

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is the new schedule for adults beginning Sunday, September 13, 2009?

- 8:15 am – Blended worship service, 9:30 and 11:00 am – Contemporary worship services
- 9:30 & 11:00 am – Sunday School/ABF classes/Serving opportunities
- Sunday night (or other nights) – Life Groups, Semester groups, campaign groups

## 2. Why are we adjusting our Sunday morning worship schedule now?

When we transitioned from our previous worship space to our new worship center in November 2004, we were in three morning worship services in the previous worship space. On the first Sunday in our new worship space Pastor Jeff talked to us about the day when we would go back to three morning worship services to accommodate the continued need for space as we continue to reach out to more and more people with the love and truth of Jesus Christ. We have had overflow seating in our chapel area for quite some time during the contemporary service to accommodate the numbers of people who are coming. The timing is right to add a third Sunday Morning worship service to continue to provide space for the number of folks God is sending our way. This move is consistent with the vision and plan we had in building our current worship center under God's leadership 5 years ago.

## 3. Why are we moving toward utilizing small groups in the life of our church family?

As we have continued to evaluate the space needs of our growing church family, we realize after much study and planning, that we do not have enough education space to accommodate three growing morning worship services. In the fall of 2008 we began seven “turbo” or starter groups to experiment with the small group environment for adults. This environment has proven to be an exciting environment with great potential for developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. While space concerns initially drove us to begin looking at adult small groups, the experience of our “turbo” groups as well as the experience of many churches across this country and across the world has been used by God to direct us into this exciting new chapter in the life of our church family. We have become convinced that the vast majority of what takes place in our current Adult Bible Fellowship (ABF) and Sunday Night Live (SNL) environments can take place at least as well and in many cases better in a small group environment with the added benefit of life on life encouragement and accountability.

## 4. Does this mean we are getting rid of Sunday School altogether for adults?

**No,** Adult Bible Fellowship (ABF) has been and will continue to be an important part of many adults' lives and the life and ministry of First Baptist. No one will have to “give up” their ABF class. As we look toward the future, we realize that due primarily to space issues, we cannot keep adding new ABF classes as well as a growing number of student, children and preschool classes on our campus. There will be a limit on the number of new ABF classes we can begin in the future, but we have no plans to shut down or discontinue ABF.

## **5. What are some of the advantages of small groups for adults?**

- They are infinitely expandable (homes are everywhere – your buildings do not dictate the number of people you can reach)
- They are unlimited geographically (you can minister to a wider area)
- They are a demonstration of good stewardship (you don't have to build and maintain as many buildings and parking spaces)
- They facilitate closer relationships (people are more relaxed in a home setting with a smaller number of people)
- They offer greater flexibility (length of meeting, day and time of meeting, curriculum options)
- They allow more life on life interaction and impact (encouragement and accountability)
- They allow adults the freedom to serve with preschoolers, children, students and in other roles without having to miss out on corporate worship services or adult community.

## **6. What types of small groups will there be for adults to get involved with?**

Beginning in September of 2009, we will offer three primary types of small groups for adults:

- Life Groups (Ongoing)
- One Month To Live Campaign Groups (6 week campaign)
- Semester/Short Term Groups (Form for one semester around a particular study)

Groups can meet on a day, time and place that best suits their needs and schedules.

## **7. What is the One Month to Live (OMTL) campaign?**

This six week campaign (September 13- October 18) is designed to engage each of us with one central question: If you knew you only had one month to live, what would you do to make what's left of your life really matter? With eye-opening insights and soul-inspiring truths, this campaign will challenge us to embrace our mortality and be empowered to live each day to the fullest. One Month to Live will challenge us to passionately live the life we were made for and leave an eternal legacy. This challenge includes:

- Sermons focused around the theme
- Adults challenged to engage with others in a six week small group study of this material
- Daily personal readings

## **8. What about some other growth opportunities for adults?**

We will continue to have periodic special events and emphasis focused on specific areas of growth and development. In 2010, we are evaluating possibilities of offering some higher level short term seminar type learning environments with a higher degree of commitment/participation (somewhat like a college course) for those that are ready to take some next steps in their growth and development.

## **9. What are some of the preparation steps for this transition?**

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** – Life Group Enlistment begins

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** – Begin volunteer enlistment for all areas ... ongoing through August

**July 12<sup>th</sup>** – Begin enlistment for 40 Days of Prayer And Fasting

**July 19<sup>th</sup>** – 6:00-7:30 - Student Ministry Leadership Training & Adult Bible Fellowship (ABF) One Month To Live (OMTL) Info Meeting; OMTL Host Enlistment Begins;

**Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>** – 6:00-7:00 - 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents meeting;  
6-7:30 - Usher/Greeter/Welcome Center Training

**Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>** – **September 12<sup>th</sup>** – 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting

**Aug. 16<sup>th</sup>** – 5:45-8:30 – ABF/Children/PS Teachers & Volunteers Banquet/Training; OMTL Host Training

**Aug. 17<sup>th</sup>** – OMTL Hosts begin recruiting group members

**Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup>** – 7:30 - Student Ministry Parents Meeting  
OMTL general group sign-ups begin

**Aug. 28<sup>th</sup>** – 6:00-8:00 - Orange Party (Children and Parents) - Orange isn't only a color it's a whole new way of us as a church partnering with you as parents! Join us at the party to hear what it means to go Orange and how we can take two separate influences, the home and the church, and work at combining them together to make a great impact in your children's lives!

