



THE JOURNAL

Stories from the missions and ministry of First Baptist Church Amarillo

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College Students on
Spring Break

Finding Jesus Through Job Corps

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The Power of Presence

TREY BOWEN

Trey Bowen serves as the Physician and Clinic Director at Heal the City, a free medical clinic in Amarillo's San Jacinto neighborhood. Here, he reflects on First Baptist's 2024 trip to Lusaka, Zambia.

This was my first time to go on this trip and to be on a medical mission as a physician. During the first two days of the clinic, I tried hard to present myself as a well-trained American doctor who had come to make a long-lasting positive impact on each and every patient. I found limited success with this approach. The harder I tried to be comprehensive, or academic, or more efficient, the more frustrated I became with myself.

Every once in a while, though, I heard the voices of the other doctors beside me. I heard their authenticity and joy as they loved on the patients and prayed with them. Our team taught me the power of presence and of responding to God's call in each moment. While we didn't sacrifice accurate medical guidance, the team brought so much more than treatment for physical illness.

On the 3rd day, a patient came to me with a fist-sized breast cancer that she had been living with for one year due to lack of healthcare access. We could not cure her cancer with the medicine we had, but we could sit with her in the midst of the news we had just delivered to her. We could pray with her. We could connect her with the local health system so she would stop falling through the cracks, and we could connect her with the





Behind the Blue Paper

GRAYSON FLOWERS

Grayson Flowers joined the 2024 Zambia trip just before beginning his freshman year at Baylor University, where he is now a full-time student.

This trip was my first time ever going to Zambia and my first time ever leaving the U.S. Obviously, this was completely new and a major learning experience for me. On the first day, we visited the Chainda slums. It was truly an eye-opening experience for me to see hundreds of children cheering and dancing for us upon our arrival because they knew we had come to serve and provide for them. It opened my eyes to the true value of being a servant.

Following this experience, I will forever hold the value of being a servant. Something that I had previously dreaded is now something I look forward to, and I can say I love serving others. This, however, was not my only learning experience. I also had a unique experience in the medical clinic.

For the first half of the clinic, I worked in the pharmacy. For every patient, I received a blue sheet of paper that had the patient's prescribed medications. I assisted in getting the medication and counted out the desired amount of pills or liquid medicine. This, truly, was a

local church.

At the end of our final day of clinic, our entire team of Zambian and American volunteers stood together in a large circle and sang, "There's no one like Jesus" together, and I was overcome with emotion thinking of how God is using his global church, united in Christ, to accomplish his purposes.

David says in Psalm 18, "For You light my lamp; The Lord my God illumines my darkness." It was a blessing to abandon my own visions for the trip and see where God was already shining light in dark places.



Grayson Flowers shadowing Dr. Bowen during a medical clinic.

joy for me as well because I knew that I was serving the people from the Chainda slums that were truly in need, the same people that I had seen on our prayer walks and while feeding the children.

It wasn't until the second half of the clinic that I had the most eye-opening experience. I was very fortunate to be allowed to shadow Dr. Trey Bowen, and, in these two days, I had the privilege of filling in the same blue paper sheets as Dr. Bowen dictated. Those sheets would then be sent to the pharmacy. Before, I had no idea what was actually happening behind the scenes with every single one of the blue papers. In many cases, with each paper came pain and suffering and many problems that were a result of medical neglect that would never happen in America.

Working in the pharmacy, I never knew that behind that blue paper and the medications that I was counting were cancer patients; people suffering from blindness because of cataracts or because they were jumped by gangsters; people who struggled to get pregnant; a girl my exact age struggling because she was pregnant; people who had HIV; and people who had many infections or diseases all

at once. Through all these terrible situations, the people were able to find smiles.

This trip taught me so much, but most importantly, it has taught me a lot about myself and how I should choose to live my life. I've learned that I should live my life with joy through all circumstances and while serving others. This trip has been so special to me because I've wanted to be a doctor since 2nd grade and getting to shadow Dr. Bowen has solidified that calling of mine. I know that one day I



FBC's Zambia mission team concludes a week of ministry in August of 2024.

