying and I believe in them," says Caesar. "Kenneth is a prime example. He is very quiet; doesn't say much. He doesn't cause any problems - he's a 'middle of the pack kid'. I told him we were going to Washington, D.C. and he would have a speaking part to a senator from Oklahoma. I asked him, 'what do you believe in,' and he told me. He's a brilliant leader... Greatness exists, but must be activated." Kenneth's potential has been activated. Not only did he go to Washington, D.C., speak with Senators Inhoff and Coburn, but he's honing his leadership qualities at home as he supervises Job Corps students who volunteer at the Food Bank.

The students at Job Corps have clocked a lot of volunteer hours at the Food Bank. "Of all of those volunteer hours not one was coaxed - all the students said, 'Mr. Latimer I want to go with you to work at the Food Bank,'" states Caesar. "If I could make one point to parents it's this, take time to listen and motivate your kids. Even the "bad" ones need this."



Kenneth is on the far right



Join us for Bible Study on Wednesdays as we begin a new topic- "BAFFLED TO FIGHT BETTER"! Have you ever wondered what God is doing? Does God seem incomprehensible in your life and in the world? Be our guest as we learn to live when God is hard to understand. (Noon & 7 pm)

## A Prayer for Japan

Carol Singelton

When a disaster like the one which recently struck Japan happens, many ask the questions: "Where is God? Why did He let something like this happen?" I think that the psalmist best answers these questions when He states that:

*"God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. ....The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our refuge" (Psalm 46:1-4, 7).*

For this very reason we know we can go to Him with our requests on behalf of the many people in Japan. And so we pray:

"Most Gracious God, the Creator of this universe and the Father of those who know your Son, we acknowledge today that You are our refuge and strength. We acknowledge that You are a very present help in trouble; for this reason we petition You on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Japan. We ask You, Father on behalf of their families and their friends. We make our requests also Lord, for those who don't know You. We ask for your grace and mercy Father as they go through the days to come.



Father we pray, that You will do what only You can do--make a way out of where and when there seems to be no way.

For those who know You, Lord, those who are called by Your name, we pray Father that they will look beyond what their physical eyes see and that they will place their complete trust in You. Father we know that You will not fail them. Help them to know this today, Lord.

For those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, friends, neighbors, jobs, and physical needs, Father comfort them as only You can. Help those around the world to be filled with compassion and reach out to them and help in every tangible way.

For those who don't know You Lord, our prayer is that through this tragedy they will see You as the true and living God; one who is the true source of our being, and that their hearts will be opened to receive the good news of Your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Father we present these requests to you, the Author and Finisher of our faith. In Your Son's name we pray. Amen

## Member News: Congratulations to Sabrina Holmes



FBCNT's own Sabrina Holmes will be performing with the Oklahoma Girls Chorus April 21, 2011, as they celebrate the Easter season with their presentation of "Pergolesi's Stabat Mater." Pergolesi, an Italian composer and musician, who wrote this haunting choral masterpiece in 1736. It paints a beautiful and painful musical portrait of the mother Mary's suffering at the foot of the cross.

Performances will be at 1:30 p.m., Tulsa Historical Society, 2445 S. Peoria Ave., Tulsa, OK; and at 7:30 p.m., Bethany Christian Church, 6730 S. Sheridan Ave., Tulsa, OK. Dr. Donald W. Armstrong, of Central Fine and Performing Arts High School, is the director.

Sabrina, a sophomore at Central Fine and Performing Arts High School, is the President of God's Chosen Generation (GCG). She is the daughter of Kathryn Holmes.

## HEALTH NEWS: SHERYL MARINA April is IBS Awareness Month



If you have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), you are not alone - IBS is common with worldwide prevalence estimated at 9% to 23%. Yet many people remain undiagnosed and unaware that their symptoms indicate a medically recognized disorder.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a disorder characterized by abdominal pain or discomfort, and altered bowel habit (chronic or recurrent diarrhea, constipation, or both - either mixed or in alternation).

## Partner News: Central High School Needs EOI Test Monitors

Central High School needs a total of 30 monitors for End of Instruction testing (EOI) between the dates of **April 19<sup>th</sup> - May 12<sup>th</sup>**. Monitors need to be 25 years of age and are required to attend one training class (see training dates below). Testing times will be from 9:00a.m.-12:45p.m. & 1:15p.m.-4:30p.m; Monitors can do can do half the day or all day (be sure to specify).

If you are interested in helping out our Partner-In-Education, please sign up with:

**Donna Jackson at Centrals Main Office, (918) 833-8400 ext 29132 or [jacksdo@tulsaschools.org](mailto:jacksdo@tulsaschools.org)**

### Dates for Monitors Training:

**April 4<sup>th</sup> 11:30am-12:30pm**  
**April 5<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm - 7:00 pm**  
**April 13<sup>th</sup> 3:00-4:00 pm**

IBS affects between 25 and 45 million people in the United States About 2 in 3 IBS sufferers are female. About 1 in 3 IBS sufferers are male. IBS affects people of all ages, even children.

Although IBS is common in the general population, few seek medical care for their symptoms.

The key sign or symptom of IBS is pain or discomfort in the abdomen.

The other symptoms of IBS relate to your bowel habit. You'll notice a change in frequency or consistency of stool. These changes link to the pain.

IBS can only be diagnosed by a medical professional.

## Tips for Visiting HomeBound Members

*"It's not up to one ministry, but all of our ministries to cater to the membership by meeting the needs of all our members" - Rev. Henry Smith.*

Acts 20:35 says, *"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

### Here are some ways you can help:

**1. Adopt a home-bound member.** - By adopting one home-bound member, you are committing to a relationship with that person.

**2. Find Common Interests!** Your homebound member might be the knitting partner you have been searching for, the second biggest American Idol fan, a closet *fashion-ista* that is unable to shop, or a fantastic chef! Believe it or not before they were home-bound they were just like you and I; they had likes and interest similar to ours. Make an invested interest by getting to know them.

**3. Make a weekly phone call** - Giving a call once a week should be a synch. If you call once a week, your are establishing a relationship; Your phone calls will become much shorter and more meaningful each week. Be sure to designate a special time with your phone pal that works for the two of you.

**4. Get Others Involved** - Make it a family thing, invite you church ministry, or even a close group of friends. It a great opportunity to fellowship; sharing this experience with them will be a memory you will never forget.

**5. Help them become mobile** - Whether it is walking with them through their neighborhood, going with them to the grocery store, or wheeling them around the nursing home - Help them to become mobile again. It is great exercise for the both of you!



JOIN US FOR  
MORNING WORSHIP @ 11AM SUNDAY!