

NASHVILLE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

FIRST ADULTS

F.A.I.T.H. WATCH

Faithful-Active-Involved-Trusting-Hoping
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Across the Street and Around the World, First Adults Are Involved in Missions

Sharon Roberts

In a recent meeting of the Mary Martha mission group, which meets monthly in homes, several participants identified benefits of participating in a missions group. “For me this group is a social outlet as well as for missions education,” Letty Gossett affirmed. For Mary Mangrum, retired missionary who served 30-plus years in Panama, this group provides unity in prayer—for missions, for those on the field at home and abroad, for our church, and for each other. Andrea Lindsey enjoys the guest speakers who come each month; “they provide a personal face for missions in action. They help me connect personally to the Great Commission.”

Sometimes speakers generate new interest in a ministry in the community. For example, after Leslie Ann Owens met with Mary Martha group to share about her volunteerism with End Slavery, we became engaged in two meaningful projects for human trafficking survivors: Valentines Day love bags, providing encouragement for women we will never meet; and “Birthday in a Box” decorations and cake for a survivor who had never had a birthday party. Our group was changed as a result.

As is often the case, “small groups allow us to get more information than we would in a large group,” said Karen McArthur. “It’s easier to get information.” Small groups do indeed create opportunities to participate, strengthen relationships, and grow in faith. Missions Small Groups and other avenues acquaint people with missions opportunities and en-

able Nashville First Baptist Church to be on mission across the street, in the heart of downtown Nashville, and around the world.

Whatever we call these opportunities—Women’s Missionary Union, Women on Mission, Missions small groups, or other—these opportunities to participate help us grow in Christ and live out our mission commitments wherever God calls.

What Does Missions Look Like at Nashville First Baptist Church?

People of all ages at Nashville First are:

- Hearing from and praying for “real, live” missionaries;
- Discovering ways to express their passion for missions through the annual Missions Fair and other opportunities;
- Participating in trips to Canada or Costa Rica; to Oneida, Tennessee or Elizabethton, Tennessee for the annual Family Mission trip;
- Conversing with new friends from Australia, Venezuela, and even Nashville during Fourth of July outreach;
- Helping women at Begin Anew take steps out of poverty;
- Learning how to serve through VBS and neighborhood Bible clubs;
- Putting English as Second Language skills to work in our city, by partnering with Tusculum Hills Baptist Church to reach 26 different language groups on their doorstep;
- Volunteering at Second Harvest Food Bank to reduce hunger for Middle Tennessee families—plus more!

First Adults Are Active in Missions

As you may have observed, a number of First Adults are:

- Leaders of mission groups;
- Faithful participants of mission groups;
- Supportive of church outreach initiatives;
- Children's mission leaders;
- Missions Committee members;
- Mission trip participants.

A variety of Missions Small Groups are available to help women learn about missions and put feet to what they learn. Some groups meet in homes, some at the church; some are daytime groups, others meet at night. The Jane Anne Gibbs group represents what is happening in all ongoing mission groups, including impact on members and the community.

"Our group was named by Carolyn Seward, former Nashville First Baptist member," Dene Bailey, facilitator, explains. "Several in our group knew my daughter Jane Anne growing up and continue to follow her and her family in their calling to serve in Burkina Faso since 1989."

"We have missionary speakers as often as we can," Dene emphasizes, "especially missionaries who are staying in Mary's House, a Mt. Juliet home built and maintained by Tennessee WMU for missionaries who are on stateside assignment. We do in-depth study of countries where International Mission Board missionaries are located" (for example, Russia in 2017 and Refugees in 2018).

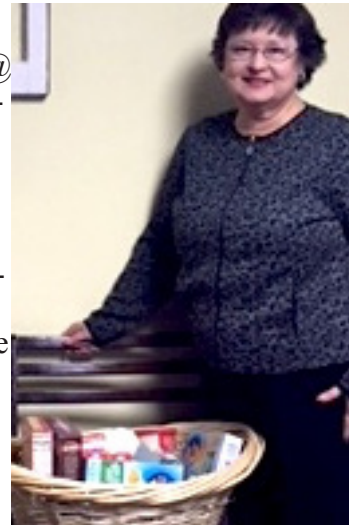
"Also, twice a year, we work with a group of ladies who live in a home called Women of Worth. These women have had problems in their lives. We cook supper for them, provide and do crafts together, and play games. Once we invited a Christian duo to sing for them. We also help them by providing needed supplies."