With My Whole Heart

College Students on Spring Break

CALLIE ROBERTSON

Over spring break, I had the incredible opportunity to go on the college mission trip with First Baptist Church to Colorado Springs, where we partnered with Mountain View Bible Church. It was the first mission trip I had ever been on, and it was absolutely life-changing. The week was packed with spiritual growth, loving community, surrender, hard work, and (of course) Christ.

Our eight students were split into groups of four, and my group was tasked with gutting/remodeling one of the bathrooms. I walked into this trip not knowing the leaders or students well and having no knowledge of how to remodel a bathroom. However, I walked away with new friendships; more than just knowledge of how to fix plumbing, install flooring, re-panel walls, or rewire a light switch; and a deeper relationship with my Heavenly Father than I knew I could have.

“I have not once found anything more rewarding than dying to my own will so I may serve the Lord with my whole heart.”

The verse that motivated us during the week was Matthew 5:16, which says, “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (ESV). This verse was clearly lived out through our leaders as I watched them give their grace and energy (and, most likely, part of their sanity!) to every student as we slowly learned to accomplish what they were teaching us. They continually supported us, made us laugh, and ensured us that any mistake made could be fixed.

As for the students, they always had positive attitudes, willing hearts, helpful hands, and showed kindness toward everyone they encountered. We worked overtime two nights in a row, yet students and leaders alike demonstrated joy and endurance as we worked hard to finish the task set before us. By the end of the trip, we were exhausted, but one of the students said, “Even though I was physically exhausted, I felt so rested.” I didn’t realize this was precisely how I felt until someone else put it into words. I have always heard that to be full



The 2025 college spring break mission trip group in Colorado Springs, CO.

of Christ, I must first be emptied of myself, but I didn't realize how true this was until I reached a state of exhaustion where the only thing that kept me going was the desire to serve Him wholly and completely. When my flesh was weak, my spirit was willing, which made the work even more enjoyable and fulfilling.

This trip taught me the value and joy of being the Lord's hands and feet, shining His light, and showing His love. I never knew it until this point, but I have not once found anything more rewarding than dying to my own will so I may serve the Lord with my whole heart. When I set aside my own will and desires, I found myself with open hands at His feet. I learned so many things from this trip and had so much fun that I cannot fit it all into this one

article, so I leave you with this: If you ever have a chance to go on a mission trip in your life, do it. Don't let the fear of failure, being uncomfortable, not knowing anyone or anything else stop you from taking that step. You are the Lord's hands and feet, the conduit for His light in this dark world.

Something I noticed myself doing during the week was continually asking the leaders what I could do to help. I didn't know much, but I learned that as long as I was willing, the leaders would always equip me with the correct knowledge to do the job. The same is true of Christ—if we approach Him with willing hands, He will give us the knowledge and abilities to take us places we could never imagine ourselves.



Finding Jesus Through Job Corps

Student Testimonies Tell of
Tragedy and Transformation





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What they helped me with, more than anything, was to find my way back to God.

A TORNADO AND A TURNAROUND

JOHN J.

On June 15, 2023, it was a normal, early summer day. It was beautiful in the morning, but the afternoon turned stormy, as it often does here in the Texas panhandle. I was a storm spotter for the National Weather Service, and I had been out looking at the building storms. Everything was moving away from Perryton, where I was living at the time. I called it a day and returned to my apartment. About 10 minutes after returning home, I received an alert on my phone, a tornado warning for Perryton. I walked around the corner of the apartment and looked in the direction of the storm.

What I saw was something that I had seen before, but never from the front, and never this close. About one hundred yards from me, there was a large tornado. Debris was flying in the air, and I watched, briefly, roofs being torn off the buildings about 2 blocks from my house. I only had time to dive under the front porch of the apartment and watch as the tornado went directly over my apartment.

I was filthy dirty, nearly black from all the dirt and debris that was clinging to my skin. I was unharmed physically, but my apartment was gone. The houses around me were gone. It seemed to me, at the time, that half of Perryton was gone. Out of shock, I began to do what I had been trained to do. That was to push my feelings down, help with the search for survivors, and help to clean up. It was not until later that I realized something was wrong with me, mentally. A few days

after the tornado, I went to the doctor and was diagnosed with PTSD.

