



# Christian Challenger

Vol. 64

March 8, 2017

No. 5

## CHURCH BOARD VOTES TO CALL RENEE HOKE AS TRANSITIONAL MINISTER BEGINNING IN SEPTEMBER



On March 5, following worship in the sanctuary, the Board voted to call Renee Hoke as Transitional Minister following Dave Hartman's retirement in September. The vote followed a

recommendation from the Personnel Ministry, chaired by Jim Hay, and the Executive Council. In calling Renee rather than an unfamiliar interim, the Church Board sought to insure as smooth a transition as possible to the pastorate of the next Senior Minister. Renee has chosen to serve as Transitional Minister rather than as a candidate for the permanent Senior Minister position.

Renee brings great gifts and skills to the Transitional Ministry position. In addition to her great warmth, organizational ability, outstanding preaching skills and profound love for

the congregation of First Christian Church, she also brings the experience of having served as Senior Minister of two significant congregations, as well as Area Minister of the Trinity-Brazos and Bluebonnet Areas of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest—an expanse of territory that stretches from the Red River to the Rio Grande. Her wisdom, experience and love for our church will be a great blessing during this time of transition.

Board Chair Cindy Hernandez has appointed Mike and Diane Spiller to chair the Search Committee for the next Senior Minister. Dave Hartman will be available to officiate at memorial services for church members during the transition.

Blessed are the bridges. They enable the people of God to traverse securely from one shoreline to the next.



WELCOME, MAGGIE!

## PLANNING MEETING FOR YOUTH AND PARENTS ON MARCH 19

We are blessed! Following Meredith Buckley's departure to begin a new job with Child Protective Services, we have another talented young adult stepping up to lead.

Beginning March 19, Maggie Ross will lead Sunday evening youth programs. Maggie, the daughter of Dwight and Sandra Ross, is a recent LSU graduate preparing to enter medical school next year. Maggie's background includes youth ministry at FCC as well as participation in Young Life during her high school years. When Maggie heard that her church was in between youth ministers, she was eager to serve.

To get things started, Maggie invites youth, parents, and grandparents to a planning meeting at 4 pm on March 19 at her house--2308 Ellingham. Youth will remain from 5-7 pm for fun and fellowship.

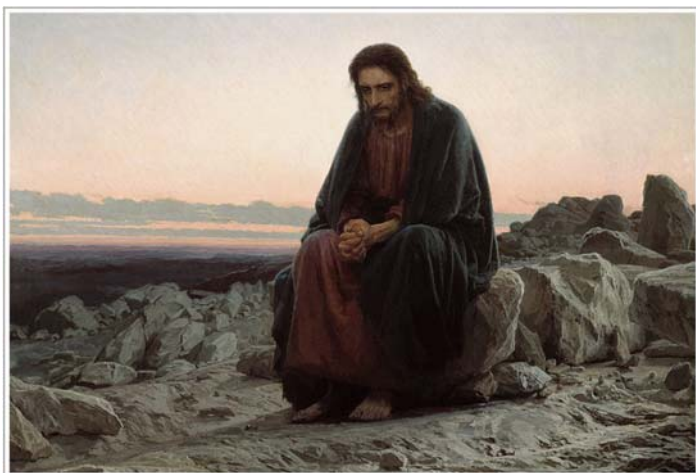


Ali Thompson & Beckham Fields take their turns posing with bunnies during picture day at Children Come First.

# Across Dave's Desk...

by Senior Minister Dr. David B. Hartman, Jr.

## LENT



*Ivan Kramskoi, Christ in the Desert, 1872*

We are one week into the Christian season of Lent, which began with Ash Wednesday and will conclude with the onset of Easter. Since the early days of the Church, Lent has been the season in which Christians have attempted to replicate (albeit on a far lesser scale) what Jesus endured during the 40 days in the wilderness that followed his baptism. In those time of trial, he fasted, suffered grievously from hunger and loneliness, and was tempted by the devil. Lent is the time of year when Christians particularly strive to practice the disciplines of self-denial, confession and repentance. Just as Jesus chose the path of hunger in the wilderness, a key component of the Lenten observance has been voluntary fasting.

The Old Testament describes many reasons for fasting—as a sign of repentance [I Samuel 7.6], as a remembrance of God's deliverance from previous sins [Leviticus 16.29-34], as prayerful supplication in calamitous times [Judges 2.26], as an expression of mourning [I Samuel 13.13], as preparation for a great endeavor [I Samuel 14.24]. The Prophet Isaiah defined a proper fast as "sharing your bread with the hungry and bringing the homeless poor into your house" [Isaiah 58.7].

