



FBC NEWSLETTER

Building on a Day of Joy and Connection

PASTOR JOEL ODONDI

What a joy it was to gather on August 10 at Webster Conference Center for our FBC Family and Fun Day! From the inspiring worship service, where our VBS kids shared a song with us, the powerful sermon from Pastor Kevin to the lively and meaningful conversations, the day filled with laughter and fellowship, reminding us that our relationships with each other are precious in God's eyes. We were also thrilled to welcome many guests who joined us for the day, expanding our circle of faith and friendship.

From spirited games in the gym to friendly competitions at the tables, a refreshing dip in the pool, and even activities by the lake, there was something for everyone. These activities weren't just for entertainment; they were opportunities to build deeper, more meaningful relationships with one another. We saw people of all ages connecting, sharing, and supporting each other.

A huge thank you also goes out to all the team leaders and volunteers who gave their time and energy so selflessly. The success of the FBC Family and Fun Day reminds us of a powerful truth: as God's people, our relationships with one another matter deeply to Him. The joy, unity, and effort to build each other up that we witnessed on August 10 shouldn't be limited to a single day. Let's carry that same spirit into our everyday lives, building on the wonderful connections we made and continuing to be a source of encouragement and support for one another.



Playing dominos at FBC Family Day 2025.

(Enjoy more pictures on page 2)



2025 Family Day



Salvation: Earned or Given?

PASTOR KEVIN HAZELTON

What does it mean to be saved?

To save can mean to rescue from danger, to preserve, to accumulate money, to reduce wear and tear, to store for safe keeping. But what does it mean when it comes to sinful humans like you and me? What does salvation really mean?

The following fictitious story illustrates well the biblical truth that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

*A man was standing at the gates of heaven waiting to be admitted. To the man's utter shock, Peter said, "You have to earn a thousand points to be admitted to heaven. What have you done to earn your points?"

The man replied, "I've never heard that before: but I think I'll do alright. I was raised in a Christian home and have always been a part of the church. I have Sunday School attendance pins that go down to the floor. I went to a Christian college and graduate school and have probably led hundreds of people to Christ. I'm now an elder in my church and am quite supportive of what the people of God do. I have three children, two boys and a girl. My oldest boy is a pastor and the younger is a staff person with a ministry to the poor. My daughter and her husband are missionaries. I have always tithe and am now giving well over 30% of my income to God's work. I'm a bank executive and work with the poor in our city trying to get low-income mortgages."

"How am I doing so far?" he asked Peter.

"That's one point," Peter said. "What else have you done?"

"Good Lord...have mercy!" the man said in frustration.

"That's it!" Peter said. "Welcome home."

Our FBC Statement of Common Faith says this about salvation by grace:

We believe that salvation is by God's grace alone through faith in Jesus. People cannot save themselves by works of righteousness. Rather, works of righteousness are products of the Holy Spirit who indwells believers by faith.

Salvation involves being **saved from** death, hell, and eternal condemnation. Because all humans, except Jesus, are guilty of sin, we rightfully deserve God's judgment. "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory [over death and sin] through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Salvation also involves being **save to** life, heaven, and eternal righteousness. We are saved to be sent by Christ as his ambassadors to the world (2 Corinthians 5:20). We are saved to serve as holy priests who represent him on earth (1 Peter 2:5, 9). We are saved to live as new creations today and forever.

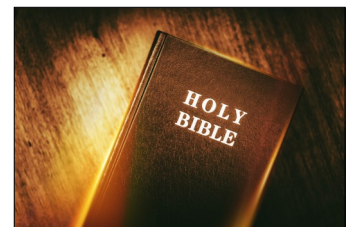
Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection is the only means of salvation for humans. Without Jesus' sacrificial death, we cannot be saved. Salvation is a free gift that Jesus earned and now offers as a free gift to you.

Are you saved? Have you received the free gift of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone? If not, what are you waiting for? You cannot earn salvation, but you can receive it.

* Daryl Dash: <https://www.dashhouse.com/the-good-life-and-god-matthew-61-18/>

Wednesday Evening Adult Study: Making Sense of God's Word

Why is the Bible so confusing? How do we make sense of something written thousands of years ago to people whose lives look nothing like our lives? How can we make sense of the Bible? Join Pastor Kevin on Wednesday evenings (6:30 - 7:30 p.m.) as he helps us learn how to read and understand the Bible. Come ready to ask questions and discover God's truths together.



Set Sail: VBS at FBC



While the world didn't slow down this summer, we did here at FBC Salina to bring focus to our Lord and Savior. For the first time in 14 years we hosted VBS at FBC with an astonishing 40 kids sailing their way, growing closer to Christ. We want to thank the many volunteers who helped provide nourishing meals, create décor, teach lessons, create crafts, and

help plant seeds of faith in our youngest minds.

