



# Christian Challenger

Vol. 67

June 17, 2020

No. 12



**To Mars and Beyond Family VBS!**  
Join us for a VBS event created for the whole family!  
**Date & Time: Sunday, July 19; 6:00 to 8:00 pm**  
**Where: First Christian Church Parking Lot**

To Mars and Beyond VBS invites Voyagers of all ages on a space travel adventure to explore where God's power can take them! Along the journey, Voyagers discover a new realm of possibilities as they reach for the stars and encounter the limitless power and love of God!

Sign up via Facebook post, Ministry News email, or by calling Claire in the Church Office.

\*All children must have an adult present with them\*



Join us on the East Parking lot Sunday mornings at 8:40 am for a Drive-In Communion service! This short service features hymns, prayers, a message, and communion. Come start your Sunday with this Onsite Worship Experience.



## A Word from our Evangelism Ministry



Thank you for joining us on our church streaming platforms in recent weeks. This has enabled First Christian Church to provide worship and fellowship for all of us while maintaining our social distancing.

Why not share with your neighbors and friends?

By forwarding our worship invitations and then "liking and sharing" our various streaming services and events, this is an easy and vital way to point those you know and care about, to the ministries of First Christian Church...and, in turn, to Jesus Christ.

If you haven't already, we also urge you to subscribe to our YouTube channel. (You can do so by navigating to YouTube.com and searching for "First Christian Church Wichita Falls".) Subscribing not only provides a very stable and high-quality livestream, this channel also houses recorded versions of each occasion we stream.

So like and share...and subscribe! These simple acts will ensure First Christian Church grows our digital footprint in our community and the area.



## Give an Animal

Need a gift idea for Father's day or any other occasion? We have a suggestion! Heifer International is greatly respected for its assistance in the U.S. and abroad. It started after World War II when Dan West noticed that food donations were quickly used up, with the recipients no better off. A farmer himself, he and his friends arranged to ship some cows to a community with the stipulation that the first off-spring go to other families. Heifer still gives animals along with required training and sharing of the gift. As a result, now millions of animals and their offspring have made life more stable for families and communities. Families have more to eat, extra to sell, and growing knowledge of good farming practices. Does this sound like a gift you would like to give? Visit <https://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html> to learn how you can give the gift of goats, cows, chickens, and other resources in honor of your loved ones!

# Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender  
Senior Minister



## The Tunnel of Chaos

A little over ten years ago, I read a book of leadership maxims. One of the adages in this book was titled "The Tunnel of Chaos" and the chapter on this saying opened with this:

*One of the greatest contributions author and psychiatrist M. Scott Peck made to this world was to shine a spotlight on the differences between participating in genuine community and experiencing what he coined "pseudo community."*

*If community involves things such as knowing and being known, serving and being served, loving and being loved, and celebrating and being celebrated, then most relationships, Peck asserted, are constantly devolving into pseudo community. It's the great temptation for small groups of people to slide into a state where they're not quite telling each other the truth and they're not quite celebrating each other. Instead, they tolerate each other, they accommodate for each other, and they settle for sitting on the unspoken matters that separate them.*

*...What captured my imagination about Peck's concept was the aha that in order to move from pseudo community to genuine community, you have to endure a little chaos. To break free from falsehood, someone has to upset the applecart and say out loud, "As far as I can tell, we're not experiencing real community here."*

(Bill Hybels, *Axiom*, 2008).

Hybels went on to note that we all want to get to true community, but we find ourselves in pseudo community. To move from one place to the other, "you have to be willing to go down into a tunnel...a tunnel called chaos."

In the last few weeks, we have seen the breakdown of pseudo community. Especially at the forefront has been race relations across our county. For many, true community among residents of the same neighborhoods and cities is more of a dream than a reality. But it hasn't just been the racial divide that has highlighted pseudo community. Our political persuasions have been more divisive than strengthening. Our diversity of thought on the management of COVID-19 has unintentionally put medicine and public policy in a wrestling match. And our strong desire for a return to face-to-face interaction has highlighted that we have substituted a number of things (some good, some not) for community. Chaos is a good word to describe many of our interpersonal relationships these days.



Hybels suggested that we often settle for pseudo community instead of demanding the real deal because of fear. "What if airing the issue actually makes things worse?" "What if probing the situation only serves to ruin the relationship?" we think. The only solution is to enter the tunnel. It can be messy. It can be scary. It can be ambiguous. But it is almost always worth it. It's how we one day pop-up into the fresh, life-giving daylight of true community.

Given the situations we find ourselves in today - personally, regionally, nationally - how do we move towards true community? Jesus said, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and 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, and then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23-24) Said a little more plainly, you can make things right with God until you make things right with the people around you. You can't have peace with God if you can't have peace with the people in your family; with your neighbor. I think we believe this to be true. But, sometimes, we are afraid - fearful - to live this out.

