

Flint First



Flint First Winter Update

December 29, 2023

Hello Flint First Families and Friends!

As we wrap up 2023 and look ahead to 2024, I figured that it was time to send out another newsletter. Our Summer program was a full schedule of various events. We had two block parties, a worship night, community service, a prayer night, a movie night, and a game night before restarting our Wednesday night small groups in September. It was a busy summer schedule and the Lord worked through our times of prayer and service, as we became the hands and feet of Jesus.

If you are not aware, Lina Brown went home to be this Jesus on Labor Day Weekend. Pastor Dennis and I met with the family and offered to do a Memorial Service and luncheon for her. They opted not to do so at this time but indicated that they would reach out should they change their mind.

There have been several staff changes in the last few months. I am glad to say that we have welcomed three new people to fill vacant staff positions. Becky Poupore has accepted and started serving as our new Congregational Care Director. In this role, she will be coordinating things like funeral dinners, appreciation dinners, showers, etc. Alexandra Villarreal will still be responsible for Wednesday night dinners. In addition, Adrianna Villarreal and Alexandra Villarreal have accepted and started serving as Co-Directors of Missions. We are so thankful for the three of these ladies and their willingness to move into these roles to minister to the congregation, our community, and the world through supporting our international missionaries and international mission trips. We are still in prayerful search, looking for the right person to lead our discipleship ministries. In the meantime, Amy and I are overseeing Discipleship groups. So, if you have any questions about groups, please reach out to us. In addition, Brianna Villarreal has submitted her resignation as our Youth Director and Young Adult Small Groups Leader. We wish her the best as she follows the Lord in His next steps for her. During this transition period, Becky Poupore and Andrea Villarreal have offered to fill the gap as Co-Youth Directors through the end of this church year to give us some more time to determine the next steps.

As we look back to Fall, what a jammed packed month we had in October. On October 1st, we kicked off our Back to the Basics series. With this series, Heather and Brianna coordinated lessons to align with the topics that were shared on Sunday mornings. This was a neat time where the kids downstairs, the youth, and the adults were all covering the same topics to try to get everyone on the same page, using the same definitions and understanding of common Biblical terms and expressions. This was a lengthy eight-week series, pausing for one week why we celebrated the church's 110th Anniversary and concluding right before Advent. Then, the church held a pastor appreciation event that was wonderful. Thank you again to everyone

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involved. We were truly blessed for the thoughtfulness of the whole event. As a church, we helped to send a team to Mexico for a week to minister at Back2Back in Tres Reyes. What a blessing that was for the team. It was great hearing their stories and testimonies from their trip. Thank you, Hannah, and the Prayer Team, for keeping the prayer reminders on our social media pages and on the prayer chain. Under the leadership of our new Co-Missions Directors, we held a Trunk or Treat for the first time in several years, where over 700 people came to the event. Finally, the last Sunday of October, we took time to celebrate God's faithfulness as we praised God throughout our 110th anniversary celebration. Many people returned to celebrate with us; I heard that there were 175 total in attendance that day! Thank you to Nettie for spearheading this celebration and to her team of people who invested countless hours preparing the church, putting together the service, and the meal. A special thank you also goes out to Mario, Jon, and others who worked to get the fountain working again. It looks great and sounds great! I really like that the fountain is back in action and runs quieter than in the past.

It is exciting to report that in November, we had five people be baptized and two people recommit their lives to Christ! Then, between the last week of November and the second Sunday of December, we invited six new people into membership at Flint First! God is still working to change the hearts of those in Flint and we are not only excited to be a part of His plans, but we are also excited that others want to join us to be a part of them as well.

Hannah has made another round of updates to the Website to keep it current with the current activities at Flint First. She has completely revamped the Upcoming Events section. You will notice that some of the events, like Wednesday Night Programming, MOPS, Food Bank Volunteering, etc. are now hot buttons taking you to a different page with more information about the event. Her goal is to do that with most of the events. This will be a better way to communicate event information to those coming to our site. The new Staff team members have also been updated to reflect our current team. In addition, there is a new History Page under the About Us section where visitors and friends alike can view the history video about the church. I encourage you to go to FlintFirst.org to check out all the updates. In addition, while you are there, you can click "Discipleship" under the Ministry drop down menu to see all the small groups we are currently offering throughout the week, in addition to those we run on Wednesday nights.

During our Advent series, we had a wonderful time of sharing testimonies and anointing those that desired it during the service. The staff also planned several weeks of activities for Wednesdays in December since some of our groups wrapped up their lessons on November 30th. While groups were still allowed to continue, our Wednesday evening activities included additional options for people to participate in. We held a community movie on Dec. 6th to watch *The Star*. Then, we held a churchwide Christmas party on the 13th. We had a trivia competition, followed by graham cracker (gingerbread) house making. Finally, on Dec. 20th, we had the privilege of caroling to some of our shut-ins and to the East Side Senior Center.

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Throughout the last several months, Pastor Amy & I have ministered to and continue to minister to several different people in the congregation through many different needs, including hospital and rehab visits, funerals, food insecurity, pre-marital counseling, general counseling, one on one mentoring, running errands, numerous phone calls and texts, as well as helping others with more serious issues. Please pray for us as we continue to seek the Lord's guidance when needs arise. In that same regard, we would love to hear from you. Should there be something that you want to talk about, feel free to talk to us at church or send us an email. We would be happy to meet with you, pray for you, and celebrate with you. Should you decide to send us an email, please feel free to reach out to either of us at Amy@FlintFirst.org or Chad@FlintFirst.org.

There are more activities and opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the works for 2024, please come and see us in person, watch us online, and/or checkout our website to stay up to date on all the exciting things that the Lord is doing at Flint First!

In His Service,
Pastor Chad & Pastor Amy