



# Christian Challenger

Vol. 62

August 19, 2015

NO. 28



*125 Years of Service*

1890-2015

REMEMBER our past. RENEW our commitment.  
REJOICE IN OUR LORD.

## FALL SERMON SERIES

In his book *The Irresistible Community*, Bill Donahue makes this observation about authentic Christian community...

*We all want a place where our stories matter, our voices are heard, our uniqueness is celebrated, our failures are embraced, and our hopes are unleashed. That kind of deep, life-changing community was modeled perfectly by Jesus and the ragged bunch of disciples with whom he chose to spend his time.*

For 125 years, First Christian Church has been an irresistible community, seeking to follow the example of Jesus and his disciples.

On the Sundays leading up to Anniversary Sunday (October 25), we'll spend time reflecting on the witness of First Christian Church as a dynamic faith community across the years. And we'll look ahead to imagine what "irresistible community" will look like in the years to come.

Join us for a special sermon series by Dr. Dave Hartman and Rev. Renee Hoke.

## GARAGE GIVEAWAY ALMOST HERE

Church members have generously donated housewares and furniture for MSU international student use. On Saturday, August 22, will be the first distribution of boxes. Volunteers can meet at 10:00 AM at the Jerry's Sporting Goods building to load boxes to transport to Heritage Church and then unload them there. The young people will receive the items after their orientation at the church that evening. On Sunday, we need volunteers with muscles and pickups to move furniture to the apartments. These helpers need to meet at Jerry's as well.

Jerry hopes to print t-shirts for participants, so please call the church, 692-2282, to let us know if you plan to help. Give Pam your name and size. Many thanks to all who have helped with this project! Call Ann Hunter 940-631-5661 with questions.

## GOD BLESS TEACHERS!

Join us this  
Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>,  
during the 10:45 am Worship Service  
in the Sanctuary  
for the  
**Blessing of Teachers**  
Everyone welcome!

## ANNIVERSARY MEMORY PROGRAM & FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

This Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>  
12:00 noon, Fellowship Hall  
Program: "125th Anniversary Memory" by Dr. Hartman  
Menu: "Eating of the Greens" - Choice of salads,  
baked potatoes with all the trimmings, and dessert.  
Cost is by donation.  
Everyone welcome!  
Please make your reservations by calling  
the church office, 692-2282.

## CHRISTIAN MEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Wednesday, August 26th  
6:30 pm, Fellowship Hall  
Speaker: Deanna Watson, Editor  
Wichita Falls Times Record News

## BABY DEDICATION SERVICE TO BE HELD

There will be a Baby Dedication Service on Sunday, August 30th, during the 10:45 worship service. If you are interested in participating, please call Susan in the church office, 692-2282, with the following info: child's full name and parents' names by Monday, August 24th.

## This Sunday:

**8:40 & 10:45 Services:**

"And Then They Bailed"

John 6:56-69

Dr. David B. Hartman, Jr.

**5:14 CGRM Worship Service:**

Rev. Dave Brummett

## Across Dave's Desk...

### *Jesus and the Court*



*From Domenichino's Rebuke of Adam and Eve, 1626*

A friend of mine said he had lived too long. He is strong and fit for a man in his '60's, his mind is clear, his sense of humor is undimmed, and his family is loving and beloved. My friend's lament was more than the usual tut-tutting that old codgers like me have directed, since time immemorial, toward young whippersnappers over trivialities like hair, fashion and music. It was, instead, his sense that the solid rocks he had been standing upon were crumbling into sand.

The ancient conviction that marriage is between a man and a woman—the only conjugal relationship capable of natural procreation—was ruled defunct by a 5-4 Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell vs. Hodges*. In his dissent, Chief Justice John Roberts observed that, "The court invalidates the marriage laws of more than half the states and orders the transformation of a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia, for the Kalahari Bushmen and the Han Chinese, the Carthaginians and the Aztecs. Just who do we think we are?"

