

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a church interior, featuring several tall, narrow stained glass windows with intricate designs in shades of yellow, blue, and red. The windows are set in dark wooden frames. A dark blue banner is overlaid on the top left, and a dark blue sidebar is on the right. The bottom of the page has a light beige background.

JULY 2026

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FIRST CONNECT

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LETTER FROM SARAH



Dearest Church Family,

For six months now we have been studying the Gospel of John. I feel like God had a lot of work he needed to do in my heart and life during these sixth months. There were lessons I needed to learn about what it means to follow Jesus. The drum beat of the whole study for me was the word abide. Jesus said it finally in chapter 15 as plain as he could. “I am the vine. You are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. Apart from me, you can do nothing.” That’s what I heard in every story and every passage. Abide in Christ and you will bear fruit. Don’t abide in Christ, and you cannot do anything.

It’s both. It is planting our lives in Jesus Christ and allowing him to work through us so that we bear fruit. It is a relationship and a calling. It’s both. It’s being saved by grace and then passing that saving grace on. I am blown away every time I come to the end of John and I listen as Jesus breathed on his disciples and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. As the Father sent me, so send I you.” That’s his plan! The church. We live by the power of the Spirit and we go out into the world as agents of his grace. It’s just that it is so much easier to abide in Christ than it is to go out into the world and live out our calling.

We are often so resistant to sharing our faith. We have loads of reasons. Maybe you’re reacting against the evangelism of your youth that involved going door to door. Maybe you’re afraid of making things awkward in your relationships. Maybe you feel unworthy to say anything about your faith at all because you don’t live up to whatever standard you have in your mind. Maybe, you just find it tough.

I want to try to reshape how we think about passing on this grace we have received. Acts 2 paints this picture of the early church and it was wonderful. It all started when God poured out his spirit. That part of the story is crucial. This isn’t men and women drumming up some plan, this is the work of God through his people. This is Spirit led and Spirit empowered. That feels different. NT Wright said, “The point of receiving the Holy Spirit, it’s clear, is not to give the disciples new ‘spiritual experiences’, though to be sure they will have plenty. Nor is it to set them apart from ordinary people, a sort of holier than thou club—though to be sure they are called to live the rich, full life of devotion and dedication that is modelled on Jesus’s own life. The point is so that they can do, in and for the whole world, what Jesus has been doing in Israel. As the Father has sent me, so send I you.”

In Acts 2, on the day the Holy Spirit was poured out, the church of Christ was born. And what a church it was! Here’s the very first description of the church.

“They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs being performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

That’s God’s plan! The church filled with imperfect people who love Jesus and love others well and live as disciples who make other disciples. It is done through relationships, through community, and out of joy. Church, we have a high and holy calling. All of us. It is up to us to all do our part, to remember that together we are the church. I can’t wait to see what God is going to do through you in the months ahead. ~Sarah

UPCOMING EVENTS

CareforOKC

- Closed Monday, July 6th in observance of Independence Day.
- Regional Food Bank deliveries July 13th and 20th. Any help at 9am is appreciated!
- Clothing room workday on July 18th from 10-1.

Book Club Invite

You're invited to join a book club discussion of "Theo of Golden" by Allen Levi. Come and enjoy an evening of meaningful conversation as we explore this memorable story about kindness, generosity, and the subtle ways lives are transformed through human connection. We will meet on Wednesday, July 15, at 5:30 PM in the library for a light meal and an engaging discussion. Whether you finished the book weeks ago, just turned the last page, or haven't started yet, we would love to have you with us for a thoughtful and encouraging conversation. Please sign up in the commons if you will be attending this book club session. If you have any questions, contact Toni Adams.

Passport Kids Camp, July 19-22

The kids are heading back to Brownwood, TX for Passport Kids Camp this summer. We always have such a fun time at camp! This year's theme is "Vamos! Let's Go!". They have recreation night, night market (they learn about missionaries in other countries), and end with a variety show on the last night. This is for any kid who has finished 3rd - 6th grade. If you have any questions, please contact Ariel Koerner for more information.

