



Christian Challenger

Vol. 67

March 11, 2020

No. 5

Easter Eggs!



FCC we need your help!

There are 1,057 Easter Eggs in the church office that we need help filling! We will be taking candy donations as well as letting you take eggs home to fill if you wish! There are plastic bags in the church office for you to use.

If you take eggs home to fill please return them to the church office by Thursday, April 2.

Thank you so much!

---Vision 2025---

You're Invited!

Let's gather around the table for an

All Church Luncheon

Sunday, March 29, 2020

12:00 pm

Join your church family for lunch and an important conversation about where God is leading First Christian Church to be in 2025... and what that means for 2020.

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday - April 5

10:45 am - Palm Processional and Traditional Worship

12:00 pm - Fellowship Luncheon and Easter Egg Hunt

Maundy Thursday - April 9

6:00 pm - Supper in Fellowship Hall

6:30 pm - Tenebrae Service in the Sanctuary

24-Hour Prayer Vigil

Begins April 9 at 8:00 pm and concludes at April 10 at 8:00 pm

Good Friday - April 10

12:00 pm - Good Friday Service in the Chapel

Easter Sunday - April 12

7:00 am - Sunrise Service

8:40 am and 10:45 am - Traditional Services

THREE QUESTIONS SEEKING ANSWERS

After Easter, Join Dr. Bender for a three-week Sunday morning experience that will help you answer the questions:

1. Why Jesus?
2. Why the church?
3. Why this church?

Three Questions Seeking Answers is designed for guests, new members, those who don't know Jesus Christ well, and those who want to make Christ the center of their lives. Come join in the conversation on Sundays April 19, April 26, and May 3, at 9:40 am in Room 305.

SAVE THE DATE: VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 13-17, 2020, "To Mars And Beyond", Ephesians 3:20

Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender
Senior Minister



The Posture of Discipleship

Last year, as I prepared for the August Adult Forum on the *Generations of the Church*, I discovered that one of the key voices on Generation Z (those born after the year 2000) is a speaker and author named Tim Elmore. What I particularly liked was that he didn't address Generation Z (or any other generation) from a singularly sociological perspective. Instead, he used that research to help teach appropriate habits among Gen Z'ers that will enable them to live in community with the rest of the world.

Last week, Elmore posted a really helpful article that addressed an issue affecting more than just our youngest generation. He wrote:

A video sparked an online debate recently. In case, you didn't see it, Wendi Williams, a passenger on an American Airlines flight from New Orleans to Charlotte, decided to recline her seat to rest after the food was served.

When she did, she got a rude awakening.

The passenger behind her immediately chose to display his displeasure with her decision by punching her seatback repeatedly, over and over to get her to put her seat in the upright position. Wendi was startled at first, then gave the man punching her seat a "look" before asking for help from a flight attendant. None of this stopped him from punching her seat again and again. The debate on social media? Is it OK to recline your seats in the economy class?



I believe there is a much bigger debate.

After watching the video (posted by another passenger across the aisle) I couldn't believe that this was the recourse a grown man (young but still a man, not a two-year-old) decided was the best reaction to the situation. I fly a hundred times a year, and I find this kind of childish behavior more and more common. And it's adults. My questions are:

- *When did we lose the ability to tolerate a person reclining their seat in front of us?*
- *When did we decide it was OK to deal with it in an immature fashion like this?*
- *When did we cease talking directly to an offensive person to resolve an issue?*

When I look at behavior patterns in society, it appears incivility increased sharply as screens became central in our lives. The moment we can interact with people and information via a portable device, we unconsciously realize we don't have to act like adults. We can react. We can vent. We can exaggerate. And we can hide behind a screen...

Social media has, indeed, become our public square. It's where we host our cultural debates and post our opinions or reactions to what's just happened. Sadly... instead of face to face communication, which is tempered by the very fact that you are face to face with others, we hide behind small screens and vent about issues, yelling at each other with multiple exclamation points.

