



Christian Challenger

Vol. 66

January 30, 2019

No. 3

ELDER & DIACONATE INSTALLATION SERVICE

This Sunday, February 3, 2019
10:45 am Worship Service in the Sanctuary

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

This Sunday, February 3, 2019
in the Sanctuary immediately after the
10:45 am Worship Service
to vote on the 2019 Budget

DIACONATE TRAINING

Monday, February 11, 2019
7:00 pm in the Sanctuary
Both New & Returning Deacons
are asked to be present.

Please RSVP to the church office, 692-2282,
by noon on Friday, February 8th, if you will need childcare.

Lenten Bible Study

Encounters with Jesus
by Timothy Keller

New York Times-bestselling author Timothy Keller explores how people are changed by meeting Jesus personally - and how we can be changed encountering him today.

Keller knows that Jesus changed the life of every person he met in the Gospels, through powerful experiences and words that led them to unexpected and transforming answers to their big questions. These profound conversations can still address our questions and doubts today. *Encounters with Jesus* focuses on several of these meetings Jesus had with others - including with a skeptical student, a religious insider, an outcast, even his mother - and shows how the central events in Jesus' life provide ways for us to encounter him again or for the first time.

Join Sheri Sutton as she leads this nine-week study beginning Wednesday, February 27 in Room 310 at 10:30 am. Call the church office at 692-2282 to register. Books will be available in the church office. Please read the Introduction before the first session.

2019 Special Offerings

Each year, First Christian Church extends a call for over-and-above giving to six Special Offerings. These special offerings go to support the work of the larger church, helping Disciples congregations do more together than they can do on their own. As you make plans for your generosity this year, mark your calendars for these special offerings:

- **Week of Compassion** (February 17 and 24) - supports the relief, refugee, and development work of the church.
- **Easter** (April 14 and 21) - supports the General Ministries of the church.
- **Pentecost** (June 2 and 9) - supports the planning, nurturing, and sustaining of new Disciples congregations.
- **Reconciliation** (September 29 and October 6) - supports the church's work in being pro-reconciliation and anti-racism.
- **Thanksgiving** (November 10 and 17) - supports Disciples Higher Education entities and ministries.
- **Christmas** (December 8 and 15) - supports the work of our region, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Southwest.

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".

Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender
Senior Minister



Growing Young (Part 3)

The previous two *Make Your Mark* columns have described how most churches desire to involve and retain young people (ages 15-29). Further, in Part 2, I wrote about the first (*Unlocking Keychain Leadership*) of six core commitments common to churches that were “growing young,” as identified by the Fuller Youth Institute. As I noted last time, the more congregations tended to demonstrate these six core commitments, the more they tended to effectively engage teenagers and emerging adults.

The second core commitment in “growing young” is *empathizing with today’s young people*. Empathy doesn’t mean patronizing young people, but rather “feeling with” young people. Eugene Cho, a pastor and author, describes empathy as “the willingness to go to hard places with people.” Or said another way, the crux of this core commitment begins with understanding today’s young people.

One of the learnings from the research on this core commitment is that young people who are surrounded by empathetic adults often become more empathetic themselves. As teenagers and emerging adults are appreciated, understood, and valued, they become conduits through which empathy flows. A second learning was that every young person has three ultimate questions: *Who am I?* (identity); *Where do I fit?* (Belonging); and *What difference do I make?* (purpose). These questions are not unique to this generation. Therefore, these questions and the common struggle to answer them actually provide a way for bridging the gaps between generations.

A third learning from the research done on empathizing with young people is that current young people develop at a different pace than those older than them. First, the starting line begins earlier. The journey toward identity, belonging, and purpose starts earlier. In the same way, the finish line is reached much later than previous generations. For example:

- The median age for first marriage is now 26.5 for women and 28.7 for men, both of which are more than five years later than 50 years ago.
- The average age for women bearing their first child is 25 years, which is almost five years later than women in 1970.
- In comparison with 1970, parents today provide 11 percent more financial help to young adult children, and 40 percent of young adults in their twenties move back home with their parents at least once.

All this to say, the traditional signs that a young person has entered adulthood - a spouse, a family, completed education, a steady job, and financial

independence - now occur five or more years later. Likewise, these longer race to adulthood means that young people’s search for identity is now much longer as well. This causes a tumult of academic, vocational, and relational dilemmas which manifest themselves in pervasive stress... and a peripheral faith.

