



Pastor's Reflection by Paul Simpson Duke

August 15, 2018

Our church has had a very special relationship with people in Nicaragua for many years now. Over the last few decades, scores of FBC members and friends have made the journey there and helped with various mission and ministry projects, forging friendships, giving what is ours to give, and finding great inspiration from the faith and the commitments of our Nicaraguan partners. This has been most profoundly true in our strong partnership with AMOS Health and Hope. AMOS (acronym for A Ministry of Sharing) is headed by Drs. David and Laura Parajón, medical missionaries for the International Ministries arm of American Baptist Churches USA. David and Laura will be with us this Sunday, making a rather brief report in the morning service and offering a more in-depth discussion at 11:30. I am writing here to stress the importance of their visit and to urge you to be present for it.

First, let me remind you of what AMOS Health and Hope is and does. It is a ministry that shares Christ's love and healing among the most vulnerable people of Nicaragua, without any distinction. They offer health services, both curative and preventative, currently serving over 69,000 people in 6 regions of the country, including remote communities where no doctors can be present. Key to the success and the spirit of the work of AMOS is their "empowering approach" that engages communities as full partners. In each community, AMOS trains "health promoters," individuals who can diagnose and treat common illnesses that can kill children, like pneumonia and diarrhea, and promote healthy habits like eliminating mosquito breeding sites. Strong emphasis is placed on the health and wellness of mothers and children. The ministry of AMOS has substantially reduced child mortality rates in the communities they serve. Put simply, AMOS saves lives and strengthens lives, and does so by empowering vulnerable people to be strong partners in their own communities' health. It has been a high honor and privilege for our church to be a mission partner with them, sending teams of our people to serve with them, supporting the work with our financial gifts, prayers, and friendship.

But a new crisis has come to Nicaragua which invites a deeper concern and a stronger encouragement for the ministry of AMOS. In April, the government of Daniel Ortega announced cuts in social security, and protests erupted. Though the government had to walk back its new policy, the fuse of social and political unrest had been lit. Many people are demanding change, and government crackdowns have been harsh. To date, more than 400 people have been killed. The economy, already the poorest in Central America and the second poorest in the Western Hemisphere, has rapidly worsened. Tourism has all but ceased, blockaded roads have hindered transportation, businesses have closed, unemployment has soared, and outcomes are uncertain.

Can you imagine the challenges that this crisis poses for AMOS? Delivery of medical supplies and other support to the remote communities has been difficult and more costly. The teams of volunteers from the U.S. who normally come to help have stayed away, as have the material resources they always bring. At the center of the problem is the fact that any social/economic crisis invariably worsens the health crisis of the poor, adding, among other things, emotional trauma, anxiety, and depression. At many levels, the vulnerable become even more vulnerable. The Parajóns and the AMOS team have risen to the challenge. Heroically, they have persisted, not only overcoming obstacles to deliver their usual services and support, but adding new elements of conflict transformation and psychological care to people in distress. The work of AMOS is needed now more than ever, and the good people who do that work are serving more valiantly than ever.

Please join us this Sunday to learn more from Laura and David Parajón. Childcare is provided. Learn of the needs, hear the stories, reaffirm the partnership. Expect to be troubled, inspired, challenged, and grateful.

Children's Christian Education



Generous Giving for Godly Play!

With deep gratitude we are happy to share that we have met our fundraising goal to cover the start up expenses for our new classroom and curriculum. I hope you will stop by in September to see what your generosity has made possible. May it be a welcoming, safe and engaging place for children to meet with God.

Thank you, Xan

Join us outside following the service on August 26 for Lemonade on the Lawn. We'll have snacks, lemonade and yard games to play. Coffee and goodies will also be in the Fellowship Hall as usual.



FBC News & Happenings

Thank you to all the Habitat for Humanity Good News House supporters. We exceeded our goal for financial support as well as providing workers and lunches for three work days this summer. One of those lunches was prepared and delivered by the children and their families. With your help and the work of all the partner churches in the Good New group, the two houses on Calder will be ready for families this fall.

Photo Caption: Dee Drake and Dan Barry caulking and adding insulation to make the house energy efficient for its new owners.



See you at the Church Potluck Picnic!

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, September 9th from noon-2:00 pm. We'll head over to Allmendinger Park (655 Pauline Blvd, Ann Arbor, MI 48103) after worship for fun for all ages. We'll have a potluck lunch, piñata and a game of kickball. Church will provide chicken and paper products. Please take a moment to RSVP and sign up for a potluck item [here](#). We'll also have booths highlighting ministries opportunities; we hope you'll find a place to plug in!

Dear FBC Family,
Thank you for granting me
the Loucks Scholarship. I am so
grateful to have a community
that supports and encourages me
as I work towards my degree.
Love,
Hannah Foster



Let's eat, and talk, and enjoy one another's company

The next Shared Suppers evenings are September 8 and 9. The Board of Care and Community is sponsoring an opportunity for our FBC Family to gather and get to know one another better. What better way to do that than around a family table?. We gather in smallish groups (6-8ish) in homes for Shared Suppers. They are pot luck style and happen on the 2nd Saturday/Sunday, every other month, i.e. January, March etc. (Sometimes there is also a Sunday evening group depending on availability.) The groups will be different every time so folks can interact with those they may not know so well.. If you haven't already signed up and are interested in being on the list of participants, sign up at the Information Counter or contact Mary Davis (madr@d.umich.edu). Also, let Mary know if you can be a host. Being on the list only indicates interest, not a commitment to come. You will be contacted for availability about two weeks before each supper. Of course everyone won't be able to come every time. Children are welcome to participate, or we can help arrange child care. Shared transportation can also be arranged.

