



# Christian Challenger

Vol. 62

October 7, 2015

NO. 35



## MINISTRY BEYOND THE PEWS

Life-changing ministry happens every week at First Christian Church. Our partners in transformation are probation officers, social workers, lawyers and judges. We collaborate with Head Start, First Step, Child Protective Services, and the Helen Farabee Center. Our goal is to provide hope and resources for men, women and families who often can't see the way forward.

This has been a great year for Common Ground Recovery Ministries. So far in 2015 CGRM has averaged 20-45 participants weekly who come through our doors on Sunday evenings to participate in peer support groups on anger management, chemical addiction, women's issues and parenting. Participants are required to complete 12 sessions and often participate in more than one of the programs. "Graduates" of the program regularly describe Common Ground as a lifeline that helped them make the difficult decisions that turned their lives around. These participants express their deep gratitude for an inclusive, judgment-free, and empowering atmosphere. Common Ground begins each week with worship, reminding participants of their status as children of God.

This month marks a leadership change for CGRM. For more than 6 years, Rev. Dave Brummett has worked tirelessly to get the program out into the community, building relationships, and equipping CGRM group leaders. Each week he has been a faithful pastor to participants. Dave has provided documentation to local courts and caseworkers. We are grateful for Dave's vision, patience, and wisdom. Six years ago Dave came out of retirement to lead CGRM. Our best wishes accompany him as he resumes his retirement.

"I am grateful to have inherited such a well-established ministry," said Rev. Erin Taylor, the new leader of CGRM. "I am especially grateful for Dave's mentoring and friendship. I cannot wait to see how God continues to use this amazing ministry to change lives, bring about wholeness, and share the Gospel of Hope for all people."

**GIVE A GIFT OF HOSPITALITY:** As Disciples of Christ, we are people of the table. We believe in the gift of fellowship - especially when it includes a delicious meal. We would LOVE to provide a light meal for our CGRM participants on a monthly or even weekly basis. Ideally, meals would be served at 7 pm and be able to feed approximately 30 guests. If you, your Sunday School class, family, or Ministry Team are interested in sharing a meal with our CGRM folks, please contact Erin Taylor to make arrangements.

# Reflections with Renee. . .

## AN ORPHAN STORY



One of my favorite books growing up was *Anne of Green Gables*. It's the story of an orphan with red hair and freckles who goes to live with an elderly brother and sister on Prince Edward Island. I was completely caught up in Anne's story as she boarded the train with her straw hat and cardboard suitcase. Matthew and Marilla were expecting a boy who could help with chores on the farm, but Anne won them over with her spunk and deep gratitude.

Anne's story is one of many tales that involve a helpless orphan dependent on the kindness of strangers to make it in world filled with obstacles and an abundance of mean people. Wichita County has a new category of orphans these days. They are "social orphans"--children removed from their homes temporarily due to abuse or neglect. Last year there were 704 reports of child abuse or neglect in Wichita County. 124 children were removed from their homes which almost doubled the number currently living in foster care. By the end of 2014, 285 children in Wichita County were living in foster care. That number has increased in 2015.

If we're honest, even the most compassionate among us have mixed feelings about these social orphans. We wonder how parents could mistreat children? We worry about the tax dollars necessary to rescue children in danger. We fear that the damage caused by abuse or neglect will last a lifetime. And, frankly, we're relieved if our own family is safe.

Call me a dreamer, but I am betting on the Church to rise up and love these orphans and the foster families who care for them. We lament the shortage of children in our Sunday School rooms every Sunday morning. But there is no shortage of children to love in Wichita County. What if we decide to love some children we don't even know? What would that look like? How would God use that ministry to change us?

Let's pray for the spunky orphans who live all around us.

Let's pray for God to use us.

Let's open ourselves to some holy possibilities.

**Renée**



## 125 Years of Service

1890-2015

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

## 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

Everyone is invited to the following activities that are planned for the weekend of October 24-25, 2015.

### Saturday, October 24, 2015

**All Church Picnic and Games**  
Fellowship Hall and Activities Building  
5:00 pm

Bring the family and have fun playing together and sharing funny stories from the past and present. We will have an "indoor picnic" at 6:00 with hamburgers, hot dogs, and anniversary cake.  
Cost is by donation.