Given these realities, sociologist Robert Wuthnow describes the gap that has developed in the lives of these emerging adults:

We provide day care centers, schools, welfare programs, family counseling, colleges, job training programs, and even detention centers as a kind of institutional surround-sound until young adults reach age 21, and then we provide nothing...Yet nearly all the major decisions a person has to make about marriage, child rearing, and work happen after these support systems have ceased to function.

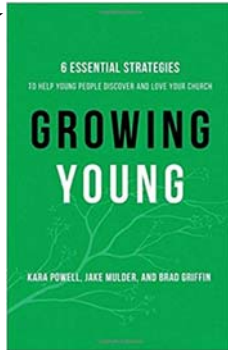
This is where the church can make a difference, as young people hunger for caring adults. These adults can help address their deepest questions. Their questions about identity are best answered by God’s *grace*. Their questions of belonging are ultimately met through the unconditional *love* of community. And their questions about purpose can be satisfied by involving them in God’s *mission* in the world.

This leads to some practical ways the church/church members can empathize with young people:

- Learn the name of one young person...or two...or three - teenagers and emerging adults want to be known, and this is low-hanging fruit.
- Go deep with one young person (your niece, your neighbor, your barista) - build a quality relationship.
- Don’t leave singles feeling singled out - given that the gap between college and marriage has grown, so too must the church’s offerings for single adults.
- Walk through your facilities with the eyes of a young person - consider how the church culture you’ve come to love feels to a first-time guest, especially a young person. What could be done to make it more welcoming to young people?
- Support marriages beyond the norm - instead of just offering a few premarital classes and a competent wedding coordinator, pair engaged and married couples with older mentor couples; and, offer premarital groups, not just classes, for long-term community.

Stanford University’s “D” (Design) School defined empathizing as “the work you do to understand people...it is your effort to understand the way they do things and why, their physical and emotional needs, how they think about the world, and what is meaningful to them.” In other words, it’s sitting on the curb of a young person’s life, celebrating their dreams and grieving over their despair. Churches that get this right have the opportunity to share life...and Jesus...with this generation that needs both.

Mark



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:

- 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?

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 each Wednesday, beginning with a meal at 5:30 pm and worship at 6:00 pm.



The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on February 13! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Monday.

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

Pantry Sunday for Interfaith Outreach Services will be this Sunday, February 3rd. Items for collection will be **jelly, canned fruit, canned meat: tuna, chicken, ham, chili, spam, Vienna sausages, etc.** Also, if you travel and have any unopened hotel toiletries, Interfaith Outreach Services would love to have them for their care sacks. Thank you for the 99 pounds of items delivered for the month of January!

Prime Timers Luncheon will be this Sunday, February 3rd, at 12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall.

The February gathering of **On Hold**, our support group for caregivers of all kinds, will be Tuesday, February 5th, 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.

Through the Bible in a Year Study: The next "discussion and encouragement gathering" will take place on Thursday, February 7, at 6:00 pm in Room 310. A list of the daily readings are available in the church office.

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

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study! Bring a friend and attend the FCC Men's Breakfast & Bible Study on Friday morning, February 8th, from 7:00-8:00 am, at the Hwy Café, 2808 Jacksboro Hwy.

February Meetings: will be as follows:
Tuesday, Feb. 12th: **Membership** at 6:00 pm, Parlor
Property at 6:00 pm, Rm 310

Outreach at 6:00 pm, Library
Worship at 7:00 pm, Rm 222
Tuesday, Feb. 19th: **Stewardship** at 6:00 pm, Rm 310
Education at 7:00 pm, Rm 405

Tuesday, Feb. 26th: **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, Feb. 11th, 18th, & 25th.

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 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 URHCS is Betty Lyons; at the Gables is Ruth Beyer. Released and back home are Kaye Holland, JoElla Rice.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Jan Pitts & Family on learning of the death of her father-in-law, Archie E. Pitts, on January 10th in Wichita Falls.

♥Our condolences are extended to Elise Allen & Family on learning of the death of her grandfather, Paul Parnell, on January 20th in Mobile, AL.

♥We also extend our sympathies to Jerry Caraway & Family on learning of the death of his father, Jimmy Caraway, on January 28th in Wichita Falls.

First Time Guests! We are excited to report that the following persons visited for the first time on Sunday, January 20th: Keith & Jessica Grantom.

New on the Library Shelves. . .

Speaking with Signs, Children's Object Lessons for Lent and Easter - by Wesley T. Runk

Speaking with Signs, is a series of six object lessons for children during the Lenten season; making worship more meaningful for them (and for adults). Each lesson brings a story from scripture, based on Matthew & John, by focusing upon a symbol related to the Easter story.

