



Christian Challenger

Vol. 65

March 14, 2018

No. 6

"Parade of the Palms" and Easter Egg Hunt



It is tradition for Palm Sunday worship to begin with children carrying palms down the center aisle, reminding us of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. All children are invited to be part of this procession on March 25. Plan to arrive at 10:15 for a brief rehearsal in the Sanctuary.

Following worship everyone is invited to stay for a hot dog feast served up by Christian Men's Fellowship. Following lunch, it's time for the annual First Christian Church Easter Egg Hunt. Even if you don't have little ones at home, please stay and enjoy the fun. We'll have chairs set up in a shady spot so you won't miss the spectacle of children searching for eggs.

Once again this year, we will need candy donation to fill all those eggs. Will you bring your candy donations to the church office no later than March 23? We have plenty of plastic eggs on hand and will be filling the eggs with the candy that is donated.

Along the Way to the Cross

Maundy Thursday worship on March 29 offers an interactive reflection on the final events of Holy Week. We will begin at 6 p.m. with a simple meal served in Fellowship Hall, reminding us of how the disciples gathered with Jesus on the night of his arrest. At 6:30 pm worship begins with Holy Communion. Then we rise and make our way to the Garden of the Cross, where we imagine Jesus deep in prayer at the Garden of Gethsemane. Our next stop is Muir Woods where we remember how Jesus was betrayed by Judas. We move next to a courtyard to consider how Jesus was beaten by Roman guards. Finally, seated in the Sanctuary, we reflect on the Crucifixion. Please join us for this journey to the cross.