VBS was a week of growing together as children ages preschool - fifth grade learned how to navigate their relationships with God and others. Each evening began with a meal together, followed by a fun activity to get us moving. After this we broke down into smaller groups to

learn about the day's highlighted big idea. Each night included a craft and object lesson to help us connect to the message in a hands-on way. These big ideas included:

Day 1: *God shows us how to love others.* We focused on the fruit of the Spirit and how God helps us live it out.

Day 2: *God gives us gifts to serve others.* We learned about unity and the body of Christ, and how God has given each of us special gifts to use to honor Him.

Day 3: *God loves spending time with you.* We talked about the peace of God and how He invites us into a closer relationship with Him.

Day 4: *God prepares us to share the good news.* We explored the armor of God and how He equips us to share the gospel.

We ended our evenings by gathering to review our big idea, practice our memory verse and rejoice in our dedication by praising Christ through songs and learning dances to go with them. On day five, we finished the week by inviting the families to join us in a night celebrating their child's growth in Christ, sharing the "big ideas," and a memory verse practiced in American Sign Language:

"All scripture is God breathed and used for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness."

2 Timothy 3:16



2025 VBS Group Photo

Get to Know

DONNA BUCHWALD

My name is Donna Buchwald and I have been a member of First Baptist Church for over 30 years.

I came to Salina, Kansas fresh out of nursing school. I met the love of my life, Don Buchwald, a professor at KSU Salina. We both grew up in Christian homes and accepted Christ early in life. We raised four kids together. God has always been an integral part of our family. I feel so blessed. I wasn't ready to lose Don so early in my life but I recognized that if this was His plan, He would take care of me.

My dad was also named Don. We always joked that he looked like the man on the dime. Thus, dimes are special to me. I find dimes unexpectedly and they make me smile. I was given change preparing for a son's wedding – all dimes. When I am low, miraculously a dime appears. When I lost my husband, my youngest son went out to his dad's office, opened his middle desk drawer and called home. He found a single stamp – the man on the dime.

God works in mysterious ways. He is always there. He doesn't expect you to figure everything out in life. Just trust He already has.



Goodness in the Gap: Trusting God When We Can't See Him

PASTOR JOEL ODONDI

Have you ever looked at your life and wondered where God is? You've prayed, you've fasted, you've done everything you know to do, but the storm rages on. The waves of disappointment, sickness, and financial hardship crash against your soul, and you're left questioning if God is still good. It's in these moments that we often fail to see His hand at work, to recognize His goodness even when everything around us seems to be falling apart. But the prophet Nahum offers us a powerful reminder in Nahum 1:7

“*The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble; he cares for those who trusts in him.*”

The first truth is that the **Lord is good**. This isn't just a fleeting feeling or a convenient platitude; it's the very essence of His character. God's goodness is a constant, an unchanging reality that exists independent of our circumstances. It's the source of all that is right, true, and beautiful in the world. When we feel overwhelmed by the darkness, we can rest in the knowledge that His goodness is a foundational promise. It's in His good nature that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for us. It's

through His good nature that He forgives us when we fall short. Even in the midst of our troubles, God's ultimate purpose is to bring about good in our lives, whether we see it at the moment or not.

The second truth Nahum reveals is that God is "**a refuge in times of trouble**." A refuge means stronghold, a fortress, or a safe haven. When life's battles leave us bruised and weary, we don't have to face them alone. God isn't a distant observer; He's a refuge you can run to. In a world full of shifting sands and unstable foundations, He is our rock, our unshakeable fortress. We can seek shelter in His presence, finding peace and security amidst the chaos. When the enemy tries to fill our minds with fear and doubt, we can declare that our refuge is in Him.

Finally, the verse concludes with this beautiful promise: "**he cares for those who trust him**." This isn't a casual acquaintance; it's an intimate, personal knowledge. God doesn't just see the crowd; He sees you. He knows your name, your struggles, and your heart's deepest desires. The word "cares" here is an active word, implying that God is actively involved in the lives of those who trust in Him. He is not a passive observer, but a loving Father who watches over His children. He cares for you deeply and personally. This is the heart of the message: you are not forgotten. Your tears are not invisible. Your prayers are not unheard. When you put your trust in Him, He sees you and He cares for you.

Fiscal Stewardship: Blessed to Be a Blessing

We have been blessed to be a blessing. This simple but powerful statement gets to the very heart of Christian generosity and the purpose of our church's Fiscal Ministry. It is a great time to celebrate the power of fiscal stewardship and reflect on our shared journey as a church family.

The Fiscal Ministry exists to serve the entire body of Christ at First Baptist Church, and we are so grateful for your faithful support. Your generosity is the fuel that allows every other ministry—from Sunday school to outreach programs to community support—to thrive. As a non-profit organization, our only source of funding comes directly from the donations of our church family, whether through regular offerings or memorial funds. Because of this, we are entirely dependent on your generosity.

