

Portraits of Our Ministry Team

R. Maurice Hollingsworth, Senior Pastor

Dr. Hollingsworth is a native of Tennessee. He joined the staff of First Baptist Church in January of 2006. He has a bachelor's degree from the University of Memphis in International Business, a M.Div. and a Ph.D. in New Testament from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. After completing his doctorate, he and his family served as Southern Baptist Missionaries in Taipei, Taiwan where he taught at the Taiwan Baptist Seminary. Later he served in Tennessee before he was called to serve First Baptist Church in November of 2005. He currently is the chairman of the Rio Grande Baptist Association Management Team and he serves as a trustee of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico. In addition to his service at First Baptist Church, he also serves as a chaplain for the Rotary Club of Las Cruces and as a volunteer chaplain at Memorial Medical Center in Las Cruces. He is married to Nancy Blass Hollingsworth and they have two children, Elizabeth and Blass.

Mike Edwards, Minister of Music

Mike Edwards is a native of Tennessee. He holds a bachelor's degree from Baylor University. He joined the church staff in July of 1994. He is active in the Singing Churchmen of New Mexico. He also produces and directs the annual First Baptist Church Living Christmas Tree. He is married to Linda Edwards, and they have two children, Jonna and Blake.

Richard King, Minister of Education

Richard King is a native of Arizona. He holds a bachelor's degree in Agriculture and an M.R.E. degree from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He is active in the affairs of the Rio Grande Baptist Association, serving on the management team. He also serves as a consultant with the Baptist Convention of New Mexico and Lifeway in the areas of Sunday School, Discipleship Training, and Vacation Bible School. He joined the church staff in February of 1995. He is married to Cherry King, and they have two children, Mindy and Sam. Brian Clayburgh, Minister of Youth On November 5, 2006 First Baptist Church of Las Cruces called Brian Clayburgh as their new minister of youth. Before becoming the minister of youth, Brian was a youth ministry intern for two years. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from New Mexico State University, where he was active in the leadership of Campus Crusade for Christ and a college worship experience called Night Of Worship. He also assists the church with multi-media presentations, video and audio editing, and video productions. He is married to Stesha Clayburgh. Larry Henson, Minister to Senior Adults Larry Henson became a Christian in 1961. Soon after his conversion he moved to California from New Mexico to pursue career opportunities in the aerospace industry. As a church member, Larry served in various capacities through the years and has taught in-depth Bible studies in small groups since the early 1970's. Larry was ordained as deacon in 1992 at High Desert Baptist Church located in Phelan, California. Larry answered God's call to public gospel ministry in 1993 and became a staff member as assistant pastor, serving with Alton Gansky, Senior Pastor and Mike Fell, Associate Pastor. His duties included teaching an adult class each Sunday, specialized ministry to their senior adults and aiding the senior pastor in the overall care and teaching of the congregation. Larry was presented to an ordination council of the High Desert Baptist Association in April, 1997. His ordination service was also in April, 1997 at High Desert Baptist Church in Phelan, California. Larry was called to First Baptist Church of San Rafael, California to be their pastor in February, 1998 where he served until he moved back to New Mexico. Larry and his wife Pat are members of First Baptist Church, Las Cruces. They have three sons and three grandchildren. Alisa Vandevender, Director of Children's Ministries Alisa Vandevender is a native New Mexican, born and raised in Roswell. After graduating from Eastern New Mexico University with a degree in special education, she came to Las Cruces in January of 1995 where she taught special education with the Las Cruces Public Schools for fourteen years. In June of 2002, she and her husband moved their membership to First Baptist Church. Alisa directs the Kids in Action group as parents worship during Encounter. She and her husband provide leadership as captains of a GROW Outreach team. She was called to serve as Director of Children's Ministry in May of 2008. Alisa married her husband, Bruce, in 1997, and they have two children, Leanne and Ryan.