

FIRST BAPTIST ORLANDO

# LEGACY LINKS

LEGACY ADULT  
MINISTRY

JANUARY - MARCH 2020

*“Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth;  
unite my heart to fear your name.”*

*Psalms 86:11 ESV*

Dear Legacy Adult Family,

As we begin a new year, please take a moment and think about how blessed you are. For a lot of people, they are thinking about the bills accumulated from Christmas. For some, they are thinking about how they are going to make it this year financially. Some are concerned about the hospital bills. I could keep going with other things that could cause us to close our eyes and say, "Thank you Lord for Your many blessings in my LIFE!"



I saw this story back in November when I was looking for a Thanksgiving illustration. I hope it helps you to realize how blessed you really are.

They huddled inside the storm – two children in ragged outgrown coats who knocked on my door. "Any old papers, lady?" I was busy. I wanted to say no – until I looked down at their feet. Thin little sandals, sopped with sleet. "Come in and I'll make you a cup of hot cocoa." There was no conversation. Their soggy sandals left marks upon the hearthstone.

I served them cocoa and toast with jam to fortify against the chill outside. Then I went back to the kitchen and started again on my household budget ... The silence in the front room struck through to me. I looked in. The girl held the empty cup in her hands, looking at it. The boy asked in a flat voice, "Lady ... are you rich?"

"Am I rich? Mercy, no!" I looked at my shabby slip covers. The girl put her cup back in its saucer – carefully. "Your cups match your saucers." Her voice was old, with a hunger that was not of the stomach. They left then, holding their bundles of papers against the wind. They hadn't said thank you. They didn't need to. They had done more than that. Plain blue pottery cups and saucers. But they matched. I tested the potatoes and stirred the gravy. Potatoes and brown gravy, a roof over our heads, my man with a good steady job – these things matched, too.

I moved the chairs back from the fire and tidied the living room. The muddy prints of small sandals were still wet upon my hearth. I let them be. I want them there in case I ever forget again how very rich I am.

As we begin another year, let us begin with thanksgiving for the great blessings God has bestowed upon us. If you have a roof over your head, a car to drive (that works), clothes to wear, food to eat, and people to love you, you are truly blessed. If you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, that is the richest blessing of all.

Are you in a LIFE Group? If not, LIFE Groups are what make this big church a lot smaller. Inside this Legacy Links are the names and locations of every Legacy Adult LIFE Group. We would love to have you a part of one of these great groups that will also help you to feel loved.

Love, Prayers, and Blessings,

  
Pastor Chris

**Chris Whaley | Legacy Adult Ministry Pastor**

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## WHO STANDS BEHIND PASTOR WHALEY?

Listening to Pastor Chris Whaley speak is always enlightening and entertaining. Whether he is sharing insights into scripture or delighting with stories about his days as the Masked Saint his audience gives him full attention. And, whatever the topic, it won't be long before he will speak positively and lovingly about his wife, Verna, the rock and epicenter of his earthly family.

Recently I visited with Verna to learn more about the woman who provides the love and support which has contributed so much to the success of Chris and their two girls, Alyson and Kacie, and their families. Verna was born in Plant City, Florida, joining an older brother and sister, and later a younger sister completed the family. Her family's financial condition was difficult and sometimes desperate. Growing up in these conditions would greatly influence Verna's commitment to get a college degree so she could have a steady job.

Verna refers to her mother as her 'spiritual rock,' making sure the family was in church most every week. "When I was 8 years old, my Sunday School teacher, Martha Roebuck, the pastor's wife, presented the gospel, and I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior." It would be another year, when she was attending an E.J. Daniel's Evangelistic service, before she went forward and made her public profession of faith. During these childhood years Verna discovered her love of music. She joined the church's sanctuary choir when she was 13 years of age. She and her sisters formed a gospel trio, and she sang with the a cappella choir at college.

