



## JANUARY NEWSLETTER

# LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW YEAR!!

By **Martha Jackson, Minister to  
Preschool & Children**



*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. - Philippians 1:6*

Whoohoo! Can you believe it is 2021 already?

A new year!

I am very thankful for all the lessons God thought me in 2020. I think we all can agree that 2020 was a challenging year, even painful at times. Through it all God was with us – giving us what we needed to make it through these hard times and laying the foundation for His future plan for us.

I am looking forward to everything God has in store for us in 2021. I am excited about new opportunities for our Children's Ministry; opportunities to put into practice some of the lessons God taught us this past year. I am also looking forward to the day when we will see our children back in our building again and rejoice together for the growth they had experienced.

In Philippians 1:6 Paul encourages me to be confident in the work God is doing in my life and in the life of our children. In Christ, spiritual growth happens all the time- even during difficult times. I will be praying God's blessings for you and your family in the new year.

May you have a safe and joyous 2021.

## UPWARD BASKETBALL & CHEERLEADING

UPWARD Basketball and Cheerleading is a high-energy ministry where children learn teamwork, sportsmanship, and Godly principles for daily living. Gear up for an all new 2021 season!

**Registration Deadline December 31, 2020.**

## CHANGING THE WORLD THROUGH DING DONG DITCH

By **Jeremy Kroeker, Minister to Youth**



Our annual FBC Youth Christmas Party took place on the evening of Sunday, December 20th. The majority of our attention during this year-end celebration is on serving others through an activity called Ding Dong Ditch. We receive information about families in our community who are in need during the Christmas season, we collect an offering, shop for gifts, wrap and deliver them to the families' homes, ring the doorbell, and run! The goal is to provide these families with an anonymous blessing, not drawing attention to ourselves or our church.

We had 50 students and leaders participate this year with 5 teams making deliveries to 5 families during our party on Sunday evening. They got to

hide and watch these families open their doors, look puzzled at the mountain of wrapped gifts in front of them, and then happily move them inside after seeing their names on the tags, all the while looking around to see who the gifts may have come from. We've had a lot of adventures and meaningful moments in years past, and this year was more of the same.

Here's a little bit about the families we served (names are changed):

- "Jane" is a student at El Paso High School. Her grandmother is caring for her and 8 other grandchildren in one small apartment in South El Paso.
- "Christian" is a senior at El Paso High School. He is married with a 3 month old baby girl and is trying to finish high school. His mother was recently incarcerated, so he has taken guardianship of his 4 younger siblings, including a 1 year-old with Down's Syndrome.
- "Jimmy" is an 8th grade student at Wiggs Middle School. His older brother and his guardian have both passed away in the last few months. He is now living with his aunt.
- "Michelle" is an 8th grade student at Wiggs Middle School. Her mother was recently admitted to a mental health facility and will be away for some time. She has 4 younger siblings and they are currently living with their aunt with some help from the mom's boyfriend.
- The "Jones" family of 5 has experienced loss and hardship with illnesses in their family over the last few months, and was in need of some help and encouragement during this season.
- About \$2,000 worth of gifts were delivered to these families by our students. We give God the glory for the generosity of those who gave to our offering and for the impact it will make on these families as well as our students. Here's what some of our participants shared after Ding Dong Ditch:
  - "I watched the lady as she walked up to her door and saw the gifts. She was so excited. It felt good to just watch and know the impact it would have on her life." Kaleb-16

- "Being a part of this really felt like something from a movie. Even though there were some unprecedented things that happened, in the end it was so amazing to see the reaction on the person's face. The amount of joy and happiness that they had expressed was something you know was real and genuine. Being there in that very moment really put a smile on my face!" Famuel-16
- "My sons literally both jumped back into the car smiling and laughing and said 'Mom! I didn't know it was going to be like that! We could keep going and going!" Mrs. N., parent
- "It brought so much joy to me to see how giving to these families made them happy and it created a desire and urge to be more generous to others. I instantly wanted to be able to knock on a hundred more doors." Trevor-11

We constantly challenge our students to be "world changers" for the glory of God, and our goal is to show them how little things can make a huge impact in people's lives. I think this quote from one of our Student Leaders, Ana Regina, sums it up well: "During the pandemic it has been difficult to continue to help in the community, but after Ding Dong Ditch and seeing the impact we made, I realized fostering change and making an impact on the community can be any small gesture."

