

March 2026

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# FIRST CONNECT

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*Photo courtesy of Ariel Koerner  
"North Windows Reflection on Piano"*

# LETTER FROM SARAH



Dear Beloved Church,

I thank God for you every day, for your love, your faithfulness, your grace, and your grit. You have created something so holy in this place. This church has become a sanctuary. People often find us when they need to heal. That is part of our identity in this season. My small group reminded me this past month that the church should always be a place where people come to heal. That is true for us.

We work hard to make sure this is a safe place to come and ask your big question, wrestle with your fears and doubts, sing through your sorrows, and know that God is with us in the ordinary. Our calling is to Love God, Love Others, and

Make Disciples. I pray you always know you are loved and seen and not alone. There is so much division in our lives, so much anger and hate around us. Let this be a place where God's glory dwells and where we reflect his love for the world around us.

Our God is a God of order and not chaos, a God of love and not hate a God who pursues us all the days of our lives. Following Jesus always moves us toward love, toward community, toward wholeness, which the Bible calls peace, and toward redemption and new creation.

We belong to a Good, Good God who created us on purpose and with a divine purpose. He is not in despair. He is saying, "Let's get to work. Let's bring heaven right down to earth by how we live and how we love. Let's show the world who God is by living as redeemed people of God. By choosing to love every single day."

We are in the middle of the season of Lent, a time when Christians are invited to sink in deeper to our faith and journey with Jesus to the cross. This year, as a church, we are going to take the 40 Challenge. I hope you have started already! If not, today is your day. I want you to take this challenge and invite your friends and neighbors or book club members to join you.

For these 40 days, I am inviting you to do one act of love every single day. Offer one word of encouragement, one act of service, or one moment of kindness. Ask God to open your eyes to the people around you and to let you see them the way he sees them. 40 people in 40 days. It might be sitting with the lonely person or helping someone at the grocery store. It might be forgiving someone whether they've earned it or not. Or for some of you, it might be admitting that you need help for your addiction or mental illness, and a great way to put love in action is to take steps toward recovery.

40 people in 40 days. Write down every day whatever thing it is that you did that day. And I want you to pray for someone else every day for the next 40 days. It could be as simple as paying more attention to the people you interact with and saying quiet prayers as you go. If you have someone you're struggling to forgive, I suggest you pray for that person's good for the next 40 days.

We can't change the chaos in our world or fix the great and terrible problems of human suffering around us all on our own, but we can start today and do what we can to bring Christ's love right around us. With each act of love or each word of kindness, we are working to create little pockets of peace for those God puts in our path, to put love into action. We can see the hurting person in front of us and walk a mile with them or help them carry their load. We can push back the darkness with light because we have an eternal flame blazing in us.

So, friends, we're gonna pray because God moves mountains. And we're gonna love because that's who God is. We're gonna say to the people all around us, "I've got you, because He's got me." I can't wait to see what God will do. **Sarah**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Rick's Café, March 8**

Do you have any questions about the Bible, faith, or what it means to follow Jesus in our world?

Rick Johnson, a seminary professor and member of FBCOKC, will be hosting "Rick's Cafe" in the Parlor at 6:00pm. Come with your questions for Rick as we learn and grow together in faith! Childcare available.

## **Youth Hangout (Reschedule), March 8th**

The youth will be watching and discussing the Hobbit and Lord of the Rings movies throughout 2026. Join us for our first movie, The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey. We will meet in the youth center after church for the movie (extended edition of course) and discussion. Lunch will be provided.

## **Senior Adults Outing, March 19**

On March 19, at 1:00 pm at the Round Barn in Arcadia. The Round Barn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is more than a century old. It is the only round barn on Route 66. Our own church member, Sherry Rice, who volunteers there, will be guiding us through the barn exhibit. We will start the day at Pops 66 Restaurant, another iconic landmark on Route 66 in Arcadia, for lunch at 11:30 am. If you cannot make it for lunch, then meet us at the Round Barn at 1:00 pm. The cost for the day is your lunch.

## **Quarterly Business Meeting, March 25th**

Join us at 6pm in the Dining Hall for our Quarterly Business Meeting.

## **Palm Sunday/Easter Egg Hunt, March 29th**

Hosanna! Hosanna in the Highest! Join us in service on Palm Sunday. The kids will process in with palm branches and shouts of praise for the triumphal entry of Jesus. If you would like your child to participate in this activity, please meet in the back of this sanctuary no later than 10:25am so we can pass out branches and get lines up!

