

## Three Things About Stewardship

Here are three quick things to remember during this season of stewardship emphasis:

- 1) **This sermon series entitled "Am I?" is a look at one of the major accomplishments that came out of the 2019 Visioning process.**

In 2019, a dozen church members worked with an Auxano navigator defining long-range planning concepts like - our mission statement (*shepherding every person to encounter the abundant peace of Christ*) and our church values (which you can find printed in your bulletin every week). This *Am I?* series addresses the measures we have identified to know if we are successful in achieving that mission. This Sunday, November 14, is Commitment Sunday, and Dr. Bender will conclude this series by considering the question - *Am I modeling my faith?*

- 2) **Hopefully you've received your 2022 estimate-of-giving card via snail-mail...**

Please prayerfully consider your ability to support our church ministries & mission for 2022 as you return your estimate-of-giving card to the church office - either as soon as possible by mail or by placing it in the black offering boxes after church on Sunday.

And second - please consider the "GROW-ONE" challenge and your ability to increase your commitment for 2022 by one-percent of your annual income. Thank you for your support of First Christian Church.

- 3) **Make your reservations in the church office for the return of our traditional chicken church lunch in the Fellowship Hall this Sunday, November 14.**

Come get a plateful of fried or baked chicken on the house with all the fixins. You can take it to-go or eat in-house as you fellowship with your church friends.

P.S. If you would like us to send you your own "Our Life Measures" cube, please call the church office at 940.692.2282 or email Cheryl:

[cheryl@firstchristianwf.com](mailto:cheryl@firstchristianwf.com).



Thank you to everyone who has picked up a grocery bag and shopping list and/or a turkey donation envelope! Please remember the deadline to return your filled bag and/or the donation envelope is this Sunday, November 14. The filled bags can be brought to the church office, or put on the stage in the Fellowship Hall. Please leave turkey donation envelopes in the church office. We plan to fill 100 Thanksgiving Baskets again this year.

We definitely need volunteers to help deliver Thanksgiving Baskets on Saturday, November 20! If you would like to help deliver the Thanksgiving Baskets, you MUST call the church office - so that your name can be added to the list. It is best to deliver in pairs, so if you don't have a partner, we will provide one for you. We will gather in the East parking lot on Saturday, November 20 at 9:45 am. You can remain in your car as we wait for everyone to gather for our 10:00 am blessing and send-off. Volunteers will load the Thanksgiving Baskets and hand the routes to you-in your car. In the short time it takes to deliver the baskets to local families, you will be richly blessed

Join us on Sunday, December 12, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall for a fun filled family event!

During this 2-hour Christmas program, families wander through the bustling Bethlehem marketplace and discover what life was like when Jesus was born.

Unlike your typical "living Nativity," everyone will create unique keepsakes as they interact with local shopkeepers who share the Christmas story. And...they'll love talking to Mary and Joseph in The Stable—and hearing about the miracle of Jesus' birth.

In order to make this event a success we need volunteers. If you would like to help with A Night in Bethlehem please contact Claire at 940-692-2282 or [claire@firstchristianwf.com](mailto:claire@firstchristianwf.com).



This year First Christian Church is providing "Advent Boxes" for families to use each day during the Advent season. In these boxes you will be provided with the book "Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas."

This book will be your guide for fun daily activities and reflection. In this box some materials have been provided for activities and if an activity is not from the book you will find an envelope with instructions. Boxes will be available for pick-up on Sunday, November 21 and 28. We hope you find this Christ-centered resource useful and meaningful this Christmas season.

# Make Your Mark

Dr. Mark R. Bender  
Senior Minister



## Stretched and Strengthened

At a previous church I served, one of our Facilities Staff members took on an interesting hobby. He got into competitive bodybuilding...fully in. This hobby affected what he ate and drank, some of which wasn't very appealing to the rest of the staff. It affected his schedule, as a trip to the gym was a big part of his daily routine. Over time, it also affected his appearance, particularly as he "bulked up," as he tanned, and then as he dehydrated himself to achieve that gaunt, lean look that judges were looking for in the bodybuilding competitions. It was a hobby that definitely changed him.

