

OCT 2018

welcome.

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

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WELCOME TO HOUSTON'S FIRST!

If you're like me, there are aspects of how you live your life that you want to improve—especially in your relationship with Jesus. It can be easy to become content with how things might be, so much so that we might not even realize that there is room for growth! Working against us are cultural norms, peer pressure, bad habits—or simply a lack of encouragement to take the next step toward making a change.

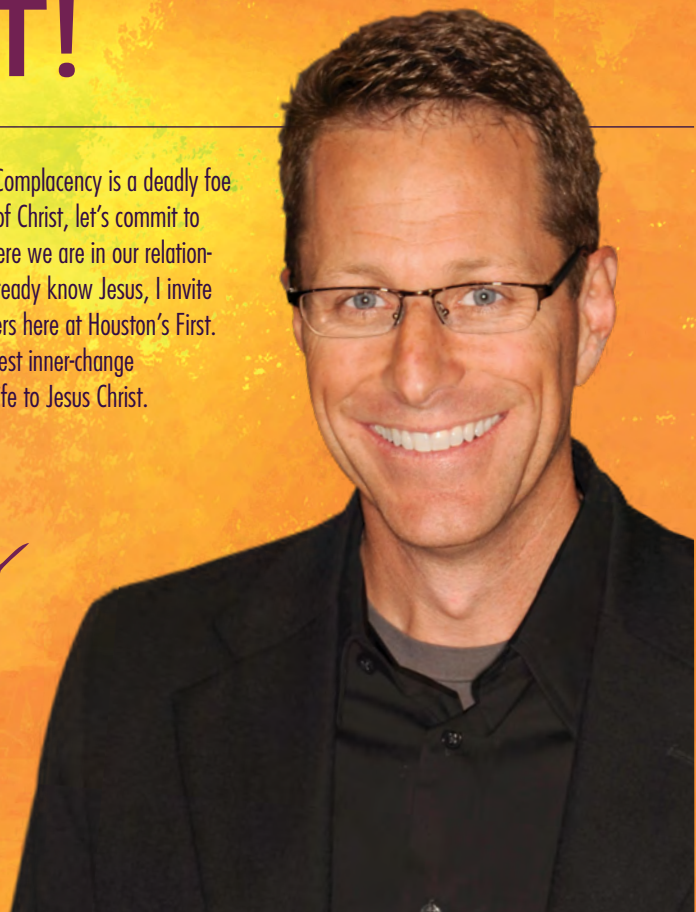
Well, Houston's First wants to be that source of encouragement. Beginning in October and continuing through Easter in late April, we're providing helpful resources related to a different spiritual discipline each month. The goal of this intentional focus—called InnerChange—is to deepen our faith by incorporating practices that will turn our attention to Him and align our hearts with His.

Pastor and author A.W. Tozer said, "Complacency is a deadly foe of all spiritual growth." As followers of Christ, let's commit to never becoming complacent with where we are in our relationship with our Savior. If you do not already know Jesus, I invite you to ask questions and seek answers here at Houston's First. Take a step toward making the greatest inner-change you could ever make—giving your life to Jesus Christ.

In Him,



Pastor Gregg Matte



Be Still.



Busyness is often the accepted way of life in our culture. Even without a full calendar of meetings to attend and errands to run, our relationships and responsibilities can keep us occupied (or distracted) all day long—and keep us away from time with God. With this in mind, learning to simply be still can have a profound impact on our faith.

Here are a few recommended ways to pause and be still in October. Whether using these or your own ideas, pursue intentional moments of peace and quiet this month. Perhaps you'll develop a new discipline that will prove even more helpful as the busyness of the holidays is just around the corner!

- Find a park or garden and simply sit, look, and listen for at least 30 minutes
- Prayer walk through your neighborhood
- Memorize a Bible verse about being still (1 Samuel 12:16, Psalm 37:7, Luke 10:38–42)
- Schedule 1-on-1 time with the Lord (over lunch, an afternoon, an entire day)
- Turn off all screens at a designated hour each night and spend time reading, praying, or relaxing

Our NextGen Ministries offer these suggestions for children and students:

- Preschoolers – go outside, listen for sounds, and thank God for all He created
- Children – go on a technology-free family walk with a designated focus
- Students – commit to sitting still and pray daily for 10 technology-free minutes

Other ways I can be still...