Senior Adult Luncheon coming up July 28th

We are excited to announce a senior adult luncheon scheduled for July 28th at 11:30 AM in the dining hall. Please join us for a delightful time of fellowship over a meal, along with a lesson and entertainment focused on cake making, filling, and frosting. For dessert, we will enjoy a special presentation of this chocolate mousse cake with Italian meringue buttercream frosting. The meal, prepared by Colin Creech (our chef for special events), will include lasagna, salad, green beans, homemade bread, and a drink. The cost for the meal and entertainment has been reduced to \$10.00 per person (made possible by a generous friend). A sign-up sheet will be available in the commons, and payment is due at the door. When you purchase your meal ticket, you will receive a ticket for the door prize drawing during the demonstration. Come and support the senior adult ministry as we gather for this special event. If you have any questions, please contact Toni Adams.

Promotion Sunday, August 2nd

We have promotion Sunday coming up! If you have a kid that is going into 1st grade or 6th grade, they will be moving classes! 1st graders will be moving into BIG church as well. 6th graders will be moving into youth. If you have any questions, please let Ariel know.

Blessing of the Backpacks, August 2nd

Bring your backpack to church this Sunday and we will pray over them as we start the new school year. Let's start it right, with a blessing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

School Supplies Drive for Restore Schools

Our annual school supply drive has started! Please bring your donations to FBCOKC (donation box in The Commons) through the end of July. These school supplies will be donated to Restore OKC and distributed to Martin Luther King Jr. elementary school. Restore OKC is one of our community mission partners and they do incredible work. Thank you for helping us love our neighbors and provide vital supplies for kids in our community!

<p style="text-align: center;">--- Requested School Supplies --- <i>(collecting now through the end of July)</i></p>			
Pencil boxes	Crayola crayon boxes	Construction paper	Crayola markers
Colored pencils	Rulers	Scissors	Bottles of glue
3x5 index card packs	Wide rule filler paper	Highlighters	Glue sticks
Paper towels	Dry erase markers	Pink erasers	Hand sanitizer
Wide rule spiral notebooks	Composition notebooks	Folders (with & without brads)	Boxes of wipes



KIDS AND YOUTH



June was a busy month! We had Kids Off Broadway where we had 85 kids, ages 4-18 join us for a week. They made friends, reconnected with old friends, grew closer to Jesus, asked great questions, sang beautifully, and had an overall wonderful time! I am immensely blessed to get to pour into these kids and I am so grateful for the volunteers we have! Kids Off Broadway could not be done without you.



FBCOKC YOUTH STUDENT LIFE CAMP, ORANGE BEACH, AL

Passport Kids Camp, July 19-22

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Promotion Sunday, August 2nd

We have promotion Sunday coming up! If you have a kid that is going into kindergarten or 6th grade, they will be moving classes! Kindergarteners will be moving into BIG church as well. 6th graders will be moving into youth. If you have any questions, please let Ariel know.

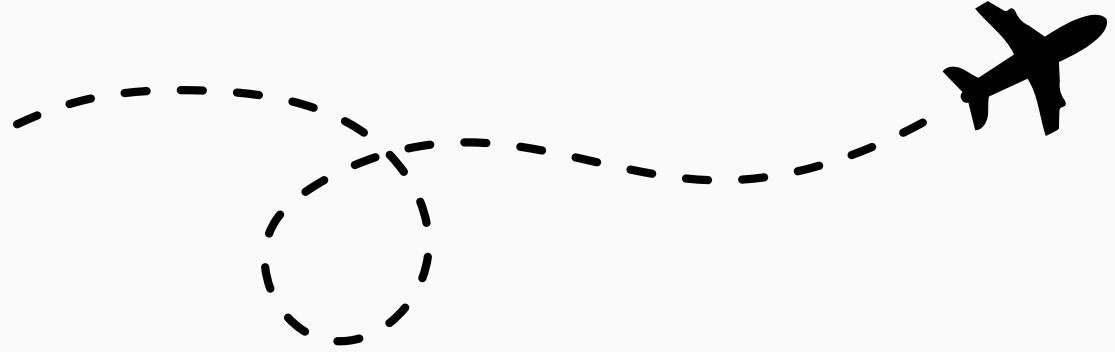
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MISSIONS



