



Christian Challenger

Vol. 66

January 16, 2019

No. 2

Gathering

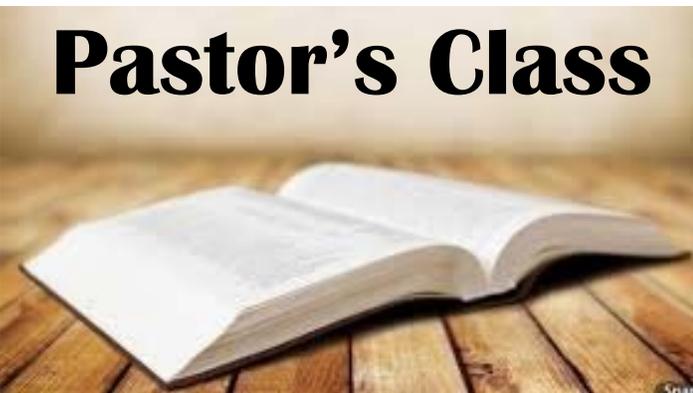
The Gathering -

The New Sunday Evening Group

If you've been looking for a time to gather with church friends to enjoy Bible Study and shared community but you're not a morning person, then we have a deal for you! The Gathering meets on Sunday evenings at 5:15 pm in the Parlor to visit and be spiritually fed (and we will feed your tummy too!) as Dr. Bender leads a study on *10 Dumb Things Smart Christians Believe*.

While geared towards young adults (single or married) and parents of young children, all are welcome. [From 5:00-7:00 pm, Young Disciples (Grades K-5) meet for choir and youth activities. Children under 5 meet to play and experience coming to church with their families].

So make this your New Year's promise to nourish and feed your spiritual health.



Pastor's Class

Pastor's Class is a 9-week study for children in 3rd-5th grade who desire to profess their faith and make a commitment to be a devoted follower of Christ through the ordinance of Baptism. During these 9 sessions, your child will learn alongside peers and seasoned congregation members the foundations of our faith and what it means to be a follower and disciple of Jesus Christ. Classes will begin Sunday, February 17th, at 9:30 am in Room 309. Baptisms will be held on Easter Sunday, April 21st.

You can register your child by going online to www.firstchristianwf.com, go to the children's ministry page and click the button that says, "Sign Up".

WORLD RELIGIONS



A World Religions course is being offered at Park Place Christian Church beginning Saturday, January 19, at 10:00 am. The class will be taught by Steve Tucker, and will focus on Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and Buddhism. The respectful focus will be upon the basic religious tenets, the cultural setting, and ritual practices. All are welcome to attend. No solicitations will be made; no commitments required. The class is free. Please register by calling Park Place Christian Church at 940-692-0165.



Through the Bible in a Year Study

The next "discussion and encouragement gathering" will take place on Thursday, January 24, at 6:00 pm in Room 310. A list of the daily readings are available in the church office.



Common Ground Benefit Brunch
Sunday, February 10th,
at Noon in Fellowship Hall

Come learn about our Common Ground Recovery Ministries and enjoy a brunch-type meal with egg casseroles, waffles, and mock mimosas.

Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender
Senior Minister

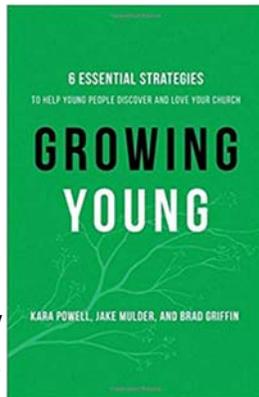


Growing Young (Part 2)

In the last *Make Your Mark* column, I noted that growing young - reaching young people (ages 15-29) - is on the wish list of almost every church. This is natural as churches, like individuals, grow old. The desire for involving and retaining young people is, first and foremost, to minister to their needs. Only after that is it possible to make the most of the health and vitality these young people bring to the church.

In their research project with over 360 churches who were “growing young,” the Fuller Youth Institute identified six core commitments that were common to these churches:

1. *Unlock keychain leadership.* Instead of centralizing authority, empower others - especially young people.
2. *Empathize with today's young people.* Instead of judging or criticizing, step into the shoes of this generation.
3. *Take Jesus' message seriously.* Instead of asserting formulaic gospel claims, welcome young people into a Jesus-centered way of life.
4. *Fuel a warm community.* Instead of focusing on cool worship or programs, aim for warm peer and intergenerational friendships.
5. *Prioritize young people (and families) everywhere.* Instead of giving lip service to how much young people matter, look for creative ways to tangibly support, resource, and involve them in all facets of your congregation.
6. *Be the best neighbors.* Instead of condemning the world outside your walls, enable young people to neighbor well locally and globally.