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus put fasting in the context of charity and prayer, and warned against practicing it simply to elicit the admiration of others [Matthew 6.1-18]. Later, in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector [Luke 18.9-14], the prideful Pharisee commends himself before God for fasting; by contrast, the deeply remorseful tax collector begged God to have mercy on him [Luke 19.9-14]. It was, of course, the prayer of the mournful tax collector that found favor with God.

Originally, fasting was mandated for adult candidates for baptism, though those fasts were not meant to be nearly as onerous as what Jesus endured. Baptismal candidates were allowed one meal a day shortly before sunset, although meat, fish, eggs and dairy products were prohibited. Beginning with the Canons of Nicaea in 325, a 40 day fast before Easter was mandated for all Christians in the west, though only meat was foresworn. In the east, the wide-ranging prohibitions remained in force.

Anyone who has ever counted the days knows there are actually more than 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. That is because Sunday—the day of the Lord's resurrection—is always considered a feast day. Thus, Sundays are considered to be "in" Lent, but not "of" Lent.

Even today, many Christians elect to abstain from some source of pleasurable consumption during Lent, like dessert or alcohol or dining out. But there is also a growing sense that giving up food, especially when it is so bountiful, is a lesser spiritual discipline. After all, here in the United States, obesity is a far more prevalent health concern than hunger (though hunger, lamentably, is increasing, especially for children growing up in impoverished or dysfunctional families). If we're going to give up something we eat, maybe the proceeds from the savings should go to the Food Bank. Instead of giving up something we put in our mouths, maybe it would be better to give up something that comes out of them.

The 16th Century poet Robert Herrick wrote, "To Keep a True Lent:"

Is this a fast,—to keep  
The larder lean,  
And clean  
From fat of veals and sheep?  
Is it to quit the dish  
Of flesh, yet still  
To fill  
The platter high with fish?  
Is it to fast an hour,  
Or ragg'd to go,  
Or show  
A downcast look, and sour?  
No! 'tis a fast to dole  
Thy sheaf of wheat,  
And meat,  
Unto the hungry soul.  
It is to fast from strife,  
From old debate  
And hate,—  
To circumcise thy life.  
To show a heart grief-rent;  
To starve thy sin,  
Not bin,—  
And that's to keep thy Lent.

Whatever else we choose to give up this Lent, may we, out of love for the One who gave his life for us, resolve to fast "from strife, from old debate and hate." If we choose to forsake "wheat and meat," may we give what we deny ourselves to those who have not. If we have to starve something, may it be our sin, in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave all out of love.

*Dave*

*Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the infinite love you have revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. May we, in our own lives, strive to love as he would have us to love. In His Name, Amen.*

# FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

The **Challenger** is now biweekly, so NO Challenger next week!



**Welcome New Member!** It was a pleasure to welcome Vivianne "Anne" Bunzendahl into our fellowship by private statement of transfer on Sunday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, from Custer Road United Methodist Church in Plano TX. Anne is a retired Speech-Language Pathologist, Andy Wilson's sister, and a member of the Chancel Choir. Her contact information is 2825 Mill Valley Dr., 76308, 214-735-1222 (cell). Welcome, Anne!

**Coats for Kids Fundraiser:** Since 1998 FCC has given over 8,000 coats to children in the WFISD. For the past several years the Coats for Kids shoppers have purchased most of the coats at after Christmas sales. Shoppers are busy checking stores and ADS for bargains daily. In 2016 shoppers spent \$6,690 on coats. Our goal each year is to replace the amount of monies that was spent. Many contributions were made in December. We have received \$2,450 towards our goal. We are asking for the congregation to make donations to the Coats for Kids outreach this Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. Please help us reach our goal.

Midweek worship at **The Neighborhood** during Lent will feature Max Lucado's reflections in *The Final Week of Jesus*. Join us 5-5:45 pm for a meal in Fellowship Hall. Worship is 6-7 pm.

**ON HOLD**, our new support group for caregivers of all kinds, is adding an evening gathering for conversation and encouragement. Mark your calendar for **March 21 from 5-7 pm** or **April 4 from 11:30 am -1:30 pm**. This informal, come-and-go setting includes a light meal/refreshments and conversation aimed at support and encouragement. Kris Gossom and Kathy Gilbert host these meetings which alternate between 2414 Barbados (Kathy's house) and 2416 Barbados (Kris's house). Just look for the ON HOLD sign out in front. ON HOLD is a ministry to women and men who place their own lives "on hold" while they care for loved ones--grandchildren, aging parents, or anyone in between. FCC shares this ministry with First Methodist Church. Everyone is welcome!