Find more ideas for being still — and share your own — at HoustonsFirst.org



Text **INNERCHANGE** to **41411** for related updates, resources, and encouragement



Engaging Your Neighbors

As the sun sets on Wed, Oct 31, communities around our city will light up as the Houston's First family takes steps to connect with their neighbors on Halloween. This "Light The Night" movement started in 2013, with more and more people joining in each year. Here, three participants share why they do it—and how they've seen God move.



Lisa & David Slattery

THE SLATTERY'S SPRING BRANCH

David and Lisa Slattery, longtime Houston's First members and residents of Spring Branch, made the switch from volunteering at a church carnival on Halloween to serving their own neighborhood beginning in 2014, the year after Light The Night initially began.

"We heard our Missions staff talk about 'pastoring your street' during Halloween, so that's what we decided to do," said David. "We would normally see many of our neighbors only in passing, so Light The Night seemed like a good way to get to know them better."

David and Lisa pull out the grill to the driveway each year, hang lights, and hand out hot dogs, chips and water to Trick-or-Treaters and their parents.

"People have started hanging out," said Lisa. "Traditionally, we haven't had many kids on the street, but the neighborhood is changing. We also get kids coming in vehicles. Parents park the car, and some get out and stay awhile."

Though last year was rainy, it didn't shut down the Slatterys' Light The Night celebration. One neighborhood couple, also Houston's First members, came over and joined in hosting after Hurricane Harvey had flooded their own home the month before. They gave away more than

80 hot dogs, with the all-time high being 120 hot dogs given out at one previous block party. Lisa, a Business teacher at Spring Woods High School, has also become Block Mom, says David. "She invited her students to come and find our house," he said. "When they found us with the grill out front, some stayed and sat for a while. You never know who we'll see at Light The Night!"



Dan & Kendra Sullivan with Joanna, Jonathan, and Gabriella

THE SULLIVANS WESTBURY

The very first year Dan and Kendra Sullivan bought their Westbury home, they celebrated Halloween by hosting Light The Night.

"We both grew up in homes that Trick-or-Treated," said Kendra. "Light The Night seemed for us like a very natural way to minister to our neighborhood."

Since that time, the Sullivans have had three children, and with three children five and under, serving their neighbors seemed the best way to do ministry together as a family.

Not only do the Sullivans pull out the grill during Halloween, but they've expanded the practice of serving in this way as hosts of Houston 1:8 gatherings, the neighborhood "stay-at-home" mission trip during July. Beyond that, the family has set a goal to grill out or host a playdate once a quarter and to invite a neighborhood family to dinner once a month.

Dan and Kendra have developed close relationships with four or five neighborhood families, half of whom are not affiliated with a church. "We want to build relationships, and we pray for ways we can share our faith," said Kendra. "It is a joy to have found a way to serve as a family right where we live."



Jason & Bethany Bechtold with Leighton, Aubrey, and Emma

THE BECHTOLDS FAIRFIELD

Jason and Bethany Bechtold and their three children opted out of celebrating Halloween for many years until they were challenged to engage with their neighbors through Light The Night. "We really don't celebrate Halloween," said Bethany. "Generally we would just leave candy on the front porch and go and do something as a family."

Three years ago, the Bechtolds began grilling hot dogs for mostly immediate neighbors in the Cypress community of Fairfield, and then other families began joining in. "We put out our pop-up tent and strung lights outside across the driveway," said Bethany. "One neighbor brought over a sand table and set up a computer that made it look like an elevation map. The kids loved it."

For the Bechtolds, the focus of Light The Night is creating a safe place for families to gather. "It's good to be out there and be the Church," said Bethany. "We do our part to make Halloween positive—not scary."

Visit HoustonsFirst.org to find ideas and resources as you make plans to Light The Night on Wed, Oct 31.

Celebration

Houston's First will welcome over 20,000 people to The Loop Campus this December as they come to experience *Celebration*—a Christmas ministry to our city. This musical presentation returns reimagined with more than a dozen new songs, new staging, and other surprises. Make *Celebration* a part of your Christmas tradition—and bring friends and family to hear the message of the season!