In 1 Peter 3:13-16, Peter writes:

*Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. "Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened." But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience.*

While this biblical passage is often used to describe the need to be ready to talk about our beliefs, Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon point out that there is also another instruction: "When you encounter other people, *do not fear. Do not be frightened.* Even when everyone around you chooses fear, you have a hope that is greater. Live out that hope, and don't be afraid to talk about it." And if Jesus Christ is our Lord, then we clearly know what Christ has commanded: *Love your neighbor as yourself.*

Entering the tunnel of chaos is frightening. It may push us to think differently, act differently, believe differently. It may challenge some lifelong assumptions. It may cause us to see our family and our neighbors in a new light. But whether its politics, race, socioeconomic status, gender, age, practical concerns, or one of a thousand other things that makes us different from another, our commitment to entering the tunnel of chaos can work to bridge that divide. So be open to where the Spirit is prompting you to enter the tunnel. It's one of the truest tests of character and love.

Mark



# FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS



The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on July 1! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Monday.

**Pantry Sunday** for Interfaith Outreach Services: You can help keep the pantry shelves filled by:

1. Donating on Pantry Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup>: **The collected item(s) will be: Ramen Noodles or Cup Noodles and cans or corn.**

2. Donating directly anytime into the large box on the porch by the Chapel entrance. It will be emptied daily over the summer.

3. If you would like to support Interfaith with a financial gift, you can mail your donation to Interfaith (1101 11th St., Wichita Falls, TX 76301), or you can donate on their [website](#).

Thank you for your 301 lbs of food donations in May through the Chapel box! The next highest church in town gave 146 lbs, so FCC did double that and we also beat our donation from May of last year of 99 lbs through our "normal" Pantry Sunday. The Chapel donation box is working and FCC folks are amazing!

## Member News:

♥**Hospitalized:** at Advanced Care Rehab is Joe Etoch. Released and back home are John Bridgman, Carol Nowell, Glorie Steele, Joye Thompson.

♥Our sympathies are extended to the family and friends of Noel Johnson, MSU Women's Basketball Coach, who passed away on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Bender & Dr. Hartman will officiate at the memorial services this Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 pm at MSU's D.L. Ligon Coliseum.

♥Our condolences are extended to Connie Cannedy & Family on learning of the death of her brother-in-law, Joe P. Fuller, on June 11<sup>th</sup> in Granbury TX.

♥We also extend our sympathies to BJ Barrett and Matthew Tatro & Family on learning of the death of their grandmother, Ann Coale Phillips, on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

## July Birthdays

- 1 Richard Hiraki, Christopher Sartin
- 2 Jodi Bender
- 3 Bob Harper, Frank Litteken, Ryan Murdock, Carly Westbrook
- 4 Abby Bender, Diane Hail, Keith Wineinger
- 5 Kathy Koch
- 6 Dawn Craig
- 7 Nancy Smith
- 8 Brain Zug
- 9 Pat Duncan, Sharon Stradley
- 10 James Boger, Raymond McCoy, Ethan Raber
- 11 Pam Poulos, Carl Winfrey
- 13 Michael Barker, Sarah Cook, Ann Kable
- 14 Curtis Sullivan
- 15 Mary K. Carroll, William Schrieber
- 16 Andrea Deases, Bob Hayes
- 18 Barnett McNeely
- 19 Hailey Wineinger
- 20 Sara Anderson, Kay Dalton
- 21 Mary Ferguson
- 22 Joe Bauer
- 24 Jim Tull
- 26 Padon Bedford
- 27 Lucy Anderson, Kathleen Sartin
- 28 John Bridgman, Debbie Turnbow
- 29 Julie Barger, Jane Ridenour
- 30 Leif Anderson, Kim Ballard, Bryson Brannon, Amy James, Pam Johnson, Donna Young
- 31 Carolyn Cobble, Margaret Phillips, Richard Phillips

## July Anniversaries

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Claudine & Fred Farrell  | 16 Sheila & Craig Reynolds |
| 3 Vanida & Dwight Tuttle   | 17 Judie & Weldon Brunson  |
| 5 Sheila & James Poole     | 23 Ashley & Kyle Burross   |
| 7 Sarah & Ryan Sparks      | 30 Donna & Robert Benson   |
| 8 Sherrie & Joe Vaccarella | 31 Linda & Gary Cook       |
| 15 Linda & Larry Carr      | Diane & Mike Spiller       |
| 16 Brandi & Jody Brannon   |                            |

