CYPRESS Launched on Easter Sunday 2013



JASON SWIGGART Campus Pastor

SUNDAYS Smith Middle School 10300 Warner Smith Blvd Cypress, TX 77433

Worship services @ 9:30a & 11a Life Bible Studies @ 9:30a & 11a

NEW LOCATION BEGINNING THIS SUMMER 11011 Mason Road Cypress, TX 77433

(next door to Bridgeland High School **G** HoustonsFirstCypress

- HFBCCypress
- HFBCCypress





LEE HSIA **Campus Pastor**

SUNDAYS 1010 Lamar (tunnel level) Houston, TX 77002

Worship service @ 11a Life Bible Studies @ 9:30a

NEW LOCATION BEGINNING IN APRIL 1730 Jefferson Houston, TX 77003

HFBCDowntown

- **HFBCDowntown**
- HFBCDowntown



ESPAÑOL Launched April 2015



IUAN ALANIZ Campus Pastor

SUNDAYS 7401 Katy Freeway (Chapel) Houston, TX 77024

Worship service @ 5p Life Bible Studies @ 6:30p

HoustonsFirstEspano

MFBCEspanol

SIENNA Launched on Easter Sunday 2013



MALCOLM MARSHALI Campus Pastor

SUNDAYS 4309 Sienna Parkway Missouri City, TX 77459

Worship services @ 9:30a & 11a Life Bible Studies @ 9:30a & 11a

HoustonsFirstSienna HFBCSienna

HFBCSienna

"MAKE IT YOUR CAMPUS" LUNCH SUN, APR 2

Do you go The Loop but live closer to another campus? O, ¿prefieres adorar y estudiar la Biblia en español? If so, you're invited to this lunch on Sun, Apr 2, at 12:30p at The Loop.

At this free event, learn about our campuses, hear from campus pastors and meet others who are praying about stepping out and GOING to better engage in what God is doing in their community. You won't be asked to make a commitment to another campus at the lunch! It's simply a time to learn and get answers as you pray about your decision. Childcare is available, too.

IERE ARE THREE WAYS TO RSVP

1 ONLINE

Go to HoustonsFirst.org/StepOut

2 ON MOBILE

3 BY PHONE Call Diamend Bianco at 713.957.5892

NEWS UPDATES

ALL CAMPUSES Deacons Meeting and Church Conference

Wed, Mar 8 @ — The Loop

Notice the new day for these monthly meetings - Wednesday evenings! The Deacon Administrative Committee meeting is at 5:30p in the Harbor Rm. All Deacons will meet at 6:30p in the Oasis Rm followed by the monthly Church Conference at 7:30p. Anyone may attend the Church Conference, but only church members may vote.

HighPoint Bible Study

Wednesdays @ 11:30a – 1010 Lamar (Tunnel Level) This weekly downtown Bible study is open to everyone! Dr. David Self is teaching this Wednesday at 12:10p. Bring your lunch or purchase one there for \$8. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to learn more.

CONTACT Diane.Bagby@HoustonsFirst.org

First H.O.P.E

Sat, Mar 11 @ 9a-noon — The Loop (Rm 253/254) For job seekers and those wanting a career change, First H.O.P.E. job ministry offers a professional consultant, resume/interview tips, career assessment and more. Join guest speaker Fred Lowe as he does a follow up on his seminar, "The Only One Standing in Your Way is You."

CONTACT Bob.Stroud@HoustonsFirst.org

Mon, Mar 13 @ 6:45p – The Loop (Reception Rm) CanHope ministers to families touched by cancer and those who love and care about them. At this meeting you'll share a meal with Cancer Exercise specialist Donna Roberts. The entree is provided, so please bring a salad or vegetable. Come enjoy this time of testimony, prayer and fellowship! RSVP to 713.957.6764. CONTACT Sherry.Oradat@HoustonsFirst.org

NEXTGEN MINISTRIES

Camp Intersect June 11-14 — Carolina Creek Christian Camp

Camp Intersect is the place your child (current 3rd-6th grades) can come and experience God in fun ways at a "two camps, one location" event! FirstKids and The HUB students each have their own summer camp experience with games, worship, small groups, water activities, and so much more! There's no better way to start the summer than with Camp Intersect! Registration opens TODAY at HoustonsFirst.org. CONTACT Mike.Harvey@HoustonsFirst.org