## Christian Women's Fellowship:

The March CWF Luncheon will be Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, at 11:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. The program will be Shirley Craft speaking about the Boys & Girls Clubs. The devotional will be given by Nancy Jolliff and the service offering will go to the Boys & Girls Clubs. 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.

## Group Meetings will be as follows:

**Group 1** will meet on Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 pm at Camille Brookshire's home, 4911 Neta Ln.

**Group 2** will meet on Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 12:00 noon in Room 405.

**Group 3** will meet on Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, at 2:00 pm in Room 405.

The **Christian Men's Fellowship Dinner** scheduled for Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, has been CANCELLED.

**Chi Rho & CYF** join us for **TCU Day** on April 8! Campus tour, lunch, AND a TCU baseball game! **RSVP** to Madi Showalter or in the church office **by March 20<sup>th</sup>!**

A **Youth Fundraiser Luncheon** will be held on Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at noon in the Fellowship Hall. The menu

will be **INDIAN TACOS!** Cost is by donation. Make your reservations in worship this Sunday or by calling the church office.

**Young Disciples & Youth:** No Sunday or Wednesday activities on March 12<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>. Young Disciples will have a movie night on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, from 6-8 pm in the Theater Room. Young Disciples will also not meet on March 19<sup>th</sup>.

## March Meetings: will be as follows:

Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>:

**Evangelism** at 5:30 pm, Rm 405

Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>:

**Property** at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

**World Outreach** at 7:00 pm, Library

Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>:

**Prayer Team for Persecuted Church** at 5:00 pm, Rm 310

**Membership** at 5:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

**Education** at 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall

**Stewardship** at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

**Worship** at 7:00 pm, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>:

**Executive Council** at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

If you will need childcare, please RSVP to the church office, 692-2282, by noon on Mondays, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, & 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Red River Hot Dogs at the Neighborhood

**Wednesday, March 22, 5:00-6:30 pm**

**Member News:** *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 an illness or death, please call the church--692-2282. Thanks!*

♥**Hospitalized:** Released and back home are Bert Armstrong, Ruth Beyer, Connie Cannedy, Scott Poole & Andy Wilson. Jimmie Shirley has been released from Windmill Rehab and has moved to Texhoma Christian Care Center Rm 205 South Building.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Melba Anastopoulos & Mary & Bill Tanner and Families on learning of the death of Bill Anastopoulos, Melba's husband and Mary's father, on February 21<sup>st</sup>. Services will be held at a later date.

♥Our condolences are extended to Anita Mills & Family on learning of the death of her nephew, Leo Brown, on February 26<sup>th</sup> in Chattanooga TN.

♥We extend our sympathies to Mark & Sherri Sutton & Family on learning of the death of Mark's brother, Daniel Sutton, on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Services will be held at a later date.

♥Congratulations to Wendy & John Stodghill on the birth of their daughter, Marlowe Eve Stodghill on February 25<sup>th</sup> in Austin TX. Marlowe weighed 7 lbs 12 oz and was 19 1/2" long. Proud grandparents are Joan & Jimmie Stodghill Sr., and aunt & uncle are Cheryl & Billy Smiley.

♥Congratulations to Andrea Wilson & Eustaquio Deases, who were married on March 6<sup>th</sup> on Tunnels Beach in Kauai, Hawaii. Andrea is the daughter of Emily & Andy Wilson, granddaughter of Bobbie Caldwell and niece of Anne Bunzendahl. Andrea & Eustaquio will be residing in Jarrell TX.

## This Sunday:

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

"Born of Water and Spirit"

Genesis 12:1-4a & John 3:1-10

Rev. Renee Hoke



## SERVING SUNDAY

### ELDERS

3/12: Kerry Roach, "Dwight Ross III; Craig Reynolds, Presiding

3/19: Ted Lauck, Cheryl Smiley; Cal Edgemon, Presiding

### DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

3/12: Larry Carr, Linda C. Carr

3/19: Catherine Earley, Caitlin Hartman, Lee DeVilbiss

### DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

3/12: Sharon Roach & Sherry Martin

3/19: Larry & Linda C. Carr

### MARCH DIACONATE SERVERS

Jerry & Cheryl Caraway, Larry & Linda Carr, Catherine Earley, Caitlin Hartman, Michael Pettibon, Lee DeVilbiss, Sharon Roach, Debbie & Mark Turnbow, Sarah Cook, Eric Hartman, Sherry Martin, Sally Wilson, David Wyatt, Luke Machado.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Sunday, March 12, 2017

