

SEP 2018

welcome.

A MONTHLY SNAPSHOT • HOUSTON'S FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH • PASTOR GREGG MATTE

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WELCOME TO HOUSTON'S FIRST!

A study in 2017 found that people who spent more time on social media reported having increased feelings of being socially isolated compared to people who spent less time on it. What was intended to enable connections among people can have the opposite effect—replacing face-to-face interactions with online ones. In our increasingly digital world, being intentional about offline relationships is all the more important.

Our vision at Houston's First is to be a relevant biblical community, and we define "community" as a place to be authentic, involved, impacted, and impactful. In this Welcome Guide, you'll see how the church provides opportunities that help us live out that vision. Connect with a Life Bible Study. Serve at one of our Faith Centers. Find encouragement and support from our Pastoral Care and Counseling ministries. Attend an upcoming event.

If you are new to Houston's First, I invite you to be intentional about taking the next step—whatever that might be for you—in your relationship with Jesus Christ and with our community of believers. When you do, you'll find that people are there ready to welcome you and "friend request" you in real life.

In Him,

Pastor Gregg

Pastor Gregg Matte



LIFE BIBLE STUDIES

Life Bible Studies are weekly gatherings available for all ages at Houston's First. Once referred to as Sunday School, they offer a place for regular study of the Bible. Beyond that, Life Bible Studies are where friendships are made and community is formed. Life Bible Study members celebrate each other's victories, comfort each other in times of loss, and encourage each other through life's challenges. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to explore the many options, or ask a Guest Experience Team member at your campus for assistance in finding one that's right for you.



DOWNTOWN CROSS LIGHTING

Downtown Houston has a new hard-to-miss landmark—the cross at our Downtown Campus at 1730 Jefferson! We officially flipped the switch at a special outdoor gathering on Sun, Aug 19, with Houston's First family members from every campus in attendance. Pray that the cross will draw people to our church and to Jesus!



"If you can, you should."

God sometimes uses people in far away places to bring hope to the hurting. Here's how one out-of-town volunteer made a difference at Houston's First while receiving help at Hope House for needs of his own.

Gary Tracy, a resident of Holt, Missouri, drives thousands of miles each year with the Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Team. He brings light and hope to people experiencing floods, tornadoes, and other life-altering disasters. Gary's team was staged in Texas City when Hurricane Harvey hit last year, and just five months later Gary received news about a health condition that would bring him back to Houston as a patient, a short-term resident—and a volunteer.

Gary says he's making up for lost time. Saved at age 52, he hadn't been looking for God, but when he realized he needed a Savior, he jumped in with both feet to give all he has to Jesus. Janice, his wife of 30 years, supports his heart for service, even as it sends him all across the country to be Jesus' hands and feet to victims of natural disasters.

"In August during Harvey, I was blessed to be healthy and had enough money to come down to help," said Gary. "At the end of January I was told I had cancer."

One of Gary's friends who had gotten a cancer diagnosis four years prior told him about Hope House—a ministry of Houston's First. At the time his friend stayed, Hope House had four residences near the Texas Medical Center earmarked for out-of-towners needing housing, encouragement, and fellowship during medical treatment. Hurricane Harvey engulfed two of the residences and a fire put the third out of commission. Only one residence was available for occupancy when Hope House Coordinator Peggy Jones contacted Gary about staying there during his treatment at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

"It was amazing that the space came available for me the week before treatment began at the end of May," said Gary. "I was anxious to volunteer while I was there, so I got in touch to see where I could be of help."

Gary found a spot to serve at our Faith Center – Spring Branch's Food Pantry & Clothes Closet as well as the Benevolence Ministry. He also helped with Men: Serve making home repairs for widows.

"Houston's First has so many ministries for Jesus," said Gary. "People in Pastoral Care were surprised I was doing so much while going through treatment, but my five-word life challenge is 'If you can, you should.'"

God used Gary sitting "knee-to-knee and face-to-face" with Faith Center clients coming in for assistance. "People who come into relief places think the people working there have no problems," said Gary. "I was able to tell people my own story of why I was in Houston."

Gary worked nearly every day of the week as a Houston's First volunteer while he was receiving treatment. Gary shared the Gospel with hundreds of people during his time at the Faith Center. One of the first people he led to Christ was a young Muslim man from Pakistan who had immigrated to Turkey before coming to the United States. In all, Gary led 16 people to know Christ.