Now, this hobby did offer some advantages to the church. If we needed to move something or lift something, he could do it. Likewise, his intimidating physique gave the impression that we had a "bouncer" on staff if any sort of uncomfortable situation arose. There were real benefits to his careful discipline and transformation.

For the last four weeks in worship, we have been focused on our *Life Measures*. These *Life Measures* are the five metrics - the five attributes found in your life and my life - that we believe best portray a growing and maturing disciple at First Christian Church. These are our "measures" of what is happening in our hearts. Our regular expressions of these measures are an answer to the questions of "Is Christ dwelling within?" and "Are we rooted and grounded in God's love?"

To measure what's happening internally, we've asked you to consider your response to five questions. *Am I:*

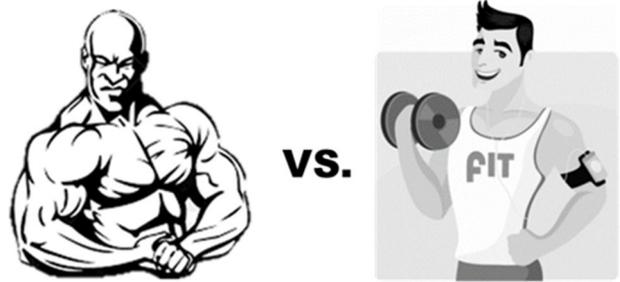
- *Growing my faith through daily spiritual practices?*
- *Strengthening my faith through weekly church involvement?*
- *Sharing my faith through intentional investment in others?*
- *Living my faith through the consistent pursuit of peace?*
- *Modeling my faith through joyful service and generosity?*

When you can answer yes to these five questions, then the church is "on mission" - we believe that these are the signs that we are producing disciples of Jesus Christ here at First Christian Church.

But I think it's important to point out that this picture of a disciple here at First Christian Church isn't a "bodybuilder." We shouldn't think of a person who answers "yes" to these five questions as being some sort of superhuman (or super Christian). Rather, the picture of a disciple we're going for is one of consistency and health.

If you have a friend who is into CrossFit, you may have seen a post from them on social media with their WOD. "WOD" is CrossFitter vocabulary for "Workout of the Day." CrossFitters complete their workout of the day not to achieve jaw-dropping biceps or to enable a four-minute mile, but to achieve all-around, multi-dimensional strength and conditioning. They are working towards an overall top-to bottom, from-the-inside-out kind of fitness that stretches the limits of their physical capabilities.

In much the same way, this is the discipleship we want from people who call First Christian Church home. We aren't looking for jaw-dropping engagement that is reflected by a six-hour devotional time each day, presence in the church every time the doors are open, or participation in every service opportunity while also giving a reverse tithe (giving 90% of your income to the church, while living off 10%). Instead, we're looking for consistent engagement and an inside-out development.



When asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus said it was "to love God with your heart, mind, soul and strength" (Mark 12:28-31). What our *Life Measures* point to is that when we attend to the condition of our minds, hearts, and souls, the limits of our discipleship are stretched and our capabilities are strengthened. This inside-out conditioning enables you to deepen your walk with Jesus Christ while enabling the church to better *shepherd every person to encounter the abundant peace of Christ*.

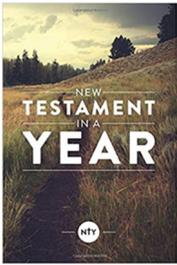
This Sunday, we're going to conclude our *Am I?* worship series by considering how we strengthen the muscles of our service and generosity. And included in this Challenger issue are numerous ways that you can model your faith through joyful service and generosity. As you can see, there are opportunities to joyfully serve by assisting with the Coats for Kids distribution, by signing up to deliver a Thanksgiving basket, by volunteering to help with A Night in Bethlehem (our one-night, VBS-style Advent event for families), and marking your calendars to pack 20,000 meals at the Rise Against Hunger event on January 8.