However much the ruling contravened the ancient basis of human society, it was not out of line with the current cultural sensibility. In the generation about to inherit the earth—those persons under 40—a majority accepted the decision without demur and in many instances celebrated it. Many—perhaps most—of the celebrants were moved by generous impulses toward inclusiveness and equality. Some of us have family members who felt joy and relief at the judicial affirmation of their unions. And it is not as if straight people, as a group, have a sterling record these last few decades defending the honor and sanctity of holy wedlock. Like the buttresses of a cathedral, the essential virtues that uphold marriage—devotion, fidelity, a willingness to restrain one's own impulses in order to honor God and cherish the other—have been toppling over the last few decades until the only remaining constraint in today's hyper-sexualized culture is mutual consent. The hook-up culture, serial adultery, the prevalence of "no-fault" divorces, cohabitation, and the burgeoning number of children born out of wedlock all signify (intentionally or not) an implicit contempt for the sacramental nature of marriage.

Given the logic of the majority opinion, it is probable that, within a decade or two, the Court will be obliged to address laws forbidding polygamy. In his dissent, Chief Justice Roberts anticipated the eventuality: "From the standpoint of history and tradition, a leap from opposite-sex marriage to same-sex marriage is much greater than one from a two-person union to plural unions, which have deep roots in some

cultures around the world." Nathan Collier, featured on a reality television show called "Sister Wives," said he will sue the state of Montana if he is denied the right to have two wives simultaneously. "It's about marriage equality," he said. A civil litigator is reviewing Montana's bigamy laws. Legal nerves are twitching. Stay tuned.

For Christians, the issue is about more than a Supreme Court ruling, or wherever the culture is now. The Supreme Court is not our Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ is. The spirit of the age—the *zeitgeist*—and the Holy Spirit are not the same things. Our primary responsibility as followers of Jesus Christ, to the extent that divine grace enables us to do so, is to follow his commandments. As Jesus taught, the second greatest commandment is to love our neighbors as ourselves. He did not define "neighbor" on the basis of race, language, creed, or sexual orientation. Nonetheless, when Jesus talked about marriage, he cited scripture: at the beginning, God made persons male and female [Genesis 1.27]; a man should leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, that "the two shall become one flesh" [Genesis 2.24]. Jesus said this in response to a Pharisee who noted that the law of Moses permitted divorce. Jesus responded that Moses allowed divorce because of the hardness of human hearts, but it was not what God intended at the beginning. He added, "I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another commits adultery" [Matthew 19.3-9]. I wish Jesus had not said what he said about divorce and remarriage, because it judges me. In fact, I wish that my Lord Jesus had not said a lot of things, and that he would be more accommodating with my personal agenda. But I cannot pretend that Jesus did not say it, or claim to be his faithful disciple if I only heed the commandments I like while disregarding the ones that judge me. If I am to be his disciple, I must accept the righteousness of his judgement, pray for forgiveness, and trust in his merciful grace. As a sinner, I do not have the moral authority to judge any two people who, in good faith, want to marry each other. But Jesus does, and as a Christian I cannot disregard what my Lord and Savior has decreed.

The church and the state are not the same. The state can do whatever it wants to do—or whatever five justices of the Supreme Court tells it to do. The church, if it is to be true to its Creator, must do what it believes God commands it to do, which means that the marriages performed within its sanctuary are not civil unions, but holy matrimony. Whatever my personal or political sympathies might be—and I do believe that civil unions with full spousal benefits may be just and necessary—I can find nothing in the Bible, or in Christian tradition, that indicates that holy matrimony is intended to be anything other than a solemn and public covenant between one man and one woman in the presence of God.

*DAVE*

*Prayer: Almighty and merciful God, in these confusing and turbulent days, give us grace to put our Lord and Savior first. In his name, Amen.*

### JUST DO IT PRAYER GROUP

It's not too late to sign up for daily text messages or emails reminding you to pray. Renee Hoke is leading this group. Call the church office to sign up!

### STUDENT ART DISPLAY

The deadline for receiving student art has been extended until Monday, August 24. Bring work to the History Room across from the library. Include the name of the student, grade, and a phone number or email address, please.



## New Midweek Ministry Begins September 16<sup>th</sup>

Join First Christian Church as we embark on a new series of programs for ALL ages! We'll gather together for a meal then break out for group Bible studies!