Now that he is back home in Missouri, cancer-free and waiting for his next assignment from God, Gary says he's having ministry withdrawals. "I never looked at cancer as life-threatening; I looked at it as a ministry opportunity," he said. "I'm crazy about Jesus, and I love talking to others about Him."

CARE & SUPPORT MINISTRIES

Hope House is one of the many ministries at Houston's First that provides care and support for various needs and challenges, for members and non-members alike. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to learn more about each of the following and other ways our church can meet you where you are.

PASTORAL CARE

- **Stephen Ministry** for confidential, one-to-one Christian care
- **CanHope** for people impacted by cancer
- **GriefShare** for people dealing with loss
- **Gathering Place** for people living with memory loss
- **Common Grounds** for memory loss caregivers
- **Homebound Ministry** for people confined to their home or continual care facility

COUNSELING CENTER

- **Counseling** for individuals, couples, and families
- **Group Counseling** based on various needs and challenges
- **Celebrate Recovery** helps people overcome hurts, hang-ups, and habits
- **DivorceCare** for people facing the hurt of separation and divorce
- **DivorceCare 4 Kids** for children to learn skills to help them heal

FAITH CENTERS

Our Faith Center – Spring Branch and Faith Center – Harwin offer a variety of ways to support the ministry as a volunteer just like Gary did while he was a visitor in Houston. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to discover current opportunities to "give life away" at a Faith Center.



make it your church

ORIENTATION



People often have questions before they join a church. Some may even have questions after they join as they seek to know their church better. So, whether you've just recently visited or recently joined Houston's First, we invite you to discover what it means to be

a member here at Make It Your Church Orientation. Learn about our mission, vision, ministries, and more while you meet staff members and find answers to your questions. Register at HoustonFirst.org for an upcoming session at your campus.

THE LOOP (SUN, SEP 30) • CYPRESS (SUN, SEP 30)
DOWNTOWN (SUN, SEP 30)
ESPAÑOL (SUN, NOV 18) • SIENNA (SUN, SEP 30)

AUGUST MOMENTS



Deacons and ministers are ordained at a special service



Students and parents gather for IGNITE at Memorial High School



Cypress Campus adopts Sheridan Elementary School



Sienna Campus attends Sugar Land Skeeters baseball game



Downtown Campus College Ministry provides snow cones at UH



"God is light, and there is absolutely no darkness in Him."
 – 1 John 1:15

On Halloween (Wed, Oct 31), Houston's First family members will reflect God's light as we intentionally connect with our neighbors and communities.

Visit HoustonFirst.org for ideas on how you can "Light The Night" and start making plans now! Help make your night a success!

MINISTRY IMPACT OF HOUSTON'S FIRST

YEAR-TO-DATE • JULY 1, 2018–AUG 26, 2018

DECISIONS

95 New Church Members
 15 Joined by Baptism

16% of New Members were Baptized

ATTENDANCE

46,054 in Life Bible Studies
 (5,117 weekly average)
 44,424 in Worship Services
 (4,936 weekly average)
 7,705 on Webcast
 (856 weekly average)

MISSIONS

9 Mission Trips with
 2,035 Team Members



GENEROSITY

3,394 Givers to
 Great Commission Fund
 179 First-Time Givers

5% of Givers gave for the first time

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOUSTON'S FIRST?



Refuge
Women's Ministry
Women's Retreat 2018
Women from every campus will be reminded that God is a safe place to be
Oct 19-20 — The Omni Westside | Register at HoustonsFirst.org



Celebration
A musical Christmas experience!
Seven presentations • Dec 6-9, 2018
Tickets available Sat, Oct 13 at TheFirstChristmas.org

ALL CAMPUSES

HIGHPOINT BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays @ 11:30a-12:40p — 1010 Lamar (Suite 1250)

This weekly downtown Bible study is open to everyone! Speakers in coming weeks include Executive Pastor David Self (Sep 5, 12, 19), Yuen-Woh Voon (Sep 26), and Missions Associate Gabriel Janulovici (Oct 3). Lunch is available for purchase for \$5, or feel free to bring yours with you.