Her love of music continues to this day as she sings with the choir here at First Baptist, and, on some Sundays, is part of the Praise Team which leads our 8:30 worship service. She is also part of a ladies ensemble called HeartSong. Her love of music has been passed along to daughter Kacie who is an integral part of our music ministry at First Baptist. Verna's early schooling revealed she had a proclivity and love for mathematics, and she sensed a calling of God to be a teacher. She combined the two and prepared for a career as a mathematics teacher. After high school she headed to the east coast of Florida and Palm Beach Atlantic College where she got her degree. Over the years wherever God's calling led Chris, Verna would soon find a place to use her teaching degree.

When Verna was 16 years old, she went with her sister to a church in Auburndale where her sister was to sing. In the seats directly behind her was a young man named Chris Whaley. Chris was smitten when he saw Verna and asked the friend he was with to give him Verna's phone number. His friend said no to the number request but did agree to give Verna's mailing address. Verna soon began receiving what she described as "unique" letters from Chris. When pressed for a clarification on the word 'unique' she responded, "let's just say those letters were very poetic."

Those of us who attend Chris's Wednesday Bible study know that many times Chris wants us to join him for lunch at the mall. Verna said that the first date she and Chris went on was "to the Lakeland mall just goofing around." As a matter of fact, Verna, who describes

*Continued on next page →*

**Hello, Welcome to Flight #2020. We are prepared to take off into the New Year.  
Please make sure your Attitude and Blessings are secured and locked in an upright position.  
All self-destructive devices should be turned off at this time.  
All negativity, hurt, and discouragement should be put away.**

**Should we lose Attitude under pressure, during the flight, reach up and pull down a Prayer.  
Prayers will automatically be activated by Faith. Once your Faith is activated you can assist other passengers.  
There will be NO BAGGAGE allowed on this flight. The Captain (GOD) has cleared us for takeoff.  
Destination GREATNESS.**

**Happy New Year to All!!!**

herself as very “structured” was attracted to the spontaneity of Chris. Their dating life was on and off the next few years and off when Verna left for Palm Beach Atlantic. Chris soon joined her at the college and their relationship was on again...for good.

With one year left at college Chris and Verna married, and the journey began. There were teaching jobs, Chris’s calling to ministry, seminary, pastoring, and, of course, the Masked Saint experiences. But that will have to be another article...or book.

Recently, around 250 Legacy Adults responded to an “open house” invitation to the Whaley home. Verna was busy greeting and serving the ‘multitudes’ as they visited. But most of the time things are a little

quieter around the house, and you will find Verna taking care of her “home body” husband and loving on her children and grandchildren. Verna today is happily serving the Lord, “staying out of the limelight, supporting my husband.”

A loving family is a shining light to our world and Verna Whaley has committed her life to making sure her family is that shining light. In her early years Verna’s desire was to marry a man of God and to have a Christ-centered and Christ-honoring family. To know Verna and her family, is to know that she has succeeded in that desire.

*Interviewed by Jim Gallery*

## **PRESSING ON IN GRACE LIFE GROUP**

**Our Missionaries to Montana: Andy and Denise Samuelson**

Andy and Denise Samuelson have been leading the annual Mission Trip to Montana since 1992. They started out with a small contingency of eight volunteers. The group traveled to Helena, Montana, during the first weeks of July with the goal of bringing the community to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. On several trips there have been as many as 30 people, including families with children as well as singles. The Samuelsons have been blessed to see the development and growth of six churches in five towns in the area. For next year’s Mission Trip, they are focusing on Whitehall, just outside of Butte.

During the beginning years, the team would join with a local pastor and provide a 4th of July celebration in a central meeting place – such as a park near the school – complete with tents, barbecue, children’s activities for all ages, plays depicting Bible stories, face-painting, clowns, sack races and other competitions kids love.

The children told their friends after the first day, and soon more and more were in attendance. Parents came too, and by the end of that first visit the group felt they had established some deep and lasting connections.