Brad is spending time with one of FBCOKC's Missions Partners, Aaron and Grace Ogburn. We can't wait to hear about how his trip went and all he got to learn! Prayers for safe travels.



FBCOKC Missions Partners

Community

- **RestoreOKC** - An asset based community development ministry that is focused on rebuilding the systems that shape life in Northeast Oklahoma City.
- **CareforOKC** - Food Pantry and Clothing Closet, providing food and clothes to our community.
- **Finding Hope** - A support group for loved ones of addicts and alcoholics. Meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 6pm in the Coffee Shop at FBCOKC.
- **Hope is Alive** - An addiction recovery program that's mission is to radically change the lives of drug addicts, alcoholics, and those that love them.
- **Crossing Community Clinic (Midtown)** - To humbly proclaim the message of Jesus by serving the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the uninsured.

Global

- **Aaron and Grace Ogburn** - *Pioneer Bible Translators* - The goal isn't just translation, but transformation. Bringing people to Jesus through Bible translation and church planting, combined with discipleship, incarnational ministry, and the use of translated Scripture.
- **Tim Tillinghast** - *SIL/Wycliff Bible Translators* - Serving the global body of Christ to advance Bible translation so people can encounter God through His word.
- **Elket Rodriguez** - *CBF Encourager Church Partnership* - Serving communities and migrants in the expansive U.S.-Mexico border region through a multi-faceted ministry.
- **African Renewal Ministries** - Focused on embracing children, equipping leaders, and empowering communities in Uganda.
- **CSO Ministries** - Bringing people closer to Christ through short-term missions.
- **J&T's Ministries**

SERVING OPPORTUNITIES



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- Acts 1:8

Jerusalem - Right here in Oklahoma City

Food and clothing ministry, addiction recovery and support, inner-city school ministry

Judea & Samaria - Across Oklahoma & the U.S.

Native American translation work, border/migrant ministry

The Ends of the Earth - Italy, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa

Church planters, refugee support, Muslim ministry, medical missions

Scan the QR code below to give online! On the drop-down menu labeled “Purpose”, choose “World Missions Offering”.



DISCIPLESHIP



Small Group Start-Up at FBCOKC

What are Small Groups?

Small groups are intimate gatherings of 8 to 10 people designed to foster community, spiritual growth, and authentic connections outside of large worship services. They typically meet in homes or church spaces to share meals, discuss faith, and pray together. The early church is described in Acts 2:42: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." This highlights the biblical principle that we are not meant to journey through life alone. Therefore, consider praying about joining a group that can help you grow in your faith and walk faithfully towards Jesus.

When do Small Groups Meet and for How Long?

Groups typically meet weekly or biweekly for 1.5 hours each session. Some groups will meet on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 PM, Sunday evenings at 6:00 PM, and Wednesday mornings at 10:30 AM. Your small group will begin meeting the week of August 12th and will continue until November 18th. Small groups will be open to newcomers throughout the duration of the group.

Where do Small Groups Meet?

Small groups can meet wherever is comfortable and convenient: your home, the church, a café, a library, etc. The environment should foster community, confidentiality, conversation, and connection.

Who are Small Groups For?

Anyone!

Who Can Lead a Small Group?

Anyone committed to growing as a disciple can lead a small group. If you are considering leading a small group, please talk with Sarah or Toni to discuss the opportunity. You may start by co-leading with an experienced leader.

