

# A STEP UP THE LADDER

New to Houston's First, Chad and Lauren Greenfield made a commitment to MISSION 1:8 and saw God provide in unexpected ways.

Chad and Lauren Greenfield both grew up in homes where their parents stressed tithing, so they began their three-and-a-half year marriage tithing to the church. When they moved to town in 2013 and found their way to Houston's First, it wasn't surprising that they responded to the MISSION 1:8 call to generosity.

The church's emphasis on giving to missions outside the walls of Houston's First has been a blessing to Chad and Lauren. "We see adoption as a form of missions," said Chad. "It holds a special place in Lauren's and my heart, so we are so happy to see money given to help people adopt." MISSION 1:8 provided funds to Lifesong for Orphans, Empowered to Connect, and other ministries involved with adoption and orphan care.

After being at the church a few months, the Greenfields took a step up the generosity ladder to what Pastor Gregg called extravagant giving. "By nature, Lauren has always found it easier to give," said Chad. "With the expense of moving, a new job and new home, it stressed me a bit at first." In spite of the stressors, they made a pledge and saw God almost immediately resolve Chad's concerns.

"Two weeks after we made our pledge I got a raise and a bonus I wasn't expecting," he said, "and Lauren also made some extra income at work. As it turns out, God has provided what we committed to MISSION 1:8."

Thank you to all who shared their stories of generosity during MISSION 1:8, both in this Weekly Guide and in the video interviews. Your testimonies have shown God's faithfulness to believers when we step out in faith and obedience to give back to Him a portion of what He has given us!



**HAVE A 'GOD STORY' TO TELL?**  
Share your story of His faithfulness at  
**HoustonsFirst.org/MyStory**

Ladder source: *Maximize* by Nelson Searcy

## NEWS + UPDATES

Houston's First Baptist Church is a relevant, biblical community where we **gather our hearts**, **grow our souls** and **give our lives** as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission.

TWEET OF THE WEEK: "SO thankful for our pastor @GreggMatte who isn't afraid to speak truth on touchy subjects--with grace and wisdom!" — Lisa Holcomb, @lmholcomb

### MISSION 1:8 CELEBRATION SUNDAY

CELEBRATE WHAT GOD HAS DONE THROUGH —  
AND AMONG — THE HOUSTON'S FIRST FAMILY!

Sun, Mar 1 — All Services | All Campuses

### ALL CAMPUSES

Together for Them Conference

Feb 27-28 — The Loop (Worship Center)

Anybody involved in adoption or foster care — parents, families, professionals, teachers, etc. — is invited to find resources, hear from experts, connect with others, and get equipped for your role. Special workshop begins on Friday with breakout sessions on Saturday. Get details and register at HoustonsFirst.org/Events.

CONTACT Toni.Steere@HoustonsFirst.org

The Mingling of Souls

Fri, Apr 17 @ 7p — The Loop (Worship Center)

At this live event, author and pastor Matt Chandler will explore God's design for love, marriage, sex, and redemption. Chandler offers an eternal, counter-intuitive perspective from the biblical book, Song of Solomon. The event is for single and married adults, regardless of age or stage of life. \$20 per person thru Mar 26. Register at HoustonsFirst.org/Events.

CONTACT Kristin.Hawkinson@HoustonsFirst.org

SENIOR ADULTS

Senior Adult Revival

Mar 16-18 @ 10:30-11:45a — The Loop (Chapel)

Senior Adults (60+) will gather to hear the Word preached by Dr. Jimmy Draper, former President of LifeWay, with worship led by our own John Bolin and the Revival Choir.

CONTACT Tracie.Bowman@HoustonsFirst.org

WOMEN

From Good to Grace

Tue, Mar 3 @ 6:30-8p — Fellowship Ctr

What if there were another way to live where the responsibility for our spiritual growth rested on someone else? Christine Hoover, author of *From Good to Grace: Letting Go of the Goodness Gospel*, will illustrate how we confuse being good and trying hard — the "goodness gospel" — with the true gospel. Register at HoustonsFirst.org/Events.

CONTACT Haylee.Nelson@HoustonsFirst.org

### THE LOOP

MARRIED YOUNG ADULTS

Re|Create Date Night

Fri, Feb 27 @ 6-10p

Enjoy a night out with your spouse or with other couples! We'll provide downloadable "date kits" to help you be intentional about the time you spend together. Childcare is full, but couples can still make use of the "date kits" available at HoustonsFirst.org/Events.

