With a desire to work in full-time ministry, Chad Rozelle recently accepted a position as assistant pastor at First Baptist Church. Having already jumped on board many of the church's ministry ventures, Rozelle will be assisting the church in expanding current programs, organizing new ones and simply helping out wherever he's needed.

Coming from working a full-time job and doing full-time ministry, Rozelle is excited to be able to focus on ministry alone. "I felt God was leading in that direction," said Rozelle, noting it was very apparent God opened doors for this opportunity.

Rozelle always knew how to answer "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Having been raised as a missionary kid, he always had a desire to serve God.

He joins Pastor Gordon Penfold and Pastor Ismael Lopez as they prepare people for the work of the ministry. With a desire to teach, Rozelle is excited to fill in at the pulpit when Penfold needs to be gone with his Fresh Start Ministries. He also looks forward to the mentoring aspect of working with Penfold.

Other ventures for the assistant pastor will be working with the young adults and young married couples as well as eventually coordinating a junior and senior high youth group. He will be helping with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) group and hopes to build relationships and connections with the youth.

Born in South America, Rozelle spent his first 10 years there while his mom worked as a missionary. "I enjoyed it tremendously," he said, noting he grew up speaking both Spanish and English. He has been refreshing his Spanish skills by interacting with First Baptist's Vida Abundante community.

Rozelle lived in Canada and Georgia for several years where he got to live as a “regular American kid” before moving to Scotland as a 16-year-old. His family grew from three to seven when his mother married his dad’s brother, and he and his sister gained three more siblings. In Scotland, he experienced public, private and homeschooling situations while his parents did mission work.

Returning to America for college, Rozelle attended Northland Baptist Bible College in Dunbar, Wis. and then graduated from Cornerstone Bible Institute in Hot Springs, S.D. with degrees in Bible and pastoral studies.

While in South Dakota, he worked with youth ministry for all five years he was there and served as the youth pastor for two of those years.

He got connected with Penfold through mutual friends at his church in Hot Springs, and has spent several weeks in Holyoke interacting with people at First Baptist.

“You don’t get caught up in the rush,” he said, noting Holyoke has a nice pace. Growing up in a city of over seven million people, Rozelle finds Holyoke a bit “less intense.” Even though people say there isn’t much to do in Holyoke, Rozelle has kept busy and has something going on every night of the week including worship music practice, Bible studies, small groups and church services.

When asked about his experiences here, Rozelle simply said, “So far, so good.” He is looking forward to all the new possibilities and open doors that are waiting for him in Holyoke and at First Baptist Church.