The BRIDGE

A PUBLICATION OF AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH



Percy V. Pennybacker Jr. Bridge, Austin, Texas
Photo by Richard Bennett

VOL. 19 NO. 38 — OCTOBER 14, 2026

AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH

LET THERE BE LIGHT

TABLE of CONTENTS

A Word from Our Pastor 3
Deacons on Call 4
New Members 5
Staff News 6
Wall of Honor: Veteran Submissions 6
Upcoming Events 7
Weekly Reminders 8
ADVANCE Prayer Theme for the Week 9
Pre-order Your Jesus Daily Bible 9
ABC Women's Ministry: Thailand Mission Trip 10-11
Week in Review 12
- Upward Kickoff Game Day
From the Pages of Bill's Notebook 13
ABC Library 14
Our Response to God's Faithfulness 15
- Attendance
- Financial Report

AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH

A WORD FROM **OUR PASTOR**

ABC Family,

This week we will press on to week three of our ***ADVANCE*** series. So far, we have seen God's invitation for us to discover Him through His word, and this week we will see He wants to develop us as disciples. Our BFGs are the backbone of our discipleship strategy at ABC. They are how we make a big church feel small, and they are where we begin to process scripture together.

I am excited to see what God is going to do as we aim to double our BFG groups in the next five years. Beginning January 10th, 2027, we will alter our Sunday morning schedule to create room for more groups and more disciples. We will launch these new groups in January, and we will have classroom space to launch many more groups in the coming months and years.

Have you found a Bible Fellowship Group at ABC? Now is the time to join one. This Sunday we will have volunteers in the Great Hall to give you more information and help you sign up for a class that fits your needs. Be sure to pre-purchase your Bible **HERE** and sign up for a BFG so you can ***ADVANCE*** in your faith and mission with us in 2027.

Invite a friend, and I'll see you at 8:45am or 11:15am this Sunday.

Onward and Upward,

DR. JONATHAN SPENCER
SENIOR PASTOR





UPCOMING SERIES

Advance 2027

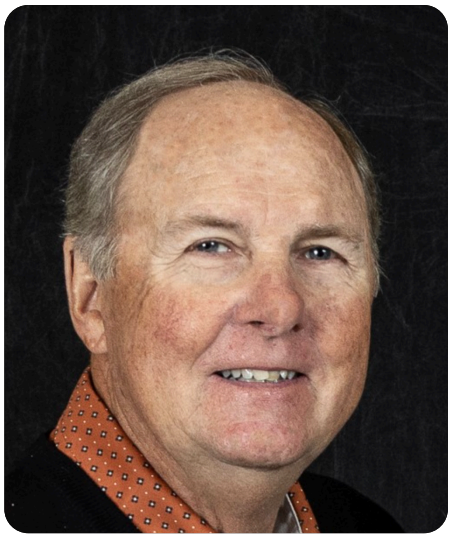
Looking forward to what's ahead

WEEKLY SERMON CONTENT

Follow us in the YouVersion Bible App and get weekly sermon notes to follow along with every Sunday!

DEACONS ON CALL

FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 12, 2026



Gary Grissom

512-656-1414



David McClung

512-550-8474

CHURCHWIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026



Beverly Tennell

LIGHT UP YOUR *Home*

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that fully well.

PSALM 139:14

STAFF **NEWS**

OCTOBER 14, 2026



Hey there Church Family,

I wanted to let you know that Thursday, October 15th will be **Stephen Vaughn's** last day with us on staff at ABC. He has served for the past several years as our Director of Media Ministries, overseeing the overhaul of our worship media. We wish him well on his way as he moves on to what's next.

In Christ's Love,

DR. MATT GILLUM
EXECUTIVE PASTOR

WALL OF HONOR

NOVEMBER 8, 2026

At Austin Baptist Church, we honor veterans for their service every Veteran's Day with our Wall of Honor. Please fill out **this form** to recognize a veteran or current service member on the Wall of Honor on Veteran's Sunday, November 8th.