[So], here are a handful of shifts we must make as we converse with students [and adults] about the "public arena" of social media:

1. We must replace reaction with reflection.

When you see a post that angers you or causes an emotional reaction, don't reply. Instead, reflect. What's behind that post? What is that person experiencing?

2. We must replace hyperbole with honesty and accuracy.

When you do post, refuse to exaggerate or use exclamation points. Just make your statement and let the idea carry the weight. If it's not weighty enough, don't post it.

3. We must replace the artificial with the authentic.

Too many posts (usually pics and videos) on social media are filtered; fake, not real. We claim to love authenticity, so be genuine about your ordinary day and unfiltered photo.

4. We must replace a lecture posture with a listening posture.

When I read social media threads, I seldom see real listening. We all want to lecture on our point of view. What if we listened and asked questions? We may just become civil.

5. We must replace the crude with the civil.

Civility is what civilization is about. We are a diverse community that must learn to get along, starting with our words, or we'll stay severed in factions. Listen, learn and love.

(Tim Elmore, Growing Leaders, March 4, 2020)

The next two weeks of our worship series, *The Teachings of Jesus*, highlight rich instructions from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1 - 7:29). While we can't begin to cover all that Jesus taught in these three chapters, these chapters include teachings that address this culture of reaction and incivility. *Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy (5:7). When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister (5:23-24). Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good (5:44-45). Do not judge, so that you may not be judged...Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? (7:1, 3) In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you (7:12).*

As Christians, we are called to be different - to lead question-posing lives (conducting ourselves in such a positive, different way that people ask why we live that way). And, while I don't know anyone here at the church who would behave like the "punching passenger," let's be careful not to use that as an excuse for failing to assess our own spiritual and social behavior. Let's take a few of these teachings of Jesus to heart - not just as a Lenten exercise - but as a way of being Christ's disciples in Wichita Falls.

Mark

FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on March 25! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Monday.

Upcoming Spring Activities

Add these upcoming Spring activities to your calendar dates:

- March 29th Camp Sign-up Sunday
- April 5th Fellowship Dinner & Easter Egg Hunt
- April 5th-12th Holy Week
- April 18th Youth Car Show
- April 19th Youth Sunday
- May 17th Senior Sunday

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study! Bring a friend and attend the FCC Men's Breakfast & Bible Study on Friday morning, March 13th, from 7:00-8:00 am, at Hwy Café, 2808 Jacksboro Hwy.

Christian Women's Fellowship

Group Meetings will be as follows on Monday, March 16th: **Group 1** will meet at 1:30 pm at Norma Hill's home, 2004 Granada; and **Group 3** will meet at 2:00 pm in Room 405. **Group 2** will meet on Wednesday, March 18th, at 12:00 noon in Room 405.

On Hold Caregivers Support Group, will meet on the third Tuesday of each month at noon at Olive Garden. Please email Georgia Harrison, gharrison@fumcwf.org, if you plan to attend so that enough seats will be reserved! 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.

March Meetings:

will be as follows:
Tuesday, March 17th: **Outreach** at 6:00 pm, Library
Stewardship at 6:00 pm, Rm 310
Tuesday, March 24th: **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 9th, 16th, & 23rd.



Outreach Ministry News: The total collected for the Week of Compassion offering in February was \$1,584.00. And, Interfaith Outreach Services Diaper Collection total for March Pantry Sunday was 3,594 diapers!

Lost & Found: The following items have been found and are now in the Church Office. Please come claim them if they belong to you: James Avery charm found in the Chapel; 2 pairs of sunglasses; 2 pair of reading glasses; and 2 coffee tumblers!

Pickleball! Join us on Sunday afternoon in the gym to play Pickleball. No experience required, on the court instruction, and loads of fun. We play from 2-4, so come for the whole time, or half the time and find out what the BIG "dill" is!

First Time Guests! We are excited to report that the following persons visited for the first time on Sunday, March 1st: Kevin Lowder.