CONTACT: Diane.Bagby@HoustonsFirst.org

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILD

Saturdays, Sep 8-Oct 13 @ 7:30a-2p

Individuals, families, and groups are invited to serve at the Houston's First build site this fall. Volunteers will serve on Saturdays from 7:30a-2p. Visit HoustonsFirst.org to learn about the requirements and to register for a build day (or multiple days) this fall!

CONTACT: Julianne.Kho@HoustonsFirst.org

HOLY LAND TOUR INTEREST MEETING

Thu, Oct 4 @ 7p — The Loop Campus (Connection Center)

Once again, Houston's First is offering our church family an opportunity to walk where Jesus walked on a tour of Israel from Apr 3-13, 2019. Volunteers will serve on Saturdays from 7:30a-2p. Come to this interest meeting to learn about the itinerary, cost, and other information you'll want to know about this unforgettable trip.

CONTACT: Drew.Walters@drew.walters@me.com

THE LOOP CAMPUS

WARRIOR'S HEART

Thursdays thru Dec 6 @ 6:30-7:30a

The Loop Campus (Garden Rm)

This Bible study for men includes teaching followed by real conversations in a relaxed atmosphere. Our fall series is "The Parables of Christ: Real Wisdom for the Real World," examining the parables Christ used and drawing out leadership and life lessons each man can employ in their work, faith, family, and friendships. Breakfast can be purchased from The Café beginning at 6:15a. Learn more at HoustonsFirst.org.

CONTACT: Julianne.Kho@HoustonsFirst.org

CANHOPE

Mon, Sep 10 @ 6p — The Loop Campus (Reception Rm)

Ministering to families and friends touched by cancer, CanHope gathers on the second Monday of each month for dinner, prayer, and to hear somebody's story. Our guest speaker for September is Martin Dixon, so bring a salad, vegetable, or fruit to share and we'll provide the entrée. Everyone is welcome! RSVP to 713.957.6764

CONTACT: Sherry.Ordat@HoustonsFirst.org

MARRIAGE MATTERS

Fri, Sep 21 @ 6:30-8:30p

The Loop Campus (Fellowship Ctr)

The Married Young Adults Ministry invites couples to dinner and an evening of marriage encouragement with guest speaker Gary Thomas, a bestselling author and international speaker. Registration is required at HoustonsFirst.org for \$25 per couple, and childcare is included.

CONTACT: Kristin.Hawkinson@HoustonsFirst.org

NEXTGEN LIFE BIBLE STUDY LEADERS FALL LUNCHEON

Sun, Sep 23 @ 12:30-2p

The Loop Campus (Fellowship Ctr)

Our NextGen leaders are leaving a legacy through Life Bible Study at Houston's First. At this luncheon, leaders and their spouses will be encouraged through the testimonies of students, parents, and teachers who understand the difference Life Bible Study has made in their lives. It is a way of honoring those who not only lead through Life Bible Study, but who also invest their lives into the lives of generations to follow. Register at HoustonsFirst.org.

CONTACT: Debbie.Thompson@HoustonsFirst.org

FORTNITE IN REAL LIFE

Wed, Sep 26 @ 6:30-8p — The Loop Campus

Middle School Students — join Wired for Fortnite in Real Life (a giant Nerf War). Get ready to board the Battle Bus and have a Battle Royale with a classic toy — the Nerf Gun! We'll play different "game modes," have a Fortnite Emote Dance Competition, and a costume contest as your favorite Fortnite skin. Winners will receive V-Bucks and we'll have random drawings from those attending! Visit HoustonsFirst.org for all the guidelines you'll need to know and to register for an awesome night!

CONTACT: Tony.Bianco@HoustonsFirst.org

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FRIENDSHIP MINISTRY

Develop friendships and learn about other cultures by opening your heart to international students and scholars during their time of university study in Houston. Attend a one-time orientation at The Loop Campus to learn about becoming a friendship partner with a student from the University of Houston. Contact Marie Downing or visit HoustonsFirst.org for orientation times and information.

CONTACT: Marie.Downing,downings@flash.net

CYPRESS CAMPUS

MOMS OF THE HEART (MOTH)

Thu, Sep 13 @ 7-9p — Cypress Campus (Connection Center)

Moms of the Heart (MOTH) is a Legacy 685 gathering for foster and adoptive moms seeking to become equipped, empowered, and encouraged in their unique parenting journey. This will be our first Cypress Campus meeting and a time of teaching, fellowship, and connection. No RSVP required!

