



Christian Challenger

Vol. 62

June 10, 2015

NO. 22

HAS YOUR DAD HAD A COW LATELY?

Consider giving one in his name for Father's Day! Heifer International provides animals to families in poverty. The animal provides food for the family, but, more importantly, it provides a way for a family to enhance its livelihood for the future. The World Outreach Ministry is sponsoring this project. The church will send an acknowledgement card to Dad, or whomever you wish to honor. We would appreciate your check arriving prior to Father's Day, June 21. Make your check payable to First Christian Church, attention Heifer Project, and we will send the money and list of donated animals to the organization. The choices are as follows:

- Flock of chicks/ducks/geese \$20 (specify) _____
- Tree seedling \$30 Share of a tree seedling \$10
- Honeybees \$30 Rabbits \$60
- Pig, sheep or goat \$120 (specify) _____
- Share of a rabbit/pig/sheep/goat \$10 (specify) _____
- Llama \$150 Share of a llama \$20
- Water Buffalo \$250 Share of a water buffalo \$25
- Heifer \$500 Share of a heifer \$50
- "The Ark" \$5,000 Where most needed

Given by _____

In honor of _____

Father's day card? yes no

Address for card _____

So if you don't want to give your dad another tie this Father's Day, please consider this worthy project. You can honor him by helping someone in need.

FAVORITE HYMNS

From July 12 to August 9, we'll be worshipping in the Fellowship Hall. We'll be singing some of our church's favorite hymns as selected by our congregation. Because we'll be using the screen, you won't need to limit your selections to the hymns found in the Chalice Hymnal. If you would like to submit a hymn title, please do so by using the form below. Drop the form in the collection plate or bring it by the church office. We'll use as many of your selections as possible.

My Favorite Hymns:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please return this portion to the church office or drop in the collection plate.

PRIME TIMERS LUNCHEON

This Sunday, June 14th
12:00 noon, Fellowship Hall

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOUSE

We have signed up to work on the Habitat for Humanity House at 1204 Burnett Street on Saturday, June 20. There will be two shifts, from 8:00 AM to noon and 1:00 to 4:30 PM. It looks like our task will be exterior painting, so anyone can do it. Please sign up in the church office, 692-2282, by June 12 so we can let the Habitat folks know how many to expect. They will have supplies; we just need to wear paint clothes and show up. If some people would like to supply snacks and cold water, please let Ann Hunter, 692-2324, know. There will be a Habitat staff person present to supervise our work. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY - JULY 18-22, 2015 Columbus, Ohio

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) General Assembly occurs every other year. It's an opportunity for Disciples from across the U.S. and Canada to gather and worship and learn together. The General Assembly features preaching by renowned pastors and theologians and provides a space for ministers & lay leaders to share their experiences and ideas for mission and creativity, and includes a business meeting, where Disciples vote upon resolutions put forth by committees or redraw regional lines. Please visit www.disciples.org/ga for more information.

CHALLENGER TO BE EVERY TWO WEEKS NO CHALLENGER NEXT WEEK!

During the months of June & July the "Challenger" will be published every two weeks and will return to weekly publication on August 5th.

The deadline for articles to be placed in the "Challenger" is 5:00 pm on Mondays. Articles may be dropped off in the church office or emailed to Susan at:

susan@firstchristianwf.com.

This Sunday:

8:40 & 10:45 Services:

"The Kingdom of God Starts Small"

Mark 4:26-34

Dr. David B. Hartman, Jr.

5:14 CGRM Worship Service:

Rev. Dave Brummett

Across Dave's Desk...

The Christian Won...What Does It Mean? (Part II)



St. Paul's Cathedral during the London Blitz, 1940

Three weeks ago, I wrote about the implications of the recent British Parliamentary elections, in which Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservative Party won an outright majority, while Ed Miliband's Labour Party and Nick Clegg's Social Democrats lost significant numbers of seats. The size of the victory was stunning, as preliminary polls had indicated a close election. Cameron was returned as Prime Minister; Miliband and Clegg resigned as their parties' leaders. What struck me most forcibly was that Cameron was the only acknowledged Christian. Miliband and Clegg had talked openly of their atheism, which seemed to stir little anxiety in an ancient Christian realm where only 54% of the population now self-identifies as Christian. Most pundits tried to explain the results in political or economic terms, but one wonders how much the candidates' religious beliefs, or lack thereof, played on the minds of the voters once they got into the booth.