There are also numerous opportunities to be generous with your resources, including your financial resources. This Sunday, we will be giving thanks for your commitment to ministry in 2022 through the returning of your Estimate of Giving cards. In the next six weeks, there will be opportunities to make over-and-above gifts to the Thanksgiving and Christmas Special Offerings. And new this year will be a Christmas Mission Market. On Sunday, December 12, during the Sunday School hour, you will have the opportunity to "purchase a gift" for a loved one by donating to one (or more) of six FCC Outreach partners. At the Mission Market, you won't have to worry about supply chain issues and limited stock. Instead, you'll be equipping one of our ministry partners for their work while also providing a meaningful gift to someone special in your life.

Your engagement in just one of these service or generosity opportunities "moves the needle" towards becoming a growing disciple of Jesus Christ. And if you can give even more of your time and resources, the potential for transformation grows exponentially. This kind of faith development, along with the other four, create the body-building picture of spiritual health and strength we're hoping to build in the body of Christ here at First Christian Church of Wichita Falls.

# FCC MINISTRY NEWS AND CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

## Through the New Testament in a Year



Join in an opportunity to grow your faith by joining Dr. Bender for a year-long Bible Study called *Through the New Testament in a Year*. Participants in this study will receive a book which divides the New Testament into 365 daily readings. Additionally, participants will have the opportunity to regularly gather with Dr. Bender to go deeper into what you are reading. If you are interested in participating in this study and ordering the book, call the church office or text NT to 940-310-5673 to register.

## Hanging of the Greens

Hanging of the Greens will be Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, and we need people to bring in the wreaths during the 10:45 Worship Service!! Please let the Office, 692-2282, or Cheryl Smiley, 867-4425, know if you can help!!

## Fain Sock Tree

Now that the weather has turned into more like Fall, it's time to be thinking about gathering socks, scarves, hats, gloves, and pajamas for the children at Fain School. Soon the Christmas tree will be put up in the church office and we need to remember to "decorate" the tree with these items. If you remember last winter in February, we had an icy blast and the children needed those hats, gloves, etc. to keep warm.

So, as you begin to do your Christmas shopping, remember to pick up some hats, scarves, gloves, socks and pjs for the children at Fain. The counselor said that the pajamas sizes 6-12 are especially needed. We will deliver these items to Fain right before they begin their Christmas holidays. Thank You!

The **Challenger** is biweekly, with the next publication on Nov. 23! FCC Ministry News is sent by email every Tuesday.

## Member News:

♥**Military Deployed:** Lieutenant Andrew Long, son of Randy & Jane Long and grandson of Sara Anderson & Donna Long, is now deployed until March 2022 as a helicopter pilot for the United States Navy and any prayers would be greatly appreciated!

♥**Hospitalized:** at URHCS is Bobbie Caldwell; at Promise Hospital is Jimmy Smriglio. Released and back home are Mary McQueen & Duane Williams.

♥We extend our condolences to the family of Dawn Craig. Dawn passed away November 5<sup>th</sup>. Graveside services will be held on Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 am at Crestview Memorial Park.

♥Our sympathies are extended to Margaret Scales & Family on learning of the death of her mother, Betty Crick, on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Services will be held at a later date.

**Men's Breakfast & Bible Study!** Bring a friend and attend the FCC Men's Breakfast & Bible Study this Friday morning, November 12<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00-8:00 am, at the Hwy Café, 2808 Jacksboro Hwy.

**Pantry Sunday for Interfaith Outreach Services:** The November collected items are: canned peas and canned pasta (such as Spaghettios and Ravioli). They also have an emergency need for green beans, corn and other canned vegetables.



**Rise Against Hunger**  
January 8, 2022  
Fellowship Hall

## Coats for Kids

Plans are underway for the distribution of coats to the elementary schools. Volunteers are needed for November 14-18<sup>th</sup>. Coats will be sorted in the Fellowship Hall. Once again, we are asking you to sign up for a particular shift.