HOLY WEEK

Our Small Group

by Sandra Ross

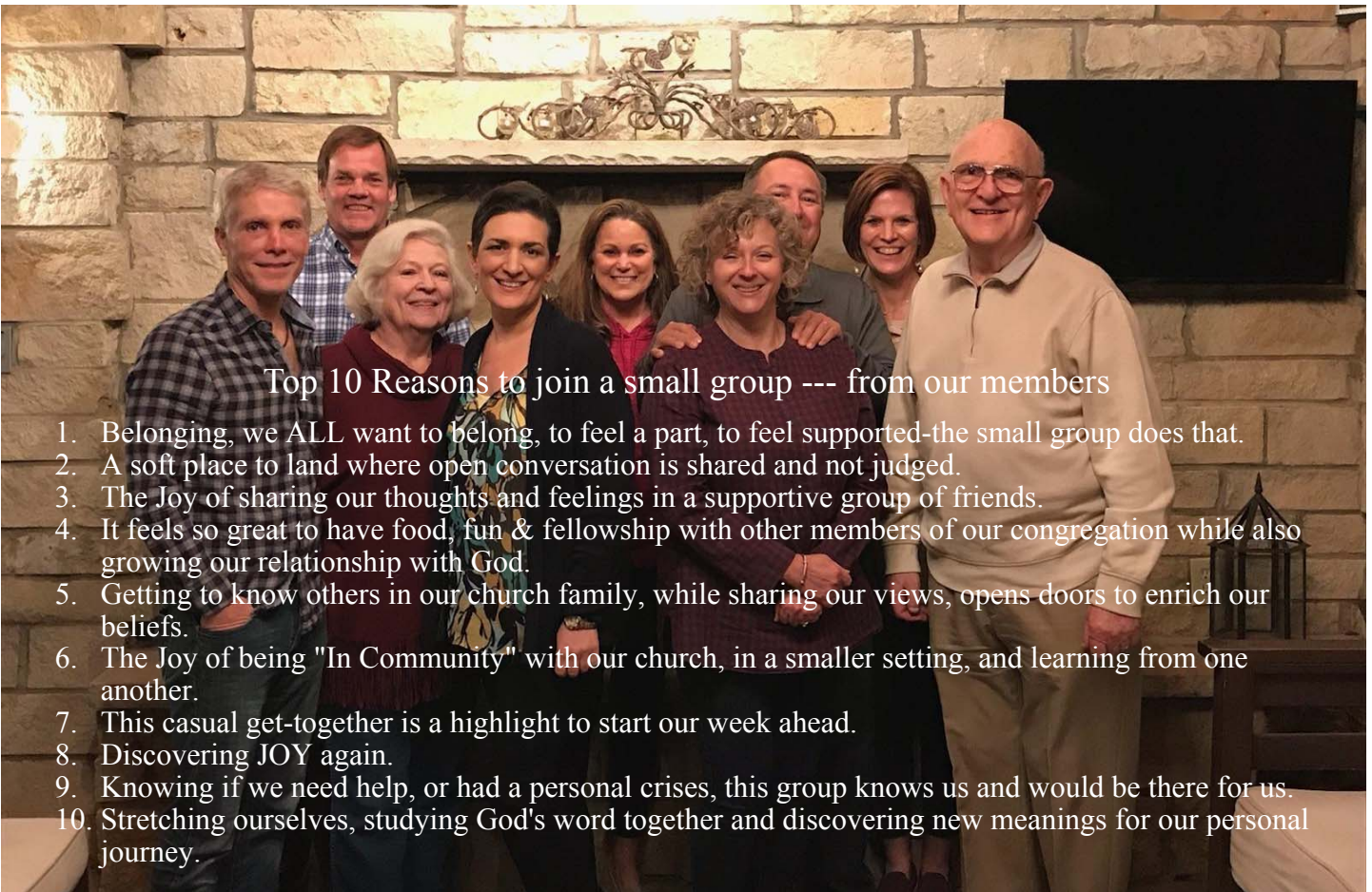


Organizing a bible study seemed like such a daunting task when Renee approached me last fall. What gifts do I have? Why in the world would anybody want to come? I had never started a bible study. I finally decided that the best option for me was to focus on food. Everybody likes to eat and I love to feed people. I asked Kathleen Lauck if she was interested in helping me. She was eager to lend a hand but

she too was unsure of the path. So hospitality became our goal in the beginning.

This small group, with two imperfect girls as the organizers stepped out in faith and challenged ourselves. We made the commitment to do the best we could and prayed that no one would notice our shortcomings. But then we had that first meeting and things began to change. The discussion was easy and atmosphere was warm and supportive. God was there with us and we all could feel it.

I can tell you this small group has made a big difference in my life. Kathleen, Dwight and I enjoy the preparation of the food and the weekly lesson. We find ourselves throughout the week reflecting on the moments shared with our friends around the dining table. This opportunity is one I would recommend to anyone who is willing to step out there and take a risk. You will be glad you did. I know I am.



Top 10 Reasons to join a small group --- from our members

1. Belonging, we ALL want to belong, to feel a part, to feel supported-the small group does that.
2. A soft place to land where open conversation is shared and not judged.
3. The Joy of sharing our thoughts and feelings in a supportive group of friends.
4. It feels so great to have food, fun & fellowship with other members of our congregation while also growing our relationship with God.
5. Getting to know others in our church family, while sharing our views, opens doors to enrich our beliefs.
6. The Joy of being "In Community" with our church, in a smaller setting, and learning from one another.
7. This casual get-together is a highlight to start our week ahead.
8. Discovering JOY again.
9. Knowing if we need help, or had a personal crises, this group knows us and would be there for us.
10. Stretching ourselves, studying God's word together and discovering new meanings for our personal journey.

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Welcome New Members!



Darrel Kirkland



Marshall & Sue Farrier

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

The **Sunday Evening Bible Study Group** has begun a new study using the book "Perfectly Yourself". The group led by Kathleen Lauck & Sandra Ross meets on Sundays at 6:30 pm at 2308 Ellingham (home of Dwight & Sandra Ross). Everyone is welcome!

Christian Women's Fellowship: Group Meetings will be as follows: **Group 1** will meet on Monday, March 19th, at 1:30 pm at Judy Muir's home, 2410 Farington. **Group 2** will meet on Wednesday, March 21st, at 12:00 noon in Room 405. **Group 3** will meet on Monday, March 19th, at 2:00 pm in Room 405.

March Ministry Meetings: will be as follows:
Thursday, March 15th: **Evangelism** at 5:30 pm, Rm 405
Sunday, March 18th: **Membership** at 5:00 pm, Rm 310
Tuesday, March 20th: **Education** at 6:00 pm, Rm 405
Stewardship at 6:00 pm, Rm 310
Worship at 7:00 pm, Rm 222
Tuesday, March 27th: **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 19th & 26th.

Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at URHCS is Jimmie Stodghill; at the Gables is Phyllis Lewis. Released and back home are Gretchen Bridgman, Braelyn Crowe, E.D. Sartin.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Jessica Black, Janie Huff & Lou Murdock and Family on learning of the death of Joel Black on March 9th. Services will be Friday, March 16th, at 2:00 pm in the Chapel.

Red River Hot Dogs is back on the Neighborhood's meal schedule for the last Wednesday of every month from 5:00-6:30 pm starting this month, March 28th.

They will also be with us for the Blessing of Pets on Saturday, April 28th, from 11 am-1 pm.



9th Annual "Cruisin' for Christ" Kick-Off Car Show on April 21st!

Come by to see the cars in over twenty categories! Registration is from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Prizes are awarded at 3:00 pm. If you have a car you would like to show off, the registration fee is only \$20. All proceeds benefit FCC Youth Ministry.



CMF's Breakfast Bible Study!

In March we welcomed three new members, Kerry Roach, Bill Jennings & Jim LaValley.

On our calendar going forward are:

1. Cooking hot dogs for the FCC Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday morning, March 25th.
2. Rescheduled CMF Ladies' Night for April 5th. Make your reservations early for bigger steaks and juicer chicken!

Thanks to Larry Spradley for an insightful meditation and join us for our next breakfast on Thursday, April 12th, at the Highway Café, 2808 Jacksboro Hwy.



Electronic Giving is a convenient and secure way to provide consistent financial support to our church. You can now make contributions to First Christian Church anytime. Just look for the *GivePlus Church* app in the App Store or Google Play. You can quickly and easily donate using your debit/credit card or checking/savings account.

FOR THE RECORD...

CGRM: (Tues., Mar. 6)	26	
The Neighborhood (Wed., Mar. 7)	32	
8:40 Worship . . . 35	10:45 Worship . . .	148
Total Worship		215
Sunday School	95	
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week		\$16,215.67
Sunday Receipts for 3/11/18		\$5,851.00
Through March 12: Income	\$168,092.20	Expenses \$147,784.03

This Sunday:

"LISTEN: Finding Your Mystery: Listening Behind the Voices"
Romans 12:2-12
Rev. Renee Hoke

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Disciples Men's Mission Work Trip



David Strickland and Bob Hayes spent last week at Disciple Oaks Camp and Retreat near Gonzales. They were part of the construction team for Disciples Men throughout the region who devote Spring Break to a church-related construction project. The team began work on a Welcome Center including administrative offices for the campground. Well done, good and faithful servants.

Phillips Legacy Scholarships

Students hoping to attend TCU (or any Disciples related college) should consider applying for a scholarship from the Phillips foundation. Recipients do not have to be members of Disciples churches, but they do agree to participate in leadership workshops. Applications are due March 23, 2018. For more information contact Ann Hunter, Outreach Chair, in the church office.

News & Testament on Sunday, March 25



Our monthly News & Testament (formerly FACE Time) conversation, will be on Sunday, March 25th, led by Deanna & Sam Watson. 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.

Hero Central Vacation Bible School!



Would you like to help with Vacation Bible School this year?! Join us on Monday, March 26th, at 6:00 pm for a VBS planning meeting. We will meet in Room 405 and discuss different volunteer positions and a timeline of events leading up to Hero Central. If you have any questions please email Claire at:

claire@firstchristianwf.com

The dates for this year's VBS are July 23rd-27th.

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, March 27th, 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!



Time To Order Easter Flowers!



We will be using a variety of Spring flowers this year to decorate the Sanctuary for Easter. If you would like to furnish one in memory or honor of a loved one, please fill out the form below and return it with your check to the church office. The Easter flowers are \$10.50 each and the deadline to order is March 25th.

Donor _____

In memory/honor of _____
(circle one)

In memory/honor of _____
(circle one)

In memory/honor of _____
(circle one)

For Office use only: date received _____ # ordered _____

Total paid _____ Cash / Check # _____

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

From the Mailbox. . .

