

Dear fantastic FBC Student Ministry family,

Welcome to the most splendid adventure of the Christmas season at FBC: TREE LOT!

If you've purchased a tree from the FBC tree lot before, you've seen the incredible operation that our students and families put on every year. What you may not have seen is the success of this fundraiser and what it enables us to do with our students. This fundraiser brings in tens of thousands of dollars for the life of our group and the ministry we get to do together. Using these funds, we're able to make the full experience of FBC Student Ministry, including summer mission trips to places in the States and to Guatemala and South Africa, a real possibility for all of our students. Pulling off this level of success for the Tree Lot does require some special effort, though, from all of our student families. Thankfully, this fundraiser has been going on a long time so we've learned a lot and can make an easier on-ramp for folks doing Tree Lot for the first time.

What do we sell?

Our tree lot sells Carolina-grown Fraser fir trees in sizes ranging from 6' all the way up to 10'+. We also sell Fraser fir wreaths (24" and 34") and boxwood wreaths (24"), along with various accoutrements for the Christmas season like bows and tree bases.

Stages of Tree Lot

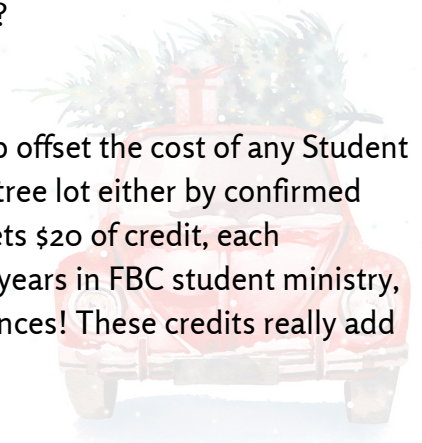
- **Pre-Order:** Preorders happen in the month leading up to Tree Lot, normally from mid-October through the Lot opening in late November. This process helps us prepare the number of trees and wreaths we need to supply in order to have a successful season. The preorder form will stay open for orders entered prior to a customer coming to the lot to purchase a tree. You can find that form [here](#).
- **Lot Open:** Our Tree Lot opens on delivery day, Saturday November 23, and will remain open for the 3 weeks after, closing on Saturday, December 14. We're open every day during that period with the exception of Thanksgiving Day. During the week our lot is open from 4:30-8pm (Black Friday open from 12pm-8pm), Saturdays from 8am-8pm and on Sundays from 1pm-8pm.

Why Preorders?

On top of helping us be the most prepared we can be for Tree Lot, preorders really help us make sure students get the credit they deserve for trees and wreaths sold. Each time a student documents a pre-order commitment using our online form and that person later purchases a tree or wreath from the lot, the student gets credit for the sale in their Tree Lot account. How does this work?

Student Family Credits

Each Student Ministry family has a Tree Lot account that they can use to help offset the cost of any Student Ministry retreat, outing, or trip. This money is raised exclusively through the tree lot either by confirmed pre-order sales or working a shift on the lot. Each preordered sale of a tree gets \$20 of credit, each preordered wreath \$10, and each shift worked \$10. Over the course of their 7 years in FBC student ministry, some families earn over \$1000 of Tree Lot funds to help pay for their experiences! These credits really add up and can go a long way in helping pay for all the Student Ministry things!



Volunteer Shifts

Pulling off an operation like Tree Lot relies heavily on volunteer engagement and commitment. Each time our lot opens we need between 6 and 10 volunteers to operate successfully. So what does that mean for students and families? Plenty of opportunity to grab a shift and earn some credits! Each shift is roughly 4 hours of committed time, but we can be flexible and make it work if you can't arrive right at 5 during the week. What do volunteers do? All kinds of fun!

- **Tree Lot Captain:** Adult who monitors the lot, checks that tree poles are stocked and fluffed, and supervises student volunteers while the lot is open. This person also checks our stock at the end of the night, helps students water the trees, and closes up the lot itself.
- **Chainsaw Operator:** Adult who operates the electric chainsaws to provide a fresh cut for our customers and helps students in wrapping and securing trees to customer vehicles.
- **Tree House Captain:** Adult in charge of the checkout and monitoring station in the Tree House (this one even gets a heater on colder nights!). This person also has direct access to all the directions, guides, and info booklets on how the Lot functions, while serving as the primary point person for each shift.
- **Tree House Adult:** Assist the House Captain in the checkout procedure on busy days and help monitor the lot and customers (also gets to share the heat on cold nights!)
- **Student Volunteers:** Our front line folks offering exceptional customer service. They help customers pick out the perfect tree, carry it to the chainsaw area, and help get it to their cars. Students also help keep the lot clean and tidy, restock tree poles, and maintain a fun and festive vibe on the lot.

Lot Setup and Tree Delivery Day (11.23)

Our first opportunity to get volunteer credit is on delivery day. This is our opening Saturday (this year, November 23) and is a FULL day. We start with a group breakfast at 8:30am, followed by setting up the lot itself (display poles, lights, checkout house, etc.). Then, the real fun begins: a climate controlled 18-wheeler backs into the Activity Center parking lot and we unload and sort all 635 Christmas Trees! Once all the trees are unloaded, counted, sorted, and set up, we're ready to open up our lot for sales that same afternoon. It sounds like a lot, but it's also a whole lot of fun.

Whew! That's a whole lot of stuff in a short space. I know it seems daunting, but I promise Tree Lot is worth the effort. Apart from being the most successful Student fundraiser I have EVER seen from a church, it is also a fun part of the Christmas season that our folks look forward to every year. We can't get that level of success and have all that fun without YOU though. We are so excited to welcome new families into this adventure and have you as part of our Tree Lot season! So get to calling for those preorders, fill out that preorder form, and be on the lookout for the volunteer shift sign-up coming soon!

Stay awesome,

Josh