Please attach a service photo to the form. If you encounter difficulties, please email the photo to Christina Reese at ***christinar@austinbaptistchurch.com.***

Please Note: If you submitted your veteran or current service member last year, you do not need to resubmit.

UPCOMING EVENTS









For all event and weekly activity information, please visit
austinbaptistchurch.com/EVENTS

WEEKLY REMINDERS













MIDWEEK **MENU**

NEXT WEEK'S MENU
OCTOBER 21

COST: $10 per person;
$5 for kids' meal (12 & under)

Fajitas, rice, beans, and chips & queso

Please note that Midweek dinner is served in the Café.
Seating for dinner is in the ***Heritage Hall*** until 6:30pm.

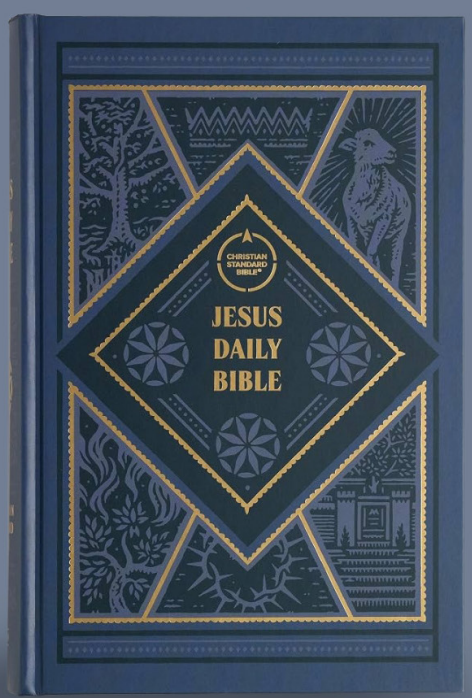
ADVANCE

PRAYER THEME FOR THE WEEK

Pray for the continuing **UNITY** of the body of Christ here at ABC. Pray that we will be like the church of Philippi, united in one *spirit*, one *faith*, one *mind*, and *expecting* God's will to be accomplished in this ADVANCE initiative.

PHILIPPIANS 2:2

ADVANCE
AUSTIN BAPTIST CHURCH



PRE-ORDER
YOUR JESUS DAILY BIBLE

PURCHASE HERE

Pick up your copy beginning
Sunday, October 25th

ABC Women's Ministry

WHERE EVERYONE HAS A SEAT AT THE TABLE

Thank you, ABC, for being a mission-minded church and sending me and Bill, along with an all-star team, to Chiang Mai, Thailand to serve. Please enjoy reading from two of our team members about how the trip impacted them, along with a glimpse of how we joined God in the work He is doing there!

JULIE CHRISTIANSON

Pure Joy are the words that best describe our time in Thailand leading a Women's Retreat for The Gathering, International Church. Our retreat theme was *Retreat, Renew, and Return* and as we interacted with women representing dozens of Christian organizations, it was apparent that God had plans for a time of Spiritual renewal, studying the Word, fellowshipping with the body of Christ, and returning refreshed to their ministries.

Our week was sprinkled with visits to a detention center where we shared testimonies and songs of praise (they already knew in English from a missions partner) and literal raindrops on a tin roof over our heads as we prayed with a Buddhist man to receive Jesus as he asked the blood of Christ to cover him. Remarkably, although we were there in the rainy season, we did not experience rain at any other time other than the couple of minutes during that prayer. And of course, we had to throw in a team building elephant ride because when in Thailand...

A verse that reflects our time there is Colossians 3:16, *"Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."* What a beautiful sight as this played out in the opportunities we had to lead and serve as well as to hear how it is lived out in those serving on the field in Thailand. The trip was evidence of immense prayer support from ABC members so a big thank you for your desire to shine the Light of the World, Jesus Christ, in Southeast Asia!