### Sunday, October 25, 2015

#### Celebration Sunday!

**10:45 Worship Service in Sanctuary**  
We will have only one service and have invited members of Park Place Christian Church to join us. A luncheon will follow in Fellowship Hall with a brief anniversary program.  
Cost is by donation.



**RESERVATIONS ARE NEEDED**  
by Monday, October 19th!

Please contact the church office at 692-2282.  
Watch for updates on the FCC website:  
[firstchristianwf.com](http://firstchristianwf.com).

## CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The October CWF Luncheon will be this Monday, October 12th, at 11:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. The program will be Mary Cantrell with URHCS Pastoral Care. The devotional will be given by Jane Ridenour and the service offering will go to URHCS Pastoral Care. Reservations are not required and guests are welcome. Cost is \$5.00 per person.

The CWF Board will meet at 10:30 am in Room 310 prior to the luncheon.

  
**FIRST TIME VISITORS**  
We are excited to report that the following persons visited for the first time on Sunday: Emily Allen, Gentile Iradukunda, Roje Lubasi, & Jacob Partida.  


## SEEDS OF FAITH

For 125 years FCC has been planting the seeds of faith in boys and girls, helping families nurture faith as it matures, equipping young people for leadership in the church and the world.

Youth Sunday on October 11 is one of those opportunities for young people to lead. Come to support our amazing youth group! Even more important, come to be inspired!

## MEMBER NEWS

♥Hospitalized: at URHCS is Inis Dudenhoeffer; at Windmill Rehab is Sherrie Phillips; at Senior Care Rehab is Ruth Skoczen. Released & back home are Carolyn Ford & Vivian Zug.

*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!*

## FCC YOUTH SERVE CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY

"Come As You Are" on Sunday evenings focuses on community involvement for our 6th-12th grade youth. We get involved with different organizations throughout the semester. First on our list this year was the Children's Aid Society. Last week our youth baked cookies for the kids at the Society and delivered them in person. This week we visited the Society to help reorganize a storage shed that held holiday decorations, large toys, and more. Our youth worked hard and were able to get everything done in one visit. (Way to go!) Kids at the Society made cards thanking us for the cookies and our help. The cards are on display in the youth room. God bless the Children's Aid Society as they faithfully serve children in our community.

## FROM THE MAILBOX . . .

Please join Betty Jane and Bud Rafuse in a celebration of their 60th Wedding Anniversary on Sunday, October 18, 2015 from 2 pm to 5 pm at 2770 Maverick Trail

\*\*\*\*\*

Hospice of Wichita Falls  
**Community Fall Carnival**  
Saturday, October 17, 2015  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
4909 Johnson Rd

Carnival Games                      Free Candy!  
Hot dogs & Drinks                  Free of Charge

## CHILDREN COME FIRST FUNDRAISER

Children Come First is raising money for both playgrounds. Our Fall fundraiser is Yankee Candle, which includes: candles, wax melts, decorative candle holders, magazine subscriptions, gourmet popcorn, holiday wrapping paper and more.

You can shop our sale online at:

[yankeecandlefundraising.com](http://yankeecandlefundraising.com)

and enter our group number: **990081681** in the "start shopping" box. Then shop for catalog items and online exclusives. We also have a catalog outside the CCF Office.

The sale ends October 13th, but you can continue shopping online through October 29th. Thank you!!

# FEAST

Come join us on Wednesdays for:

Fellowship Meal at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall  
Communion & Prayer at 7:00 pm in the Chapel

Small groups for all ages at 6:00 pm  
Open Gym from 7:15-8:00 pm



## SERVING SUNDAY

### ELDERS

Harry Tonemah, Kenn Hill; Marjorie Parker, Presiding

### DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

Shirley Craft, Jessica Morris

### DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

Kay Jackson & Melody Jennings

### OCTOBER DIACONATE SERVERS

Ashley & Richard Barker, Jessica Morris, Mike Murdock, Curtis & Dottie Westbrook, Kay Jackson, Melody Jennings, Vicki Kunkle, Curtis Sullivan, Cary Thompson, Jerry Caraway, Claudine Farrell, Caitlin Hartman, Jim LaValley, Carly Westbrook, John DeVilbiss, Gracie Reynolds.

## THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

Church Number 940-692-2282  
Dr. David Hartman, Senior Minister 692-2282  
Rev. Renee Hoke, Associate Minister 692-2282  
Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator 691-7265  
Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries 763-8515  
Justin Dickey, Director of Youth & Children's Ministries 936-645-1215  
Rev. Erin Taylor, Director of Recovery Ministries 337-304-3038  
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: www.firstchristianwf.com Church e-mail: susan@firstchristianwf.com  
FAX Number 940-696-3085

Home Phone Number:

940-692-2282

692-2282

692-2282

691-7265

763-8515

936-645-1215

337-304-3038

687-2231

692-3640

Tina Williams, Financial Secretary

Debbie Watson, Organist

Church e-mail: susan@firstchristianwf.com

## FOR THE RECORD . . .

Sunday School . . . . .	99
8:40 Worship . . . 43	10:45 Worship . . . 183
Total Worship . . . . .	226
CGRM Evening Ministry . . . . .	40
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$16,698.52
Sunday Receipts for 10/4/15	\$9,095.66
Through Oct. 5: Income \$562,418.41	Expenses \$590,977.61

## PERSECUTED CHURCH PRAYERS THIS WEEK ARE FOR:

Pray for safety for North Korean Christians who fear sharing their faith with even their own families.



## OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, October 11, 2015

YOUTH SUNDAY

- 8:40 Worship (Chapel)
- 9:30 Sunday School
- 9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
- 10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
- 3:45 Chancel Ringers (Stratten Hall)
- 4:30 Come As You Are "Amazing Race" (Grades 6-12) (Room 403C)
- 5:00 Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)
- 5:14 CGRM Evening Ministry (Fellowship Hall)
- 5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 309 & 311)
- 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, October 12, 2014

- NO Children Come First - Teacher In-Service
- 9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)
- 10:15 FCC Staff Mtg (Office)
- 10:30 CWF Board Mtg (Rm 310)
- 11:45 CWF Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)
- 7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, October 13, 2015

- 7:30-6:00 Children Come First (T-F)
- 2:00 Library Committee (Library)
- 7:00 Property Ministry Mtg (Rm 402)

Wednesday, October 14, 2015

- 7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 402/Chapel)
- 10:00 Women's Fall Bible Study (Rm 310)
- 5:00 Mid-Week Communion Service (Chapel)
- 5:30-6:00 Feast Fellowship Meal (Fellowship Hall)
- 6:00-7:00 Feast Small Groups:
  - Young Disciples Group (Grades K-5) (Rm 309 & 311)
  - 360 (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403C)
  - Adult Bible Study: "Too Busy Not To Pray" (Rm 305)

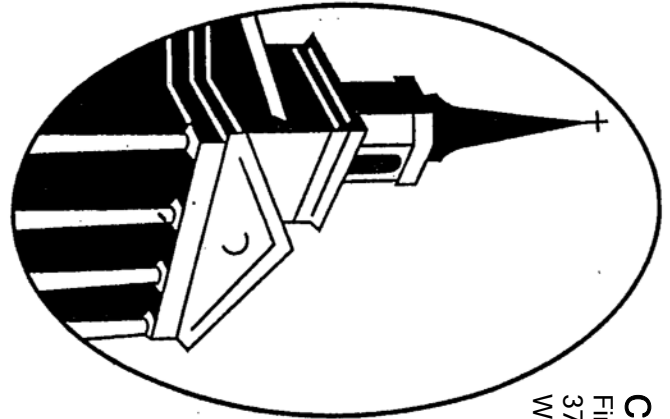
- 7:00-7:15 Feast Communion & Prayer (Chapel)
- 7:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)
- 7:15-8:00 Feast Open Gym

Thursday, October 15, 2015

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

Saturday, October 17, 2015

- Young Disciples Mystery Trip



**CHRISTIAN CHALLENGER**  
First Christian Church  
3701 Taft Boulevard  
Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

THE CHRISTIAN CHALLENGER  
Pub. No. (USPS 559-820). Published weekly during the school year with exception the last week in December. & in June & July biweekly by First Christian Church, 3701 Taft Blvd., Wichita Falls TX 76308-2315. Periodical postage paid at Wichita Falls TX.  
POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to Christian Challenger, 3701 Taft Blvd., Wichita Falls, TX 76308-2315.