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)

10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)

3:45 Pastor's Class (Grades 3-8) (Rm 310)

NO Choirs or Youth Groups

### Monday, March 13, 2017

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

Young Ages School Closed this week for Spring Break

10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Office)

10:30 CWF Board Meeting (Rm 310)

11:45 CWF Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

5:30 Evangelism Ministry Meeting (Rm 405)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

### Tuesday, March 14, 2017

2:00 Library Cmte (Library)

6:00 Property Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)

6:00 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups:

CGRM Office (Rm 307)

Women's C.A.R.E. (Rm 304)

Parenting (Rm 305 & 306)

Anger Recovery (Rm 308)

Substance Abuse (Rm 309)

7:00 World Outreach Ministry Meeting (Library)

### Wednesday, March 15, 2017

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)

8:00 Leadership Team Mtg (Renee's Office)

10:00 Lenten Bible Study (Rm 310)

5:00 CCF Training (Rm 405)

5:00 Mid-Week Communion Service (Chapel)

5:00-5:45 Mid-Week Meal (Fellowship Hall)

6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)

Chi Rho & CYF (6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) meets 7-8pm in Rm 403]

NO Young Disciples (K-5<sup>th</sup>)

NO Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

### Thursday, March 16, 2017

9:00 CWF Group 3 Birthday Breakfast (IHOP on SW Pkwy)

1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)

6:00-8:00 Young Disciples Movie Night (Theater Rm)

NO Boys Basketball Church League (Gym)

NO CMF Dinner

### Sunday, March 19, 2017

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)

10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)

3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

3:45 Pastor's Class (Grades 3-8) (Rm 310)

NO Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)

NO Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Scout Hall)

4:00 Chi Rho & CYF Parents Meeting (Ross home: 2308 Ellingham)

5:00 Come As You Are (Grades 6-12) (Ross home: 2308 Ellingham)

### Monday, March 20, 2017

Last Day to RSVP for Chi Rho & CYF Day at TCU

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

9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)

10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Office)

1:30 CWF Group 1 (TBA)

2:00 CWF Group 2 (Rm 405)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

## THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

Church Number

Dr. David Hartman, Senior Minister

Rev. Renee Hoke, Associate Minister

Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator

Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries

Maggie Ross, Interim Director of Children & Youth Ministries

Heather Dickerson, Director of Children Come First

Karen Bivona, Director of Young Ages School

Laurel Clement, Common Ground Recovery Ministries

Susan Marrs, Executive Secretary

Tina Williams, Financial Secretary

Ann Hunter, Receptionist

Debbie Watson, Organist

Web Page: www.firstchristianwf.com Church e-mail: susan@firstchristianwf.com

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Home Phone Number:

940-692-2282

692-2282

692-2282

691-7265

763-8515

692-2282

687-2231

692-3640

642-7021

## FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Mar. 7) . . . . . Not available

Sunday School . . . . . 130

8:40 Worship . . . 43 10:45 Worship . . . 173

Ash Wednesday Service (Wed., Mar. 1) . . . 75

Total Worship . . . . . 291

Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week

\$15,815.66

Sunday Receipts for 3/5/17

\$22,802.00

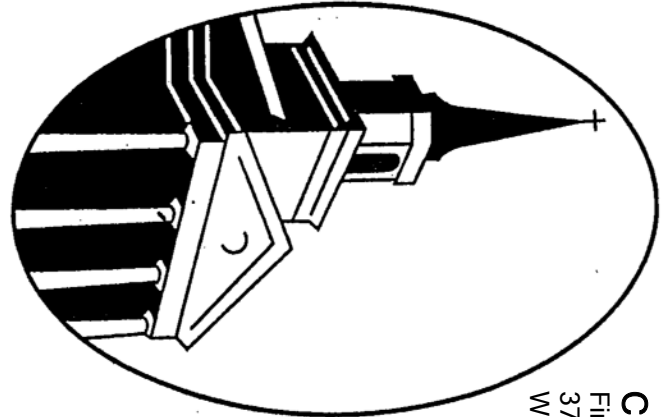
Through Mar. 6: Income \$139,221.72

Expenses \$144,798.06

## PERSECUTED CHURCH PRAYERS

### THIS WEEK ARE FOR:

Pray for Christian refugees in Jordan who are displaced and unable to work or attend school.



## CHRISTIAN CHALLENGER

First Christian Church  
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Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

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