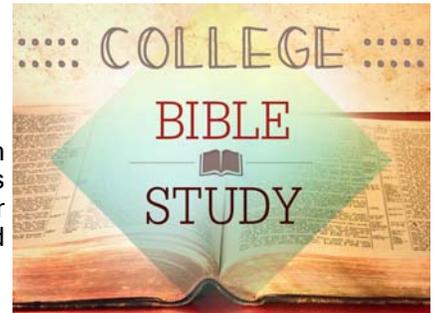
Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at Kell West is Larry Carr; at Windmill Rehab is Gretchen Bridgman. Released and back home are Steve Holland, Larry Spradley, Lynette Gill.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Debbi Schmidt & Family on learning of the death of her aunt, Juanita "Nita" Pratt, on March 10th. Graveside services will be held in Kansas.

Calling All College Students!

Join Josh at 6:00 pm on Thursday evenings at Rapid Fire Pizza for food, fellowship, and bible study!



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. 4)	31
The Neighborhood (Wed., Mar. 4)	45
Worship (Mar. 8): 8:40am. 23	10:45am. 153
Total Worship.	221
Sunday School	
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$18,362.35
Sunday Receipts for 3/8/20	\$3,938.00
Through Mar. 9: Income	\$213,368.56
Expenses	\$182,693.21

This Sunday:

"The Sermon on the Mount:
 Salt, Light and Fulfillment"
 Matthew 5:13-20
 Dr. Mark Bender

March 10, 2020

Dear Church Family,

Committed to the safety and security of all who frequent First Christian Church, a number of protective measures have been enacted over the last few years. Among these measures have been the addition of magnetic keypad locks on many of our doors and the presence of trained security officers at worship services and other special events.

The safety and security of our members and guests remains an ongoing priority and is regularly reviewed. As a part of this process, the Wichita Falls Police Department Officers assigned to First Christian Church recently made recommendations for further enhancing our security. Among those recommendations are suggestions for limiting access to the building during our Sunday morning worship services.

Following their wise counsel, **beginning Sunday, March 22, the southeast door leading into the Sanctuary from the breezeway (closest to the Sacristy) will be locked beginning at 11:00 am** (fifteen minutes after the start of worship).

Further, at that same time (11:00 am), all outside entry doors throughout the building will also be locked, with the exception of the North door under the portico that leads into the Sanctuary Narthex. That door will remain unlocked and under the careful, but unobtrusive, observation of our security officers. Of course, these new measures *do not affect egress from the building*. All exits remain accessible and available at all times.

While we recognize that these new measures may create some minor inconveniences, we believe these changes are particularly critical for the security of our worship community and our children in the Nursery and Children's Church. Although we hope that the implementation of these measures will be seamless, we will continue to evaluate these measures for effectiveness and congruity with our values of welcome and hospitality.

We regret that security considerations have become a part of our life as a faith community. However, we also believe it is foolish to assume that we are immune to danger, no matter how remote. Recognizing the challenges posed by the outside world, Jesus counseled his disciples to be *wise as serpents and innocent as doves* (Matthew 10:16). Our prayer is that we are doing just that, and we gratefully appreciate your patience and understanding as these measures are enacted and refined.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact one of us.

Seeking the abundant peace of Christ,

Dr. Mark Bender
Senior Minister

Rick Appling
Chair of Property

Ronnie James
Safety and Security Subgroup Chair

OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, March 15, 2020

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School
9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00-2:00 Pastor's Class (Rm 402)
2:00-4:00 Pickleball (Gym)
NO Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)
NO Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5)
5:00-7:00 Chi Rho & CYF (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
5:45-7:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)
6:00 Sunday Evening Bible Study (Rm 310)

Monday, March 16, 2020

7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-F)
Young Ages School "YAS" Closed This Week
9:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)
1:30 CWF Group 1 (2004 Granada)
2:00 CWF Group 3 (Rm 405)
5:00-8:00 CCF Staff Training (Rm 310)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