Rush Week

July 21–27 — Panama City Beach, FL Students entering 7th-12th grades are invited to this unique experience! Rush Week is 50% camp and 50% missions. Students partner with local churches in Panama City, FL, to assist in ministry, service projects, and evangelism each morning. In the afternoon we play, compete, laugh, relax, worship and learn more about God. This is the largest event The HUB Student Ministry organizes and

we want YOU there! Register at HoustonsFirst.org. CONTACT Tony.Bianco@HoustonsFirst.org

blessing over this new place of ministry.

sion. For information, call 713.681.8000, or visit HoustonsFirst.org. 😗 오 오 🕹 🚳

SUNDAYS AT HOUSTON'S FIRST

7401 Katv Fwy • Houston, TX 77024 Worship 9:15a • 11a • 5p Life Bible Studies 8a • 9:15a • 10:45a • 6:30a Life Bible Studies 9:30a • 11a

Cypress Campus 10300 Warner Smith Blvd • Cypress, TX 77433 Worship 9:30a • 11a

1010 Lamar • Houston, TX 77002 7401 Katy Fwy • Houston, TX 77024 Worship 11a Worship 5p Life Bible Studies 9:30a Life Bible Studies 6:30p

Tuesdays @ 7:30-9p — The Loop (Worship Center) Houston's First is partnering with The Porch Dallas to bring The Porch Live worship experience to Houston for their series, New Year's Revolution. People in their 20s and 30s gather on Tuesday nights for live worship, great teaching and fellowship. Come see what The Porch Live is all about at HoustonsFirst.org. CONTACT Joshua.Bagby@HoustonsFirst.org

WOMEN

The Porch Live

The Table Thu, Mar 9 @ 6:30-8p - The Loop (Worship Ctr) Women of all ages are invited to experience the presence of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit! Kay Altic will teach as women across Houston join together at the last gathering of The Table to embrace the hope and provision found in Scripture. Register for childcare at HoustonsFirst.org for just \$10 per child (\$5 each additional child).

Warrior's Heart Thursdays @ 6:30-7:30a — The Loop (Garden Rm) Warrior's Heart is a weekly morning Bible study for men focusing on clear biblical teaching followed by real conversations Mark McCollum, CFO of Halliburton, will teach this week in the series. "Faith @ Work." Breakfast is available for purchase in the Cafe. Learn more at HoustonsFirst.org. CONTACT Emily.Brown@HoustonsFirst.org

THE LOOP

Marriage Matters Thu, Mar 23 @ 6:30–8:30p — The Loop (Fellowship Ctr Your marriage matters! Come enjoy dinner and an evening of marriage encouragement from guest speaker Ted Cunningham. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to register for just \$25 per couple – including childcare. Space is limited!

CYPRESS

The Word with Friends Tuesdays thru Apr 25 @ 9:30-11:30a **Cypress Ministry Center** Ladies, come expecting great things from God as He teaches us about the Holy Spirit, His purpose and His power in our lives. Hear a word from Teena Haines, Nicole Hufty and Mary Ann Bridgwater. Registration is required and childcare is available at HoustonsFirst.org. CONTACT Laura.Jordan@HoustonsFirst.org

DOWNTOWN Downtown Prayer Gathering

Text STEPOUT to 41411 to receive a link

TWEET OF THE WEEK "Thx to pastor @GreggMatte for challenging us! How important it is that we answer our call as Christians to pray, give and GO in our cities!" – @Rachel_Bonnette

COLLEGE/SINGLES/MARRIED

CONTACT Meredyth.Cann@HoustonsFirst.org

MARRIED YOUNG ADULTS

CONTACT Kristin.Hawkinson@HoustonsFirst.org

Fri, Mar 31 @ 7-9p — 1730 Jefferson auditorium The Downtown Campus invites you to our first official event at our

new Downtown church home! We will gather together to praise the Lord through music, consecrate the building, and ask for God's CONTACT Lee.Hsia@HoustonsFirst.org