On Friday, January 23, at 10:12 pm we said goodbye to mom for the final time. The events of that day are still just a blur. Remembering small details has proven to be very difficult and I suspect that will not change in the days to come. I now realize that no matter how long you prepare for the inevitable when a parent draws their last breath your mind goes numb. My siblings and I were operating on auto pilot as we made the necessary arrangements for mom's funeral.

I remember asking myself time after time, "How do people without a church family cope with the grief of losing a loved one?" Fortunately, we didn't have that extra burden. Renee and Dave and the rest of the First Christian Church family reached out to us daily up until the time of the funeral to make sure every detail was handled. FCC welcomed our family and friends with open arms and provided an amazing memorial service celebrating mom's life. Jeanette and Sharon added to the celebration with their gift of beautiful music. We were then treated to a fine meal hosted by the CWF women allowing our family members to eat and talk about the day's event before having to return to our daily lives.

The entire time we gathered in the Fellowship Hall family members repeatedly commented to me about how the church was so welcoming, how phenomenal the music was and how amazing and moving the service was to them. I share that sentiment and am so grateful that I don't have to know how families without a church home cope with such a great loss.

I am so grateful to be a small part of the First Christian Church family and I want to thank you all for your thoughts, prayers and for all that each of you did to join with us and celebrate mom's life.

Thank you First Christian Church,

Mark Vallejo & Alice Vallejo

Dear FCC family,

Words fail me today, except to say a heartfelt, "Thank You."

Your prayers, support, and love have held my family up during this sad time. A special thanks to the ladies who prepared and served the meal before the service, and also to Rev. Renee Hoke, Mary Cantrell, and Dave Hartman for the uplifting service. Burl would have loved it!

Thank you for your continuing prayers. Learning to live and carry on without my soul mate is going to be difficult.

In Christian Love,
Carol Nowell

Dear First Christian Church of Wichita Falls,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generosity in providing the John T. Muir, Jr. Memorial Ministerial Scholarship. I am honored to be its recipient. Your gracious support makes possible my education for ministry at Brite Divinity School, and with your help I am able to pursue my calling and live out my commitment to serve.

I am from Dallas. I was born and raised here in the metroplex. My parents also attended Brite Divinity School

when I was young, and it was the only school that ever made sense for me. I came to Brite to live out my unique expression of ministry. My experience at Brite has helped me discover not only what that expression consists of, but also how that might function in a more formal setting. Upon graduation, I hope to continue my education. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at Brite thus far, and it has helped ignite a new love of graduate work and research which I think will serve me well throughout the rest of my life.

Again, thank you for your gracious scholarship support. We are blessed to have people like you who share our passion for ministry and want to support through us God's transforming work in the world.

Sincerely,

Sarah Christian

(Volunteer) Help Wanted:

Someone to help with food donations for the Interfaith Pantry each month. Boxes and baskets need to be put out before the first Sunday. Then sometime in the next week, the incoming items need to be loaded up and taken to Interfaith. Call Ann in the church office for more information or to volunteer.

Trinity-Brazos Area Women's Retreat

April 27-29, 2018

Disciples Crossing Camp & Retreat Center
3693 State Hwy 31 E., Athens TX 75752

"By Our Love"

Inspired by John 13:35

Keynote Speaker: Grey Zachary

Regular Rate: (March 1 through 31): \$100.00

Late Registration (April 1 through 27): \$110.00

To register go to: tbadwm.com

Questions: tbadwmcoordinator@gmail.com

New Titles Added to the Church Library

1. Heroes and Outlaws of the Bible – Downhome Reflections of History's Most Colorful Men and Women by Don Reid
2. Five Characters Who Shaped Our Disciples Characters – A Skit of Monologues from Early Founders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in America by Martin P. Foster
3. What Children Know About Angels – A Humorous Collection of Children's Thoughts About the Angels That Watch Over Us by Dandi Daley Mackall
4. Great Bible Stories and Master Paintings
5. Collected Poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay
6. The Little Brown Book of Anecdotes
7. Imaging The Word – An Arts & Lectionary, Vol. 1
8. Your Calling As A Deacon by Gary Straub
9. Jesus & the Rise of Early Christianity
10. Genesis – A New Translation of the Classic Biblical Stories
11. Cross Roads by Paul Young (author of The Shack)
12. Abraham and His Sons by James Harpur
13. One Church – A Bicentennial Celebration of Thomas Campbell's Declaration & Address