I have been through other things in my life which have left their mark and caused problems in my life. I have been through a motorcycle accident in 1979, when I was seventeen, and in 1990, I lost my leg. After losing my leg, I was trained in computer technology. However, following my motorcycle accident, I became addicted to opioids.

I overcame my addiction in 2002, and I made a good life for myself. I eventually served with Celebrate Recovery in our church in Perryton, working with this program Celebrate in the Texas panhandle region. I have been through two house fires that caused me to lose everything I owned, but I was able to work hard, and I was able to replace what was lost.

But now, here I was without anything, once again. I was homeless again, but this time, I had nothing to fall back on. I have never felt as down and beaten as I did then. God seemed far away. I began to wonder if he had abandoned me.

I made it to Amarillo, and I ended up staying at a couple of shelters here in town. I lost my disability for a couple of months and had no income of any kind. Trying to find a job was proving difficult because I have been out of the computer industry for a few years, and if you do not stay current, you get left behind quickly.

I had a friend who told me about the Christian Men's Job Corp at First Baptist, so I went the first day and signed up for the training. My whole goal was to make it through this program and hope they could help me find a job. What they have helped me with,

more than anything, was to find my way back to God and Jesus, to put my trust in them, give God my problems, and let Him work out the problems. I have learned so much about myself and what my true needs are. Now I can find a job without all the stress that usually goes along with it. I know God is watching out for me, taking care of me, and will guide me to find the job that He wants me to have.

I have my disability back. I have a place to stay that I can call my own. I have transportation. My life is looking up again. My life is coming back together. It is not perfect yet, but I have come a long way since December when I became homeless again. I know where I am heading, and if I need help, I know where I can turn. I have made some godly friends who will always help me with the guidance that I need to keep my life headed in the right direction.

I have confidence in myself again. I had lost all that in December. When I first came down here, I did not know where to turn, what to do first, how to go about doing the things that I felt needed to be done to get my life back on track. Nobody has done it for me, but through the CJC, suggestions have been made, phone numbers given along with names of people to talk to. I was given the information and told to do it myself. And I did. My life has come a long way since December, and I thank God for giving me the opportunity to be involved in the Christian Men's Job Corp.



CONFIDENCE AND COMPETENCE

JANIE C.

Before becoming a participant for CJC, I was full of doubt about myself. I had no real direction for what I wanted to do. I felt overwhelmed and, at times, fearful regarding my circumstances. I kept thinking of going to the direction that I was most comfortable with, but it got me nowhere. I didn't think it could be possible for someone like myself to actually have a second chance at something better.

Upon coming into Christian Women's Job Corp at First Baptist and meeting the coordinator, the instructors, and mentors, I thought to myself, "These people are all so fancy. What am I doing here? There is no way I can strive to get positions that these people have with their education and degrees." With this in mind, I told myself not to share so much about my background with them.

However, the second I introduced myself, my mouth

began to reveal things I wasn't planning on revealing. I felt comfortable and vulnerable with all these people. As much as I enjoyed getting to know each of the mentors, I felt a connection with Linda. I believe that God knew who He was choosing when Mrs. Kim, the CJC coordinator, assigned Linda as my mentor.

She gave me such good feedback and advice. She really helped me come to the conclusion that goal setting is a good thing, and it's okay to have small goals to achieve a greater goal. She has been a great motivator and a blessing through this process. I learned valuable lessons in each of the other classes. In some, like computer class, my memory was refreshed in things I knew, but had forgotten. In others, like management class, information that I never heard or had any idea about was eye opening. In "Jobs for Life," I learned how to apply the Word of God into job related situations.

I loved getting to know my fellow participants in Bible study. I heard their points of view and the way God spoke to them through the Bible. In "Co-dependent No More," I was able to understand the reason why I became so doubtful of myself throughout the years. As these classes progressed, my doubts, insecurities, and fears became less and less. I began to gain confidence and excitement for the possibilities of what I can achieve, regardless of having a criminal background and history with

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have gained so much
if it wasn't for
these people.**



addiction. I began to throw out the filthy rags of my life. And just as I'd learned through the Bible study, I saw and heard the Teacher, Jesus Christ, through the instructors, mentors, coordinator, and the rest of the participants. I now know that this is the plan God has for me in my time of distress. I've learned that this has been the way that I should go. I am thankful for the opportunity to attend this program, the instructors for teaching us all these amazing tools, and the mentors for their motivation and advice.