FOR THE RECORD. . .

CGRM: (Tues., Jan. 22)	26
The Neighborhood (Wed., Jan. 23)	26
8:40 Worship . . . 34	10:45 Worship . . . 178
Total Worship	238
Sunday School	124
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$16,215.67
Sunday Receipts for 1/27/18	\$8,403.00
Through Jan. 28: Income \$62,266.86	Expenses \$39,382.60

This Sunday:

"LAITY SUNDAY"

Cindy Hernandez will be giving the message.



Save the Date



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 reservations in worship or by calling the Church Office, 692-2282.

Common Ground 2018 at a Glance

Common Ground Recovery Ministries made some big changes in 2018. On June 1st, Rev. Margaret Scales became the new director and it was decided to focus on our 3 most successful groups—Rebuilding Your Life, Anger Management and Parenting. After much prayer and discussion, it was also decided to include CGRM in our church budget for 2018.

Common Ground attendance has increased 11% from 1,065 hours of support in 2017 to 1,177 hours in support in 2018. Weekly attendance varies from 20 to 35, and last year we welcomed 98 new participants. During the last six months of 2018, 70 affidavits were submitted to Stephani Logue, Wichita County Assistant District Attorney as evidence for court cases...and 63 participants received their course completion certificates.

In the first three weeks of 2019, Common Ground has welcomed 20 new participants and 5 persons have received course completion certificates. Thanks to God and our congregation's support, Common Ground is still making a difference in the lives of individuals and their families in our area.

Common Ground's Weekly Topics

Parenting

Liz Ivey, M.A., LPC - leader

- 1 Negative behavior causes
- 2 Stress management
- 3 The five love languages
- 4 New ways to relate
- 5 Effective command giving
- 6 Discipline & time out
- 7 Maintaining compliance
- 8 Emotions
- 9 Anger
- 10 Sexuality & boundaries
- 11 Parenting & Step-parenting
- 12 Practice & trouble shooting

Anger Management

Jeff Justice - leader

- 1 What causes anger?
- 2 Internal & external sources
- 3 It makes me so mad!
- 4 Thinking = feelings
- 5 Irrational thinking
- 6 Irrational beliefs
- 7 Distortions of interpretation
- 8 Distortions of reality
- 9 Rules we live by
- 10 Blaming basics
- 11 Forgive & forget
- 12 Expressing myself effectively

Rebuilding Your Life

Stacey Lingbeek - leader

- 1 Denial & Fear
- 2 Adaptation
- 3 Grief
- 4 Anger
- 5 Self-worth
- 6 Transition
- 7 Openness
- 8 Love
- 9 Relatedness
- 10 Sexuality & Singleness
- 11 Children
- 12 Purpose & Freedom



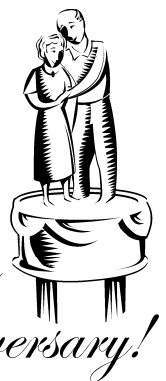
Wish These Friends a
"Happy Birthday!"

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 Matthew Roberts | 12 Todd Brunson | 23 Jim Biggs III |
| 2 Vicki Kunkle | 14 Melissa Ford
Mac Reid | 24 Phyllis Litteken |
| 3 Bob Carlton
Barbara Lyne | 15 Cathy Biggs
Phyllis Lewis
Maris Moran | 25 Jacquelyn Myers |
| 6 Betty Crick
Mike Wilson | 16 Paige Johnson | 27 Roger DeVilbiss
Lana Winfrey |
| 7 James Irl Montgomery | 17 Steve Burross | 28 Mark E. Vallejo |
| 9 Sadie Brannon
Jesse Hartman
LaVeta Kaiser | 18 Lelah Clementson | 29 Betty Lyons |
| 10 B.J. Barrett
Charlotte McNeely
Bud Rafuse
Ricky Scales
Clyde Williford | 19 Chuck Dalton
Chris Loskot | |
| 11 Claire Baer
Hunter Dalton
Matthew Tull
Michael Tull
Dan Ward | 20 Clyde Markee
Ron Preston | |
| | 21 Linda S. Carr
Nancy Roberts
Andy Wilson | |
| | 22 Luann Merrick
Hunter Westbrook | |

& ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 Julie & Shane Barger
- 13 Karen & Terry Burross
- 15 Mary Kay & Curtis Dolberry
- 18 Carole & Dan Davis
Glenda & Frank Tate



If we are missing your birthday or anniversary, please help us complete our records by calling the church office, 692-2282. We want to include all our members on this list!