## July Scripture Readings

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Psalm 19:1-4           | 17 Psalm 121:1-8         |
| 2 Job 42:10-13           | 18 Romans 12:9-21        |
| 3 Romans 6:1-13          | 19 James 1:9-25          |
| 4 Mark 12:41-44          | 20 Numbers 6:22-27       |
| 5 Philippians 4:10-20    | 21 Ephesians 6:12-18     |
| 6 Psalm 139:7-10         | 22 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 |
| 7 James 1:2-6, 12-17     | 23 2 Corinthians 9:6-11  |
| 8 Luke 10:25-37          | 24 Isaiah 45:2-6         |
| 9 Psalm 36:5-9           | 25 Genesis 50:15-21      |
| 10 Hebrews 2:5-18        | 26 Hebrews 12:4-11       |
| 11 2 Corinthians 1:1-7   | 27 Luke 7:36-50          |
| 12 Matthew 6:25-33       | 28 2 Corinthians 4:13-18 |
| 13 Ephesians 2:1-10      | 29 Psalm 34:1-8          |
| 14 Psalm 91:1-6          | 30 John 20:24-31         |
| 15 2 Corinthians 12:6-11 | 31 1 Corinthians 13:4-7  |
| 16 1 Peter 4:9-11        |                          |

## FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., June 9)	21
Neighborhood Online Prayer Service (Wed., June 10)	24
Sunday School (Sun. June 14 – via Zoom)	18
Worship (June 14): 8:40am Drive In Worship Service	35
10:45am Online Facebook Page	183
Total Worship	242
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$18,362.35
Sunday Receipts for 6/14/20	\$11,098.00
Through June 15: Income \$425,868.47	Expenses \$427,854.29

## This Sunday:

"Eyes Wide Open"  
Nehemiah 1:1-11  
Rev. Josh deSteiguer

## OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, June 21, 2020

FATHER'S DAY

8:40 Drive In Worship Service (East Parking Lot)  
9:30 Adult Sunday School Classes (via Zoom)  
10:45 Worship (Watch the Livestream on YouTube or  
Facebook.com/FCCWF)

2:00-4:00 Pickleball (Gym)

NO Romans Bible Study (Rm 310 & Zoom)  
NO Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)

Monday, June 22, 2020

7:45-5:30 Children Come First (M-Th) (Classrooms/Gym)  
8:30-11:00 CCF Music (M-Th)  
10:00-11:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
10:30 CWF Board Meeting (Rm 310)

Tuesday, June 23, 2020

9:00-10:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
9:30 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 310)  
4:00 CCF Kona Ice (East Parking Lot)  
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups  
(Rm 304-308)

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)  
8:30-11:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
6:00 The Neighborhood Service (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 First Kidz (Grades Pre-K-5<sup>th</sup>) (Rm 402)  
7:00 Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)

Thursday, June 25, 2020

8:30-9:30 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
6:00 College Bible Study (Rm 405)

Sunday, June 28, 2020

8:40 Drive In Worship Service (East Parking Lot)  
9:30 Adult Sunday School Classes (via Zoom)  
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary or Watch the Livestream on  
YouTube or Facebook.com/FCCWF)  
2:00-4:00 Pickleball (Gym)  
4:00 Romans Bible Study (Rm 310 & Zoom)  
7:00 Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)

Monday, June 29, 2020

7:45-5:30 Children Come First (M-Th) (Classrooms/Gym)  
8:30-11:00 CCF Music (M-Th)  
10:00-11:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)

Tuesday, June 30, 2020

9:00-10:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
9:30 FCC Staff Meeting (Rm 310)  
4:00 CCF Kona Ice (East Parking Lot)  
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries Support Groups  
(Rm 304-308)

Wednesday, July 1, 2020

7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)  
8:30-11:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
6:00 The Neighborhood Service (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 First Kidz (Grades Pre-K-5<sup>th</sup>) (Rm 402)  
7:00 Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)

Thursday, July 2, 2020

6:00 College Bible Study (Rm 405)

Friday, July 3, 2020

Church Building, Offices & All Programs Closed  
for July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday

*Let's Stay Connected...*

## SERVING SUNDAY

### ELDERS

6/21: Rick Appling, Sandra Ross; Sherry Tucker, Presiding  
6/28: David Collins, Richard Phillips; Andy Wilson, Presiding

### DIACONATE COMMUNION VISITATION

### DIACONATE COMMUNION PREPARATION

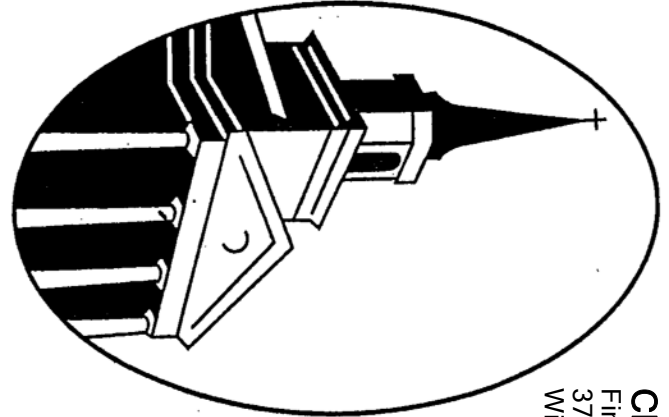
### JUNE DIACONATE SERVERS

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...

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
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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