After a deep and wide analysis of their research, what proved to be true was that the more congregations tended to demonstrate these six core commitments, the more they tended to effectively engage teenagers and emerging adults. These core commitments don't necessarily happen in the order they are listed, and the distinction among them isn't always clean. However, the turning point is the prioritization of young people within the life of the church, motivated by the pursuit of Jesus for all people.

The first core commitment is to unlock keychain leadership. Keychain leaders can be volunteers, ministers, parents, committee chairs, Sunday School teachers, and more. The term “keychain leadership” suggests that every church leader has “keys on their key ring.” The choice is what to do with those keys. Some leaders hoard their keys, refusing to give others access. Other leaders let people borrow their keys, but make sure

they are returned quickly. Still other leaders are “key-less” - they are either young and inexperienced, without much authority or access, or perhaps an older congregant who feels as though she lost access to keys - and her voice in the church - a decade or two ago.



But in churches that grow young, those with the keys of leadership are aware of the keys they hold, and they are constantly opening doors for some while training and entrusting others who are ready for their own set of keys. While these leaders are more than capable of doing the work themselves, they have a keen sense of where God is leading and leverage their strengths for the good of the overall church.

To think about unlocking keychain leadership here at First Christian Church, the first step is to be aware of the keys you actually hold. What responsibilities do you have? How well do you share that responsibility?

Another possible idea for action is to work on training a young person for a particular role. Read through a book together. Invite the young person to lead one of your small groups or meetings. Attend a volunteer training together. Andy Stanley suggests that church leaders should always be intentionally apprenticing - they should be investing in and training someone else to do their job.

A third step towards unlocking keychain leadership is to close the gap on social distance. In other words, are all of your relationships with people in your general demographic range? Or are you finding ways to interact with young people? Perhaps it is inviting a young person to dinner. Maybe it is being intentional about greeting them in worship. Maybe it is serving as a volunteer at VBS or in another one of our children's ministry programs where you interact with these young parents.

Last but not least, say thank you. Whom do you need to thank for entrusting you with the keys of leadership at some point in your journey? Let them know by sending them a card, or calling them on the phone, or stopping them in the hallway.

Unlocking keychain leadership is not without a few misadventures. Sharing leadership with others will likely be more challenging than leading alone. But, no matter your role, if you are willing to entrust your keys to young people, they will trust you (and the church) with their hearts, their energy, their creativity, and even their friends.

Mark

Get to Work! at The Neighborhood

The *Get to Work!* series continues each Wednesday at The Neighborhood. Based on the petitions of Howard Thurman's poem, *The Work of Christmas*, each week will feature worship and a hands-on service project. Come join your neighbors in praising God, engaging with scripture, serving the world, and sharing in community on Wednesday, beginning with a meal at 5:30 pm and worship at 6:00 pm.



FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Christians are sometimes challenged by questions of life and faith. The ongoing FAQ series on Sunday mornings at 8:40 am and 10:45 am attempts to wrestle with these questions and to hear what the Bible says about these topics:

- January 20 Wives submit to your husbands? #really?
- January 27 What happens to us when we die?
- February 10 Does Satan really exist?
- February 17 Evolution and/or Creation?
- February 24 Does God bless us with prosperity?
- March 3 When will Jesus return?

Vision Team Begins Work for FCC

With the blessing of both the Executive Council and Board, First Christian Church is embarking on a journey to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading the church. Late last year, a Vision Team was appointed to help the church determine the scope of its ministry in the coming years. This team will be meeting once a month for the next nine months with a Navigator from Auxano, a church consulting group intent on helping churches gain clarity about their unique identity and direction.

The members of this Vision Team are: Susan Buckley, David Collins, Marisa Hafley, Cindy Hernandez, Ronnie James, Jerry Johnson, Doug Kunkle, Sheila Reynolds, Nancy Smith, Keith Wineinger, Cheryl Appling, and Mark Bender.

Your prayers for this team and their work are needed. Pray that these leaders, as well as all of our church leaders, would have increased sensibility to discern the leading of the Holy Spirit, and that God might enlarge our hearts toward people far from Christ here in Wichita Falls.

The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on January 30! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Monday.

January Meetings: will be as follows:

Sunday, Jan. 20th:

Membership at 5:00 pm, Rm 405

Tuesday, Jan. 22nd:

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, Jan. 21st.

Christian Women's Fellowship

Group Meetings will be as follows on Monday, January 21st: **Group 1** will meet at 1:30 pm at Judy Muir's home, 2410 Farington; and **Group 3** will meet at 2:00 pm in Room 405. On Wednesday, January 23rd, **Group 2** will meet at 12:00 noon in Room 405.