I know I couldn't have gained so much if it weren't for these people. I would like to thank First Baptist Church for allowing us to use their facilities and providing us with lunch on Tuesday. (I really enjoyed the baked potatoes.) Above all, I would like to thank God for leading me to a group of people that He knew would help me gain the skills and confidence and to dream big and achieve that dream.

BRAND NEW BEGINNINGS

Amber R.

After spending most of her adult life in and out of addiction and incarceration, Amber found herself in a Christian treatment program in Amarillo and engaged in Christian Women's Job Corps at FBC. These are her words.

It's been a year now, and I've grown so much during my stay. I've had the privilege to be born again by baptism while in the program. I've had my beautiful daughter, and I've had the blessing of caring for her, knowing that I don't have to have any fear about being successful, and that, as I'm living my life for God, he will walk me through success. The main scripture that has become my life verse is 2 Timothy 1:7, and the New Living Revised Version states that "God did not give us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline."



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I can stand here today and testify that, while in my classes, I've been able to learn the way of the Lord.

I give all glory and thanks and praise to God for where I am at today: sober, a great mom, and walking the path of righteousness. I was also blessed to be able to grow closer to God by attending Christian Women's Job Corps. I can stand here today and testify that, while in my classes, I've been able to learn the way of the Lord and have his guidance in my everyday life.

During our first class, Jobs for Life, we have learned about being on a journey through life and that employment is an important part of that journey. The very first lesson I have learned was a biblical perspective that states: I am valuable to God, and he has a plan for me. The Bible says that I'm "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14), created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), and God loves me and has a purpose for me that makes me precious to him.

The main goal from Jobs for Life training was to help me discover God's plans for my life. Jobs for Life helped me to understand that I have unique value. I discovered that I do have a plan and a purpose for my life. We learned that God created people to work and also how to be professional when starting to look for job careers. We also had the privilege to learn about being codependent and being able to stand on our own two feet. God also placed a wonderful mentor in my life through CJC, and I would love to give a big "thank you" to Shannon for being at CJC every Wednesday, ready to help us with our short term goals during the 10 weeks of CJC.

She helped me to understand that when I'm in doubt with anything, I can take it to God and ask him to show me the direction that I need to go. She let me vent when I needed to and also encouraged me to be

myself and rely on God with all my life. I thank God that she was placed in my path, and I know that we will always stay in contact.

I've been shown the do's and don'ts of money management. Let me just tell you: I'm never going to own a credit card. I was blessed to be able to better understand how to work on computers and how to use programs like Excel and Word. Thankfully, I got the opportunity to type out my testimony instead of writing it.

Thank you so much for teaching us how to make a resume to present at our next job interviews. While helping others believe that God has changed my life, he has shut the doors to my past and has opened the doors to a brand new beginning that's bright and successful. He is allowing me to multiply and prosper and to know that as long as I'm making a profession of faith for myself and not for someone else, then I know I will have a wonderful future.

God taught me that I can be very successful and that my purpose is to work - not just to take any job, but to find a job that I'm going to love and want as a career. Thank you.

If you would be willing to serve as a mentor or champion for a future Job Corps session, contact our church office or email cjcofama@gmail.com



I Was Thirsty

VBS Missions Provide Clean Water

Each year, VBS at First Baptist makes missions a priority. In addition to daily videos and lessons that teach about what God is doing around the world, this weeklong children's experience collects a missions offering. Over the years, this missions offering has had a wide-ranging impact, from shoes to food to water filters. The offering both supports global work and teaches children how their generosity can impact others.

In 2024, FBC partnered with 25:35 Water, an Amarillo-based nonprofit, to provide clean drinking water for a community in Uganda. 25:35 Water receives its name from Matthew 25:35: "I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink." With a goal to raise enough money to drill one new well in Uganda at a cost of \$5000, VBS was able to exceed expectations. Together, VBS kids collected more than \$8,000 toward this need.

This year, VBS is ready to be bigger and better than ever, and so is our missions offering goal. The 2025 goal is to collect enough to provide 2 new wells in Uganda, a cost of \$10,000. Together, VBS children will learn about the need for clean water in vulnerable communities and how their collective efforts can transform lives.