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, March 18, 2018

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)
NO Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)
4:45 Chi Rho & CYF (Grades 6-12) Meet to go to the Rock & Worship Roadshow Concert at MPEC
5:00 Membership Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)
5:45 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)
6:30 Bible Study (2308 Ellingham)

Monday, March 19, 2018

7:30-6:00 Children Come First / 9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)
10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
1:30 CWF Group 1 (Judy Muir's home, 2410 Farington)
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, March 20, 2018

2:00 Library Committee (Library)
6:00 Education Ministry Meeting (Rm 405)
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)
7:00 Worship Ministry Meeting (Rm 222)

Wednesday, March 21, 2018

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
10:30 Lenten Bible Study (Rm 310)
12:00 CWF Group 2 (Rm 405)
12:00 YAS Staff Mtg (Rm 217)
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)

Sunday, March 25, 2018 PALM SUNDAY

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School / 9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00 Fellowship Lunch & Easter Egg Hunt (Fellowship Hall & Grounds)
3:45 Chancel Ringers (Stratten Hall)
5:00 News & Testament (Parlor)
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)
6:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)
6:30 Bible Study (2308 Ellingham)

Monday, March 26, 2018

7:30-6:00 Children Come First / 9:00-12:00 Young Ages School (M-F)
10:15 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
6:00 VBS Planning Meeting (Rm 405)
6:30 Sr. Minister Search Committee Meeting (Rm 310)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

2:00 Tea at Two (Parlor)
2:00 Library Committee (Library)
6:00 Executive Council 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, March 28, 2018

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
10:30 Lenten Bible Study (Rm 310)
10:30 YAS Easter Parties & Egg Hunts (Wed & Thurs)
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, March 29, 2018 MAUNDY THURSDAY

6:00pm Maundy Thursday Meal (Fellowship Hall)
6:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship
8:00pm 24-Hour Prayer Vigil Begins (Chapel)

Friday, March 30, 2018 GOOD FRIDAY

Children Come First & Young Ages School Closed
8:00pm 24-Hour Prayer Vigil Ends (Chapel)

SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

3/18: Cheryl Smiley, Ricky Scales; Sally Hastings, Presiding
3/25: Cathy Gately, Robert Hernandez; Howard Morris, Presiding
Maundy Thursday: Ann Hunter, Dwight Ross III; Emily Wilson, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

3/18: Ainslee Buckley, John Buckley, Karen Burross
3/25: Braelyn Crowe, Terry Burross, Sandy Hay

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

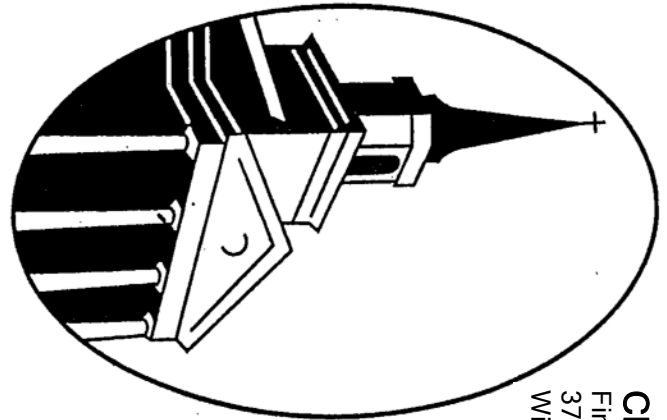
3/18: Chris Showalter & Scot Hafley
3/25: Colleen James & Sandy Hay

MARCH DIACONATE SERVERS

Cheryl Caraway & John Buckley, Co-Captains
Bob & Mary Carlton, Jill Griffin, Colleen James, Karen & Terry Burross, Sandy Hay, Chris Showalter, Ashley & Kyle Burross, Buddy Edgemon, Lynette Gill, Scot Hafley, Ainslee Buckley, Braelyn Crowe.

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



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