The Easter Egg Hunt is for the Young Families at FBCOKC! Bring your kids, grandkids, nieces or nephews! This will be a fun activity for all! After worship we will gather for lunch in the Coffee Shop. We will then go hunt Easter Eggs. Be sure to bring your Easter basket. We will have some available if you forget. If you have any questions, please let Ariel know.

## **Good Friday, April 3rd**

Join us in the Sanctuary at 6pm for a reflective worship service around the cross and how it shapes our devotion to Jesus.

## **Easter Sunday, April 5th**

An all-church breakfast beings at 9:00am in the Fellowship Hall! We will gather in the Sanctuary at 10:30am as we celebrate the Risen Christ! No Bible study that day! A donation of \$10 is requested.

# RECENT EVENTS



Ash Wednesday  
2026



Disciple Now  
2026



# KIDS AND YOUTH



I've been thinking about the Love in Action challenge that Sarah has put before us this Lenten season. I definitely saw love in action during the DNOW weekend. Those youth were vulnerable with each other and leaned on each other. There was no judgement and they kept trying to push the other to be the best version of themselves. It was truly inspiring to see them interact all weekend. During one of our sessions we watched a few clips from Les Misérables. Specifically the clip where the bishop could have turned Valjean back into prison, but instead let him keep the stolen silver and told him to become an honest man. Valjean does just that, he turns his life around all because of this one man. In his soliloquy he sings, "Yet why did I allow this man, to touch my soul and teach me love. He treated me like any other. He gave me his trust, he called me brother." That is truly love in action. That is how we should view others, as our brothers and sisters. Show them love and treat them well. Be like the bishop.

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## **KOB Auditions, April 12th**

If you kid would like a drama or solo for the Kids Off Broadway performance, the auditions will be Sunday, April 12th at 1pm in the Commons. You do not have to audition to be part of KOB, only if you would like a specialized role. You do not need to prepare anything. We will have the kids sing a simple, well known song and read part of the script. If you are interested in auditions, please let Ariel know.

# MISSIONS



**RestoreOKC** is one of the community ministry partners that FBCOKC supports through our World Missions Offering and you need to know about the amazing work being done through this organization! RestoreOKC is an asset-based community development organization focused on the restoration of **health, education, residences, and employment** alongside our neighbors in Northeast OKC. Let's take a quick look at these four emphases:



## **Health**

They serve the physical, spiritual, and mental health needs of neighbors holistically by facilitating access to sustainable food, supportive community, care management and access to healthcare.

## **Education**

They strive to build a more equitable future through education, recognizing that our current path is “more separate & less equal” than it was 50-years ago. Thriving schools lie at the heart of any thriving community and foster tomorrow’s leaders.

## **Residences**

They seek to transform our residential housing crisis by confronting the root causes of housing discrimination. Only by acknowledging and addressing these complexities can we build communities rooted in equity, justice, and healing.

## **Employment**

They believe that supportive employment can disrupt the cycle of poverty that has been perpetuated by systemic injustice by giving people the tools and support that we all need to achieve economic stability and build a brighter future for our families & communities.

We have members of FBCOKC who volunteer with RestoreSchools (the education component of RestoreOKC) by serving on a CARE Team to support the teachers and staff in our Northeast Oklahoma City neighborhood schools. You may remember that we do a school supplies drive every Summer that benefits RestoreOKC.

Check out the link below to learn more about RestoreOKC and sign up to volunteer!

<https://www.restoreokc.org/>

# SERVING OPPORTUNITIES



## **What is CareForOKC?**

CareForOKC is our church's community ministry. It's located on the Ground Floor of FBCOKC and serves clients on Monday afternoons from 4-6pm. We have a food pantry which is like a tiny grocery store. Canned vegetables, meats, produce, milk, eggs, pastas, bread, desserts, and a lot more. Clients get to shop for groceries. We also have a clothes closet that has clothes for women, men, and children. If you've never been to CareForOKC, we'd love for you to come down and take a tour. We serve over 75 families every single week.

## **Who does CareForOKC serve?**

CareForOKC serves the working poor, those experiencing homelessness, immigrants and refugees new to Oklahoma City, folks who may have lost their jobs or are in another life transition, victims of domestic violence, the disabled, and many more.

## **How does CareForOKC provide this service to the community?**

We have an incredible lay team of volunteers that serve clients on Monday nights. Volunteers check in clients, assist them in the food pantry and clothes closet, and help people get their food/clothes loaded into their vehicles. In addition to Monday afternoons, we have drivers who pick up food donated from Wal-Mart and bring it to CareForOKC, we have other volunteers who come up during the week and restock the food pantry shelves or process clothes in the closet.