You may have watched PBS' Masterpiece Classic series, "Wolf Hall," based on Hilary Mantel's acclaimed book and its sequel, "Bring Up the Bodies." The setting was the inception of the English Reformation, and focused on the roles played by King Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, Thomas More and—the central character—Thomas Cromwell, who secretly harbored Evangelical sympathies. Books and series alike were brilliant, and sparked new interest in both Cromwell and his mentor, Cardinal Wolsey. In Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, Wolsey counseled Cromwell:

*Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's;
Thy God's, and truth's. Then if thou fall'st, O Cromwell,
Thou fall'st a blessed martyr.*

"Blessed martyr" is not a term often heard in secular society, nor would "God, country, and truth" be invoked in conjunction with one another, except ironically, or sarcastically.

I'm not quite sure why atheism ascended so quickly in the United Kingdom—indeed, all of western Europe—but perhaps it had to do with the self-indulgence that prosperous secularism inspires, even among Christians. True Christian witness calls for self-sacrifice—if not of one's life, then at least in one's behavior. As G.K. Chesterton wrote, "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried." The Holy Spirit is different from the *zeitgeist*, "the spirit of the age," but if honest observers see no distinction between the behavior of Christians and that of unabashed secularists, is there any wonder they would prefer the straightforward lifestyle over the one alloyed by hypocrisy? The difference is noted most keenly by the embattled Christians of the Middle East, sub-

Saharan Africa, Latin America and East Asia, whose own faith demands much of them, sometimes to the point of their lives. For them, "blessed martyr" is more than an accolade shrouded in antiquity.

Julian Barnes is an atheist, and an insightful writer (the two are not necessarily exclusive). In *Levels of Life*, he wrote of the spiritual emptiness he felt after his wife's death: "When we killed—or exiled—God, we also killed ourselves...No God, no afterlife, no us. We were right to kill Him, of course, this long-standing imaginary friend of ours. And we weren't going to get an afterlife anyway. But we sawed off the branch we were sitting on. And the view from there, from that height—even if it was only an illusion of a view—wasn't so bad."

The recent General Election doesn't prove the UK is embarking on another Great Awakening. The New Atheists have not yet become as unfashionable as polyester leisure suits. But whatever else the implications of the British election, at least one of them may be that many of the natives still like the view from the heights of their Christian treehouse, and are not yet ready to saw off the branch.

DAVE

PRAY DURING RAMADAN

It is fitting at all times to pray for peace, and to remember that all people, regardless of faith, are made in the image of God. This year, the month-long Muslim holy season of Ramadan runs from June 17 to July 17. Unlike increasingly secular western Christianity (see above), Islam is a religion that demands much from its adherents, including prayer five times daily and alms for the poor. There are special commandments during Ramadan, notably fasting from sunrise to sunset.

This year, the Persecuted Church Ministry team is asking for special prayers during Islam's holy season. Over the last three years, ISIS has accelerated in violence during Ramadan, and though Islamist terror groups like ISIS inflict unspeakable cruelty on Christians and other religious minorities, most of its violence is directed against other Muslims. Last year, ISIS declared a caliphate on the opening day of Ramadan, and there is great concern that this season it will launch even more vicious attacks, particularly targeting religious shrines.

Voice of the Martyrs is offering a guidebook called "30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World," a limited number of which are available in the church office. As the guide notes,

Through prayer, we engage in an act of love for Muslim people around the world—sharing their burdens, understanding their concerns and petitioning God to help them. In this way, we fulfill the command of Jesus to love our neighbors.

This Ramadan, may we pray for our Muslim neighbors, even as we continue to pray for our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters. By God's grace, may the love of Christ be revealed and peace prevail upon the earth.

TEXOMA PRAISE

Thanking God for an end to the drought.

"We give thanks to you, O Lord our God, with our whole heart, and we will glorify your name forever." Psalm 86:12

June 28, 2015
6:30 - Bugscuffie Praise Band
7:30 - Prayer Service
Silkes Lake Pavilion

SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

6/14: Harry Tonemah, Ronnie James; Marjorie Parker, Presiding
6/21: Emily Wilson, Eddie Tucker; Kerry Roach, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

6/14: Fred Gentry, Amy James, Diana Collins
6/21: Sandy Hay, Liz Thomas

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

6/14: Catherine Earley & Amy James
6/21: Sarah Stewart & Diana Collins

JUNE DIACONATE SERVERS

Diana Collins, Fred Gentry, Sandy Hay, Liz & Tim Thomas, Jody & Brandi Brannon, Donna Long, Travis Ralls, Sherry Tucker, Philip Dudenhoeffer, Catherine Earley, Amy James, Sarah Stewart, Luke Machado, Madi Showalter.

