

Get involved in Community Ministry

Family Promise

First Baptist Church serves as a host congregation once every quarter for the local chapter of Family Promise, a national organization that assists homeless and low-income families. The goal of Family Promise is to provide these families with housing, consistent meals, and assistance in finding jobs and permanent housing in order to help them achieve sustainable independence. By uniting the faith community in Knoxville, Family Promise is able to provide housing and meals for families in local churches with each church hosting families for a week at a time. At least two church volunteers are on-site to help assist guests with any needs. Guests are provided with dinner, breakfast, and packed lunches for the day. During the day, guests can go to the Day Center called Harley House where they have resources to assist them find jobs and housing as well as many other social service needs. Nationally, Family Promise has an 80% success rate in helping families to secure permanent housing. For more information about the national organization go to www.familypromise.org or to www.familypromiseknoxville.org for information about Knoxville's Family Promise network.

Handyman Ministry

The Handyman Ministry is a group of volunteers (men and women) who help low income or disabled individuals in the community with a range of home repairs and projects. Assistance ranges from painting, building wheelchair ramps, helping with wiring, and any other needs. These handy men and women serve members of the congregation as well as individuals in the Knoxville community. Individuals receiving help are only asked to pay what they can towards the expenses while the Handyman Ministry can help fund some expenses.

ESOL Ministry

English to Speakers of Other Languages is a class taught every Wednesday night to help non-native speakers improve their English skills. Assistance is provided on an individual basis so as to help people at different speaking abilities. David and Jama Mosher lead the program and are both fluent in Spanish which is extremely helpful due to the fact that the vast majority of students are Latino. Their Spanish skills are particularly helpful in assisting students who have trouble understanding certain concepts or phrases. The classes are not only limited to teaching English, but they might also address current issues, the monetary system in the US, occupations, or any other needs or questions that might arise.

FISH

Fish of Knox County was founded in 1972 and helps to provide food for low income individuals through a volunteer-based cooperative community food distribution service. Through a network of churches in Knoxville, individuals can receive help Monday-Friday, fifty-two weeks out of the year. First Baptist Church's food pantry is open the first Monday of the month. Volunteers help to hand out food packages and also deliver food to elderly or disabled people.

Benevolence Ministry

The Benevolence Ministry at First Baptist Church assists individuals by helping with utility or rent bills and through referrals to other Knoxville agencies that can also provide support. The Benevolence Ministry seeks to compassionately assess the needs of the individual and works to help individuals determine the source of their problem. In order to receive assistance with rent or utilities, the individual is required to attend a Making Money Work class with the hope that we can give give them additional knowledge and resources.

Circles of Support

As a part of the Knoxville-Knox County Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, permanent housing for the chronically homeless is provided. To help with this transition to permanent housing, Compassion Coalition provides volunteers from local churches through the Circles of Support program. This faith-based mentoring program pairs volunteers with a formerly homeless individual and a professional case worker in order to create a supportive and caring team. As a mentor, volunteers help individuals reintegrate into main-stream society through helping with money management, engaging in social activities, introducing to a church community, and even helping with housekeeping or decorating. No matter the specific activity, the main goal of the relationship is to provide a caring and supportive environment so that they can transition successfully into a more stable and productive life. Volunteers in the Circles of Support program go through training to prepare them with the knowledge and skills to best provide assistance and to understand their role as a mentor. First Baptist currently has one mentoring team working with one formerly homeless neighbor.

Kid's Hope

First Baptist Church partners with South Knoxville Elementary to provide mentors to at-risk children. The Kid's Hope USA organization uses a church based model to match churches with schools in order to establish a one-on-one mentoring relationship. The Kids Hope motto: "One Child, One Hour, One Church, One School" reflects the emphasis on the individual child. Mentors not only help with homework but might also engage in social or educational outings. Even though one hour might not seem like much, it can make a huge difference in a child's life. For more information about Kid's Hope USA visit their website at www.kidshopeusa.org.

Knitting Club

First Baptist knitting club has taken their hobby and turned it into a ministry. They knit scarves and hats for people in need. This year 60 hats were delivered to children living in an orphanage in Peru. Over 100 hats will be given to children who attend the Christmas Brunch in December. First Baptist Knitting Club meets the first Thursday of each month to fellowship and knit!

Operation InAsMuch (OIAM)

OIAM is a one day mission blitz event when volunteers of all ages sign up for mission projects held throughout our community. Many projects are designated as family-friendly and include activities such as interior painting, exterior painting, and planting flowers. OIAM usually takes place in the month of April.

Christmas Brunch

The Christmas Brunch is a yearly event held each December intended to open wide the doors of First Baptist and welcome low income and homeless families into our building and our lives. Families and individuals in need are invited to come in and eat a hearty breakfast, hear local choirs sing Christmas music and pose for a family portrait. They also receive a gift and a food bag. Last year, 251 people volunteered to serve our 625 guests.