SONIA CUSHING

The Thailand trip was truly life-changing. Seeing firsthand the depth of spiritual lostness and idolatry within Buddhism was incredibly heavy and heartbreaking. At the same time, we came home deeply encouraged by the faithful work and ministry already taking place throughout Thailand.

continued on next page

SONIA CUSHING (CONT.)

We were blessed to visit Acts of Grace Church and join the pastor on house visits, witnessing firsthand how the church is reaching and caring for people in the community. We also visited the Thai Artisan Village, which helps individuals living in poverty develop practical skills and find meaningful work so they can earn a living and provide for themselves and their families.

Another impactful ministry was ELM Pregnancy Resource Center, which is working to educate young people and help the people of Thailand recognize the value of unborn life. Their work is especially significant in light of the heartbreaking number of callers to Thailand's national unplanned-pregnancy hotline who are seeking abortion, which is currently 94.2%.

One of the greatest blessings of the trip was the opportunity to serve women through a retreat we hosted in partnership with The Gathering International Church. Through the theme *Retreat, Renew, and Return*, we shared biblical truths about stepping away to spend time with the Lord, being renewed through His Word and fellowship, and returning to everyday life strengthened and equipped to serve Him. It was a beautiful weekend of discipleship, fellowship, encouragement, and spiritual renewal. Although the spiritual darkness we witnessed in Thailand was sobering, we also saw so much hope. God is at work through faithful churches, pastors, ministries, and believers who are loving and serving the people of Thailand, and it was an incredible privilege to come alongside them, even for a short time.









WEEK IN REVIEW

Upward Kickoff Game Day

October 10, 2026





















From the Pages of Bill's Notebook

When in seminary, I bought a house. Anita and I loved this little brick house in a historic neighborhood. There were mansions near us, but ours was a humble little 1,300 square foot fixer-upper. Our first night in the house we fell into bed exhausted, but around 2AM we were rudely woken up by a train barreling through our bedroom. Not really, but somehow we had not realized that the train tracks were just a block away. Strangely, we never noticed it any night after that, we slept right through. We repainted the house inside and out, buffed the hardwood floors, reworked a bathroom and a bedroom. While we were living there the pipes ruptured under the house, but through God's amazing provision we were able to get them repaired. We had done some cosmetic work on the house and still found time for seminary classes. God provided two part-time jobs for me and one full-time for Anita. I was also interning at a church close by. We were enjoying our little house and a new puppy that Anita found on a street corner. We had an adequate backyard for the dog to live in. She shared the porch with the washer and dryer. What we didn't know was that the giant rats from the rail yard could eat through a plastic dog food bin we stored on the back porch and they wanted to live close to the food supply. So, right in the middle of exams, we were awoken by loud noises in the attic. While studying late into the night you could hear these large rats having a frat party just above the pull-down staircase in our bedroom. The next day, between exams, final papers, work, and a church event I found some glue traps and stuck them up there. I was confident that these traps would do the trick, but the rats thought otherwise. Apparently, after the party commenced that next night, one reveler got stuck on the trap and ran around the attic while still attached to the glue. I went up the rickety stairs and found a trap covered in fur, but no rat. Apparently he had partied his fur coat right off and was running around naked. Too tired to search for said naked rat, I closed up the attic and fell asleep. The next day, I took exams, studied, and found some more glue traps. I nailed these to the attic floor. Sure enough the party was on again. And sure enough I heard that terrible stuck-to-the-trap noise again. This time I ascended the stairs with the only weapon in the house - a golf club. Fortunately the rat was stuck well enough this time that he was not getting away and I didn't have to use the club. As it turns out "he" was a "she" who had deposited her little ones in the attic too. Unfortunately they all had to be dispatched to the "rat hereafter".

The apostle Paul, worried about the early church, reminded them that they were not like those who partied all night, but they belonged to The Light. He says: *"You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet"* (1 Thessalonians 5:5-8 NIV). When we belong to Jesus we no longer act like varmints, but we begin to act like Jesus.