ESPAÑOL Baptism Sunday

Sun, Mar 19 @ 6:30p – Water Wall & Cross Tower Join the Español Campus to witness and celebrate all who have made the decision to get baptized. There will be no Life Bible Studies as we will come together for a meal to celebrate! Bring chips, drinks or dessert to share afterwards. No RSVP is required. CONTACT Douglas.Hernandez@HoustonsFirst.org

SIENNA

Baptism Sunday Sun, Mar 26 — Sienna Campus

Celebrate our brothers and sisters in Christ who are being baptized immediately following the 11a worship service on the Sienna Campus patio. If you would like to be baptized, or want more information on baptism, please contact Sienna Campus Pastor Malcolm Marshall.

CONTACT Malcolm.Marshall@HoustonsFirst.org



Sat, Mar 25 @ 9a-2p — The Loop (Connection Ctr) Learn how to share your story and the Gospel in this one-day training. Lunch is provided; childcare is not. RSVP to Jonathan.Huegel@HoustonsFirst.org.

Foster Care 101 CPR Training

Wed, Mar 8 @ 6:15p — The Loop (Rm 504) Are you in the process of adoption or foster care? Or maybe you are considering babysitting or respite care for a foster family...either way, you will need CPR as a part of your process. Join us for one night and get trained and certified in CPR. Registration is required for \$45 at HoustonsFirst.org. CONTACT Caroline. Johnson@HoustonsFirst.org

For more information on Giving Life Away, contact Charlotte.Nease@HoustonsFirst.org

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 Guest Experience (GX) team at your campus for assistance.



HUTTLE PARKING

Do you attend The Loop Campus 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 <u>HoustonsFirst.org.</u>

> Sienna Campus 4309 Sienna Pkwy • Missouri City, TX 77459 Worship 9:30a • 11a Life Bible Studies 9:30a • 11a



GROWING BY

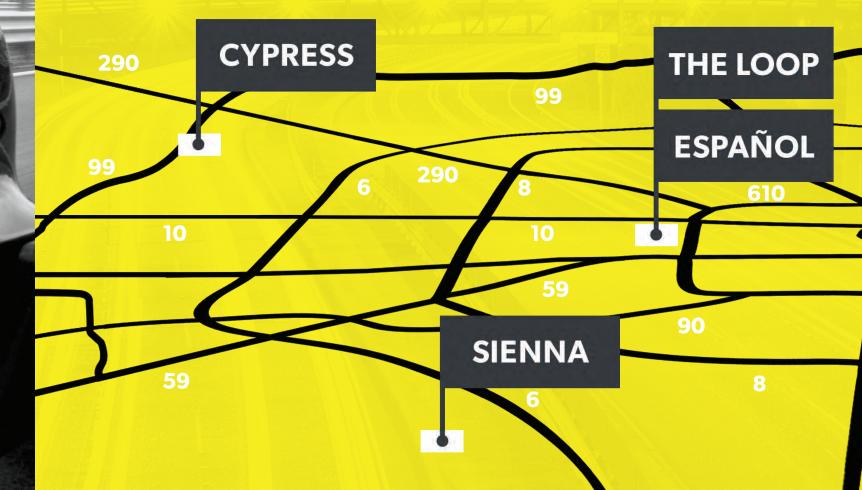
Impact Your City In Your Own Community



WHERE WILL YOU GO?

"Going" is as rooted in the culture at Houston's First as is praying and giving. Throughout our 176-year history, members have prayed for God to open doors to the Gospel, and then acted on His answers by going out to plant churches throughout the United States and abroad, where Christ has changed countless lives.

In more recent history, Houston's First has followed God's lead to extend our reach locally by establishing multisite campuses throughout the Houston metropolitan area. "Missionaries," individual members and families who have accepted the call to leave the community they have established at The Loop Campus, are planting their lives at one of four other Houston's First campuses — Cypress, Downtown, Español and Sienna. As the stories inside reveal, these members have become the hands and feet of Jesus as they engage in what God is doing in their communities.



CYPRESS What about the kids?

When the Lord nudges us to go deeper with Him, it's one thing for adults to walk into the unknown, but what about children who would be affected by being uprooted from a home, school or a community of believers?

