



Christian Challenger

Vol. 64

October 18, 2017

No. 21



This year's Trunk or Treat will be held on Sunday, October 29th, from 6:00-8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall! Join us for Halloween games, food, door prizes, candy, and much more! Wear your best costume! An event for the whole community! Come join the FUN!

If you would like to volunteer to help with game booths, provide a trunk, or help with supplies (food/snacks, door prizes, candy for trunks, Halloween themed plates/utensils) at this year's event, please contact Claire in the church office, 692-2282, by Tuesday, October 24th.

"In the Spirit" Potluck Breakfast on Sunday, Oct. 29

We're celebrating Halloween at our Fifth Sunday Breakfast this month!

Bring your favorite breakfast item to share and join in the fun Sunday morning, October 29, from 9:30-10:15 am in Fellowship Hall. In addition to a delicious meal and an impressive collection of Halloween inflatables, Rev. Renee Hoke will share a brief program on the celebration of All Hallows Eve. Did you know that begging at the door for candy grew from an ancient English custom of knocking at doors to beg for a "soul cake" in return for which the beggars promised to pray for the dead of the household? Spooky, huh? See you for breakfast Oct. 29!

Coats for Kids

It is time to gear up for our annual gift of coats to needy children in the WFISD. Our intrepid shoppers need help sorting and counting the coats that have already been purchased so as to see what sizes to buy when the requests arrive from the schools. If you would like to help sort, come to the Sanctuary at 2:30 pm this Sunday, October 22.

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, we can give more than 500 coats each year. Contributions can be made anytime.

Young Ages School visits the Pumpkin Patch





THE POWER OF BELONGING

By Rev. Renee Hoke

In Newell Williams' wonderful book *Barton Stone: A Spiritual Biography*, a whole chapter is devoted to Stone's conversion. He is a young student living in the time following the Great Awakening and under the instruction of a New Light Presbyterian who believes Christianity is an experience of the work of the Holy Spirit, not merely doctrine and morality. At least 30 of the 50 students attending the academy with Stone have recently "embraced religion" and Stone is initially worried that the religious fervor around him will distract from his studies.

In reading about Stone's lengthy and complicated tug-of-war with the Holy Spirit, I was reminded that there is no single experience of conversion and no single understanding of how God works through the Holy Spirit to change our hearts and redeem our lives.

Over lunch recently with my clergy friend Dr. Kyle Dennis, he shared that West Wind Church—our sister congregation in Keller—has been studying a new approach to evangelism that emphasizes belonging to a faith community as the first step in the process. Here's a recent article from *Christianity Today* that puts it all in perspective.

BELONG, BELIEVE, BECOME

By Eddie Cole, District Superintendent,
Evangelical Free Church of America

"Churches aren't growing because of conversions. Churches are just swapping sheep."

Have you ever heard someone make this claim or something like it? I have—way too many times, from pastors and church members alike. What do we make of this kind of comment, and how do we respond?

First, a note of encouragement: just because you don't see conversions, it doesn't mean they aren't happening in churches in America. They are. The gospel has never stopped being powerful. Conversion growth will continue to happen. Nothing can prevent the power of the gospel from working in the lives of those who believe it enough to act on it.

In a recent meeting with Evangelical leaders, I learned that many American churches experiencing conversion growth have discovered a slight, but significant change in the process for how to effectively evangelize. For decades, the

most effective process used by American Evangelicals followed this pattern:

Christians presented an unbeliever with the opportunity to believe in Christ by sharing the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ with him or her.

The Christian would then invite the new convert to become a part of a church.

The Christian would then help the new convert to enjoy a sense of belonging with the church.

Today's process looks more like this:

The Christian invites someone outside the church to experience/belong to a faith community.

The Christian and the community help them see why they should believe in what the Bible claims about Jesus.

Once they believe in Jesus, the Christian encourages them to become active in ministry.

This reminds me of how my friend Jeff became a follower of Jesus. Jeff saw me and another friend working out in the park that was right next to our church and he stopped to talk. My workout partner and I took a break and chatted with him for a few minutes. We ended up inviting him to come to church with us that Sunday. Not only did Jeff come to church Sunday, but he loved it and kept coming. The church family wrapped its arms around him and welcomed him. Eventually, the gospel took hold of his heart. After several months of coming, he gave his heart to Jesus and I was privileged to baptize him.

God did a powerful work in Jeff because of the love he was shown by Christians. The way God worked in his life shows an example of the shift in the process of evangelism. The new process - belong, believe, and become - worked with Jeff. It's working in many lives and for a growing number of congregations.

Be ready at all times to share the gospel truth, because it is the gospel that changes lives. Let us begin the process by simply showing gospel warmth until that door of conversation opens. In other words, love people until they ask, "Why?"

Belong

Believe

Become

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who completed a Congregational Survey! The Search Committee collected 94 surveys and has begun to tabulate the responses contained in them.

We look forward to informing you of the results in the future after we process the information and formulate it into a set of immediate and long-range congregational goals and priorities.

We will then prepare a one-page statement describing our church, community, and vision, that we will share with potential candidates interested in becoming our next Senior Minister.