CONTACT Melanie.Russell@HoustonsFirst.org

### SUNDAYS AT HOUSTON'S FIRST

The Loop Campus

7401 Katy Fwy • Houston, TX 77024

Worship 9:15a-11a-5p

Life Bible Studies 8a-9:15a-10:45a-6:30p

Cypress Campus

10300 Warner Smith Blvd • Cypress, TX 77433

Worship 11a

Life Bible Studies 9:30a

Downtown Campus

1300 Lamar St • Houston, TX 77002

Worship 11a

Life Bible Studies 9:30a

Sienna Campus

4309 Sienna Pkwy • Missouri City, TX 77459

Worship 9:30a-11a

Life Bible Studies 9:30a-11a

### CYPRESS

NextGen Gatherings

Wednesday Evenings

Children and Students can connect with Cypress Campus friends in the middle of the week! At the Ministry Center from 6-8p, infants through Kindergarteners enjoy Mission Friends and Grades 1-5 gather for B.L.A.S.T. Meanwhile, students gather for HUB Community Groups at the home of the Stringfellows (Middle School) and Parkers (High School). Who will you invite this week?

CONTACT Kaylyn.Sindair@HoustonsFirst.org

### DOWNTOWN

PLACE Downtown

Wed, Mar 4-Apr 8 @ 6:30-8p — Vine St. Studios

Want to explore how you've been created and the ways you can make an impact? PLACE is a 5-week class that will help you discover how you process the world around you, your spiritual gifts, and how you can better serve God with those gifts. Studios are located at 1113 Vine St. (No meeting on Apr 1.)

CONTACT Peter.Lee@HoustonsFirst.org

NYC Spring Mission Trip

Apr 1-5

The Downtown Campus has actively partnered with our MISSION 1:8 church plants in NYC since Fall 2013. Now, come with us on our fourth mission trip to the city! Fill out an interest form at HoustonsFirst.org/Missions to get the process started. The cost is \$750 per person.

CONTACT Peter.Lee@HoustonsFirst.org

### SIENNA

Closet/Cupboard Clean

Sat, Mar 28 @ 9a-1p — 4309 Sienna Parkway

Look through your closets and cupboards for clothes and non-perishable foods! The Second Mile truck will be in the Sienna Campus parking lot to receive your donations. Invite your neighbors to participate, too!

CONTACT Kelli.Boylan@HoustonsFirst.org

2nd Annual Helicopter Easter Egg Drop

Sat, Apr 4 @ 9a — 4309 Sienna Parkway

One helicopter. Lots of eggs. Endless fun! Preschoolers through 5th graders will have a blast as eggs drop from the sky over the Sienna Campus lawn. Registration starts at 9a and egg drop at 10a. Enjoy food trucks and carnival games in between! Invite your neighbors to this free event!

CONTACT Kelli.Boylan@HoustonsFirst.org

### SPANISH

Soccer Tournament of Champions

Sat, Mar 14 @ 9a-5p — Warrior Field

The Spanish Campus is hosting a soccer tournament for the Spanish-speaking community in Spring Branch at Warrior Field! The day will include Steve John's Project Delta and Tre's Hip Hop Hope. Register at HoustonsFirst.org/Espanol. Warrior Field is located at 6711 Long Point Road.

CONTACT Cynthia.Carranza@HoustonsFirst.org

### MAKE IT YOUR CHURCH ORIENTATION

Today — The Loop, Downtown, Sienna

Discover what it means to be a member of Houston's First! Over lunch, pastors and staff members from your campus will share our vision, mission, and strategy — and you can learn how to find your place to gather, grow, and give. The class is not required to join the church, but we encourage you to attend! (Cypress and Spanish sessions coming in April!)



FIRST PANTRY

The Food Pantry & Clothes Closet serve over 1,000 people each month. At The Loop Campus next Sun, Mar 1, please bring non-perishable food items, gently used clothing, and other household goods to help serve those in need in the Spring Branch community. Donation bins will be located at main entrances to the church and in the Missions Office.

### LIFE BIBLE STUDIES

Life Bible Studies are the primary method for connecting with others and growing together at Houston's First. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to find one that's right for you, or ask the Welcome Team at your campus for assistance.



Wednesday evenings — The Loop

There's more to Houston's First than Sundays! Gather at The Loop on Wednesday evenings for MidLink featuring MidLink Cafe, Milestones classes, worship rehearsals, NextGen programs, and more. Visit HoustonsFirst.org/MidLink for the full schedule.