Houston's First members Brandon and Katy Burk felt God's familiar nudge, after attending The Loop Campus for 15 years, to become members of the Cypress Campus at its launch in 2013. They had been members at The Loop since their newlywed class, where Jason Swiggart had been one of their teachers. When he left to pastor the new campus, they felt drawn to join him there, but how would their daughters, nine-year old Lexie and six-year old Emily, take it?

"The Loop was the only church our girls had ever known," said Katy. "It was 'home' to them, and they had developed strong friendships. And we loved the children's programming, so the thought of leaving a place we loved so much and felt so comfortable was difficult."

Lexie, now 13, and Emily, 10, remembered a little of their apprehension, though it seems almost a lifetime ago. "At first, I didn't want to move and leave my friends, said Lexie. Emily agreed. "I didn't want to leave friends either, but I was like, Yes! Ms. Erin* and Mr. Patrick* are going to be there! That made it better," she said.

While at The Loop, Emily and Lexie were involved in Life Bible Study for children Kids' Worship, MidLink on Wednesday nights, Camp Intersect (Lexie's age group), and Vacation Bible School every summer.

Lexie says she's met a lot of friends and likes the student activities in Cypress. "I like Cypress because I know more people, and I'm more involved," said Emily.

As the girls have grown, they are pitching in to help in all kinds of ways at the Cypress Campus. They attend Life Bible Study and MidLink, Camp Intersect and Rush Week just as they would have at The Loop. But they also are on the weekly teardown team



on Sundays after church, which is unique to the Cypress Campus, as it meets in a middle school until the new campus is completed early this summer. The airls are also greeters on Sunday mornings and help host Backyard Kids' Club at their home every summer, ministries they likely wouldn't have been involved in had they stayed at The Loop.

It was bittersweet for the family to leave The Loop, but they auickly found their place and a new rhythm at the Cypress Campus. "We are reaching out to people in our own community," said Katy. "The girls go to church now with the kids from their schools and we've developed sweet friendships across all age groups that come with being part of a smaller campus. An added bonus is that it only takes five minutes to get to church!"

*Erin Ruddle is the Director of Preschool & Children's Ministry and Patrick Simpson is the Children's Ministry Associate at the Cypress Campus.

DOWNTOWN Obeying God's call

Houston's First member Caron Blankenhorn joined the church at The Loop Campus because it was close to home. Friendships blossomed for four years in a young single adult Life Bible Study and spilled over into spending time together outside the church, giving her a deep sense of belonging. Then Pastor Gregg – and God – asked her to leave The Loop.

"I didn't want to leave," said Caron. "I was comfortable and loved my community. The Lord requires obedience, though, and I trusted He would be faithful. Still, obedience is not always easy."

Caron's sense that God was leading her to the Downtown Campus came after Pastor Gregg's churchwide call to go and get plugged in for a year at the newly-formed campus of Houston's First. Caron's Garden Oaks address made her a likely candidate for joining the small community of believers who would initially seed the campus.

As difficult as it was to leave, Caron felt a calling to reach international people God had already beaun the work in her heart several years earlier, and she beaan volunteering a few times each week at the Faith Center-Spring Branch in the Food Pantry & Clothes Closet. Later she began teaching ESL to adults from mainly Latin American countries living nearby. The Faith Center-Harwin opened in 2016, and she began loving refugees by volunteering there most every Saturday.

After more than five years at the Downtown Campus, Caron sees how beautifully God's plan to reach internationals has unfolded in her life. "The smaller feel of the Downtown Campus is such a welcoming and easy place to bring unbelieving internationals to church for the first time," she said Caron. "The building is not what they're expecting, but I tell them the church is not a building – it's the people of God."





ESPAÑOL

Making a connection



Before Caron began attending downtown, she wasn't in the habit of bringing international friends to church. Many international students come to Houston to attend one of the universities and then ao back to their own country. She started a "Discovery Group" on Friday nights at her house two years ago. Caron makes dinner each week for between six and 13 people. The topic of discussion each week is about truth, and they open the Scriptures, something internationals have rarely – or ever – done.

"We don't always see fruit, but we do a lot of sowing," said Caron. Recently a couple of young men who have been part of the group came to know the Lord and were baptized at the Downtown Campus.