This group meets daytime the second Tuesday of each month September-May in the Donelson/Hermitage/Mt. Juliet area. For more information, contact Dene Bailey at deneb@comcast.net.

Other groups available for women are Missions Alive, Rebekah Naylor, and Mary Martha. Missions Alive, facilitated by Mary Frances Turner, meets daytime the third Tuesday of each month, September-May. For more information, contact Mary Frances at mft30@comcast.net. The Rebekah Naylor group meets early afternoon the second Tuesday of each month, September-May. Diane Jordan, facilitator, may be reached at diane.jordan07@comcast.net for more information. The Mary Martha group, described at the beginning of this article, meets in homes in the evening the last Thursday of each

month; contact Sharon Roberts at sharon219059@yahoo.com for more information.

Pray about participating in a group or in other mission initiatives, including outreach and needs assessment in our downtown community. Be open to the possibility that God may be leading you to start a new group in your sphere of influence.



Why We Do Missions

A priority for all groups is to learn about and pray for Southern Baptist domestic and international missionaries; indeed, when we have the privilege to hear from and meet them personally, it does put a face on missions and the Great Commission. Missionaries can serve freely without the burden of enlisting support knowing that churches and individuals are praying and giving. Major avenues for such awareness are Weeks of Prayer, featured mission studies, and Lottie Moon Christmas and Annie Armstrong Easter offerings. For more information about Tennessee WMU, check tnbaptist.org, "The Story Lives on," featuring Tennessee WMU leaders, including Candy Phillips.

Another reason we do missions is to help people discover and live out their calling to missions—as Valerie Michel's personal story dramatically illustrates:

"Fairwinds Baptist Church, located in Bear, Delaware, is the church I went to throughout my childhood. It is where I learned to sing, accepted Christ as my Savior, and was baptized; I was even married there. It was, and still is, a place that has a tremendous heart for the lost, but the one thing that my church lacked was a true emphasis on missions.

"I had always felt a calling for missions, for what God can do through missionaries and for those involved in churches who support missionaries. Yet I did not grow up going to GAs and had never had an opportunity to learn about Woman's Missionary Union. There were no women's mission classes and we were not a part of any official mission board. "I had never even heard about WMU until I came to Nashville First Baptist Church. When Mary Frances Turner asked me if I would become the WMU Director, I had no idea what she was talking about! She was so patient in teaching me all of the ins and outs

of WMU and how we support our missionaries. “I have learned so much about missions work and how we at home can support those on the mission field. I now teach in GA classes and am just as excited as the GAs are to hear about what we are learning every week. I am so grateful for the opportunity I have to learn, teach, and reach out to missionaries all around the world.”

Room in the Inn

When Bill and I joined FBC in 1993 we knew nothing about Room in the Inn. It didn't take us long to realize that this ministry was high priority at First Baptist, and soon we found ourselves serving dinner and helping with showers and laundry. At that time, RITI was hosted in our Rec center, which we lost to a fire several years later. There was a kitchen, a gym with room for 30 mattresses, several sets of washers and dryers, and showers. We were able to host families with women and children along with the men. RITI was moved to the East building after the fire, and most recently has relocated to the Fellowship Hall area. Throughout the years and the changes, I'm thankful that the FBC commitment has remained strong to provide warm, safe shelter and a hearty meal for our homeless friends with whom we share this downtown community. We host 12 men each Sunday night from November through March, and our members roll out the red carpet to make them feel welcome, serving delicious meals and staying overnight to make sure their needs are met. We ask SS classes and departments to volunteer for one Sunday night. They set up for sleeping and dinner, serve the evening meal and provide two overnight hosts. As of now, all the nights are covered except for 2 in March!