Probably one of the biggest draws for the community has been the realization that everything is free! Andy and Denise and their team originally brought all the supplies with them from Orlando; food and everything they needed. The group realized, however, it much easier to wait and do much of their purchasing once they reached the area. Their list included items such as bicycles they give away as prizes for memorizing Bible verses. So not only are they blessing the town with their gifts, the team is also blessing the local businesses by spending money there!

Of course, there have been many ups and downs. On one Mission Trip one of the team fell down a flight

of stairs and knocked himself out! Another year some team members became very ill with colds and flu. Some were able to continue working through it but for others it was completely debilitating and required days of total bed rest. And always there were the “little things” that annoy – Satan’s attacks and attempts to discourage – but each year Andy and Denise and the team come back tired, exhausted, yet always triumphant. They see God working in big and small ways. There have been many commitments to Jesus, and the little churches the team works with are growing.

What a blessing for the Pressing On In Grace class to be a part of the Samuelson’s amazing ongoing vision. What an honor to continue praying and supporting the team, and how delighted everyone is to hear stories each year of the hearts being won to the Lord.

*Submitted by Charlotte Colby*

## PEACE SEEKERS LIFE GROUP

The Peace Seekers LIFE Group consists of Legacy married couples and singles. We are a very active group. Our classes are led through the Quarterly by four excellent teachers. Charles Bell is excellent in addressing social issues. Dick Hissam provides practical Biblical application and Pat Phillips is our Historian, researching his teachings thoroughly. Former teacher Jerry Fallin was an encourager who taught in a traditional style. Marilyn Fallin has also dynamically taught on occasion. Our LIFE Group has a strong prayer-oriented focus, with many prayer warriors who can be counted on for prayer needs. We spend at least 15 minutes each Sunday in praises and prayer requests. A prayer list is sent out right away, so we can continue to pray for our needs during the week.

Some of our “family” spend countless hours visiting any of those in our class who are in the hospital or homebound and can’t make it on Sundays. We support several missions, including the ministry of John Bos, who is a member of our class. He always

comes back from his many mission trips all over the world with outstanding reports of salvations. We travelled through the Dave Ramsey “Financial Peace” seminar and then the “Legacy Journey.” We have had several outreach projects to benefit individuals or organizations within the Church.

We like to have fun, too, so pot luck meals are a big part of our social activities. We try to have at least one activity a month. We have enjoyed Ladies’ Teas, Super Bowl parties, luncheons, activities for our men, other fun get-togethers, and always, a great Christmas party. We would love to have you come and visit our vibrant and rewarding class. Of course, we have “goodies” every Sunday. We share so much support and love with all our members and visitors. Contact Carolyn Bissonette at (407) 287-4282 for further information on this LIFE group.

*Submitted by Carolyn Bissonette*

## WHAT ABOUT THE WRAPPING PAPER?

Well, Christmas has come and gone. The packages have been unwrapped. But we’re still left with that one nagging question, “What do we do with all this wrapping paper?” It’s truly amazing how much we spend each year on ribbons, bows, boxes, and wrapping paper for the holiday season, especially since it’s thrown away when we’re through. Wouldn’t it just be easier not to wrap presents? Wouldn’t it save a lot of time, effort, and money not to decorate our gifts? How do we justify this expense for something so temporary? Now I’m kidding, of course. There’s something very special about seeing a gift wrapped up for us under the tree. The crude wrapping job of a child means so much to a parent or grandparent. The neatly wrapped and sometimes disguised gifts add to the color, anticipation, and joy of the season. We wouldn’t want to give that up -- why it’s almost as important as the gift itself!

Isn’t it a shame we don’t value the way we package our comments and conversation as much as we do the Christmas wrapping paper. Some people feel it’s

a waste of time to be careful what they say and how they say it. “Let me be brutally honest,” they’ll say. “Let’s cut through the fluff and get down to brass tacks,” is their motto. Now I’m not for beating around the bush when there is something to say, but brutal honesty is often more brutal than it is honest.

Our choice of words, their tone and timing, and their emotional intensity, all dramatically affect how we are heard. This packaging of our conversation, however, is much more important than the packaging on our Christmas presents because it is not thrown away. In fact, the packaging we choose for our words is often remembered longer than the words themselves. So, take time to be kind, and package your words with as much care as you did this year’s Christmas presents.