- 5:30-6:00PM      Family Meal
- 6:00-7:00PM      Young Disciples (K-5)  
Check In (6-12)  
Adult Studies
- 7:00-8:00PM      Open Gym

As Disciples we are called into fellowship with one another and with Christ to lead a life of love and compassion. To educate and advocate for those who cannot and to serve others as Christ served those around him. As Disciples we are named to be the wholeness in a fragmented world. Join us for a new community of individuals gathered in Christ's name and bringing together all generations and demographics. FEAST offers a place for fellowship, education, advocacy, and service in order to transform us into better Disciples of Christ. Join us for dinner followed by separate studies for children, youth, and adults alike.

2 Corinthians 5:17: *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."*

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 \* **OPEN FLOWER DATES** \*  
 \* If you would like to donate the flowers for the \*  
 \* worship service in the Sanctuary, the following dates \*  
 \* are open: **August 23 & 30**. To donate or for more info, \*  
 \* call Peggy Fitts, Flower Coordinator, 781-2426. \*  
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### PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE IF A CHURCH MEMBER IS HOSPITALIZED

Due to a policy change and the HIPAA law, URHCS Chaplain's Office informed the church office that they are no longer allowed to give us a list of the new patient admissions into the hospital each day. They are allowed to give us room numbers if we call and ask about a specific person, and they will notify us if a patient specifically tells the Chaplain to call us.

Therefore, if a church member enters any hospital, the church office now needs for the patient, a family member, a friend, or another church member to call and tell us. If in doubt, please, everyone, go ahead and call the us as we would prefer to receive many calls about someone being hospitalized, than us not knowing at all!

## MEMBER NEWS

♥Hospitalized: at URHCS is Pat Wearth; at Health South Rehab is Jim Zug (Brief visits—prefer cards); at Windmill Rehab is Patt Giddings.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Eddie Tucker & Family on learning of the death of his brother, Gary Tucker, on August 16th.

♥Our condolences are extended to Madra & Susan Marrs & Family on learning of the death of their son & brother, Kenneth Marrs, on August 15th.

*We want to be as inclusive as possible with our Member News, so if you know about an honor someone received, an important event in someone's life, or about illness or death, please call the church-692-2282. Thanks!*



### FIRST TIME VISITORS

We are excited to report that the following persons visited for the first time on Sunday: Jacob Gai, Nell Rutherford.



## JOURNEY THROUGH SCRIPTURE

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam--three religions related yet with diversity will be the subject of Journey Through Scripture starting Sunday, September 13th, at 9:45 AM, in the Church Parlor. Through study of scripture and practices of each religion, participants will gain a richer understanding of the Three Major Religions in the world. New travelers are always encouraged to join in the journey.

## "PHASED IN" REQUESTS ASSISTANCE

"Phased In," a new program to the Wichita Falls' community and sponsored by our sister congregation, Evangel Temple, assists 18 year old males as they phase out of foster care and into an independent lifestyle. Many of these young men, who were never adopted, never learned good life or coping skills.

The men's dorm, which houses up to 16 young men, ages 18-22, provides a Christian, home-like setting for up to 18 months, with house parents who teach the skills needed for the men to be successful in life.

Lolita Baker, Phased In Administrator, has asked 1<sup>st</sup> Christian members to donate hand crafted items to be sold at a fundraiser at Phased In's Hangar Holiday booth, November 14 - 15, at the MPEC. Suggested craft ideas are wreaths, Christmas ornaments, original art, ceramics, knitted/crocheted/hand sewn items, needlework, woodwork, jewelry, etc.

A basket has been placed in the church office to collect these items before the end of October. If you have any questions, please call Lolita Baker, 691-1400, or Glenda Tate, 696-5554.

## YOUNG AGES PRESCHOOL

Time for our school is fast approaching!! Young Ages Preschool will begin on Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. There are a few openings available for 3, 4 and 5 year olds. We offer a half day, morning preschool program, where learning is fun and age appropriate, in a loving Christian environment with experienced teachers. Please call us at 692-3640 if you are interested.

## SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

Howard Morris, Cindy Hernandez; Mike Spiller Jr., Presiding

### DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

Luke Ward, Sandra Whatley, Debbi Schmidt

### DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

James Poole & Luke Ward

### AUGUST DIACONATE SERVERS

Debbi Schmidt, Captain; Billy Thacker, Vice-Captain; Robert & Sally Hastings, Gidget & Michael Pettibon, Debi & Larry Ballard, Shirley Craft, June Lemmon, Robinsue & Wendi Miller, James Poole, Larry & Linda Carr, Kathleen Lauck, Sandra Whatley, Ben Sabine, Luke Ward.

### 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.firstchristianwf.com](http://www.firstchristianwf.com), under the "Resources" tab.

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Saturday, August 22, 2015

10:00 Moving boxes for MSU Garage Giveaway  
(Jerry's Sporting Goods)

#### Sunday, August 23, 2015

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)

"Blessing of Teachers"

12:00 Anniversary Memories Program Fellowship Luncheon  
(Fellowship Hall)

2:00 Moving furniture for MSU Garage Giveaway  
(Jerry's Sporting Goods)

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, August 24, 2014

FIRST DAY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL

7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)

9:00 YAS Teacher In-Service

10:15 FCC Staff Mtg (Office)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

#### Tuesday, August 25, 2015

2:00 Library Committee (Library)

5:00 YAS CPR & First Aid Training (Rm 402)

#### Wednesday, August 26, 2015

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 402/Chapel)

5:30 Respite Service (Chapel)

6:30 CMF Dinner (Fellowship Hall)

7:30 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

#### Thursday, August 27, 2015

9:00 YAS Meet the Teacher

1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)

#### Friday, August 28, 2015

3:00pm Check-In begins for Discovery Class HHH Sleepover

#### Saturday, August 29, 2015

3:00pm Check-Out ends for Discovery Class HHH Sleepover

### THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

Church Number	940-692-2282
Dr. David Hartman, Senior Minister	692-2282
Rev. Renee Hoke, Associate Minister	692-2282
Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries	763-8515
Justin Dickey, Director of Youth & Children's Ministries	936-645-1215
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 Marrs, Executive Secretary	Tina Williams, Financial Secretary
Pam Poulos, Receptionist	Debbie Watson, Organist
Web Page: <a href="http://www.firstchristianwf.com">www.firstchristianwf.com</a>	Church e-mail: <a href="mailto:susan@firstchristianwf.com">susan@firstchristianwf.com</a>
FAX Number 940-696-3085	

Home Phone Number:

940-692-2282

692-2282

692-2282

763-8515

936-645-1215

691-7265

613-2112

687-2231

692-3640

Tina Williams, Financial Secretary

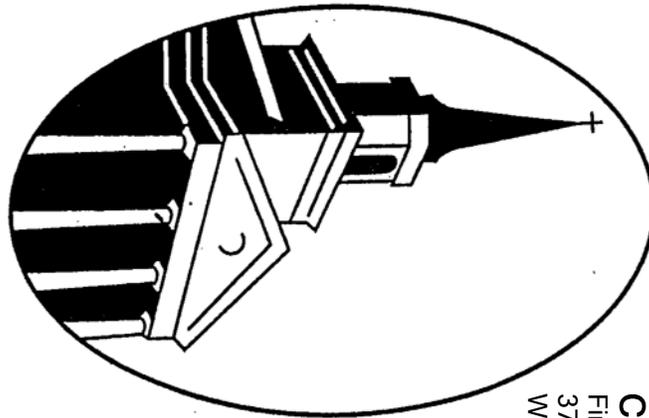
Debbie Watson, Organist

### FOR THE RECORD . . .

Sunday School . . . . .	82
8:40 Worship . . . 51	10:45 Worship . . . 216
Total Worship . . . . .	267
CGRM Evening Ministry . . . . .	
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$16,698.52
Sunday Receipts for 8/16/15	\$9,550.50
Through Aug. 16: Income \$461,576.96	Expenses \$498,768.09

### PERSECUTED CHURCH PRAYERS THIS WEEK ARE FOR:

Pray for a VOM prosthetics clinic that helps Nigerian believers injured in attacks by Islamists.



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