As we move into the next phase of developing our campus, it is my hope that we will once again be able to provide showers and laundry service for our RITI guests. In the meantime, it is my privilege to serve alongside the generous, kind people of FBC who give so unselfishly to welcome these homeless friends.

If you are looking for ways to help, please contact me at laurynbmoody@gmail.com. (and if you have any reading glasses you don't use—we would love to have them!)

Bill and Lauren Moody

Tony's Reflections

Everybody ought to volunteer for Room in the Inn every year! I have never helped when I haven't been the beneficiary of my stay or helping. RITI (when they stay at our church) needs persons to prepare food, serve the meal, watch football, play a game, prepare a brown bag lunch, or spend the night. It really is easy! Anybody can do this whether they're a child or an adult of any age.

This year I came after the meal and sat with the men as they ate dessert, watched a football game (2/3 of the guys went to sleep by 7:30), and listened to whatever they wanted to tell me. One of the guys was a successful businessman who was renting one of the condos on 2nd Avenue and the person who was renting to him (and seven other tenants) took his automatic draft for his first month's rent and then wiped out his entire bank account in addition to that. He's staying in Nashville waiting for the courts and the bank to retrieve his money. He chatted with me for two hours as he texted his two daughters who are in college.

I laughed and bantered with a man who knew a lot about football and found it entertaining to talk about how good the Rams were in spite of them losing that day. After a while we agreed that it's fun to watch but people take the game games way too seriously.

I talked with a man who drove a dump truck when the Twin Tours in New York City were built in 1972-73 and when the cleanup took place after 911. It was incredible to hear him speak about the excitement of the construction and the intensity of the cleanup efforts.

I watched as one man listened to several sermons of an African American congregation and he didn't fall asleep, complain about the length of the service, or talk negatively about the church.

Here's what I saw and learned:

- A man said, “Somebody who was less fortunate could have two lunches.”(including his)
- Homeless men helped others prepare for the day and assisted in cleaning up the church's space
- The participants volunteered to take the bags of linens off the bus and put them in the proper bins and I never had to get out of the bus driver's seat
- Twelve men saying “thank you” for everything
- And my pastor (Frank) is a good example for volunteering for RITI.

With courage,
Tony



PAM'S Corner

I invite you to slow down every morning and spend some quite time with God, counting your blessings and being thankful. We look forward to seeing you at brunch on Dec. 7 at 10:00 and other events during Advent Season.

Blessings to you,

Pam



NASHVILLE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

YOUR FIRST ADULT COUNCIL

Chair: Tom Clark; Staff: Tom Crow and Pam Stockett; Lynne Wells, Graphic Designer; Members: Linda Burch, Carol Chambers, Bill Chaney, Curtis Freed, Rene Holt, Fred Linkenhoker, Joe Nave, James Porch, Sharon Roberts, and Sam Talley, Coordinator of Martha's Friends: Pat Haskins **Tom Crow** Tom Crow@firstbaptist-nashville.org

108 Seventh Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203

Advent at Nashville First

Christmas at First

Sunday, December 2 | 5 p.m.
a time of worship featuring our Children's, Youth, and Sanctuary Choirs and The Sanctuary Orchestra

Christmas with Denver and the Mile High Orchestra

Sunday, December 9 | 5 p.m.
an evening with the Dove Award winning instrumental ensemble, blending the sounds of jazz, big band, and pop stylings to share the Hope of Christ

Carol-Candlelight Celebration

Sunday, December 16 | 5 p.m.
a service of celebration with The Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra

Christmas Eve Communion

Monday, December 24 | 5 p.m. ~ Sanctuary;
8:00 p.m. Chapel
a special time of worship featuring carols, candles, and communion

Anniversaries 50+

Marshall and Heneritta Carter
12-5-48

Pete and Myrna Deere
12-9-56

Bob and Beth Taylor
12-21-57

Jimmie and Patricia White
12-27-58

In Memoriam

Timothy Morita
Martha Ozment