Volunteers will be needed on:

**Sunday, Nov. 14,** at 2 pm, and

**Monday-Thursday, Nov. 15-18:**

9:00-11:00 am, and again from 11:00 am-1:00 pm, and  
Delivery drivers at 12:30 pm.

If you would like to help, please phone or text Jane Long, 940-781-1108.

## From the Mailbox. . .

I wanted to thank the Elders of First Christian Church for the card they sent to all the WFISD School Board members last month. Your prayers are very, very much appreciated. The card you sent came at a great time. This is the first note of this type I've received while on the board. It warmed my heart! I know we can never have too many people praying for our board and staff at WFISD. God is in control, and I'm thankful for that. AND, I'm thankful for people like you keeping us in your prayers. May God continue to bless you all and the work you do at First Christian Church.

Sincerely,  
Mark Lukert

## From the October 15<sup>th</sup> Issue of District in Pictures: 100 WFISD Educators Tagged for Prayer by First Christian Church Members



Communications Officer Ashley Thomas opened up an envelope at her office desk to find a card that read, "I'm praying for Ashley Thomas." The prayer card was sent by First Christian Church members, who created the practical outreach after their pastor, Dr. Mark Bender, preached a sermon titled, "The Christian and the Schools." Church members made 100 prayer cards and sent seven to WFISD administrators like Ms. Thomas at the Education Center, 51 to teachers and staff at Fain Elementary, and 35 to educators at Zundy Elementary. Zundy and Fain are the two schools where First Christian Church serves as PIE Partner. They also sent seven prayer cards to WFISD school board members. The church members distributed 100 prayer cards to congregants after the church service to take home and pray for the educator named there. Church elders also lifted up the 100 educators in prayer at their weekly prayer