*“When you talk, don’t say any bad things. But say things that people need -- things that will help other people become stronger.” (Ephesians 4:29)*

*Anonymous*

## MADAGASCAR EXPERIENCE

It was my privilege to take a mission trip to Madagascar this past September. It was a wonderful experience to see what our missionaries, Tiffany Dewitt and Ancil Ragoonath are doing. In the few years they have worked with the Antimora people they have started five churches. The team included Pastor Bill Mitchell, Pastor Patrick Barrett, Pastor Robert Elkins, Sherrie Starcher, Pam Ward, and myself. After our long plane ride to Madagascar, we were met by Tiffany and Ancil. They had driven up to Antananarivo from Manakara to pick us up. That is about an 11-hour drive. We enjoyed the trip down the island of Madagascar with a stop overnight about half way. We passed many villages along the way. All had stands right on the road selling a variety of things--food, produce, handbags, clothes, etc. People were right out in the



road till the last second to get out of the way. The road was not the best. There were many potholes as we traveled to Manakara, the road was no better. This is where Tiffany and Ancil live.

We attended a church service on Friday in the home of the pastor. It was a single room with a raised platform at one end. The children sat on the floor in the middle and the adults on stools around the outside of the room. We were honored guests at the service. The songs that the people sing are ones that Ancil has taught them along with the young nationals he is working with. He has set scripture to music. The people are learning more verses from the Bible than I know!

Another church service we attended was led by the young nationals. After this service we were served coffee or tea. They do this after their service as a sign of hospitality. The young pastor gave a very good message to his people. I didn't have an interpreter, but could tell he was presenting scripture that was important to him and for the people.

The purpose of our women going from FBCO was to

present scripture to the women from the different churches. Tiffany had set up a women's conference and the pastors of the churches had to recommend the women who came. They stayed overnight in the hall where the conference was held. When we arrived in the morning, the ladies were seated at the tables and were very quiet. Some had probably never sat in a chair before. We were told that some had to be shown how to use a toilet. As we presented the scripture and its meaning, an interpreter made it clear what we were saying. The women were so respectful and listened intently. We each gave them time to discuss what we had shared and they all participated in their groups. As the ladies shared what they had learned it was evident that they had listened well.

Tiffany had contacted FBCO Women's ministry to see if they could help finance the conference. They were able to raise more than enough money to hold this meeting. Tiffany had also purchased material to make lambas for each woman who came. It is a piece of cloth that they tie around them. It was great fun seeing the ladies come up to get their lamba and then put them on!

The most moving thing that still makes me tear up was at the end. Tiffany asked about their feelings after hearing the scripture. Many shared different things, but one lady said that she was touched that we (Sherrie, Pam, and I) had come from America to "do surgery on their hearts." It was very touching.

The Antimora people are primitive but still love God and want to serve Him now that they know. Thanks to Tiffany and Ancil.

*Submitted by Marilyn Withrow*



## ARK ENCOUNTER TRIP

Blessings upon blessings was our trip, Oct. 6-12 to the Creation Museum, Ark Encounter, Newport Aquarium, and the relaxing cruise on the Ohio River. Not only did we enjoy the work of Godly people bringing the word of God to life in this way, but we created new and lasting friendships.



A big thank you to Rick Collins for our wonderful morning devotions and everyone for getting our day going with the song This is the day the Lord has made, we rejoiced and was glad in it!

On our last day we stopped at the President Jimmy Carter Museum. Not only was it displaying his life and great works, but all the wonderful movies made in Georgia.

We are very thankful for everyone's prayers for our wonderful week! Words can't explain it... you have to GO!

## A STRONG WOMAN VERSUS A WOMAN OF STRENGTH

A strong woman works out every day to keep her body in shape ...  
but a woman of strength kneels in prayer to keep her soul in shape...