The Board of Care and Community and your congregation want to be available to help in life's difficulties and transitions, but we can only do that if we know your are experiencing them. We can offer visits, help with food, transportation and possibly other needs. If you or your family lets the church office know, we will contact you by your preferred method to see how we can help.

Join the Sunday Morning Welcoming Team!

No meeting - just come and serve! Our Welcoming Team is one of our most important ministries. On Sunday mornings, volunteers stand in key places in the building to show hospitality to all who come for worship. Sign up online - Sign-up is online: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d44afa928ab9-sunday> - it's fast and easy! Sign up on your own, with a friend, with a spouse, or with your whole family. Sign up once or multiple times. Serving on our Welcoming Team is a great way to plug in to ministry at First Baptist and get to know others in our community.

Questions? Contact Marissa Alaniz at malaniz@umich.edu.

To Sing or Not to Sing? There is no question!

The First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor Sanctuary Choir is looking for new voices to fill the choir loft. The choir rehearses each Thursday evening from 7:30-9:00pm. The ability to read and sight-sing music at a high level is not a requirement for joining the choir, but rather the love of singing and the desire to worship God through music. The music the choir offers each week is challenging, which is part of the reason there is weekly rehearsal. Please come to choir rehearsal starting Thursday, September 6th. You will meet new friends, have a lot of fun, and become part of a loving and caring group of people that praise God with their singing voices! If you have any questions, please contact Bonnie Kidd.

Follow us on Facebook! If you aren't already a fan of FBCA2 on Facebook, come on over and "Like" our page: [facebook.com/fbca2](https://www.facebook.com/fbca2). We post regular updates there about what's going on around here, along with the occasional devotional thought. You can post on our wall as well. If you are already a fan, did you know that you can easily share certain FBCA2 posts with your own Facebook friends? Events and links that can be shared will have a "Share" button (in addition to the usual "Like" and "Comment" buttons). Click "share" and the event or link will show up on your own Facebook page for all your friends to see. It's a great way to get the word out about special happenings at our church.



FBC e-Connection and Newsletter Email Distribution

From time to time, we hear from folks that they didn't get word of various events. Here is a quick summary of how to get your email added to one or both of the distribution lists...

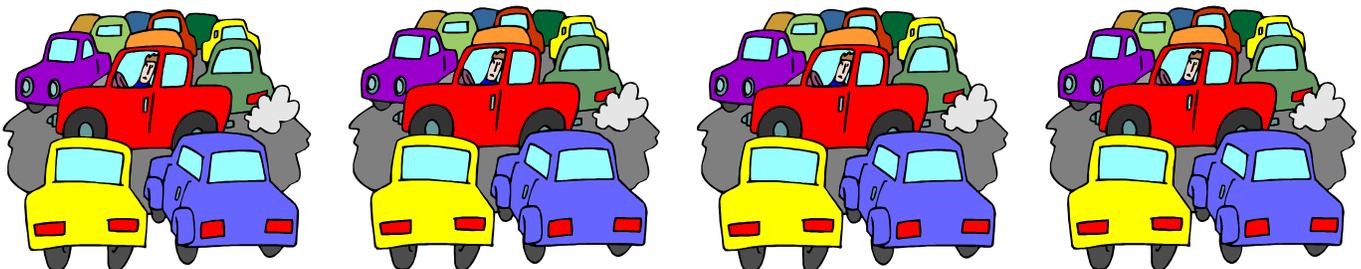
The church office sends out two communications electronically:

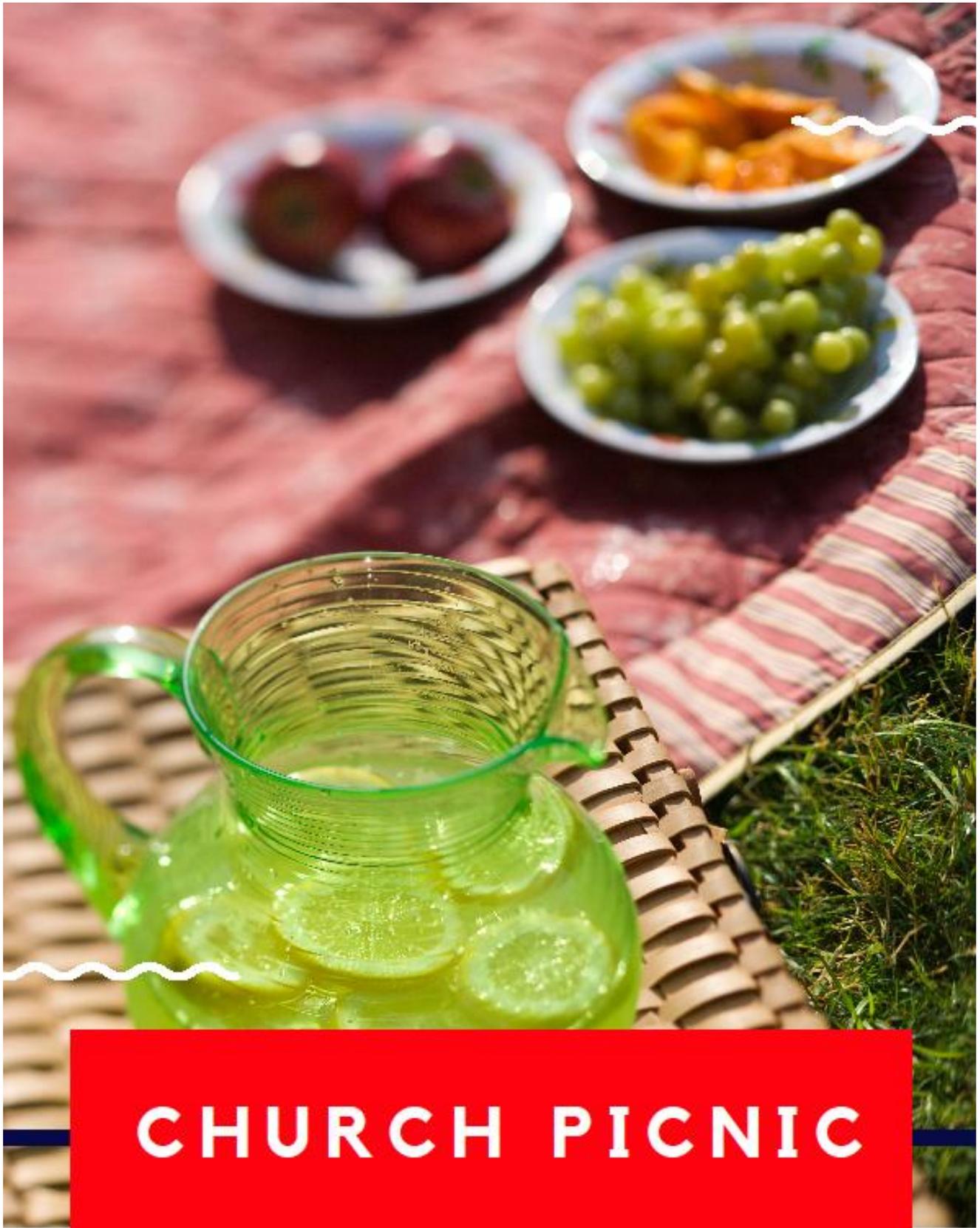
- **FBC e-Connections** are sent out with important news about immediate happenings at the church and the concerns of church members, such as prayer requests, birth and death announcements.
- **FBC Newsletter** for distribution of the twice-monthly church newsletter for those who want to receive it electronically (it helps save on paper and postage, besides arriving at your computer on date of publication!)

If you aren't currently subscribed to either list and wish to be, please email the church office at office@fbca2.org and we will send out an invitation to subscribe to either or both lists. When you get the email invitation, click on the link to finish the subscription process. ***In order to prevent complaints about spam, the distribution program doesn't allow us to simply add an email address to the list.***

Church Parking Lot

With the fall schedule starting back up and everyone getting back into town, the church lot will be very busy! For Sunday mornings, if you are able, please park in the structure across the street, leaving parking spaces in the church lot for those with less mobility. Also, please avoid parking in the lot on Wednesdays from 12:30pm-2:30pm (Bible Study starting Sept 19) and Thursdays from 7pm-9pm (Choir rehearsal starting Sept 6). The Ann Arbor Co-op Nursery starts up on Wednesday, Sept 5, and has five spaces along the playground fence reserved for the teacher and assist parents. If you need an FBC sticker for your car, please come to the church office. Thank you!





CHURCH PICNIC

• SEPTEMBER 9, 12:00-2:00 •
ALLMENDINGER PARK

September 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 10:00 Worship	3 Labor Day Church Office & Buildings Closed	4 1:00 Mission Action 5:30 Vespers	5 *newsletter* 5:30 Gathering	6 7:30 Choir	7	8 TBA Shared Suppers
9 10:00 Worship 12:00 Church Picnic TBA Shared Suppers	10	11 1:30 ChristCare 5:30 Vespers 6:30 Outreach	12 5:30 Gathering	13 5:00 Christian Education 7:30 Choir	14	15
16 ABWM Sunday 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour	17	18 1:00 Beecher-Brewer Cir. 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Trustees	19 *newsletter* 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 Gathering	20 12:30 MacGregor-Stitt Circle 7:30 Choir	21	22 2:00 Mothering Justice
23 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour	24	25 9:30 ABWM Board 5:30 Vespers	26 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 Gathering 7:30 ChristCare	27 7:30 Choir	28	29
30 10:00 Worship 11:30 2nd Hour 2:00 CROP Walk						

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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors



**Next
Newsletter
Deadline:**
Sunday, Sept 2