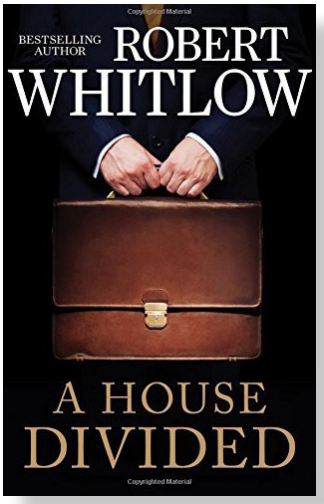
Hang in there people. God is glad to be with us. I'm praying for us all.

In His Joy,

BILL MCGINNIS

PASTOR OF CARE

ABC Library



A House Divided by Robert Whitlow

Robert Whitlow practices law and lives in North Carolina. He had never thought about writing books, but he had the idea that "people don't realize how much the past influences the present." His idea led him to write a novel based on that topic. He is now the author of 24 books, a film-maker, and a winner of the Christy Award for Contemporary Fiction. Four of his bestselling books have been made into movies. Whitlow is best known for writing Christian legal thrillers that are set in the South; his fans praise the books for his courtroom knowledge, his complex characters, and his inclusion of spiritual matters. Many reviewers compare him to John Grisham.

In ***A House Divided***, the main character Corbin Gage is a Georgia lawyer dealing with alcoholism, or his love for "mountain water." Whitlow presents alcoholism in a real way. Relationships with Corbin's family have been negatively affected by this condition; things have become so bad that his son, Ray, threatens not to let him see his grandson. Corbin's law firm is in financial trouble because of this addiction. His son and daughter, Roxie, are also lawyers; they have gone their own way but are forced to work with their father for the sake of their community on a tort case for three boys who have non-Hodgkins's lymphoma due to an alleged chemical exposure. The defendant is the largest local employer, a fertilizer company. The pressure of the case threatens to destroy the thinning family connections altogether. This book is a story of redemption, God's grace, healing, and forgiveness. A great legal story and a great story of spiritual awakening.

CONTACT: Rita Ervin

Email **library@austinbaptistchurch.com**

or visit us online at **austinbaptistchurch.com/LIBRARY**

LIBRARY HOURS

SUNDAYS - 9:45AM-11:15AM

WEDNESDAYS - 5:00PM-7:30PM

OUR RESPONSE TO **GOD'S FAITHFULNESS**

ATTENDANCE — 10.11.2026

8:45 AM WORSHIP	**534**
11:15 AM WORSHIP	**320**
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP	**711**

FINANCIAL REPORT — 10.11.2026

ACCOUNT	OCT. 11, 2026	YTD
GREAT COMMISSION FUND *(GENERAL)*	**$69,572.79**	**$3,814,848.78**
DESIGNATED		**$179,348.46**
LIGHT THE WAY - *COMBINED*		**$729,608.68**
TOTAL GIVING	**$74,557.20**	**$4,733,516.92**

JOIN US SUNDAY FOR WORSHIP!

8:45 AM | Choir-led Worship
10:00 AM | Bible Fellowship Groups
11:15 AM | Band-led Worship

HAVE A QUESTION OR NEED PRAYER?

CONTACT US!

ABC CHURCH OFFICE

Call **512.491.9600** or visit **austinbaptistchurch.com/TEAM**

ABC PRAYER TEAM

Email Bill McGinnis at **billm@austinbaptistchurch.com**

FOR PUBLICATION CONSIDERATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Mariah Parker, Director of Communications

- **EMAIL: mariahp@austinbaptistchurch.com**
- **CALL: 512.334.8247**

Please submit articles and items for The Bridge by the Friday BEFORE publication.

7016 RIBELIN RANCH DR. AUSTIN, TX, 78750