Sign-ups for groups will begin now! Will you challenge yourself to step out of your comfort zone and meet new people? You may find yourself changed, grow spiritually, make new friendships, and experience the unleashing of hope. Join a small group to position yourself to receive God's amazing gift of grace.

I can't wait to begin this fall semester of small groups and see what God has in store for us. Look for sign-up sheets in the commons or contact Toni Adams if you have any questions. **Toni**

SENIOR ADULTS

The story of our journey tells who we become. Let me share a bit of mine.

I was born in Nashville, TN., into a home with a father, mother, and two older sisters. The family moved to Memphis, TN., when I was five, and we became part of a large church that offered wonderful opportunities for children: rich Bible study, choirs for people of all ages, and exposure to a variety of opportunities for service. Similarly, I loved the public schools that I attended. I often say that I don't know where I would have landed without the Baptist church and public schools.

When I was seven, my father died. I have little recollection of him, and his death left my mother with three children and few skills to make a living, but she worked to put food on the table and clothes on our backs. Most importantly, she took us to church and relied on a loving church family when she needed help. My sisters both went to work at the ages of 15 and 13 to help with expenses; I simply got up each day and went to school, happy to be with other kids and teachers who were kind and encouraging. After graduating from high school, I attended Memphis State University for one year before being awarded a choir scholarship to attend Oklahoma Baptist University to complete my college education. I know I cannot live long enough to pay forward all the generous help poured over me during my formative years.

At OBU I met W. J. Davis; we married and began our lives of ministry – he as a minister of music, I as a public school educator. We moved to Louisville, KY, for W. J. to attend seminary and over 41 years of marriage we served in 5 states (Oklahoma, Kentucky, Georgia, Maryland, and Indiana). We were the parents of two sons, Lee, whom we lost to childhood cancer just before his 12th birthday, and Lane, who is the light of my life!

I began as a music teacher, then received a master's degree in counseling and served as a jr. high and high school counselor for several years. One of my mentors encouraged me to try administration, and I moved from jr. high principal, to high school asst. principal and finally to central office administrator until 2001 when I retired to stay home with my husband who was fighting cancer. After he passed away, I went back to work for UCO and enjoyed supervising student teachers for several years. Once I left education completely, I had the rich experience of making monthly visits to the homebound members of our church. I learned so much from these saints as I listened to their stories and fell in love with them.

Many songs characterize my journey; I cite one: "Trust His Heart,"

"God is too wise to be mistaken; God is too good to be unkind.

So when you don't understand, when you don't see His plan

When you can't trace His hand, trust His heart."

The joys and pain along the journey taught me to trust His heart. The journey is my home and God is my Heavenly Father who has always had His hand on my shoulder.

Marie Davis
June 25, 2026



MEMBERS



Jill Gregston - 7/7

Don Clothier - 7/8

Kenneth Cook - 7/8

Larry Hawkins - 7/9

Pam Williams (2) - 7/9

Suzanne Cox - 7/11

Ariel Koerner - 7/12

Lane Davis - 7/13

Mike Wester - 7/15

Billie Fogarty - 7/16

Chris Pinto - 7/17

Toni Adams - 7/17

Alan Hicks - 7/18

Clarence Bonitz - 7/21

Meredith Long - 7/22

Naomi Wallace - 7/22

David Swenson - 7/22

Deric Treadwell - 7/23

Pam Nath - 7/24

Donna Gatewood - 7/27

Shari Hawkins - 7/30

YEAR AT A GLANCE

JULY

July 4 Independence Day - Office Closed
July 15 Book Club
July 19-22 Passport Kids Camp
July 28 Senior Adult Luncheon

AUGUST

August 2 Promotion Sunday/Blessing of Backpacks
August 9 Start of Term Feast

SEPTEMBER

September 7 Labor Day - Office Closed
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 Others | 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

Erika Miller, Administrative Assistant

(405) 232-4255

info@fbcokc.org

1201 N Robinson Ave.

Oklahoma City, OK 73103

