



Christian Challenger

Vol. 65

January 3, 2018

No. 1

Preparing for a New Year of Leadership at FCC

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NLT)

There is a particular kind of hope and positive energy that emerges in faithful congregations every January. That's the month when new leaders are approved, blessed and equipped to serve. Of course Paul reminds us in his letter to the church in Corinth that God has equipped each one of us with special talents we are called to share. There is no sitting on the sidelines where the Holy Spirit is concerned. Paul writes, "A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other." Perhaps you are called during 2018 to share your gift of encouragement—to pray for our leaders one by one, to thank them when you see them at work on Sundays, or to send a handwritten note expressing your appreciation for their faithful service.

Here are leadership highlights for January 2018:

- January 7 Church Board meets immediately following 10:45 worship to approve new slate of leaders
- January 11 6 pm Annual Elder/Deacon Banquet and Training, Fellowship Hall
- January 14 Congregational vote at the end of both worship services to approve new leaders.
- January 21 Elder Installation in both worship services
- January 28 Laity Sunday highlighting children and youth; Installation of Deacons, Fellowship Meal

New ministry for 2018

FCC MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB

First meeting January 11 at 6:30 am...Don't miss it!

Nominating Committee Report for the 2018-2020 Church Board

Trustee: Kerry Roach

Elder:

Rick Appling David Collins Woody Gossom Howard Morris Ricky Scales Emily Wilson

Diaconate—1 year Term: Sheila Reynolds

Diaconate—3 year Terms:

Debi Ballard Ashley Burross Alan Freeman Scot Hafley Nancy Smith Liz Thomas
 Kim Ballard Kyle Burross Lynette Gill Ann Kable Curtis Sullivan
 Larry Ballard Buddy Edgemon Kris Gossom Hollie Murphey Greg Thomas

Youth Diaconate:

Ainslee Buckley Braelyn Crowe Hannah Earley Emily Thomas Tyler Thomas Hannah Ward

Life-Term Elder:

John Bridgman Patt Giddings Ted Lauck Pat Thacker





Youth Ministry News!

by Josh deSteiguer



Children's Ministry News!

by Claire Baer

Happy New Year FCC Folks!

As we go forward into 2018 it is an exciting time for the youth program! Make sure to stay tuned for all of the fun, fellowship, and faith formation that will be coming up for the youth and adult volunteers in the near future. In order to start the year off right, I wanted to say a big thank you to the adult volunteers who have helped make 2017 a great year for our youth and who have helped me learn the ropes here in my first few months in Wichita Falls. I would like to thank John Cook for being a constant presence in the lives of these youth and especially for toughing it out all night at the Christmas lock-in with me. I would like to thank Doug Thompson for all of his help on Sunday nights and for being a great example for the youth by being an Elder as well. I also owe Sarah Cook a HUGE thank you for all of her hard work in directing the youth for both Christmas Eve services. I felt that it went exceptionally well thanks to Sarah and a great group of youth. As it was my first time seeing this historic and beautiful service, guiding the youth (and me) through the rehearsals was no small task. I feel so blessed to have an amazing and supporting team who invests themselves in the lives of our youth here at FCC.

I could never overstate the importance of adult volunteers in the life of our youth program. By forming relationships with the youth they become parts of the crucial support network for each of the kids as they go through the trying times of being a teen. These volunteers also serve as a constant and tangible reminder that this church is all in when it comes to youth and children. Multiple intergenerational relationships are vital for helping youth feel like a real part of the church family and for keeping church in the center of their lives. I would invite each of you to think back to when you were a teen, and to remember the important ways in which the adults of the church helped to nurture your faith and growth as a follower of Christ.

In the year to come I look forward to working with this great team of intrepid adults to make this year a time of growth and development for the youth of our church. I will also be seeking to expand this team by offering a multitude of ways in which adults of all ages and gifts can come alongside our youth to be a part of teaching, and living the faith with our teens.

New Year's Blessings!



2018 is here, and that means it is time to get ready for a new and exciting year of sharing God's word and love with the children of our congregation. I would like to start by saying a huge thank you to all of the people who have helped with our children's ministry this past year. I know that I have only been here a couple of months, but I am so thankful for the people who were in my place before I started here, and I am very thankful for those who have volunteered their time to help with our children's programming over the last couple of months including all those who helped with Young Disciples, Sunday School, Trunk-or-Treat, Advent Workshop and the Christmas Pageant. Your commitment to these children is outstanding and I am very excited for this next year!

Working with children is one of the most rewarding things a person can do because you get to give a part of yourself to another person, and you also get so much back in return. I learned more about my faith and my walk with God from sitting and talking with children than I ever thought possible. They bring insight that I never would have thought of or worried about and I leave sometimes feeling like the roles had been reversed. Children are the greatest teachers because they are fearless in their wondering. They ask hard questions, and sometimes pretty strange questions, but it's these questions and discussions that show you that they are getting something out of our time together. It shows that these children are preparing to be leaders and disciples.