### SHUTTLE PARKING

Do you attend The Loop on Sunday mornings? Use shuttle parking to make room for others! It's a simple way to expand the ministry of our church. Get details on the five garages at HoustonsFirst.org/ShuttleParking.

# MISSION 1:8

Feb 22, 2015

## OUR WORLD

Sharing Christ  
with the Nations



EAST ASIA



RIO DE JANIERO



SPAIN





# ADVANCING THE KINGDOM CITY BY CITY

Sociologists note that the world's population is becoming more and more urban. In 1800, there were only three cities on the planet with more than 1,000,000 people — London, Beijing and Tokyo. Today, there are nearly 500 such cities. In recent years, *National Geographic* stated that cities “are the best cure for our planet's growing pains.” Ironically, the cover story of that issue featured what we believe to be the best solution — the Bible.

When MISSION 1:8 launched in March 2013, our commitment was to donate \$2,250,000 to ministry partners advancing His kingdom in Rio de Janeiro, Madrid, and East Asia. Each location was strategically chosen based on the global influence of those regions and our desire to support missionaries as they face unique challenges in each setting — cultural differences, language barriers, security concerns, and others.

**BUT GOD DID MORE THAN WE COULD ASK OR IMAGINE!**

Thanks to the unprecedented generosity of the Houston's First family, we are able to provide \$4,500,000 to these global partners and others. Your MISSION 1:8 contributions will now extend to churches and ministries advancing His kingdom in Africa and India and in additional cities in Europe. May we be as generous with our prayers for the men and women — and, for some, their families — as they boldly proclaim the Good News and bring light to the darkness!

## \$2,203,019

**Total giving to Our World  
(Mar 2013-Jan 2015)**

An additional \$2,296,980 will be invested,  
bringing the total to \$4,500,000



## EAST ASIA

“We recently received Houston's First's very generous gift to the T-people (an unreached people group). It encourages us beyond measure that you all have partnered with us in the cause of the gospel. Your investment in the work over the past two years is yielding rich dividends and making a lasting contribution. The T-people leaders our team has mentored have used the training and resources we've developed in order to plant 12 new churches in 2014. These churches are using our team's translation portions in their weekly worship times.

In 2015, we plan to print another Scripture portion booklet containing James as well as 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, and Titus. The believers are anxious for more Scripture to read and study (the churches already have booklets of Luke and Acts). We hope to provide them with the complete New Testament by 2017/2018. The gifts from Houston's First support our team of translators, our consultant checks, our publications, and the gospel ministry of national partners. I am grateful for your investment in our work with the T-People during this exciting time. Thank you for your continued prayer and support.”

**Anonymous Missionary**

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### Also in East Asia:

- Supporting work being done among the J-People (unreached)
- Holding Bible conferences to train and disciple house church leaders
- Sponsoring vocational training for youth and college students



## SPAIN



“This month, we celebrate one year since we started Iglesia Bautista Emanuel, a Spanish-speaking church planted by English-speaking Immanuel Baptist Church. On our anniversary Sunday, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper for the first time, signaling the reality of an identifiable and stable community that aims to grow in faith and share God's love and grace through Christ to Madrid. The financial support from Houston's First is a blessing to our community for the quality and diversity of activities we can develop that otherwise would be out of our reach. We are conducting twice a month street evangelism where tracts and Bibles are given to any who will receive them; Christian activities to attract our neighbors, including a solidarity street market, concert and a parenting workshop featuring a well-known evangelical psychologist; ‘Carol by Candlelight,’ our Christmas service, gave us the opportunity to share our faith and talk with hundreds of people. The financial crisis we are facing as a country is still affecting people in our midst and we are also helping individuals and families in need. Thank you for your part in God's provision for our ministry. God bless you!”

**Fernando Mendez, Pastor  
Iglesia Bautista Emanuel, Madrid**

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### Also in Spain:

- Supporting Iglesia Evangelica Bautista in Xàtiva



## RIO DE JANEIRO

“Because of the generosity of the Houston's First family in giving to MISSION 1:8, we were able to move some of our church plant team members from the outlying areas to the heart of Rio de Janeiro (including the pastor and his wife) in order to build friendships and community through conversations, participating in beach sports with neighbors and hosting get-togethers to reach the lost. We have also purchased Bibles and materials for evangelism; started small group Bible studies in our apartments and initiated personal discipleship; and rented a small theater in Rio de Janeiro on Sundays for people to gather to worship and hear God's Word. We are witnesses to God's power as He transforms lives, heals, restores and brings light into the darkness.”

**Patti LaCarter, Missionary**