CONTACT: Legacy685@HoustonsFirst.org

THE BRIDGE: WOMEN'S NIGHT OF WORSHIP

Tue, Sep 25 @ 6-8p — Cypress Campus

Amidst the chaos of the fall season, join the Women's Ministry of Houston's First — Cypress for a moment of pause with our Heavenly Father. Take time to reflect, approach the throne with cares and concerns, and be present with the Lord in quiet reverence through worship and scripture reading. Women of all ages and stages of life are welcome, but no childcare is provided. Enjoy refreshments and fellowship together prior to worship!

CONTACT: Teal.Moran@HoustonsFirst.org

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

MEN'S MINISTRY INTEREST MEETING

Sat, Sep 15 @ 9:30-11a — Downtown Campus (Rm 221)

Enjoy FREE breakfast tacos and learn about the relaunch of our Men's Ministry and upcoming events! No RSVP is required — just show up!

CONTACT: Peter.Lee@HoustonsFirst.org

COLLEGE FALL RETREAT

Sep 21-22 — Lake Conroe

Retreat yourself with the College Ministry on Lake Conroe! We'll have times of worship and teaching as well as resting and boating! It'll be a great weekend to fix our eyes on Jesus, to rest our souls, and to be renewed in life. Please email Jarret Garber at Jarret.Garber@HoustonsFirst.org to RSVP.

CONTACT: Jarret.Garber@HoustonsFirst.org

WOMEN'S FALL PRAYER BRUNCH

Sat, Sep 22 @ 10a-Noon — Offsite

Come join the women of the Downtown Campus as we celebrate the changing seasons. A "brunch" of us are getting together for food, fellowship, prayer, and devotion. Please email Erin Krafft at Erin.Krafft@HoustonsFirst.org to RSVP.

CONTACT: Erin.Krafft@HoustonsFirst.org

ESPAÑOL CAMPUS

BAPTISMS

Sun, Sep 23 @ 10:45a — Cross Fountain

Come celebrate with our brothers and sisters as they publicly confess their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ by symbolically dying to the world and being raised to new life in Him! Interested in learning more about baptism? Contact Douglas Hernandez to start the conversation.

CONTACT: Douglas.Hernandez@HoustonsFirst.org

SIENNA CAMPUS

FALL 2018 MILESTONES

Visit HoustonsFirst.org for details and to register for Milestones classes available this fall for women (*The Patriarchs* by Beth Moore, *Living Out Loud*), men (*This is Real Life*), and all adults (*Defending Your Faith*, *Practical Evangelism*, *Financial Planning*, *Trauma Competent Caregiver*, *Loving Our Kids on Purpose*).

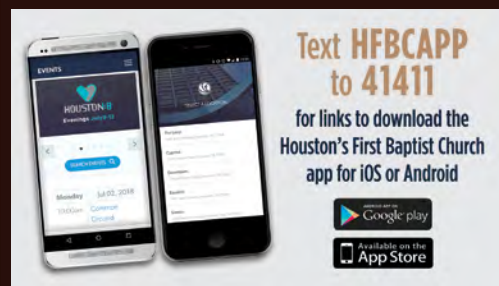
CONTACT: Kelli.Boylan@HoustonsFirst.org

TAKING CONTROL OF TECHNOLOGY

Sun, Sep 9 @ 12:30p — Sienna Campus

Screens and technology can seem like a constant struggle for many families. Come and learn how to take control of technology and develop a plan for the whole family. Tony Bianco, Middle School Student Minister at The Loop Campus and traveling conference speaker, will be with us on Sun, Sep 9! Come learn how your family can take control of the technology in your home! Walk-ins are welcome!

Visit HoustonsFirst.org or the *Houston's First Baptist Church* app for details about these and other upcoming opportunities!



Text **HFBCAPP**
to **41411**
for links to download the
Houston's First Baptist Church
app for iOS or Android

Available on the
Google play
Available on the
App Store

WHERE YOU'LL FIND US

Houston's First Baptist Church has numerous locations around town. But with members from all across the greater Houston area living out their faith and making a difference in their homes, schools, and offices, the church's ministry extends far beyond the addresses listed below!

