

25 Years of Ministry

By Pastor Joshua Trojak

Thinking back on the past 29 years of my life this church has been at the center of it. I remember very little from those first 4 years of my life, but I do remember sitting in the front of the moving van with my dad as we pulled on to North Myers and our new home in Sharon. Little did I know that I would experience what is uncommon for a pastor's kid; growing up in the same town.

I was a kid with the start of West Hill Ministries. I gave my heart to Jesus while on a Promise Keepers trip with men from this church. I was baptized here on Christmas Eve in 1994. I was in high school as the church encouraged Cindy to pursue her Master of Divinity. I attended mission trips to Chicago and Toronto, spent multiple summers at Camp Judson, was a part of the first Super Week, sang in the Choir, volunteered at our after school programs, and even represented First Baptist at our ABC Biennial Convention. I was proud to be a part of the 200th celebration and renovations. It has been fun to see and be a part of the many changes that have happened over the years.

However, the greatest significance this body of believers had on my life was in my spiritual development and call to full time ministry. It was in this church that I first heard the call to ministry. I was supported as I headed to Grove City in pursuit of that call. Even after trying to run away from that call I was given an opportunity to come on part time as the WHM intern while being encouraged to attend seminary, just as Cindy had while I was in High School.

First Baptist then saw something in me that I wasn't even sure of myself. This church took on the financial challenge of hiring me as the full time youth director with the commitment to walk along side of me as I dove head first into my seminary program. Four years later this church confirmed the call to ministry by licensing me to preach the gospel. In June of this year this church stood by me as I graduated and headed into my Ordination Council.

There really are no words to convey how important First Baptist and the people who have represented it over the last 25 years have played in my faith and journey with Jesus Christ. I am the man I am today because of the faithfulness of many. I could start a list of names, but it would be far too long to put here. As I think about how much of an impact this church has had on me in the last 25 years, I am simply overwhelmed when I think how much of an impact the people of this church have had on the people of this community for 210 years.

I am who I am today not only because of those who were here in the last 25 years but because of the faithfulness of all the believers in this 210 year history. My challenge; what role will we have in the faith and growth of those around us in the next 10, 25, or 210 years. Let's live so that when this church is celebrating its' next milestone, the believers then can look back and be proud of the legacy they are a part of.