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, February 3, 2019

LAITY & PANTRY SUNDAY

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

9:45 Journey Through Scripture Bible Study (Parlor)

10:45 Worship & Installation of Elders & Deacons (Sanctuary)

12:00 Congregational Meeting (Sanctuary)

12:00 Prime Timers Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

NO Chancel Ringers (Adults) (Stratten Hall)

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

5:00- Chi Rho & CYF Super Bowl Watch Party
(Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)

NO The Gathering (Adults) (Parlor)

NO Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)

Monday, February 4, 2019

Ministers' Week at Brite Divinity School (Feb. 4-6) (TCU-Ft. Worth)

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

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

6:00-7:00 Stretch Class (Gym)

6:00 Whirlwind Cluster Ministers Meeting (Ft. Worth)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, February 5, 2019

10:00 YAS Music (Rm 220) (Tues. & Wed.)

11:30-1:30 "On Hold" Caregiver Support Group (2414/2416 Barbados)

2:00 Library Committee (Library)

6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups

Wednesday, February 6, 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, February 7, 2019

10:00 YAS Chapel (Chapel)

1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)

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

Friday, February 8, 2019

7:00 Men's Breakfast & Bible Study (Hwy Caf , 2808 Jacksboro Hwy)

9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 220)

10:00 YAS Chapel (Chapel)

Saturday, February 9, 2019

CCF Staff Training (Region 9)

Sunday, February 10, 2019

BOY SCOUT SUNDAY

8:40 Worship (Chapel)

9:30 Sunday School

9:45 Journey Through Scripture Bible Study (Parlor)

10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)

12:00 Common Ground Benefit Brunch (Fellowship Hall)

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, February 11, 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)

10:30 CWF Board Meeting (Rm 310)

11:45 CWF Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)

6:00-7:00 Stretch Class (Gym)

7:00 Diaconate Training (Sanctuary)

7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, February 12, 2019

9:30 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)

10:00 YAS Music (Rm 220) (Tues. & Wed.)

2:00 Library Committee (Library)

6:00 Membership Ministry Meeting (Parlor)

6:00 Property Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)

6:00 Outreach Ministry Meeting (Library)

6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups

7:00 Worship Ministry Meeting (Rm 222)

Wednesday, February 13, 2019

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

9:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)

2:00 Vision Team Meeting (Rm 310)

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)

Thursday, February 14, 2019

CCF & YAS Valentine Parties (Classrooms)

Friday, February 15, 2019

9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 220)

Leave for CYF Retreat (Feb. 15-17) (Disciples Crossing-Athens TX)

Saturday, February 16, 2019

Scouts' Pinewood Derby (Gym)

SERVING SUNDAY

ELDERS

2/3: Rick Appling, Sherry Tucker; Dwight Ross III, Presiding
2/10: Woody Gossom, Andy Wilson; Debbi Schmidt, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

2/3: Karen Burross, Braelyn Crowe, Lynette Gill
2/10: Terry Burross, Chris Showalter, Sherry Martin

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

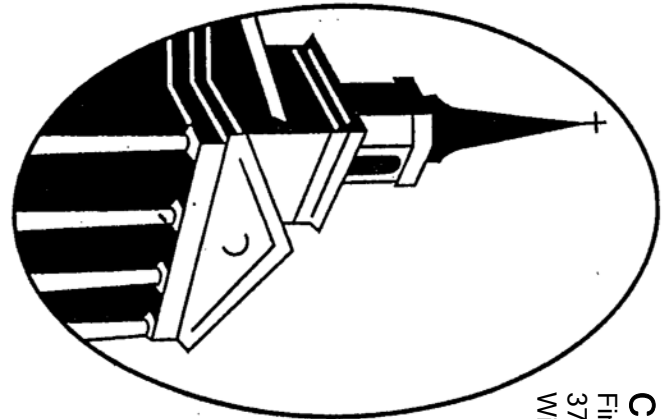
2/3: Karen & Terry Burross and Braelyn Crowe
2/10: Lynette Gill & Kris Gossom

FEBRUARY DIACONATE SERVERS

Karen & Terry Burross, Sherry Martin, Chris Showalter, Debi & Larry Ballard, Alan Freeman, Lynette Gill, Kris Gossom, Liz & Emily Thomas, Teresa Archambo, Shirley Craft, Fred Gentry, Melody Jennings, Margaret Phillips, James Poole, 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
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	



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

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.