Please continue to pray for us as we work to discover who we are and who we want our congregation and minister to be according to your responses in the survey.

FCC REMEMBERS THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION



Kaye Holland as Luther

This year marks the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation begun by Martin Luther when he reportedly nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. First Christian Church is marking the anniversary in several ways:

- CWF Group 1 is studying the Protestant Reformation each month, focusing on different theologians.
- Morning worship on October 29 will feature sacred music influenced by the Reformation as well as sermon references to the Reformation.
- On November 1, the Neighborhood will feature the 2003 film *Luther* starring Joseph Fiennes in the title role. The movie begins at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. A meal is provided.

The **Challenger** is biweekly, so NO Challenger next week!
FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Monday.

Christian Men's Fellowship Dinner will be this Thursday, October 19th, at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. The speaker will be Noel Filer with the YMCA speaking on what's new at the YMCA.

Thanksgiving Baskets: The Outreach Ministry would like to ask the congregation to provide thanksgiving meals for needy families. For several years we have aimed at 75 baskets, this year our goal is for 100 baskets. These have gone to families suggested by counselors at 2 elementary schools, Fain and Zundy. We want to add another school, Cunningham. Common Ground clients are also eligible for the meals. The church freezers max out at 75 turkeys, however. Please call the church office if you have freezer space to birdy-sit for a few days the week before Thanksgiving.

Chancel Choir Robe Fund Update: Thanks to everyone who attended the Chancel Choir dinner fundraiser! We gained \$2,500 toward our new choir robes. If you missed this dinner, don't worry: robes and stoles cost around \$160 to \$200, so we'll be having many more fundraisers. If you'd like to contribute to the choir robe fund in memory of a past choir member or in honor of a current choir member, please mark your check Chancel Robe fund.

Tea at Two on Tuesdays! Claudine Farrell & Renee Hoke host a gathering for women on Tuesday afternoons on the last Tuesday of the month. Bring your favorite tea cup and join us on Tuesday, October 31st, at 2 pm in the Church

Parlor. There will be hot tea, tasty treats, and great conversation. Everyone is welcome—bring a friend or neighbor!

Young Ages Preschool Kringle Danish Fall Fundraiser will be from October 12-30th. These delicious pastries make great Christmas gifts. They freeze well and only take a few minutes to heat up as they are fully cooked. Flavors available are: almond, apple, apricot, blueberry, cherry, cherry cheese, chocolate pecan, cinnamon roll, cream cheese, maple walnut, pecan, raspberry & turtle. They are \$15.00 each and will be delivered fresh the week after Thanksgiving. Payment is due at the time the order is placed. All orders, including payment, are due by Monday, October 30th. Thank you for supporting Young Ages Preschool!

Open Flower Dates: If you would like to donate the flowers for the worship service in the Sanctuary, the following dates are open: **Oct. 29**. Call Peggy Fitts, Flower Coordinator, 781-2426, to donate.

Deanna & Sam Watson to host News & Testament on Sunday, October 29: FCC member



Deanna Watson knows a thing or two about current events. We're thrilled that she's agreed to lead our monthly News & Testament (formerly FACE Time) conversation, on Sunday, October 29, joined by her husband, Sam Watson, Dean of the College of the Humanities and Social Sciences at MSU. We'll explore what's making headlines in our world and then consider our faithful response as followers of Jesus. Join us at 5 pm in the Church Parlor.

Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at Health South Rehab is Gretchen Bridgman; at Windmill Rehab is Gayle Salazar; at Senior Care Rehab is Jane Sterling. Released and back home is Eddie Tucker.

♥**Military Deployed:** is Jodi Schmidt, daughter of Debbi & Dennis Schmidt. Please keep them all in your prayers.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Linda Christoff & Family on learning of the death of Kathy Kluver Boren on October 4th. Services were October 7th at Owens & Brumley Funeral Home.

♥We extend our sympathies to Tony Nicholas, Amy Churchill & Roger Nicholas & Families on learning of the death of Exie Nicholas on October 6th. Services were October 11th in the Sanctuary.

♥Congratulations to Rachel & Tye McLaughlin on the birth of their son, Owen Franklin McLaughlin, on October 7th. Owen weighed 5 lbs 12.8 oz. and was 18.5" long. Proud grandparents are Ricky & Margaret Scales and Teresa & Larry Archambo.

Persecuted Church Prayers This Week Are For: Pray that thousands of Syrian refugees in Lebanon will respond to the gospel and trust in Christ.

Pantry Sunday for Interfaith Outreach Services will be on Sunday, November 5th. Items for collection will be cereal and evaporated or powdered milk. Interfaith and World Outreach appreciate your gifts to this project each month.