"If you sense the Lord leading you to leave The Loop, do it," said Caron. "God is faithful and He'll provide a purpose."

Oscar and Eliana Dominguez were only five years old when their families made their way to the United States from Cuba. Oscar's family flew to Miami by plane in 1956, BC – Before Castro, Eliana and a majority of her family fled the city of Matanzas on Cuba's northern coast in 1963 after Castro's regime took power. They left behind farms, cattle, land and businesses for freedom. Her family began their 230-mile nautical journey to Miami at dawn, hidden in the bulrushes off Cuba's coast, laying low to avoid patrolling PT boats that would cut off their escape.

The couple met at a party in Florida in 1976. Oscar was vacationing there, but was living in Louisiana, where he attended a Spanish congregation. Eliana had grown up Catholic and accepted Christ just before the couple married in 1979. She decided to ditch the plan to wed in a Catholic church, and instead, they said their vows in a Spanish-speaking Baptist congregation in Hialeah, Florida.

Oscar and Eliana joined Houston's First in 1983 and here they raised their children, David and Christina, to love Jesus. Both children were on the nursery roll, professed faith in Christ, baptized and were married at Houston's First. Oscar is a deacon and the couple has been active in leadership throughout their 34 years at Houston's First.

When the vision for the Español Campus began taking shape, the Dominguezes were ecstatic. "When I met Pastor Juan Alaniz in 2014, I told him that after more than 32 years as members, we had finally met two people from Cuba at Houston's First, and they had been members here more than 20 years!" said Oscar. "Being part of a Spanish campus is like when you go to a foreign country and meet a fellow believer. Culturally, we feel that same way – there's a connection."

Making people feel welcome was the foundation for the Dominguezes' ministry as leaders of the Connection Team. Oscar and Eliana welcome visitors and information-



seekers at the Español Campus to get to know them and help them find what they are looking for.

"There are 17 different nations represented here," said Oscar. "We all speak Spanish, so there's an instant connection. God is so good, and we're thankful for Pastor Gregg's vision and Pastor Juan's leadership to start a Spanish campus at Houston's First. We wait expectantly to see what God has planned for Spanish speakers at the other campuses."



SIENNA New in town

In 2013, high school sweethearts James and Hannah Lucas relocated from Waynesboro, Virginia, population 21,000, to Houston, a city of more than four million. The Lucases were invited to The Loop Campus, where the membership rolls rival the number of residents in their hometown. As they navigated being new in town, they developed sensitivity to others in similar circumstances.

"We got involved in a Life Bible Study, and volunteered for special events and other ministries at The Loop," said James. "After James Jr was born, we both served in the Preschool ministry."

"We found community instantly and developed a core group who became like family to us," said Hannah. Within a year, the Lucases were Life Bible Study co-directors, and friendships they developed with other newly marrieds proved to be a blessing during Hannah's pregnancy. "They brought meals and made airport runs to pick up our family members," she said. "We want others to experience the same blessing and community."

James and Hannah purchased a home in Sienna Plantation in April 2016, and were determined to get involved in the neighborhood. They tried attending the Sienna Campus and liked it, but weren't yet ready to pull the trigger. As a compromise, they attended Milestones classes there during MidLink on Wednesday nights. They prayed for God to soften their hearts about leaving The Loop. "We asked God to help us get plugged in," said James. God was faithful to answer their prayers when a new campus pastor was called to the Sienna Campus that they had already grown to love while attending The Loop. "Malcolm Marshall bridged the gap for us," said Hannah. "He was the icing on the cake and the answer we needed to make the move."



About the same time, two other couples from the Lucases' Life Bible Study relocated to the Sienna Campus. "It helped having people we knew." said James, And God gave them a huge blessing on their street. "Five Sienna Campus families live on our street," he said. "The Five Oaks Clan has pool parties, events, does missions work together – and we're getting to know them all on a deeper level."

Hannah and James are paying forward the love they received at The Loop when they moved far from family. They stay home for the holidays and invite people new to town for a meal at their home. "Our church is a small community," said Hannah. "It's easy to pick out the new people, and we want them to feel they have family around."