Open Flower Dates: If you would like to donate the flowers for the worship service in the Sanctuary, the following dates are open: **January 20 & 27 and February 3, 10, 17 & 24.** Call Sherry Tucker, Flower Coordinator, 696-2490, to donate.

Tea at Two on Tuesdays! Bring your favorite tea cup for a gathering for women on Tuesday, January 29th, 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!

Stretch Class: Join us in the gym every Monday at 6 pm for an hour of stretching. This class is open for everyone...men and women. Lora Vailes is teaching the class. She has taught classes in spin, sculpt, pump, Pilates, yoga and has been training since 1999. She guides us through some easy stretches to relieve the stress on our muscles. Cost is \$5 a class. Yoga mats and stretch bands are available but you are welcome to bring your own. Please come and bring a friend. If you have any questions ask Cindy Hernandez.

Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at the Gables is Ruth Beyer. Released and back home is Lisa Pullam.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Bettye Beavers & Family on learning of the death of her husband, Gerald Beavers, on January 5th. Graveside services were held on January 8th in Terrell TX.

♥Our condolences are extended to Jackie Bearden Stribling & Rosie Lee Bearden and Family on learning of the death of their husband and son-in-law, Phil Stribling, on January 2nd.

♥We also extend our sympathies to Sue Farrier & Family on learning of the death of her brother, Larry Teel, on January 5th.

First Time Guests! We are excited to report that the following persons visited for the first time on Sunday, January 6th: Caroline Nicholas.

*Take advantage of and enjoy your
First Christian Church Library and
its contents any time the church building is open.*

FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Jan. 8)	31
The Neighborhood (Wed., Jan. 9)	29
8:40 Worship . . . 28	10:45 Worship . . . 173
Total Worship	230
Sunday School	96
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$16,215.67
Sunday Receipts for 1/13/18	\$15,968.00
Through Jan. 14: Income \$29,751.24	Expenses \$13,523.63

This Sunday:

"Really...Submit?"
Ephesians 5:21-33
Dr. Mark R. Bender

Participate in a Ministry of the Church in 2019!

You make a difference! The gifts you bring, combined with the power of Christ at work within us, enable First Christian Church to accomplish more than we can ask or image (Ephesians 3:20). Therefore, each member of the congregation is encouraged to participate in one or more of the ministries that further the church's mission, both on our front doorsteps and to the ends of the earth.

No prior experience is required. All that is needed is a passionate willingness to further the ministry of the church. Indicate where you would like to serve by checking the box beside one or more of the ministries below.

EDUCATION – Ashley Burross, Chair - Responsible for the total education program and related ministries.

EVANGELISM – Chris Showalter & Robert Hastings, Co-Chairs - Responsible for direction of the church growth ministry of the church.

MEMBERSHIP – Susan Buckley & Alice Gordon, Co-Chairs - Plans meaningful opportunities for the total congregation with special attention to special need groups. Responsible for membership assimilation and cultivation. Responsible for planning, organizing and serving on pastoral care teams for membership. Plans recreation, dinners & other fellowship opportunities.

PROPERTY – Rick Appling, Chair - Responsible for supervision of church maintenance and related areas.

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE – Jerry Johnson & Eddie Tucker, Co-Chairs - Responsible for stewardship education and management of church funds.

WORLD OUTREACH – Polly Tonemah, Chair - Responsible for education and promotion of local and worldwide outreach ministries.

WORSHIP – Cheryl Smiley, Chair - Responsible for worship, music and drama.

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PHONE: (Home) _____ (Cell) _____

(Work) _____ (Fax) _____

If you plan to stay on the same Ministry as you served on in 2018, please still fill out this form and return it, otherwise you may be removed from the 2019 Ministry listing. THANK YOU!!!

Don't forget...Church Board Members are expected to serve on a Ministry and if a form is not received they may be drafted to a Ministry.