SUNDAY ELDER COMMUNION VISITATION

The Elders will be happy to take communion to anyone who can't come to the worship service. Call the church office and your name will be added to our list.

SERMONS

Each Sunday the previous week's sermon is available in print form in the Narthex of the Chapel and Sanctuary. Sermons are also available on our website, www.firstchristianwichtafalls.org, under the "Worship" tab.

PERSECUTED CHURCH PRAYERS THIS WEEK ARE FOR

Pray for "Bagus" and other Indonesian Christian converts from Islam who have sacrificed all to follow Christ.

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, June 14, 2015

- 8:40 Worship (Chapel)
- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
- 12:00 Prime Timers Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)
- 5:14 CGRM Evening Ministry (Fellowship Hall)
- 6:00 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups:
 - Anger Recovery (Rm 304)
 - Chemical Addictions Recovery (Rm 305)
 - Parenting (Rm 306)
 - Women's C.A.R.E. (Rm 307)
 - Family Challenges (Rm 310)

Monday, June 15, 2014

- 7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)
- 10:00 Leave for Niner's Youth Conference (Grade 9) (June 15-20)
(Disciples Crossing-Athens TX)
- 10:00 Leave for CYF Conference (Grades 10-12) (June 15-20)
(Disciples Crossing-Athens TX)
- 10:15 FCC Staff Mtg (Office)
- 7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, June 16, 2015

- 7:30 CCF Picture Day (Parlor)
- 2:00 Library Committee (Library)

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

- 7:00am Elders' Breakfast (Rm 402/Chapel)
- 7:00pm Chancel Choir (Grade 9-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, June 18, 2015

- 9:00 CWF Group 3 Birthday Breakfast (IHOP-SW Parkway)
- 1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)

Friday, June 19, 2015

- 2:30 CCF Desserts with Dad (Fellowship Hall & Rm 405)

Sunday, June 21, 2015

FATHER'S DAY

- 8:40 Worship (Chapel)
- 9:30 Sunday School
- 10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
- NO Sunday Evening Activities

Monday, June 22, 2014

- 7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)
- 10:15 FCC Staff Mtg (Office)
- 7:00 125th Anniversary Committee Mtg (Rm 402)
- 7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

- 2:00 Library Committee (Library)

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

- 7:00am Elders' Breakfast (Rm 402/Chapel)
- 7:00 Chancel Choir (Grade 9-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, June 25, 2015

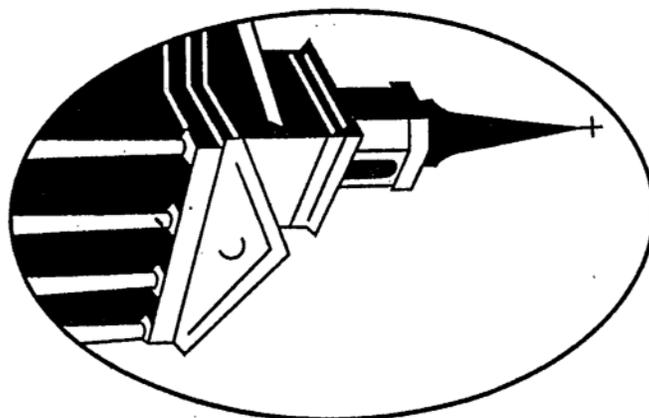
- 1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)

THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

Dr. David Hartman, Senior Minister	692-2282	Home Phone Number:
Rev. Will Brown, Interim Associate Minister	712-621-7705	
Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries	763-8515	
Justin Dickey, Director of Youth & Family Ministries	936-645-1215	
Sarah Cook, Director of Children's Ministries	763-2703	
Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator	691-7265	
Rev. Dave Brummett, Director of Recovery Ministries	613-2112	
Heather Dickerson, Director of Children Come First	687-2231	
Karen Bivona, Director of Young Ages School	692-3640	
Susan Marris, Executive Secretary	Tina Williams, Financial Secretary	
Pam Poulos, Receptionist	Debbie Watson, Organist	
Church Number 940-692-2282	FAX Number 940-696-3085	
Church e-mail: susan@firstchristianwf.com		
Web Page: www.firstchristianwf.com		

FOR THE RECORD . . .

Sunday School	85
8:40 Worship . . . 59	10:45 Worship . . . 151
Total Worship 210	
CGRM Evening Ministry	28
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$16,698.52
Sunday Receipts for 6/7/15	\$13,394.11
Through June 7: Income \$324,810.98	Expenses \$333,451.21



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