

Greetings out there in the Winter Wonderland formerly known as Cochran, GA! During the stress of this frigid weather, let's lookout not only for ourselves but also for our neighbors — the neighbors we know AND the neighbors we don't know. If you come across a need and you're not in a position to meet the need, call the church office and we'll send the need out to those who have signed up for the Share & Care Ministry. There is a very good chance someone in the group will be able to help out! To re-purpose a well known catchphrase: "If you see something (a need), say something!" I'm excited to see the Share & Care Ministry take root in our church and community.

You've heard me say that we're making a change in our church vocabulary by retiring the word 'committee' and using instead the word 'TEAM' when referring to the groups of people who shoulder much of the responsibility for the various ministries of First Baptist Church. So instead of the Finance Committee...you'll be hearing from the Finance Team; instead of the Grief Ministry Committee...you'll be hearing about the Grief Ministry Team; instead of receiving a report from the Nominating Committee...you'll be receiving a report from the Nominating Team, and so forth. I'm sure you get the idea but you may also be wondering about the "Why?" behind the vocabulary change. Let me try to answer that question for you.

Committee is certainly an adequate word...but we thought to use a word that would be a bit less secular and more oriented to the ministry aspects of our Teams. 'Team' more clearly denotes characteristics like relationship, vision, community, familiarity, goals, communication, and cooperation. In fact, we have an acrostic that helps define the purpose of our teams: **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**mplifies **M**inistry - TEAM.

The updated ministry description of every single team in our organizational structure begins the same way:

- **Mission:** Lead People into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **Purpose:** Strengthen the believer's connection with God and other members of the Body of Christ so that we might live lives of authentic faith in the world and lead others to do the same.
- **Strategy:** Create viable Connection Points where people are encouraged and equipped to pursue intimacy with God, community with other believers, and influence in the larger world around us.

(Full disclosure — it was hard to design an acrostic from 'committee!')

I'm energized to witness what God is doing in and through the body of believers known as First Baptist Church. I know many folks have been praying for a Spirit led revival to break out in Bleckley County; it could begin with FBC! The metric I look at most in terms of the strength of FBC is not attendance in our two morning services (*which is really good*) or the amount of our offerings (*which is really good*) but rather I look at small group participation because small groups are the catalyst for sustained church growth. Active, growing small groups are the tide that raises all the other ministries of a church. This past Sunday we welcomed 329 people into our Sunday morning small groups; the Sunday before was a snow day; but the Sunday before that we welcomed 317 attendees into our small groups! Our Men's Discipling Ministry (mDm) just launched four new small groups! These are exciting indicators that a fresh wind of God's Spirit is moving across FBC! And if you're not convinced yet, explain this: 111 people showed up on a rainy Saturday night to play Bingo!! Thanks to Jan and the Legacy Builders for providing that occasion for food, fellowship, and fun.

We have much to celebrate by way of God's blessings; yet there is much to be done in our future by way of our Great Commission Calling. The joy is in the journey! Grace & peace, love you. PK