Please take a moment to pray for the families we served, the others in need in our community, and for our youth ministry's goal to help students become world changers!

## COATS IN THE PARK



The members of the Bridges Sunday school department shared the love and life of Jesus with people passing through Houston Park, across the street from FBC, by providing a little warmth. Erin, a member of the Bridges class, had this to report:

"Mary Wakefield [director of the FBC Clothes Closet] brought about 25 coats from the clothes closet and we tied them to trees in the park across the street from the church. We included the story of Christmas, some candy canes and the story of the candy cane, and a small Bible as well in the coat pockets. We saw two girls who have been walking around the park for a while and they stopped and got one apiece. It was awesome that they didn't take more than one and it got me to thinking, I wonder if that is going to be a Christmas gift."

We praise God for the love gift given by the Bridges class and look forward to hearing about more stories like this from our church family!

## HURRICANE RELIEF

The Colombian islands of San Andrés, Providence, and St. Catalina were hard hit by Hurricane Eta and Iota. Thousands of families on these Islands are still without homes or water. Learn how you can help.



Out of an abundance of caution, the Women on Mission (WOM) Meeting scheduled for January 5, 2021 will take place by email.

Please participate in prayer and send cards to FBC members who are home bound, as you are able.

**Mission Service Project for December and January: Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, FBC goal \$20,000, received \$9,225 as of December 29, 2020.**

**Pray for Missionaries Passage: Jonah 4, focus Jonah 4:10-11,** "But the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left-and also many animals?" Jonah saw a miracle, but it did not help his prejudice toward the Ninevites. He pouted and complained and thought only about his discomfort. God showed him that his concern for a plant was more than his concern for the thousands of souls in Nineveh. We don't know whether Jonah woke up to his sin, but we can learn a lesson from the story.

Pursuing God means I need to see the world from His perspective, not mine. It's easy to hold on to old points of view, hurts, and prejudices, but it's not God's way. As you pray this month for missionaries and the

nations they serve, don't be a grumpy Jonah! Open your heart and eyes to gain God's perspective and see how He wants to change you as a result.

Start today by thanking God for being able to be part of what He is doing through missionaries as you fervently pray for their needs and witness for the kingdom.

Prayer focus: Sub-Saharan Africa Peoples: the COVID-19 lockdown left hundreds of university students in East Africa trapped without hope for support from their families and villages. Many resorted to prostitution to get money for food. As missionaries and Kenyan believers distribute food relief and the gospel, pray God would change hearts and remove many from traumatic situations.

Pray for **North American Mission Board**: Alaska, Brenda Crim, California, William Lo, Florida, Guillermo Hernandez, Georgia, Thomas Chesnut, Idaho, Sammi Mischkot, Illinois, Jack Has, Missouri, Richard Tucker, Tennessee, Annie Barton. International Mission Board: American Peoples: Michael Jones, East Asian People, SB, Northern African and Middle Eastern Peoples: AD, MG, DM. Southeast Asian Peoples: Erickson Mullis, Sub-Saharan African Peoples: Karen Lee, BM, Chaplains, Volunteers, State Convention Missionaries, Retired, NAMB: Larry Fisher, IMB AB, Chris Carr, Tom Jones, Bette Moeller, Weldon Viertel, Nan Williams.

Thank you for your amazing faithful mission ministry. Many people are blessed by your generosity. Martha Caldwell, Director, WMU, and Pat Murtland, WOM Facilitator.

## CONGRATULATIONS

**William Benjamin Caylor**

Grandparents: Jim and Margaret Caylor

Parents: William and Jenny Caylor

## SYMPATHY

Larry Hogsed in the passing of his wife, Norma.

Nelda Parker in the passing of her husband, Charles.

The family of Alice West.

Sebastian Serrano in the passing of his father, Manny Serrano.

Terry Stroud in the passing of his brother-in-law.

The family of Veronica Carcamo.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

—1 Peter 1:3

## DECEMBER GIVING

2019 (5 Sunday Month)		2020 (4 Sunday Month)	
Budgeted	\$329,941	Budgeted	\$240,308
Actual	\$256,747	Actual	*\$276,154
Lottie Moon	\$22,308	Lottie Moon	\$9,850

\*As of December 30, 2020. Number may change due to year end contributions not yet received.