There are so many benefits to working with children in the church. You get to really know the children that sit by you in the pew on Sunday. You get to know what they like and what they dislike, what they find interesting and what they find challenging. You see their personalities blossom and grow. Each child brings unique thoughts and insights to discussions and the more time you spend with them the more that you learn as well. You get to act as a positive role model in their lives.

In a world where the news is filled with violence and hate, it is so important for our young people to have solid role models in front of them, behind them, and beside them. Children learn through observation and experience, so the more people that they have to observe and learn from, the better! Working with children also gives you an opportunity to share your story. The experiences that we have in life matter so much and those experiences can help our young people in ways we never thought possible. It's important for children to see that faith comes in all forms. There is no straight shot to perfect faith and I think that the more people the children hear and learn from the deeper their faith will become.

I hope in this New Year you will prayerfully consider how you can serve the children in our congregation. Each and every interaction can make a huge difference in a child's life and their perception of what it means to be a disciple and follower of Jesus. I promise that they will give you more than you could ever imagine, if you will just let them.

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS



A NOTE FROM THE STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Thank you for your loving gifts to the church, gifts of time and talent and offerings. We trust that we will together, as the Body of Christ, provide for our church in the year to come. If you have not turned in your Estimate of Giving for 2018, we hope you will prayerfully consider doing so soon. Each commitment enables us to be faithful stewards when planning our church's budget for 2018. Thank you for your generosity and may God richly bless you and your loved ones.

ESTIMATES OF GIVING AS OF TUESDAY, JAN. 2

141 Commitments = \$654,811.00.00

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

Pantry Sunday for Interfaith Outreach Services will be Sunday, January 7th. Items for collection will be paper towels & toilet paper. Interfaith and World Outreach appreciate your gifts to this project each month.

Prime Timers Luncheon will be Sunday, January 7th, at 12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall.

New Evening Bible Study for Adults Begins January 7! What does Christian faith have to do with our ordinary, day-to-day life? That's the question we'll explore on Sunday evenings beginning in January. Sandra Ross and Kathleen Lauck host this six-week study called "Intersections: Faith, Confidence and Doubt in Daily Life." Together we'll explore faith through a life-long lens, understanding the shape of faith in childhood, youth, early adulthood, and so on. Most important, we'll examine how to grow and enliven our faith in every season of our lives.

Join us January 7th at 7 pm, 2308 Ellingham (Home of Dwight and Sandra Ross). Everyone is welcome!

Christian Women's Fellowship: The January CWF Luncheon will be Monday, Jan. 8th, at 11:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. The program will be Lindsay Greer with the Multi-Purpose Events Center (MPEC). The devotional will be given by Glenda Tate and the service offering will go to the Community Resource Center. 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, Jan. 15th, at 1:30 pm at Norma Hill's home, 2004 Granada. **Group 2** will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 17th, at 12:00 noon in Room 405. **Group 3** will meet on Monday, Jan. 15th, at 2:00 pm in Room 405.

The January gathering of **ON HOLD, our support group for caregivers of all kinds**, will be **Tuesday, January 9th, at 2414/2416 Barbados from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm**. Just look for the ON HOLD sign out in front. This informal, come-and-go setting includes a light meal/refreshments and conversation aimed at support and encouragement. 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.

Join The Men's Breakfast Club! Men's ministry at FCC is in transition, seeking new opportunities to build community and bless others. For January, we invite all men to join us for breakfast on Thursday morning, January 11. We will gather at 6:30 am and conclude no later than 7:30 am for those who are on their way to the office. Besides coffee, good food

and fellowship, we will continue our conversation about men's ministry in the coming year.

Elder/Deacon Dinner and Training Meeting Jan. 11—FCC prepares for a new year of lay leadership on Thursday evening, Jan. 11, by gathering all 2018 Elders and Deacons for an important meeting. Please join us for dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6:00 pm. This meal is becoming a new tradition at FCC, giving our leaders an opportunity to meet each other and build relationships for the year ahead. Board Chair Cindy Hernandez and other members of the Executive Council will provide a brief state-of-the-church program. At 7 pm we will divide into two groups so that Elders and Deacons can meet separately for planning and preparation. Training will be provided for those who are beginning a new term.

We ask all Elders and Deacons to be present for this important gathering.

January Ministry Meetings: will be as follows:

- Tuesday, January 9th:
 - Education** at 6:00 pm, Rm 222, **Property** at 6:00 pm, Rm 310
- Tuesday, January 16th:
 - Prayer Team for Persecuted Christians** at 5:00 pm, Rm 310
 - Stewardship** at 6:00 pm, Rm 310, **Worship** at 7:00 pm, Rm 222
 - Sunday, January 21st: Membership** at 5:00 pm, F. Hall
- Tuesday, January 23rd:
 - 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, January 8th, 15th & 22nd.

Member News:

- ♥**Hospitalized:** at the Gables are Ruth Beyer & Phyllis Lewis. Released & back home are Ann Cocke & Galen Wells.
- ♥Our sympathies are extended to Karen & Jim LaValley & Family on learning of the death of Karen's father, Bill Watkins, on December 14th. Services were held in the Chapel on December 18th.
- ♥Our condolences are extended to Madra and Susan Marrs & Family on learning of the death of their daughter-in-law & sister-in-law, Deborah Marrs, on December 14th.
- ♥We also extend our sympathies to Fran Brown & Family on learning of the death of Claude Brown on December 23rd in Kerrville TX. Services were held on December 29th in Kerrville. Fran's address is 135 Plaza Dr. Apt. 329, Kerrville TX 78028.