Every dollar and every resource you contribute is managed with the utmost integrity, guided by approved budgets and a deep sense of responsibility. We want you to know that your gifts are not just numbers on a spreadsheet; they are the tangible expression of your love for God and for our community. To ensure transparency, regular financial reports will be posted right here in our newsletter. We also encourage all ministry

leaders to bring any and all financial needs to the attention of the Fiscal Ministry so we can prayerfully and carefully consider them.

Christian generosity is a form of worship. It is a powerful act of faith that shows we trust God to provide for our needs. When we give, we're following the example set by the ultimate giver. As John 3:16 reminds us, *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."* God gave us the most precious gift imaginable—His son, Jesus. Our giving is a response to that unconditional love. It is a way of saying, "Thank you, Lord, for all that you have given me."

We are a church that has been greatly blessed, and our calling is to be a blessing to others. Thank you for your continued partnership in

this ministry. Your faithful stewardship allows us to be a light in our community and beyond. Let's continue to be a generous people, trusting that our God will use our gifts to do more than we could ever imagine.

Fiscal Ministry

FBC Finances: Seven Months Ended – July 31

	2025	2024
<u>Income</u>		
Giving	\$138,936	\$142,706
Other	<u>19,582</u>	<u>5,174</u>
	\$158,518	\$147,880
<u>Expenses</u>		
	\$206,329	\$203,758
<u>Net Cashflow</u>		
	\$(47,811)	\$(55,878)



Singing Songs of Praise

Looking for a fun way to praise God, publicly giving glory to His name? Be a light of encouragement by joining choir today.

FBC's Sanctuary choir season is approaching. We typically practice about 45 minutes each Wednesday - we take a week off now and again.

We have openings for sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. For any questions, such as "I help with Wednesday activities. May I come in late?", the answer is YES, reach out to Amy Brandt, director and 9 a.m. praise team pianist, or Barbara Karlin, organist and choir pianist.

First Choir Practice

September 10
7:15 p.m.

See you there!





Keynote Speaker:

Rev. Jacqueline Saxon
September 26
1:15 p.m.

2025 ABCCR Annual Gathering Mission Project

We are collecting the following items to donate to **SALINA RESCUE MISSION**:

Toilet Paper

Disposable Razors

Men's Jeans

Any Size; Greater need for sizes 30-36

Laundry Detergent

Preferred Brand: Free & Clear



Individual
Registration

Deadline:

September 10

Meals are not guaranteed
for those who register
after the deadline.



Childcare
Registration

Finding My Place Through Service

In a quiet moment of reflection, I'd like to share how God has worked in my life through a simple act of service. As the years have gone by and my body has slowed, I often wondered what I could possibly offer our church family. Then came the **Ministry Notebook**, a wonderful document outlining ways for us to get involved. I looked through it, and after much thought, decided that a task I could still do was make phone calls. I contacted Pastor Joel, who directed me to the Service team. They gave me a list of seven ladies to call.

Initially, I was hesitant; I barely knew them. But as I began making those calls, something beautiful happened. I soon discovered that despite the health challenges, many of these women were vibrant and active, with rich lives and stories to share. Our conversations began to grow from simple check-ins into heartfelt connections. We'd talk about everything; past jobs, husbands, our children and grandchildren, and yes, our illnesses and doctor's visits. We'd laugh and we'd pray for each other. It became a space where we could be truly open and honest.

Through these calls, God gave me the most unexpected blessing: **true and steadfast friends**. I was trying to be a help to them, but it was I who was fulfilled. They have humbled me with their strength and their faith, and their friendship is a gift I cherish more than words can say. I pray for each of them every single day, along with our entire church family.

I'm not sharing this for any recognition, because the real reward has been the joy and purpose I've found in these connections. My hope is that it might encourage someone else to find a simple way to serve, no matter their age or health, and discover the unexpected blessings that come with it.

September Sermons

Why do some people see God at work in the world while others are spiritually blind? What does God's Kingdom look like in our lives today? Join us in September as we develop "*Kingdom Eyes*" through studying the parables of Jesus found in Matthew 13.

Sermon Series: Kingdom Eyes

September 7 - Pastor Kevin
Matthew 13:9-17, 44-45

September 14 - Pastor Joel
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

September 21—Pastor Joel
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50

September 28 - Pastor Kevin
Matthew 13:31-35, 51-58

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, September 3

5:30 p.m. Kids/Youth Programs Begin
6:30 p.m. Adult Bible Study Begins

Thursday, September 4

6:30 p.m. Out of Touch @ IHOP on S. 9th St.

Wednesday, September 10

7:15 p.m. Choir Practice Begins

Thursday, September 18

10 a.m. *"Tame Your Thoughts"* Bible Study - NEW

Thursday, September 20

6 p.m. Increase

September 25 -27

ABCCR Annual Gathering

The entire calendar
can be found online at:
[www.fbcsalina.org/
calendar](http://www.fbcsalina.org/calendar)

Join Us in Person

Sunday Mornings

Worship at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday Evenings:

FBC Kids and Youth at 5:30 p.m.

Visit Us Online: www.fbcsalina.org

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