THE LOOP CAMPUS 7401 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77024



Gregg Matte, Pastor

[Houston's First](#) [@HoustonsFirst](#) [@HoustonsFirst](#)

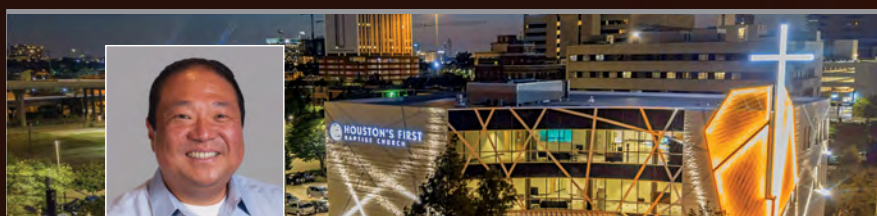
CYPRESS CAMPUS 11011 Mason Rd, Cypress, TX 77433 (Next to Bridgeland High School)



Jason Swiggart, Campus Pastor

[Houston's First Cypress](#) [@HFBCcypress](#) [@HFBCcypress](#)

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS 1730 Jefferson, Houston, TX 77003



Lee Hsia, Campus Pastor

[HFBCDowntown](#) [@HFBCDowntown](#) [@HFBCDowntown](#)

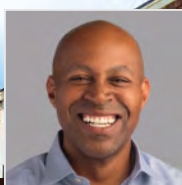
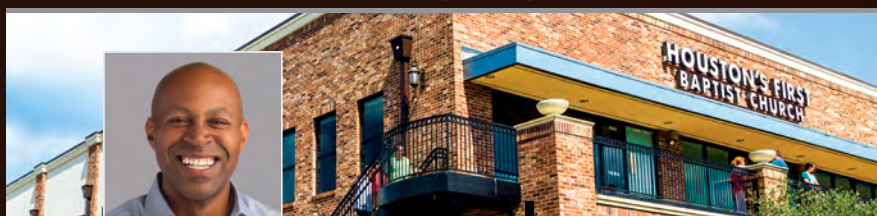
ESPAÑOL CAMPUS 7401 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77024



Juan Alaniz, Campus Pastor

[Houston's First Español](#) [@HFBCespañol](#) [@HFBCespañol](#)

SIENNA CAMPUS 4309 Sienna Parkway, Missouri City, TX 77459



Malcolm Marshall, Campus Pastor

[Houston's First Sienna](#) [@HFBCSienna](#) [@HFBCSienna](#)

OUR SIGNATURE STATEMENT

Houston's First Baptist Church is a relevant biblical community where people gather their hearts, grow their souls and give their lives as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20).

RELEVANT

Having the passion, desire and ability to build necessary bridges to move people from culture to Christ.

BIBLICAL

Fully embracing the beliefs and values revealed in the Bible as true, eternal and life-changing.

COMMUNITY

Providing a place to be authentic, involved, impacted and impactful.

JOINING HOUSTON'S FIRST

Membership at Houston's First is open to anyone who has placed their faith in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of their sins and has been baptized by immersion at our church or by a body of believers of like faith and practice. If you have not already done so, we can assist you with these decisions. At the end of the worship service, come forward to speak with a minister or volunteer, or make your way to the Connection Center at your campus. They will walk you through the process of making Houston's First your church!

LIFE BIBLE STUDIES

Life Bible Studies are the primary method for connecting with others in smaller settings and growing together at Houston's First. Visit [Houston's First.org](#) to explore the many options, or ask a Guest Experience Team member at your campus for assistance in finding one that's right for you.

For more information about Houston's First, call 713.681.8000 or visit [Houston's First.org](#).

SUNDAYS AT HOUSTON'S FIRST

The Loop Campus

Worship 9:15a • 11a • 5p

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

Cypress Campus

Worship 9:30a • 11a

Life Bible Studies 8a • 9:30a • 11a

Downtown Campus

Worship 11a

Life Bible Studies 9:30a

Español Campus

Worship 9:15a

Life Bible Studies 10:45a

Sienna Campus

Worship 9:30a • 11a

Life Bible Studies 9:30a • 11a