A strong woman isn't afraid of anything ...  
but a woman of strength shows courage in the midst of her fear...

A strong woman won't let anyone get the best of her ...  
but a woman of strength gives the best of herself to everyone...

A strong woman makes mistakes and avoids the same in the future...  
a woman of strength realizes LIFE's mistakes can also be God's blessings and capitalizes on them...

A strong woman walks sure-footedly...  
but a woman of strength knows God will catch her when she falls...

A strong woman wears the look of confidence on her face...  
but a woman of strength wears grace...

A strong woman has faith that  
she is strong enough for the journey...  
but a woman of strength has faith that  
it is in the journey that she will become strong.

## GLEANERS LIFE GROUP

We were blessed by Mark Sutton's teaching for six weeks during September and October. Five of the weeks he taught the book of Jude. October was his last Sunday of teaching so The Gleaners had a fellowship lunch in our classroom and a birthday cake for September/October class birthdays.



## TIES AND QUILTS

It was an honor to recognize Pastor Emeritus, Jim Henry, recently in a very unique way. First Baptist was blessed to call Bro Jim "Our Pastor" for nearly 30 years. Bro Jim served as Pastor at Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee before beginning as Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church/ Orlando

in September of 1977. The church was blessed to be under his ministry until March of 2006. The church was at the downtown location when Bro Jim came to Orlando. He inspired and challenged us through his Biblically sound teaching and preaching, as well as through his leadership to the church. Under his

ministry the church grew to three Worship Services and built a Christian Learning Center at the downtown location.

As the church grew it became evident a larger building was needed. There was no place to grow in the downtown area. A Scout Team was selected to look for a suitable relocation site. That led to the current First Orlando site. At that location, with Bro Jim as Pastor, a Worship Center was built as well as Education Buildings 1, 2, and Faith Hall. Later, when the

Chapel was built it was dedicated to Jim and Jannette Henry and named "Henry Chapel." Bro Jim was also instrumental in the beginning of The First Academy, often referred to as TFA.

Bro Jim was a true Southern gentleman. He almost always wore a suit and tie when he preached; however, he did encourage men to leave their ties and jackets at home during the hot summer months. And, speaking of ties, a very talented and creative member of the church did something very special for Bro Jim by taking many of the neckties he wore throughout his years in ministry and created quilts. Pictures are included with this article. Great keepsakes! Today, Bro Jim travels and continues to teach and preach throughout the South. Blessings and love to you, Bro Jim. Orlando First Baptist loves and appreciates you.

*Submitted by Shirley Bos*



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**February 5** – S A L T meeting • 9:30 a.m. • Room WC 132

**February 5, 12, 19, 26** – Bible Study • 10:30 a.m. • WC 132

**February 21** – The Collingsworth Family • 7 p.m.

**March 4, 18** – NO Bible Study

**March 10** – Dr. Bell's 50s Review

**March 16-20** – Spring trip to Charleston, SC • Cost: \$798.00

Call Karen Strain: 407-786-8755.

**March 11, 25** – Bible Study • 10:30 a.m. • WC 132

**March** – Club Joy To Be Announced

**April 1** – S A L T meeting • 9:30 a.m. • Room WC 132

**April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29** – Bible Study • 10:30 a.m. • WC 132

## SUPPORT GROUP SCHEDULES

**GriefShare** runs January 8 – April 8, 2020 • 9:30 a.m. or 6:00 p.m. • Faith Hall 301D

**Breast Cancer Support Group** meets 1st Wednesday of each month • 6:00 p.m. • Room E2-340

**Alzheimer's Support Group** meets 2nd & 4th Wednesday of each month • 6:00 p.m. • Room E2-340

**General Cancer Support Group** meets 3rd Wednesday of each month • 6:00 p.m. • Room E2-340

*E2=Education Building, FH=Faith Hall, WC=Worship Center*

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# LEGACY LIFE GROUPS

## 7:30 a.m.

**SCRAP IRON** - Room E2 343 • Teacher: Larry Margarella  
Contact: Mordy Brooks, 407-339-0196 ab300z@aol.com

## 10:00 a.m.

**AGAPE** - Room E2 343 • Teacher: Bill McCurry  
Contact: Carolyn Moore, 407-884-5432 smoore682@centurylink.net

**ASSURANCE** - Room E2 309 • Teachers: Bill Emery and Theron Guthrie  
Contacts: Kathy Emery, 407-625-5473 kathyemery@firstorlando.com  
Glenda Guthrie, 407-967-1914 gguthrie45@gmail.com