This Sunday:

8:40 & 10:45 Services:

"Signs and Wonders: Part 6"

Exodus 33:7-16

Rev. Renee Hoke

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, October 22, 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)
 5:00 Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)
 5:00 Chi Rho (Grades 6-8) & CYF (Grades 9-12) (Youth Room/Gym)
 5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)

Monday, October 23, 2017

7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)
 9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)
 10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
 6:30 Sr. Minister Search Committee Meeting (Rm 405)
 7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

2:00 Library Committee (Library)
 6:00 Executive Council (Rm 310)
 6:00 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups:
 Substance Abuse (Rm 304) Parenting (Rm 305 & 306)
 Rebuilding from Broken Relationships (Rm 307)
 Women's C.A.R.E. (Rm 308) Anger Management (Rm 309)

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
 10:30 Fall Bible Study (Rm 310)
 5:30 The Neighborhood Meal (Fellowship Hall)
 6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)
 6:30-7:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 405)
 7:00-8:00 Youth Activities (Grades 6-12) (Youth Room/Gym)
 7:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Friday, October 27, 2017

YAS Kringle Fundraiser Ends

Sunday, October 29, 2017

REFORMATION SUNDAY
 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN BEGINS
 8:40 Worship (Chapel)
 9:30 Sunday School
 9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
 10:45 Worship (Fellowship Hall)
 3:45 Chancel Ringers (Stratten Hall)
 5:00 News & Testament (Parlor)
 6:00-8:00 Trunk or Treat (Fellowship Hall & Parking Lot)

Monday, October 30, 2017

7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)
 9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)
 9:15 YAS Halloween Parade & Parties
 10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
 6:30 Sr. Minister Search Committee Meeting (Rm 405)
 7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, October 31, 2017

HALLOWEEN
 9:15 YAS Halloween Parade & Parties
 2:00 Tea at Two (Parlor)
 2:00 Library Committee (Library)
 6:00 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups:
 Substance Abuse (Rm 304) Parenting (Rm 305 & 306)
 Rebuilding from Broken Relationships (Rm 307)
 Women's C.A.R.E. (Rm 308) Anger Management (Rm 309)

Wednesday, November 1, 2017

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
 10:30 Fall Bible Study (Rm 310)
 5:30 The Neighborhood Meal (Fellowship Hall)
 6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)
 6:30-7:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 405)
 7:00-8:00 Youth Activities (Grades 6-12) (Youth Room/Gym)
 7:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, November 2, 2017

1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)

SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

10/22: Eddie Tucker, Alice Gordon; Polly Tonemah, Presiding
 10/29: Craig Reynolds, Ann Hunter; Cathy Gately, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

10/22: Slate Westbrook, Jill Griffin, Sandra Ross
 10/29: John Buckley, Francine Carraro, Bobby Dean

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

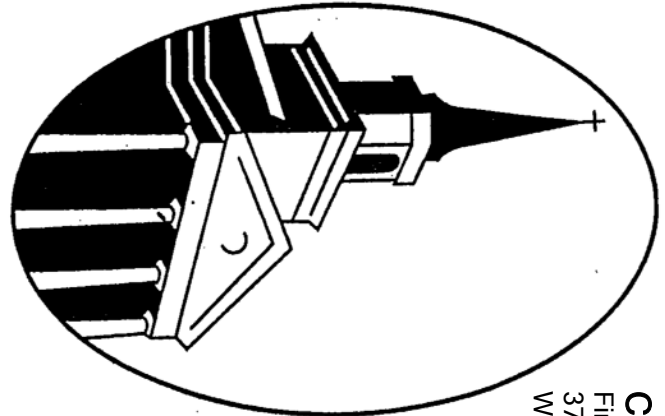
10/22: Slate & Carly Westbrook
 10/29: Jill Griffin & Colleen James

OCTOBER DIACONATE SERVERS

Brandi Brannon, Kathleen Lauck, Madi Showalter, Carly & Slate Westbrook, Sandra Whatley, Bob & Mary Carlton, Jill Griffin, Colleen James, Sandra Ross, Francine Carraro, Bobby Dean, Sandy Hay, Mac Reid, Chris Showalter, Hannah & Luke Ward.

THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

Church Number	940-692-2282	FAX Number	940-696-3085
Web Page:	www.firstchristianwf.com	Church e-mail:	susan@firstchristianwf.com
Rev. Renee Hoke, Acting Senior Minister	692-2282		
Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator	691-7265		
Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries	763-8515		
Claire Baer, Director of Children's Ministries	692-2282		
Josh deSteiguer, Director of Youth Ministries	692-2282		
Heather Dickerson, Director of Children Come First	687-2231		
Alisa Gardner, Director of Young Ages School	692-3640		
Laurel Clement, Common Ground Recovery Ministries	642-7021		
Susan Marrs, Executive Secretary		Tina Williams, Financial Secretary	
Ann Hunter, Receptionist		Debbie Watson, Organist	



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

FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Oct. 10)	22	
The Neighborhood (Wed., Oct. 11)	42	
8:40 Worship . . . 30	10:45 Worship . . . 171	
Total Worship	423	
Sunday School	93	
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week		\$15,815.66
Sunday Receipts for 10/15/17		\$9,178.00
Through Oct. 16: Income	\$574,853.30	Expenses \$641,102.14

THE CHRISTIAN CHALLENGER
 Pub. No. (USPS 559-820) Published
 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.