# This Sunday:

"Modeling My Faith"  
1 John 3:11-24  
Dr. Mark Bender

## OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, November 14, 2021  
STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN COMMITMENT SUNDAY  
BLESSING OF THE COATS / THANKSGIVING OFFERING  
8:40 Worship (Chapel)  
9:30 Sunday School / Journey Through Scripture  
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary or Watch the Livestream on YouTube or Facebook.com/FCCWF)  
12:00 Commitment Sunday Luncheon (Fellowship Hall)  
2:00 Coats for Kids – Sorting Coats (Fellowship Hall)  
3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)  
5:00 Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
5:00 Young Disciples Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)  
6:00 Young Disciples (Grades K-5) (Rm 402)  
Monday, November 15, 2021  
7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-F)  
9:00-10:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
9:00-12:00 Young Ages School "YAS" (M-F)  
9:00-1:00 Coats for Kids – Sorting & Delivering Coats (Fellowship Hall)  
10:00 YAS Music (Fellowship Hall)  
1:30 CWF Group 1 (Rm 310)  
6:30 Leadership Development Committee Meeting (Rm 310)  
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)  
Tuesday, November 16, 2021  
9:00-1:00 Coats for Kids – Sorting & Delivering Coats (Fellowship Hall)  
9:30 FCC Staff Mtg / Worship Planning (Rm 310)  
10:00 YAS Music (Fellowship Hall)  
12:00 Evangelism Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)  
6:00 Faith Formation Ministry Meeting (Zoom)  
6:00 Stewardship Ministry Meeting (Rm 310)  
6:30 Common Ground Recovery Ministries "CGRM" Support Groups (Rm 304-308)  
7:00 Communication & Technology Ministry Meeting (Rm 222)  
Wednesday, November 17, 2021  
7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405)  
9:00-10:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)  
9:00 YAS Music (Fellowship Hall)  
9:00-1:00 Coats for Kids – Sorting & Delivering Coats (Fellowship Hall)  
10:30 Sheri Sutton's Fall Bible Study (Rm 310)  
1:00 Stretch Class (Gym)  
5:30 Brown Bag Fellowship (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 Neighborhood Worship Service (Fellowship Hall)  
6:00 First Kidz (PreK-5th) (Rm 402)  
7:00 Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
7:00 Chancel Choir (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)  
Thursday, November 18, 2021  
9:00-1:00 Coats for Kids – Sorting & Delivering Coats (Fellowship Hall)  
Friday, November 19, 2021  
9:00-10:00 CCF Music (Rm 300)  
10:45 YAS Thanksgiving Feast (Fellowship Hall)  
4:00 CCF Thanksgiving Celebration (Fellowship Hall)  
Saturday, November 20, 2021  
9:45 Delivery of Thanksgiving Baskets (Outside the Fellowship Hall)  
Sunday, November 21, 2021 THANKSGIVING OFFERING  
8:40 Worship (Chapel)  
9:30 Sunday School / Journey Through Scripture  
10:45 Worship (Sanctuary or Watch the Livestream on YouTube or Facebook.com/FCCWF)  
3:00 Pickleball (Gym)  
3:45 Chancel Ringers (High School-Adults) (Stratten Hall)  
5:00 Youth (Grades 6-12) (Rm 403/Gym)  
5:00 Young Disciples Choir (Grades K-5) (Stratten Hall)  
6:00 Young Disciples Thanksgiving Family Dinner & Mission Project (Grades K-5) (Fellowship Hall)  
Monday, November 22, 2021  
7:30-6:00 Children Come First "CCF" (M-W)  
9:00-10:00 CCF Chapel (Chapel)  
Young Ages School "YAS" Closed This Week  
6:00 CCF Health & Safety Training (Rm 310)  
7:30 Boy Scouts Troop 15 (Fellowship Hall)  
Tuesday, November 23, 2021  
9:30 FCC Staff Mtg / Worship Planning (Rm 310)  
6:00 Executive Council Meeting (Rm 310)  
NO CGRM Support Groups (Rm 304-308)  
Wednesday, November 24, 2021  
7:00 Elders' Breakfast (Rm 405)  
9:00-10:00 CCF Spanish (Rm 300)  
NO Evening Activities  
Thursday & Friday, November 25-26, 2021  
Church Building, Offices & All Programs Closed for Thanksgiving

## SERVING SUNDAY ELDERS

11/14: Linda C. Carr, Larry Spradley; Kathleen Lauck, Presiding  
11/21: Linda Cook, Cindy Hernandez; Kerry Roach, Presiding

## NOVEMBER DIACONATE SERVERS

Brandi Brannon, John Cook, Fred Gentry, Lauren Johnson, Jim & Karen LaValley, Maggy Anderson, Jodi Bender, Dave Clark, Robert Hastings, Stacey Lingbeek, Ashley Warton, Davidson Cook, Christopher McKenzie

## DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION PREPARATION

11/14: Ashley Warton & Christopher McKenzie  
11/21: Brandi Brannon & Fred Gentry

## DIACONATE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNION VISITATION

11/14: Brandi Brannon, Christopher McKenzie, Fred Gentry  
11/21: John Cook, Karen LaValley, Jim LaValley

## 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  
Claire Baer, Director of Children's Ministries 692-2282  
Jeanette Showalter, Director of Music Ministries 763-8515  
Cheryl Appling, Business Administrator 691-7265  
Ashli Fischer, 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, Administrative Assistant Debbie Watson, Organist  
Tim Williamson, Director of Digital Media Bri Wingfield, Communications Intern

## FOR THE RECORD . . .

CGRM: (Tues., Nov. 2) . . . . .	31
Neighborhood (Wed., Nov. 3) . . . . .	23
Sunday School (Sun. Nov. 7) . . . . .	.69
Worship (Nov. 7): 8:40am Worship Service . . . . .	.36
10:45am Worship Service . . . . .	.225
Total Worship . . . . .	.284
Sunday Receipts Needed Per Week	\$19,336.85
Sunday Receipts for 11/7/21	\$13,292.00
Through Nov. 8: Income \$819,245.14	Expenses \$859,898.00

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