

# *Folks of Faith*

*'A Celebration of  
the Human Spirit'*

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# Grayson church building on faith and hard work

By KEITH KAPPES  
JOURNAL-TIMES

Paul Schmidt, pastor of Grayson's First Baptist Church, believed his congregation had enough faith to move mountains. But he didn't ask them to go that far.

Instead, they are moving enough concrete, lumber, wiring and other building materials to create a new, 8,000-square foot "ministry center."

"When the building is finished in late spring or early summer, we will have a million dollar facility for about half that amount," the pastor said proudly. "Our members are providing the bulk of the manual labor."

Schmidt said the volunteer laborers range in age from 13 to 78 and all have shown a great attitude since the project began in October.

"You can sense the pride that everyone feels with doing something this important to support the Lord's work in our church and community," he said.

The steel framework, concrete floor, plumbing and other complicated work was assigned to paid contractors but everything else is being done by church volunteers, sometimes as many as 25 at a time.

The church started saving money for the project about four years ago and decided to go forward in September, about 18 months after Schmidt arrived in Grayson following several years as a pastor in Inez.

The pastor reported that one of the church members on the project had secured an outside job because of how well he had performed as a volunteer electrician.

The new building will include a multi-purpose room large enough for basketball and other recreational activities, church dinners, musical programs, meetings and other events.

The pastor is especially excited about starting an after-school program for middle school students. But that won't be all.

"We intend to serve all ages in this building in many different ways," Schmidt added.

A unique exterior feature of the new edifice will be the church logo in brick on both ends of the building. The logo was designed by Grant Harper and is being reproduced in brick by John Steele of Steele Construction. Both are church members.

Founded in 1920, First Baptist Church of Grayson has an average Sunday attendance of about 250. It is part of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In keeping with tradition, Pastor Schmidt's name will be displayed on the cornerstone of the new structure.

"Of course I didn't request it but was informed that

the same thing was done with our educational building in 1959 and the sanctuary in 1968," he stated.

As for the potential impact of the new building, the pastor said:

"We already have been blessed in more ways than we can count."



Skilled brick mason John Steele is reproducing the church logo in brick on each end of the facility. (Photo by Keith Kappes)

## On the cover



Pastor Paul Schmidt of First Baptist Church of Grayson paused on a volunteer work day in front of the construction project.

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