Persecuted Church Prayers This Week: Pray that the gospel will spread to remote villages by radio, print or recorded means in Laos.

FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Dec. 19)	24
The Neighborhood (Wed., Dec. 27)	Did not meet
8:40 Worship. . . 17	10:45 Worship. . . 88
Total Worship	105
Sunday School	26
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$15,815.66
Sunday Receipts for 12/31/17	\$3,112.00
Through Dec. 31: Income \$743,329.36	Expenses \$806,788.07

This Sunday:

8:40 & 10:45 Services:

"Known & Called"
Mark 1:4-11
Rev. Renee Hoke

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, January 7, 2018 PANTRY SUNDAY

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School / 9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00 Church Board Meeting (Sanctuary)
12:00 Prime Timers Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)
3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)
5:00 Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)
5:00 Chi Rho & CYF (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)
7:00 Adult Bible Study (2308 Ellingham)

Monday, January 8, 2018

7:30-6:00 Children Come First (M-F)
9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)
10:30 CWF Board Meeting (Rm 310)
11:45 CWF Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)
6:30 Sr. Minister Search Committee Meeting (Rm 310)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

11:30-1:30 "On Hold" Caregiver Support Group (2414/2416 Barbados)
2:00 Library Committee (Library)
6:00 Education Ministry Meeting (Rm 222)
6:00 Property Ministry Meeting (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, January 10, 2018

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

Thursday, January 11, 2018

6:30 Men's Breakfast Club (Rm 405)
6:00 Elder & Deacon Training Dinner (Fellowship Hall)
7:00 VBS Planning (Rm 310)

Friday, January 12, 2018

6:15am Leave for Choristers' Guild Workshop (Dec. 12-13) (Dallas TX)

Sunday, January 14, 2018

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School / 9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00 Congregational Meeting (Sanctuary)
3:45 Chancel Ringers (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 Rm/Gym)
5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)
7:00 Adult Bible Study (2308 Ellingham)

Monday, January 15, 2018 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Children Come First & Young Ages School Closed
1:30 CWF Group 1 (2004 Granada)
2:00 CWF Group 3 (Rm 405)
6:30 Sr. Minister Search Committee Meeting (Rm 310)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

7:30-6:00 Children Come First (Tu-F)
9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (Tu-F)
2:00 Library Committee (Library)
5:00 Prayer Team for Persecuted Church (Rm 310)
6:00 Stewardship Ministry Meeting (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, January 17, 2018

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
12:00 CWF Group 3 (Rm 405)
5:30 The Neighborhood Meal (Fellowship Hall)
6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)
7:00-8:00 Youth Activities (Grades 6-12) (Youth Room/Gym)
7:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, January 18, 2018

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

Saturday, January 20, 2018

6:30 Choir Robe Fundraiser Dinner (Fellowship Hall)

SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

1/7: Robert Hernandez, Howard Morris; Cathy Gately, Presiding
1/14: Dwight Ross III, Emily Wilson; Ann Hunter, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

1/7: Andrew Allen, Elise Allen, Sheila Reynolds
1/14: Bob Carlton, Mary Carlton, Diane Spiller

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

1/7: Andrew & Elise Allen

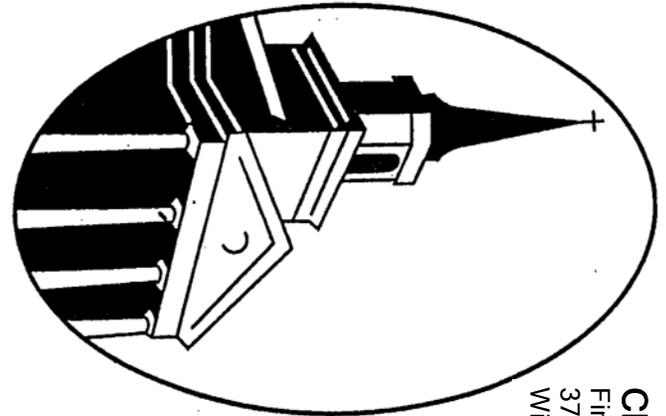
1/14: Francine Carraro & Norma Hill

JANUARY DIACONATE SERVERS

Andrew & Elise Allen, Bob & Mary Carlton, Sheila Reynolds, Diane Spiller, Francine Carraro, Bobby Dean, Eric Hartman, Norma Hill, Mac Reid, Kim Ballard, Hollie Murphey, Nancy Smith, Curtis Sullivan, Liz Thomas, Emily Thomas & Tyler Thomas..

THE CHURCH STAFF . . .

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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
Jessica Gallant, Common Ground Recovery Ministries			
Susan Marrs, Executive Secretary		Tina Williams, Financial Secretary	
Ann Hunter, Receptionist		Debbie Watson, Organist	



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