Multiplied Efforts

Youth Choir's Impact Continues

PARKER BOWEN

"You guys are a part of something really special for us."

The partnership began with a knock on the church's front door. Out stepped J.T. Mallinson, pastor of Multiply Church in Kansas City.

"You guys just showed up out of nowhere," Mallinson recalls. He certainly wasn't looking for a team of ninety students and adults, but the door literally opened before him. Dan Baker and Bradley Maybin had traveled to Kansas City looking for mission partners for the upcoming Youth Choir Mission Trip. Multiply Church came up through mutual contacts. With little more than the church's name, Dan and Bradley decided to visit in person to explore the possibility of a partnership.

That first meeting led to a week of shared ministry months later. Backyard Bible Club, flier distribution, construction projects – FBC Amarillo's Youth Choir came ready to serve.



The packed week culminated in a block party and concert at the Forest Glen Apartments right across the street from the church. As we were preparing grilling food, passing out trays, and reviewing our assignments, Mallinson provided the team with some background.

“We’ve been going over there for two or three years now,” he cautioned, “and we have never once had someone come to Jesus or come to Multiply Church.” Not one.

Here was a pastor and a young church in the trenches of ministry. Week by week, they sought

ways to show love to their community. They hosted events, they pursued relationships, they extended invitations, but they saw little change. A lot of watering and little visible fruit.

We were prepared for a small crowd at our Thursday concert, and, by no surprise, a handful of residents came for a free burger and some music. It was a powerful night of worship and community, no less. After the trash was loaded, the final van was packed, and a prayer was offered by the pastor, we said a final goodbye to our new friends in Kansas City.

Not long after, the staff at Multiply received an

inquiry through their website. The new manager at the Forest Glen apartments wanted to schedule a meeting. It seemed God had brought another surprise opportunity to the church's front door.

"I have not talked to a single resident who hasn't been singing your praises," she said. "I want to do more things to connect with our folks, and they recommended I come alongside you." Apparently, efforts like the Youth Choir block party did not go unnoticed.

The apartment manager called on Multiply Church to provide Christmas gifts for fifty kids in the complex. Mallinson was thrilled with the idea, but time and resources were in short supply. He decided his church could help by providing six as a start.

When the Pastor took the news to his staff, one member of the team chimed in. "You know, I'm connected with an organization that might be interested in helping." Weeks later, through their partnership, the people at Multiply learned they could provide not six, not fifty, but a hundred gifts to kids at Forest Glen — as well as new hats, socks and gloves. The church body quickly busied itself with preparations.

Meanwhile, one of Multiply's members excitedly shared news at work. Upon hearing about such generosity, his client responded, "You know, I run a food pantry. Could you guys use some hams?"

Now, in addition to the gifts already provided, Multiply would distribute a frozen chicken or ham to every family at Forest Glen.

"These were all donated items that the Lord provided," Mallinson told Dan Baker. "Much like how he provided you as hands and feet over the summertime, these were gifts and blessings that we were not looking for — that we weren't even aware of — and Forest Glenn was showered with love and blessings."

As a result of the December gifts, the church became aware of some individual needs within the community, eventually connecting them with a single mom with three young kids, herself the victim of domestic violence. The ladies at Multiply Church developed a relationship with her after helping move some furniture in her home. Before long, she became the first person to attend the church from Forest Glen.

"She's getting baptized June 21st," Mallinson shared. "We could not be more excited!"

The impact of Multiply Church's ministry at Forest Glen was hardly the result of one person or moment. God worked through a visionary pastor, a knock on a door, ninety students from Texas, a neighbor-loving church, an apartment manager, nonprofit partners, and a team of women moving furniture. Hundreds took their place in the bigger picture of what God was doing in this community. As the church's name suggests, these small efforts were multiplied by a God who can feed the masses with a few loaves and fish.

"I can't imagine what kind of a blessing you're going to provide to another community this year," Mallinson said. With a God who works like this, who could?



First Baptist Church Amarillo
1208 S. Tyler St.
Amarillo, TX 79101

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Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;
Make known among the nations what he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts.

Psalm 105:1-2



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