9:30 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 222)
12:00 "On Hold" Caregivers Support Group Meeting (Olive Garden)
2:00 Library Committee (Library)
6:00 Stewardship Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)
6:00 Outreach Ministry Meeting (Library)
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups (Rm 304-308)

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 220)
10:30 Sheri Sutton's Lenten Bible Study (Rm 310)
12:00 CWF Group 2 (Rm 405)
2:00-5:00 Young Disciples Mission Event
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)
NO Chancel Choir (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, March 19, 2020

1:30 Knit Wits (Parlor)
6:00 MSU Bible Study (Rapid Fire Pizza)

Friday, March 20, 2020

9:00 CCF Music (Rm 220)

Sunday, March 22, 2020

8:40 Worship (Chapel)
9:30 Sunday School
9:45 Journey Through Scripture (Parlor)
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary)
12:00-2:00 Pastor's Class (Rm 402)
2:00-4:00 Pickleball (Gym)
NO Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)
NO Grow in Grace Choir (Grades K-5)
5:00-7:00 Chi Rho & CYF (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)
5:45-7:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)
NO Sunday Evening Bible Study (Rm 310)

Monday, March 23, 2020

7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-F)
9:00-12:00 Young Ages Preschool "YAS" (M-F)
9:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

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 (Rm 304-308)

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405/Chapel)
9:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 220)
10:30 Sheri Sutton's Lenten Bible Study (Rm 310)
5:00 MSU Mustang Meal (Fellowship Hall)
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)
7:00-8:30 Chancel Choir (Stratten Hall)

Thursday, March 26, 2020

6:00 MSU Bible Study (Rapid Fire Pizza)

Friday, March 27, 2020

9:00 CCF Music (Rm 220)

SERVING SUNDAY

ELDERS

3/15: Sherry Tucker, Cindy Hernandez; Linda C. Carr, Presiding
3/22: Howard Morris, Linda Cook; Jerry Johnson, Presiding

DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

3/15: Fred Gentry, Jodi Bender, Abby Bender
3/22: Fred Ridenour, Jane Ridenour, Dave Clark

DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

3/15: Curtis Sullivan & Dave Clark
3/22: Brandi Brannon & Stacey Lingbeek

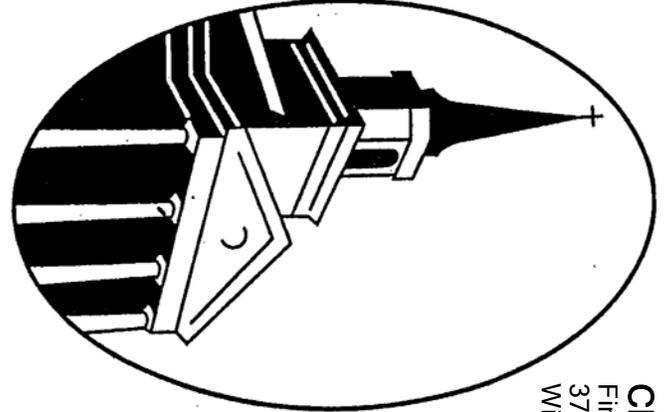
MARCH DIACONATE SERVERS

Dave Clark, Captain

Ashley & Kyle Burross, Linda Gipson, Ann Kable, Curtis Sullivan, Brandi Brannon, Fred Gentry, Margaret Phillips, Fred & Jane Ridenour, Jodi Bender, Leann Elder, Robert Hastings, Stacey Lingbeek, Ashley Warton, Abby Bender.

THE CHURCH STAFF...

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Web Page:	www.firstchristianwf.com	Church e-mail:	susan@firstchristianwf.com
Dr. Mark Bender, Senior Minister			692-2282
Rev. Josh deSteiguer, Minister 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	
Karen Watson, Receptionist		Debbie Watson, Organist	



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