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, January 20, 2019

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School
9:45 Journey Through Scripture Bible Study (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
3:45-5:00 Chancel Ringers (Adults) (Stratten Hall)
5:00 Membership Ministry Meeting (Rm 405)
5:00-5:45 Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)
5:00-7:00 Chi Rho & CYF (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
5:15-7:00 The Gathering (Adults) (Parlor)
5:45-7:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)

Monday, January 21, 2019

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Children Come First & Young Ages School Closed
1:30 CWF Group 1 (Judy Muir's, 2410 Farington)
2:00 CWF Group 3 (Rm 405)
6:00-7:00 Stretch Class (Gym)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)
Tuesday, January 22, 2019
7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-F)
9:00-12:00 Young Ages School "YAS" (M-F)
9:30 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
10:00 YAS Music (Rm 220) (Tues. & Wed.)
2:00 Library Committee (Library)
6:00 Executive Council Meeting (Rm 310)
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups
 Anger Management (Rm 309) Parenting (Rm 305 & 306)
 Rebuilding Your Life (Rm 307)

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
9:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)
5:30-6:00 The Neighborhood Meal (Fellowship Hall)
6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)
6:00-7:00 First Kidz (Grades Pre-K-5th) (Rm 402)
7:00-8:00 Youth Activities (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
7:00-9:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, January 24, 2019

6:00 Through the Bible in a Year (Rm 310)

Friday, January 25, 2019

9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 220)
Leave for JYF Rally (Disciples Crossing-Athens TX)

Sunday, January 27, 2019

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School
9:45 Journey Through Scripture Bible Study (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
3:45 Chancel Ringers (Adults) (Stratten Hall)
5:00-5:45 Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)
5:00-7:00 Chi Rho & CYF (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
5:15-7:00 The Gathering (Adults) (Parlor)
5:45-7:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)

Monday, January 28, 2019

7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-F)
9:00-12:00 Young Ages School "YAS" (M-F)
9:00 CCF Music (Rm 220)
6:00-7:00 Stretch Class (Gym)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, January 29, 2019

9:30 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
10:00 YAS Music (Rm 220) (Tues. & Wed.)
2:00 Tea at Two (Parlor)
2:00 Library Committee (Library)
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups:
 Anger Management (Rm 309) Parenting (Rm 305 & 306)
 Rebuilding Your Life (Rm 307)

Wednesday, January 30, 2019

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
9:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)
5:30 Neighborhood Meal (Fellowship Hall)
6:00-7:00 The Neighborhood Worship (Fellowship Hall)
6:00-7:00 First Kidz (Grades Pre-K-5th) (Rm 402)
7:00-8:00 Youth Activities (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
7:00-9:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)

Friday, February 1, 2019

9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 220)

SERVING SUNDAY

ELDERS

1/20: Linda C. Carr, Linda Cook; Sally Hastings, Presiding
1/27: David Collins, Kathleen Lauck; Robert Hernandez, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

1/20: Keith Wineinger, Hannah Earley, David Wyatt
1/27: Linda Gipson, Ann Kable, Curtis Sullivan

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

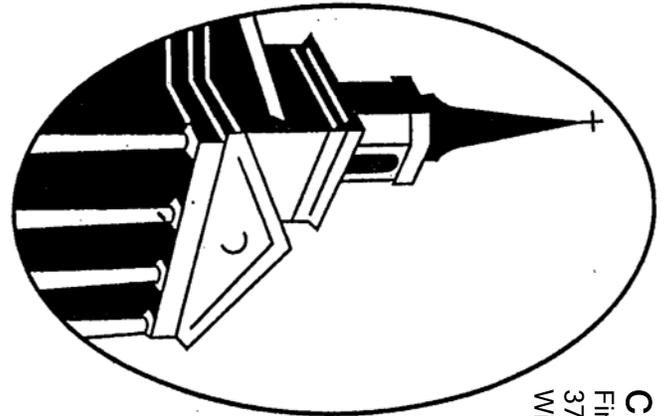
1/20: Catherine & Hannah Earley
1/27: Susan & John Buckley

JANUARY DIACONATE SERVERS

Elise Allen, John & Susan Buckley, Norma Hill, Keith Wineinger, David Wyatt, Kim Ballard, Buddy Edgemon, Linda Gipson, Ann Kable, Curtis Sullivan, Brandi Brannon, Catherine & Hannah Earley, Jim & Karen LaValley, Fred Ridenour.

THE CHURCH STAFF...

Church Number	940-692-2282	FAX Number	940-696-3085
Web Page:	www.firstchristianwf.com	Church e-mail:	susan@firstchristianwf.com
Dr. Mark Bender, Senior Minister			692-2282
Josh deSteiguer, Director of Youth Ministries			692-2282
Claire Baer, Director of Children's Ministries			692-2282
Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries			763-8515
Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator			691-7265
Heather Dickerson, Director of Children Come First			687-2231
Alisa Gardner, Director of Young Ages School			692-3640
Rev. Margaret Scales, Common Ground Recovery Ministries			337-1712
Susan Marrs, Executive Secretary		Tina Williams, Financial Secretary	
Ann Hunter, Receptionist		Debbie Watson, Organist	



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