**BEARERS OF THE WORD** - Room E2 207 • Teacher: Bob Wittmeyer  
Contact: Bob/Ruth Wittmeyer, 407-299-8478 rwittmey@bellsouth.net

**CARE BEARERS** - Room E2 307 • Teacher: Roger Stevens  
Contact: Roger Stevens, 407-876-3823 rstevens@wservices.org

**FAITH FELLOWSHIP** - Room E2 312 • Teacher: Jim Moore  
Contact: Jim Moore, 407.384.0563 voll@bellsouth.net

**FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS** - Room FH 334 • Teacher: Sylvia Downes  
Contact: Dianne McKenzie, 407-277-9510 diannemckenzie@bellsouth.net

**FAMILY TIES** - Room E2 319 • Teachers: Bob Faust and others  
Contact: Bob/Smilie Faust, 407-296-6786 rfaust@cfl.rr.com

**FOCUS** - Room FH 353 • Teacher: Anthony Browning  
Contact: Ann Mette annmette@aol.com

**GLEANERS** - Room E2 310 • Teacher: Bob Hudson and Team  
Contact: Bob/Ruth Ann Hudson, 407-896-6840 coachandnana53@gmail.com

**JOY CLASS** - Room E2 311 • Teacher: Louise Ward  
Contact: Sharon White, 207-451-8640 sharonw4211@gmail.com

**LIGHT OF THE WORLD** - Room WC 139 • Teachers: Rotating Team  
Contact: Roy/Jill Miller, 407-363-7986 royandjill@cfl.rr.com

**PAUL'S DISCIPLES** - Room E2 232 • Teacher: Bob Buck  
Contact: Joyce Sims, 407-549-5432 jmsims510@gmail.com

**PEACE SEEKERS** - Room FH 346 • Teachers: Charles Bell, Dick Hissam, Pat Phillips  
Contact: Mary Simon, 407-869-7750 maryeesimon@gmail.com

**PRESSING ON IN GRACE** – Room WC 124 • Teacher: Pastor Chris Whaley  
Contact: Herb Tillman, 407-925-3663 hat@cfl.rr.com

**SEEKERS** – Room WC 132/134 • Teachers: Jim and Shirley Cashion  
Contact: Jim/Shirley Cashion, 407-831-0230 jcashion@cfl.rr.com

**SERVERS** - Room E2 340 • Teachers: Ray Shands and Will Butler  
Contact: Ray/Darla Shands, 407-331-5616 rdshands2@cfl.rr.com

**SOLID FOUNDATION** - Room FH 144 • Teacher: Rosia Henderson  
Contact: Beverly Fleury, 407-539-2241 bfleury@live.com

**SON RISERS** - Room E2 316 • Teacher: Jim Gallery  
Contact: Jim or Sue Gallery, 407-851-2914 jimgallery@bellsouth.net

**SOULDIERS FOR CHRIST** - Room FH 350 • Teacher: Bob Riemer  
Contact: Bob or Lynne Riemer boblynne.riemer@comcast.net

**VICTORY CLASS** - Room E2 315 • Teachers: Team Teaching  
Contact: Jim or Pat Wortham, 407-656-7303 jimwortham@cfl.rr.com

*E2=Education Building, FH=Faith Hall, WC=Worship Center*

**If you have articles for Legacy Links,  
please contact Hazel Hamlin at: [hazham927@gmail.com](mailto:hazham927@gmail.com)  
Please write, "LEGACY LINKS" on the subject line.  
Thank you.**



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