**Aug. 30<sup>th</sup>** – 6:00-7:30 - Adult Life Group Host Training

\*\*\*A/V Training ... TBD

## **10. What is the 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting?**

- A 40 day period of seeking God's leadership and empowerment leading up to this transition.
- Objective to have every one of the 40 days covered by at least one person praying and fasting unto God.
- Uniting us as a church family as we passionately seek God together.
- Sign-ups will take place on: July 12, 19 and 26

### **11. What will the students be doing beginning September 13<sup>th</sup>?**

On Sunday mornings, beginning September 13, the students will have two identical sessions of 180 (9:30 & 11:00 am) to choose from based on which of our three morning worship services they and their families choose to go to. 180 is a combination of large group time and time of breaking out with a connect group. Sixth graders move from the large group time to a group time designed uniquely for sixth graders called Bridge 57. On Sunday evenings, students will be in small groups on campus with an adult leader structured around grade in school and guys and girls.

### **12. What will the children be doing beginning September 13<sup>th</sup>?**

The schedule for children (K-5<sup>th</sup>) includes 9:30 & 11:00 am Uptown experiences. Children will attend one session and worship with parents during an alternate time. Each Uptown hour begins with a large group where children will participate in worship and hear the Bible Story for the morning in an engaging way. They will also focus on a Mission Spotlight in large group. From there children will break into age graded small groups to engage in activities that will reinforce and help children apply the Bible lesson to their everyday lives.

We believe that these Sunday morning experiences combined with the influence of the family will provide children with a solid start in their spiritual journey of loving God and loving others. Outside of Sunday mornings, activities will include Small Group Gatherings, quarterly ministry opportunities, monthly Jr. HOP, as well as annual big events (VBS, Kidz Blitz, Camps, etc.).

### **13. What will preschoolers be doing beginning September 13<sup>th</sup>?**

The schedule for preschoolers includes 9:30 & 11:00 Sunday School sessions which are designed to teach our youngest whether they attend one or both sessions. There are large group times at each, as well as small group experiences. Preschoolers will engage in Bible teaching under the care of different sets of volunteers at the 2 sessions. Care without planned activities will be given to 4's & under during the 8:15 Worship Service.

### **14. I hear about the priority of the church partnering with parents, what does that mean?**

We believe that two combined influences (church & home) make a greater impact than just two separate influences. We intend to make great efforts in providing experiences for families and equipping sessions for parents that will make this combined influence reach its maximum potential in our setting. We also want parents to win. This will not be complicated or a 10 step program. This means giving practical "baby steps" that will allow parents to engage with their children in spiritual discussions or spiritual practices. We want parents to feel successful instead of guilt ridden or overwhelmed.

## **15. What will be the childcare options for adults with children who are participating in a small group?**

The childcare options are varied and limited only by the creativity of the parents in the small group. Some suggestions that other small groups have found helpful include:

- Small groups to pair w/ another group and exchange childcare services.
- Small group members alternate turns to keep all of their own groups children in same home or nearby home.
- Group hires their own childcare.
- Older children are in one part of the house while their parents meet in another part of the house.
- No group arrangement ~ couples/individuals handle their own childcare.
- Childcare on church campus (for a group meeting on campus only) following the guidelines that are part of the calendar request form for the use of church facilities (see website for a copy of this form noting particularly the section on childcare).

## **16. What if I have other questions?**

There will no doubt be lots of questions that come to mind as we process this transition together. Please feel free to contact one of our staff members for some further information about a specific area where you are seeking more information. You can also write a question on a First Family G.R.A.M. in the worship folder. Some common questions may be included in a future addition of Frequently Asked Questions.

## **17. How can we as a church family continue to prepare for this transition?**

First and foremost continue to pray. Pray that God will continue to guide us as He has in the past. Pray that we would all have open hearts, minds and lives to hear and follow His leadership for our church family at this time in the history of this wonderful fellowship. Pray that we would hear God clearly, follow Him completely, and walk by faith and not by fear, comfort or convenience. Second, we can also be willing to step outside of our comfort zones and try something new to see how God may use this in our lives. We cannot go with God and stay where we are at the same time. Third, seek God's leadership as to how He would desire you to serve within the life of our fellowship. As God continues to send us more and more people the need for people to work with preschoolers, children, students, ushers, greeters, welcome centers, etc. will continue to grow. This is a great time to step up to a new serving opportunity. Finally, commit to following Biblical guidelines in terms of attitude and communication. Satan loves to sow seeds of discord during times of transition. Discussion and disagreement handled correctly is healthy and produces growth, disunity flowing from disobedience always leads to discord and the missing of God's best.