## **Where Does the Food Come From at CareForOKC?**

CareForOKC has partnerships with a local Wal-Mart where we pick up donated food twice a week and deliver it to the church. We also have a partnership with the Regional Foodbank of Oklahoma that enables us to buy bulk food items at a discounted cost. Occasionally, we will receive free items from the foodbank in addition to the goods we buy. In addition to Wal-Mart and the Regional Foodbank, we receive food and monetary donations from our FBCOKC church family and the community.

## **How can I pray for and support this ministry?**

You may notice that your grocery bill is more expensive these days. Items that we purchase from the Regional Foodbank for our food pantry, which are often heavily discounted, are becoming more expensive or even not available. Due to the recent cuts to federal aid, our CareForOKC team is spending more money purchasing food to help keep our shelves stocked each week. Our reality is not unique. Community ministries in our area and across the nation are working to find creative ways to continue serving folks despite the effects of inflation and budget cuts. God has been so faithful in providing for our needs and we trust that God will continue to be faithful as we love our neighbors as ourselves. We can't express how thankful we are for your prayers, countless volunteer hours, food and clothes donations, financial gifts, and so much more. See the link below to learn more about giving to CareForOKC! You are testifying to the goodness of God in a world that sometimes feels hopeless. Jesus is our hope and we are His people.

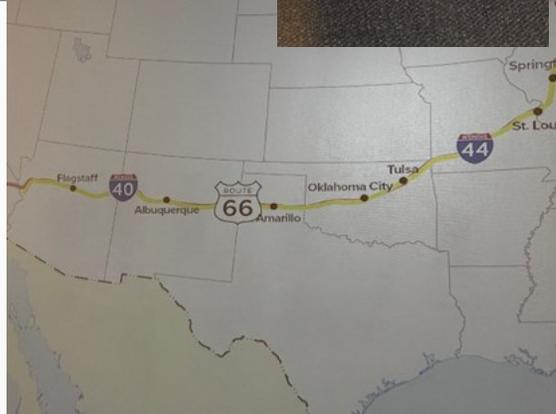
If you see this, email Toni Adams at [tadams@fbcokc.org](mailto:tadams@fbcokc.org). The first person to email her will get a prize!

# SENIOR ADULTS



On February 19<sup>th</sup>, thirteen of the 60+ group, plus 1 much younger friend, toured the National Cowboy Museum “Route 66”: From Trails to Truck Stops Exhibit. Born in 1926, Route 66 was the first federally designated highway built for cars and trucks to stretch clear across the country. It wasn’t a brand-new road, but a patchwork quilt of older state and local roads, themselves laid over trails and railbeds from days gone by. She might have twisted and turned a bit more than other routes, but she got the job done, tying East to West for nearly 60 years, right up until she officially retired in 1985.

I grew up on Route 66, and so it was especially meaningful to me to see some memorabilia of days gone by. Indulge me as I share some pictures from our outing. Thank you to all who participated in a fun time of fellowship with one another. These outings are designed for us to get to know one another as we share our lives.



NATIONAL COWBOY & WESTERN HERITAGE MUSEUM

# DISCIPLESHIP

## ***Bloom Where You Are Planted.....***

### *The Power of Kindness and Love*

Can you plant a seed by performing an act of kindness or love towards someone? This person could be a coworker, a friend, a family member, or even someone you have just met. We are part of a society that visits different places, though, post-COVID, we may not go out as much as we used to. Nevertheless, we still go out, and when we do, we are likely to encounter other people.

### *Simple Acts, Profound Impact*

So, is it hard to plant a seed of kindness or love? I would say no, it is not. Planting a seed can be as simple as offering a smile, a nod, a kind word, a small gesture, or providing timely help to someone in need. Sometimes, I wonder why people come in and out of our lives. Where do they come from, and where are they going? I believe in God and in His grand plan of bringing people into our lives for a reason. Sometimes the reason is for our benefit, and sometimes it is for theirs, or much of the time for both, but I believe there is always a purpose behind it.

### *The Role of the Holy Spirit*

I believe the Holy Spirit can move within us in the smallest of ways. Most of us are not called to stand on street corners to proclaim the Gospel, but I do believe we are meant to share the Gospel in ways God presents to us. For introverts, this doesn't mean we should remain closed off; it simply means our methods will differ from those who are more extroverted. We all know people who are as different as night and day, and each approaches sharing their faith and planting seeds in their own way.