TICKETS AVAILABLE
SAT, OCT 13
TheFirstChristmas.org

SEVEN PRESENTATIONS

Thu, Dec 6 7:30p	Fri, Dec 7 7:30p	Sat, Dec 8 10a • 2:30p • 7:30p	Sun, Dec 9 2:30p • 7:30p
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SEPTEMBER MOMENTS



Cypress Campus hosts 1st Grade Bible Presentation



Downtown Campus women gather for a prayer brunch



Parents and children have fun at Single Parent Family Camp

VOTER INFORMATION

“YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH... YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD...” – MATTHEW 5:13-14

Election Day is Tue, Nov 6, but Early Voting begins this month. Depending on where you are registered to vote, your ballot will include local, state, and federal races as well as various propositions. Visit HoustonFirst.org for helpful voter information, including links to help you find polling locations and sample ballots for voters registered in Brazoria, Ft. Bend, Galveston, Harris, Montgomery, and Waller Counties.

EARLY VOTING
OCT 22–NOV 2

ELECTION DAY
TUE, NOV 6

MINISTRY IMPACT OF HOUSTON'S FIRST YEAR-TO-DATE • JULY 1, 2018–SEP 30, 2018

DECISIONS

162 New Church Members
20 Joined by Baptism

12% of New Members were Baptized

ATTENDANCE

72,577 in Life Bible Studies
(5,184 weekly average)
69,189 in Worship Services
(4,942 weekly average)
11,938 on Webcast
(853 weekly average)



Teams of men serve our widows during Men's Serve

MISSIONS

12 Mission Trips with
2,019 Team Members



GENEROSITY

3,727 Givers to
Great Commission Fund
270 First-Time Givers

7% of Givers gave for the first time



Sienna Campus serves Harvey-flooded New Zion Bethel Baptist Church

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOUSTON'S FIRST?

**men:
SERVE**



Sat, Oct 27 @ 8a-1p
Serving the widows of our church

Yard Work • Home Repairs
Car Maintenance • More

The Loop and Cypress Campuses
Register by Fri, Oct 19
at HoustonsFirst.org



BAND OF BROTHERS
MEN'S MINISTRY

21st ANNUAL
UNDER THE TEXAS SKY
HOEDOWN
2018



Sat, Nov 3 @ 6-11p
George Ranch Historical Park
Tickets available at
HoustonsFirst.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 Missions Associate Gabriel Ianculovici (Oct 10) and Executive Pastor Dr. David Self (Oct 17, 24, 31, Nov 7). Lunch is available for purchase for \$5, or feel free to bring yours with you.

CONTACT: Diane.Bagby@HoustonsFirst.org

REDEMPTION WASH

Sat, Oct 13 @ 3-6p

The Loop Campus (East Parking Lot)

Former inmates with C.H.A.R.M. Prison Ministry, along with Houston Executive Mobile Detailing, will serve local law enforcement officers at their second annual car wash. Law enforcement officers are invited to bring their personal or patrol vehicles to this free event!

CONTACT: Torrance.Wilson@HoustonsFirst.org

GRIEFSHARE: SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

Thu, Oct 25 @ 6:45p — The Loop Campus (Reception Rm)

The upcoming holidays can be difficult to face for those who have lost a loved one or experienced another type of crisis. Grief can make the holidays a painful time. This free and encouraging seminar will help you survive the holidays and discover new reasons to enjoy them again. Dinner is provided, so please RSVP by Mon, Oct 22, at HoustonsFirst.org, by calling 713.957.6765, or emailing Fran Alberti.

CONTACT: Fran.Alberti@HoustonsFirst.org

THE LOOP CAMPUS

CANHOPE

Mon, Oct 8 @ 6-8p — 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 October is J.J. LaCarter, 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

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 Cafe beginning at 6:15a. Learn more at HoustonsFirst.org.

CONTACT: Julianne.Kho@HoustonsFirst.org

FIRST H.O.P.E. JOB TRAINING

Sat, Oct 20 @ 9a-1p — The Loop Campus (Rm 257/258)

Helping others procure employment, First H.O.P.E. offers a variety of resources to those seeking a job or to change their current one. At this month's meeting, Mary Emami, PhD, will talk about encouragement and keeping focused on Christ in your job search efforts. Please bring your laptop! Seating is limited so register early at HoustonsFirst.org.