### *Introverts: Noticing and Nurturing*

An introvert may take time to notice someone — probably from a distance and in a familiar setting. The keyword here is "notice." They won't immediately jump into that person's life, but they will eventually show an act of kindness. This act can be significant for the person who has been noticed, as it can provide a sense of belonging and help them feel seen, especially if they often feel overlooked or isolated. To all the introverts out there: you have a ministry.

### *Extroverts: Initiating and Connecting*

On the other hand, we have extroverts who are comfortable initiating conversations and learning about others' life stories. These individuals are often curious and ask many questions about the people they meet. I would call them initiators; they recognize that God has brought them into someone else's life for a specific reason and seize the opportunity to plant a seed by investing emotionally in that person's life, ultimately aiming for a spiritual connection.

### *Different Ways of Demonstrating God's Love*

My point is that we all have opportunities to actively demonstrate God's love to others. The way we do this may look different for each believer who understands they are here to share that love. When we embrace this calling, the Holy Spirit can take our small actions and turn them into something miraculous.

### *Let Your Light Shine*

Remember that a seed of potential has been planted within you, and it has begun to grow, preparing you to share God's love in ways you never imagined were possible. As we take on the challenge of "Love in Action," let it inspire you to express love—whether through small acts of kindness or by making significant sacrifices for others. It's time for you and me to do something. **Toni**

***"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16***

# MEMBERS



Charlotte Clifton—3/3

David Koerner—3/3

Stephanie Wallace—3/3

Judson Kinkade—3/4

Scot Sigler—3/4

Ben Rodriguez—3/9

Marc Edwards—3/10

Michael Jones—3/11

Edward Poole Jr.—3/11

Mike Fogarty—3/12

Rodney Wallace—3/13

Judith Hicks—3/14

Ballamay Butler—3/16

Rick Johnson—3/18

Janice King—3/18

Paul Kinkade—3/20

Gladys Lewis—3/20

Morgan Johnson—3/21

Andy Overmon—3/23

Wes Wilson—3/26

Cathy Manuel—3/28

Sandy Roark—3/28

Justin Keiser—3/29

Michele Rosado—3/29

Jerry Ligon—3/30

LaJuanda Speegle—3/31

Susan Yback—3/31

# YEAR AT A GLANCE

## March

March 8 Rick's Cafe  
March 8 Youth Hangout  
March 19 Senior Adult Outing  
March 25 Quarterly Business Meeting  
March 29 Palm Sunday & Easter Egg Hunt

## April

April 3 Good Friday  
April 5 Easter Sunday & Breakfast  
April 12 KOB Auditions  
April 17 Youth Hangout  
April 24 Kid's Night Out

## May

May 3 First Family Feast  
May 24 Pentecost Sunday  
May 29 Kid's Night Out  
May 31 End of Year Youth Bash

## June

June 8-12 Kids Off Broadway  
June 14 Deacon Nomination Begins  
June 14-20 Youth Camp in Orange Beach  
June 24 Quarterly Business Meeting  
June 28 Summer Feast

## July

July 4 Independence Day - Office Closed  
July 19-22 Passport Kids Camp

## August

August 2 Promotion Sunday/Blessing of Backpacks  
August 9 Start of Term Feast  
August 21 Kid's Night Out  
August 23 Youth Hangout

## September

September 18-19 Elementary Retreat  
September 23 Quarterly Business Meeting  
September 27 Fall Feast  
September 27 Youth Hangout

## October

October 9 Kid's Night Out  
October 24 Trunk or Treat  
October 30 Youth Hangout

## November

November 6-8 Youth Retreat Anadarko  
November 15 Thanksgiving Feast  
November 20 Kid's Night Out

## December

December 2 Annual Business Meeting  
December 13 Sounds of the Season  
December 20 Christmas Feast  
December 24 Taste of Christmas

**\*Please note:** *Activities are subject to change*

Love God | Love Other | Make Disciples

## Service Times

### Sunday Mornings

Bible Study at 9:15am

Worship at 10:30am

### Wednesday Evenings

Small Groups and

Children's Activities at 5:30pm

Choir at 7:00pm

### FBCOKC Ministers and Staff

Sarah Stewart, Pastor

Brad Stewart, Missions Minister

Toni Adams, Minister for Senior Adults & Discipleship

Ariel Koerner, Minister for Young Families

Steven McConnell, Minister of Music

Don Clothier, Pianist

Justin Keiser, Facilities Manager

(405) 232-4255

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