CONTACT: Bob.Stroud@HoustonsFirst.org

3-DAY MARRIAGE CLINIC

Nov 2-4 — The Loop Campus

Though couples experience different symptoms such as anger, resentment, and withdrawal, the root problem is usually the same: violating one or more of 25 Essential Marriage Skills found in the Bible. This unique marriage intensive addresses these while providing the equivalent of 18 weeks of counseling in just three days — Fri @ 1-7p, Sat @ 8:30a-2:30p, and Sun @ 1-7p. Register at HoustonsFirst.org.

CONTACT: Greg.Curnutte@HoustonsFirst.org

THE CHRISTMAS STORE COLLECTION DAY

Sun, Nov 18 — The Loop Campus

At The Christmas Store at our Faith Center — Spring Branch in December, families from our ministry partners are invited to "shop" for gifts for their family members. Where do those gifts come from? YOU! The Houston's First family is asked to bring a new, unwrapped gift to Collection Day so we can stock the store for our guests. Visit HoustonsFirst.org for gift ideas, and listen for details from your Life Bible Study about the gender and age group you've been assigned.

CONTACT: Claudia.Reyes@HoustonsFirst.org

CYPRESS CAMPUS

CY-HUB GIRLS' NIGHT OF WORSHIP

Fri, Oct 26 @ 6p-Midnight — Cypress Campus

Girls in 6th-12th grades will enjoy an evening of fun, community and worship at this night just for them! Registration closes on Sun, Oct 21, so register soon at HoustonsFirst.org! The cost is \$10 per student and dinner is included.

CONTACT: Karen.Willingham@HoustonsFirst.org

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

MIDLINK — DOWNTOWN

Wednesdays thru Nov 7 @ 5:30-8p — Downtown Campus

MidLink is coming to Downtown! There is more to Houston's First than what happens on Sundays. Gather with us on Wednesday evenings for MidLink with dinner available for \$5, *The Art of Neighboring* for 6th grade—adults, plus programming for birth-5th grade. (MidLink will not happen on Wed, Oct 31, due to Light the Night.)

CONTACT: Derek.Nease@HoustonsFirst.org

LIGHT THE NIGHT — DOWNTOWN

Wed, Oct 31

As we set out to be a light in the darkness on Halloween, the Downtown Campus will have 3 organized locations where we will serve together — New Hope Housing, Open Door Mission, and Barry & Melissa Knoll's house. We also have resources available in the lobby for you to put on your own block party or some other Light The Night celebration.

CONTACT: Peter.Lee@HoustonsFirst.org

ESPAÑOL CAMPUS

HOMBRES DE IMPACTO (MEN OF IMPACT)

MEN'S RETREAT

Oct 26-27 — Riverbend Retreat Center, Glen Rose, TX

Men are invited to this gathering with more than 500 brothers from other congregations across Texas. Enjoy the countryside and activities offered at the camp, including a zip line, paintball, skeet shooting and many other options. Register at HoustonsFirst.org.

CONTACT: Douglas.Hernandez@HoustonsFirst.org

SIENNA CAMPUS


TRUNK OR TREAT

Sun, Oct 28 @ 5-7p — Sienna Campus

Kids and families will enjoy this free community event with carnival games, food trucks, a petting zoo, candy, and more! The event benefits Sole Loved, a local charity, so bring pairs of new socks to donate as we seek to collect 1,000 pairs!


CONTACT: Tyler.Scott@HoustonsFirst.org

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



Text HFBCCAPP to 41411

for links to download the Houston's First Baptist Church app for iOS or Android



WHERE YOU'LL FIND US

Houston's First family members gather at our campuses, but we spend most of our time at locations throughout our city — living out our lives as lights in our homes, workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, and wherever God takes us.

CYPRESS CAMPUS

THE LOOP CAMPUS/
ESPAÑOL CAMPUS

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

SIENNA CAMPUS

OUR CAMPUSES

The Loop

7401 Katy Freeway
Houston, TX 77024

Cypress

11011 Mason Road
Cypress, TX 77433
(Next to Bridgeland High School)

Downtown

1730 Jefferson
Houston, TX 77003

Español

7401 Katy Freeway
Houston, TX 77024

Sienna

4309 Sienna Parkway
Missouri City, TX 77459

Gregg Matte, Pastor

 GreggMatte

 @GreggMatte

 @PastorGregg

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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 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.